

A BASKET OF CHIPS.

"I declare! It does beat all natur' where that woman got her tongue. It grows wuss an' wuss, seems if!" and old Farmer Barber seated himself wearily on an old hoghead out in the barn.

A domestic storm had been brewing for several days, and now it had suddenly burst, and in its fury Matilda, the daughter of the house, had been decidedly worsted.

Matilda was an only child, but living at Farmer Barber's was another young girl, a niece, whom Mrs. Barber said "was like an own daughter."

The observant neighbors said there seemed to be quite a difference in the treatment of the two girls. Tillie, as she was generally called, took a great deal of time to attend to her curling papers, and never very much time to spend upon domestic duties, while poor little Mollie gave very little heed to personal adornment except to keep herself tidy.

But then, Mollie's hair would curl anyway. She had no use for curl-papers.

This summer the Barbars were taking city boarders "for a change." Mrs. Barber said, but the neighbors said it would come a little nearer the truth if she had said "for the change."

Among them old Mrs. Wainwright had come to stay for the summer. It was necessary she should be somewhat economical this year, but her reduced circumstances seemed affluence to the poor people at the farm.

Tillie, who dearly loved finery, regarded her as a princess, unmindful of the fact that her gowns were a little passe, and made herself as agreeable as possible.

Tillie did not care to propitiate Mrs. Wainwright so much for that lady's own sake as for the sake of the very interesting nephew who accompanied her.

But Mollie, with a correct interior sense of the fitness of things, regarded Mrs. Wainwright as an ill-bred woman, quite unlike her nephew in manner.

Halstead Wainwright brought his aunt there and went away directly, but returned in a week's time to see if the place suited her. He thought he would remain a couple of weeks himself. And then Tillie primped more frequently and spent all her time in dressing in her coarse finery to attract Halstead Wainwright's attention.

Mollie worked harder than ever, and when she was tired, heated and flushed, the brown rings of hair curled about her lovely face and pressed closer about her dainty ears, as if trying by their caresses to comfort her a little.

One day Tillie had arrayed herself in her best and sat upon the front piazza ready to give Halstead a smiling welcome when he returned from a ramble in the woods.

He had already come in, but this fact was unknown to her. He was seated in Mrs. Wainwright's room, and this is what Tillie heard him say:

"I declare, Aunt Wainwright! It's a shame the way folks here treat that poor Mollie! She was up before 5 o'clock hard at work, and has been working all day—not an hour for rest! She looks ready to drop! And there's that lazy Tillie, sitting round in her finery and never seeming to care about Mollie!"

"Yes, that is so," said Mrs. Wainwright. "Mollie seems to be a nice, civil girl enough, though she doesn't make of me as Tillie does."

"Good reason why—she can't get a chance to make of anybody! But I guess if it wasn't for Mollie's busy fingers you wouldn't fare as well as you do."

Halstead pulled a rose in pieces impatiently and continued: "If Mrs. Barber would put a kitchen apron on Tillie and set her to work there would be some sense in it. Mollie would make a better figure in the parlor. She's pretty—Mollie is."

Tillie sat transfixed with rage, but she dared not move just then. At that moment Mrs. Barber's shrill voice rung out:

"Now, Mollie, you hurry up an' go an' pick up some chips to set the little table, an' while that is doin' you just take down them clothes on the line, cause you know 'tis 'most time to get supper!"

"There it is again!" exclaimed Halstead. "Chips and clothes—clothes and chips! They will kill her if she stays here much longer. I'm going out to help her," and he rushed out of a side door into the back yard, where Mollie, with a tired, patient face, stooped over her basket, picking up chips.

"Will Miss Mollie allow me to renew the days of my childhood? I used to pick up chips for my grandfather when I was a little lad. I don't think I have forgotten how."

He took her basket from her and gently, but with a very decided movement, led her laughingly to a chopping block.

"There," he said, making her seat herself, "set yourself while I fill the basket."

For a moment she sat there, watching Halstead's shapely hands as he quickly gathered up the chips, flashing his brown eyes merrily upon her.

His fears overcame her evident pleasure at his kindness.

"Indeed, I must not stay here any longer!"

"Why not?" he asked.

"Because Aunt Barber won't like it!"

Even as she spoke the basket was piled high, and he placed it on the kitchen doorstep.

Wiping the dust from his hands, he said, "What next?"

Molly shook her head remonstratingly.

"Oh, the dearest! Here, I'll help you take them down!" And he actually began tugging at a sheet fluttering in his willowiness in the gentle breeze.

Mollie began to laugh, but didn't see how she could prevent those strong arms from doing what they chose. She hoped Tillie wouldn't see them.

But Tillie did. She had gone behind the vines at the end of the piazza and watched the proceedings.

She could no longer keep silent. She rushed to her mother and exclaimed:

"Ma! Ma! Do just look at Mollie! She's carrying on at a great rate with that young man! Actually coaxed him out to help her pick up chips! And now she has got him at the clothes line! My! I never saw such a shameless flirt! Didn't I tell you you'd find out some day what she is?"

Tillie was flushed and angry—angrier than even her mother had ever seen her before.

Mrs. Barber hurried to the kitchen window. Yes, there they were, Mollie blushing and laughing, while Halstead looked as if he were enjoying himself decidedly. There was an ominous silence in the kitchen for a few moments. Then Halstead deposited the basket, piled high with snowy clothes, upon the doorstep to keep company with the basket of chips, and, lifting his hat gracefully to Mollie, disappeared by the vine-covered porch. They heard the back gate click and thought he had gone out. Not so. He still stood near, thinking of pretty Mollie.

"You shameless critter!" cried Mrs. Barber. "Is this what I have brought you up for—to go an' flirt yourself under our very eyes, a-flirtin' with Tillie's lover in that way? Oh, I saw you, you horrid gal, a settin' your cap at him an' coaxin' him out to pick up chips!"

Mrs. Barber paused to catch her breath.

"I ain't a-goin' to put up with this a day longer, you selfish, good-for-nothin', lazy critter! You pack up this very night an' leave this house to-morrow mornin', rain or shine! Do you hear?"

Mollie's bright face paled.

"Oh, Aunt Barber, what have I done? I'm sure I haven't done anything wrong. I never meant to. And, truly, I've worked as hard as I could. I don't want Tillie's lover or anybody's lover," moaned poor Mollie, "and I will go to-morrow; I will not stay here any longer."

Mollie turned to go upstairs. Her tears were blinding her eyes. She did not see Halstead, but he had entered the door and stood, pale and stern, listening to what they were saying. Tillie's angry sobs were sounding through the room.

"Mrs. Barber"—Halstead's voice was low with concentrated anger—"Miss Mollie is not to blame. I went out there uninvited. Don't blame her for what I did."

He turned abruptly towards Mollie.

"Please come here, Mollie," and he held his hand towards her.

She shook her head feebly and groped for the latch, still blinded by her tears.

"Come!" This time there was something almost imperative in his tone. "I want to speak to you."

She passed out the open door into the porch, while Tillie jumped up and shut it with a vigorous bang.

"Mollie," said Halstead, "she said you should go away from here. I wish you would, and come to me. I love you, dear, though I have only known you so short a time. Are you afraid of me?" he asked, as she shrunk from him a little.

"No," she said, softly.

"Will you trust yourself to me, Mollie? Surely I can't use you any worse than Mrs. Barber!" He smiled a little at the last words. Somehow Mollie felt like smiling, too.

"Now, come around here to Aunt Wainwright's room and talk this over." And Mollie went.

It was arranged that they should all leave the next morning, "rain or shine," as Mrs. Barber had said, and that Mollie should stay with Mrs. Wainwright until Halstead took her to their home. It was Mrs. Barber's comments upon the abrupt departure of the trio which led Farmer Barber to repeat his exclamation:

"I declare! It does beat all natur' where that woman got her tongue!"—Chicago News.

EDUCATIONAL.

There are 5,399 whole and 1,821 fractional school districts in Michigan.

The public schools of St. Louis give employment to over one thousand teachers.

There are 330 women students in the University of Michigan, distributed throughout all the departments.

In one of the public schools of New York city there are 710 children, all but ten of whom are of foreign birth and language.

Embossed books, for the use of blind persons, have been prepared in more than two hundred and fifty languages and dialects.

In Paris the common public schools are provided with medicine cases, and instructions are given for the use of the remedies.

The New York Legislature passed a bill making the teaching of music in the public schools compulsory. Governor Flower vetoed it.

Jacob Gould Schurman, Cornell's new president, is yet a few years under forty, but a noted scholar. Twenty odd years ago he was a clerk in a grocery store on Prince Edward Island.


Cornell University has given presidents to three universities—Schaefer to Iowa, Jordan to Stanford and Andrews to Brown. Eight members of its Faculty have declined college presidencies.

The School of Architecture of the University of Pennsylvania is to have a "traveling scholarship in architecture," with an income of \$1,000, which will enable the holder to study the best models in Europe.

It appears from the official records that last year articulation was taught to no less than 4,245 pupils in American schools for the deaf. In a large number of these cases the infirmity dated from birth, and was inherited.

Mrs. Sidgwick has just been appointed Principal of Newham College, University of Cambridge, England, to succeed the late Miss Clough. Mrs. Sidgwick is a sister of the Right Honorable A. J. Balfour, leader of the House of Commons, and a niece of the Marquis of Salisbury.

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