

**THE TEMPTER.**  
Squat in my path was my besetting foe;  
I hurried him down a thousand fathoms length!  
I paused to breathe, I turned again,  
and lo!  
Again my way he blocked and mocked  
my strength.  
—Edmund V. Cooke, in *Lippincott's Magazine*.

### The Courtship of Miranda Jane.

By Minnie A. Greiner Edington.

Miranda Jane Brown was the eldest daughter in a family of twelve children. Three boys, older than herself, had already tumbled out of the home nest, and were providing for themselves, each after his peculiar fashion; but there were still enough left to make people wonder how they managed to turn around in the overcrowded nest.

Miranda Jane had now reached her sixteenth birthday; and her mother said:

"Miranda Jane, it's high time you were looking out for yourself. Since your father is laid up with rheumatism I kin hardly git corned enough for the kids, an' backy fer the ole man an' myself."

"Well, marm," Miranda Jane answered, as she twisted a corner of her apron about her finger, "how'll I do it? I can't get a place, 'cause I don't know how to cook anything but cornbread, taters an' bacon."

"Git married," was the short and pointed reply.

Miranda Jane opened her eyes wide with astonishment.

"Why, Marm Brown, who in the name o' sense kin I marry? I never ead a beau, an' men don't grow on bushes like blackberries, to be got fur the pickin'."

"No reason why you shouldn't marry. Merry that long-legged, red-haired Jim Shade. He's got a log-house, an' an acre of ground his grandad left him. It ain't good fur a man to live alone; an' Jim's a mighty good worker, if he ain't jest so hansom."

"But s'pose he don't ask me, marm?" And Miranda Jane looked to her mother for an answer to this puzzling question.

"I'll help ye. He's got a kind of hankering arter you, anyhow, 'cause yer sort o' purty, Miranda Jane, with them yellor curls, red cheeks, an' big blue eyes. Yer ought to marry a man of property like Jim. Yer needn't be a poor man's wife with that face o' youn'."

Miranda Jane blushed, giggled, and looked bashfully at the reflection of her pretty, but not overclean face, in the bit of broken mirror hauled out from the city, and had been most carefully treasured.

Miranda Jane's home was a miserable little shanty in a recently cleared part of ——— County, Ohio. The soil was black and rich, but almost swamp-like, even in dry weather. What it was during a rainy season I leave the reader to imagine. There were half a dozen such shanties, scattered along either side of the railroad newly-built through this region. The thriving city of K—— was only some two miles distant; but Miranda Jane had been there only once; they had moved to this place some three years before, when work on the railroad was first commenced.

Miranda Jane went about for the next two or three days in a sort of expectancy, as though the much needed man might even drop from the skies, or like the princes in the fairy-tales, come riding across the marshes on a snow-white horse—glittering with gold and jewels; or might spring up out of the ground like a mushroom.

Miranda Jane was romantic, and indulged in many blissful day-dreams that closely resembled the cheap novels that she now and then found a chance to read. She kept her face and hands half clean, and washed out her hair, but sadly faded red calico. In imagination, she went through, numberless times, but with as many changes, the exciting moment when Jim should fall upon his knees and in impassioned words, declare his never-dying love. Jim was not at all like the heroes in the novels; but of course she could not expect any of those grand personages would come in her way.

"S'pect I'd oter faint," she said to herself, "when Jim pops the question. Only I don't know how they do it. All the fine ladies in the stories does that, or falls gracefully against his manly breast."

She did practice falling against a tree a few times, in lieu of a "manly breast;" but when her mother chanced to see her, and asked her if she was trying to knock her brains out, she gave up her practice and determined to depend upon the emotions of the moment to help her out.

Three days passed by as usual, and Jim had not even been near the shanty. Miranda Jane began to yield to the despairing thoughts and jealous fears of her favorite heroine.

"Marm's been foolin' herself," she said dejectedly, as she sat on a stump, and dug her bare toes into the damp black soil; "an' I 'spect there's nothin' fur me to do but tramp it. Jim don't keer fur me, I 'spect he's stuck on that red-haired Sal Perkins, who thinks she's some'at cause her folks live on the hill where it's dry. It sets some folks up wonderful to have a bit o' propt'y. Them as has wants as much more as they kin git," she added a little bitterly. "Jim's got a acre an' a log cabin, an' he's got on gittin' a sheer of old Perkins' forty acres. Well, I hope he'll be happy with Sal if her tongue is sharper nor a razor."

"Who's that yer hope'll be happy?"

asked a voice behind her.

Miranda Jane started, and blushed under her limp sunbonnet. She had not known that she was thinking aloud.

"Yer scart me, Jim," she said, without turning around. "I wonder you ain't up on the hill with the rich folks."

"I'd ruther be here," he answered with one of his cheery laughs, as he seated himself on the stump near her. "Say, Miranda Jane," he went on abruptly, "you ain't never seen anything hereabouts, have you, of a gal that would like to be Mrs. Shade?"

Miranda Jane's heart beat so loudly, that she thought he must hear it. This wasn't at all the way she had imagined he would begin. She was only a simple, ignorant girl, and the man at her side was not a bit like the daintily-reared, elegantly-clad and polished-mannered heroes of romance. But he was her only hope of salvation from the almshouse; for who would give employment to one who did not even know the rudiments of house-keeping, and there was no longer room for her in the old home, wretched though it was.

After a fashion, too, Miranda Jane really loved Jim. He was big, good natured and a broad-shouldered fellow, who was kind even to the smallest of God's creatures, and never spent his earnings for the coarse pleasures indulged in by the other men of her acquaintance.

He often said, in his quaintly humorous way, that he was born for better things; and he meant to have his rights some day. Miranda Jane thrilled with pride to hear this great, strong fellow half afraid to openly declare his love; but she was in no hurry to let him know that she meant to accept him.

"You know Sal Perkins never comes down here," she said, with a shy little glance from under her sunbonnet. "She's too rich—too crazy."

"I ain't looking for Sal. I don't like her red hair and freckles. The gal I'm looking for has yellor hair like sunshine, eyes like a bit of clear blue sky, and cheeks like June cherries, all pink and cream. You ain't seen such a girl hereabouts, have you?"

"It must be Mary Ann Reed, 'cross the creek," she answered thoughtfully. "She's got light hair."

"Tow hair," he retorted, scornfully, "as he moved nearer to her. 'You know as well as I do, Miranda Jane, who I'm looking for."

"How should I know," she replied, digging her bare toes deeper into the mud, "you ain't never told me."

"I've allus bin half afeared to," he said, trying to get hold of the not overclean, but small, shapely hands that nervously toyed with the frayed hem of her faded apron.

Miranda Jane, like Jim, had a nature capable of better things than her hard life had developed in her; and she possessed, moreover, the instincts of a born coquette.

"Oh just to think, afeared of a gal."

"An' me just six-foot two," she sang mockingly.

He laughed, though he flushed to the roots of his curly brown hair.

"Well, Miranda Jane, when a feller's sure of himself, and not sure of the gal, he kinder dreads to have her laugh at him."

"The gal wouldn't laugh if she loved him," Miranda replied in a low tone.

"Then you do know of a gal hereabouts that's willing to be Mrs. Shade, don't you, Miranda Jane?" And he boldly put his arm about her.

"I ain't said so," was the quick reply, as the girl drew herself away from him with the air of a queen, while she wondered whether she was acting as her favorite heroine would act under the same trying circumstances.

"Say, Miranda Jane," he said, coaxingly, as he once more drew her toward him, "let's go to K—— this afternoon, get a license, and surprise folks by coming home married. The cabin's ready for you at any time, and I need you."

Miranda Jane's face was radiantly as red as the limp sunbonnet, and as Jim boldly pressed his first kiss on her lips.

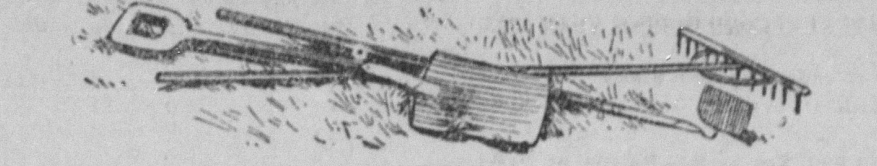
That evening saw Miranda Jane installed as mistress of the little two-roomed cabin on the hill above the flats; and it was wonderful to see what a gift for housekeeping she developed. The rooms were always sweet and clean; and she herself fresh and neat in her simple calicoes. She no longer envied, or even read of dime novel heroines, for she herself was living a romance as sweet, if more pure and simple, as any she had ever read. And she and Jim were slowly striving together for the "rights" of the higher and better life to which they feel themselves entitled.—*Waverley Magazine*.

**Long Rang, Ancestry.**

A double succession of very late marriages brought the Hon. Lovel Coke, now ten years old, into this world 140 years after the birth of his grandfather. This was William Coke, who gave his name to the billycock hat, and was born in 1754 and became first Earl of Leicester. He married a Keppel in 1822, being sixty-eight years old, and left three sons. One of them, the present Earl, now eighty-one years of age, became the father of the Hon. Lovel when he was seventy-one years old.

Scotland Yard furnishes statistics which show that 34,000 persons were lost in London last year, and much the same number in the preceding year, making a total close on 70,000 for the new century.

## FARM AND GARDEN



### PROFIT IN POULTRY.

Farmers are rapidly learning that chickens are among the most valuable assets of the farm. Given proper attention they yield a great percentage of profit than any other class of live stock. The farmer has the advantage over those living in villages of a free range for his chickens. The farmer who says poultry does not pay is he who allows his fowls to roost in the trees in all sorts of weather and get food when and where they can. With such treatment they assuredly do not pay. Poultry raising is a business and requires a thorough knowledge of the needs of the fowls and methods of supplying them.

As general purpose fowls the Barred Plymouth Rocks cannot be excelled. They mature quickly and are excellent layers, beginning to lay when six months old. When dressed they show up yellow and clean and bring a better price than fowls showing blue skin and legs. For producing eggs a mixed diet of the various grains, table scraps and crushed green bones should be given. Give a soft feed in the morning—corn-meal, bran and cracked oats in a trough and a little cracked corn scattered in leaves or straw. For the afternoon feed scatter oats, cracked corn, wheat and meat scraps in the leaves.

As important as the diet is cleanliness. Houses, yards and fowls should at all times be kept in perfect condition; have dust baths, crushed shells, gravel or crockery and fresh water accessible at all times. Use whitewash liberally on fences, houses, nests and perches. Change the straw in the nests frequently. Have your houses plain, roomy and tightly built, but well ventilated. Too much warmth is injurious and induces colds, which lead to more serious diseases. The perches should be so constructed that they may be easily removed when it is desired to clean the house, which should be frequently. I have my perches set in slots on the wall, from which they can be removed in a moment. My poultry house is in reality two houses, with the space between them roofed over and closed at the rear to form a feeding shed. It is particularly convenient in stormy weather or when the snow covers the ground. In this shed around the sides the nests are built and a screen of boards is set in front of them so give the seclusion the fowls like.

Marketing the fowls in the proper manner is an important consideration, though too often overlooked. Chickens of all sizes and colors, cockerets and hens, are sent in the same coop, probably no two alike, and consequently they bring a low price. They should be assorted and sent in separate coops to command the best price. It is attention to these little details that makes success possible. Neglecting them will inevitably result in failure.—N. G. Saxton, in *Tribune Farmer*.

### DEPENDS WHOLLY UPON THE RESULTS OBTAINED.

The following formula is given in a trade journal for the manufacture of a cement to mend chipped and defective enamelled ware. The journal noted, however, intimates that the process is not an easy one, even when the method is known. Five parts colorless copal, five parts colorless damar mixed and melted in a suitable pot. Stir in carefully four parts of Venetian turpentine. Care should be taken to keep the heat as low as possible, so that the resins do not darken. Any color may now be added to give the shade desired. Use this cement warm, and, if possible, warm the object to be repaired also. After the cement has set apply pumice stone and water to grind off any unevenness.

**CHOICE OF A HOUSE CAT.**

A good cat—the kind you want to have in the house, if any—will have a round, stubby pug nose, full, fat cheeks and upper lip, and a well developed bump on the top of the head between the ears, betokening good nature. A sleepy cat that purrs a good deal is apt to be playful and good natured.

By all means to be avoided is a cat with thin, sharp nose and twitching ears. It must be remembered, also, that a good mouser is not necessarily a gentle or desirable pet. Although any good cat will catch mice if she is not overfed.

The greatest mistake—and probably the most common one—in the care of domestic cats is overfeeding, particularly too much meat. In wild life the cat has exercise which enables her to digest her food. In the lazy house life the same full feeding leads to stomach troubles and to fits.—*Philadelphia Record*.

**CONVENIENT CLOSET ROOM.**

To swell the capacity of the closet one finds in the boarding house is a problem that needs solution. First, paint the walls a light French gray, which can be washed to remove spots. Then arrange a rod, supported at either end, the length of the closet, about midway up. On this rod can be hung skirts, waists and gowns on the hangers, those most lately patented, that will hold both a shirt and waist. These hangers are a trifle more expensive than the common metal ones. At the end of the closet arrange some shelves, and on the door tack a series of pockets, varying in size, to accommodate shoes, paper and wine. A long narrow case at the side of the pockets is used for the umbrella.—*New York Evening Journal*.

**HOUSEKEEPER'S LORE.**

To prevent blue spotting the clothes put some out on a piece of white cloth, gather up the corners and tie together. Dip this bag in water and squeeze it until the water is blue enough. In this way the clothes will never become spotted.

See that the sides or walls of your neat safes are occasionally scoured with soap or soap and slaked quicklime. All places where provisions are kept should be so constructed that a brisk current of cool air can be made to pass through them at will.

Never sweep dust from one room to another, nor from upstairs to the lower part of the house. Always take it up in a dustpan where you have previously placed some tea leaves. This prevents the dust from scattering again and returning to its old haunts.

Use a clean firebrick instead of the ordinary iron stand, and you will retain the heat of the iron much longer. The usual iron stand not only admits the air to the bottom of the iron, but it conducts the heat from it. The brick, being a non-conductor of heat, retains the heat in the smoothing iron much longer.

To keep handkerchiefs a good color, instead of dampening them before ironing, proceed as follows: Put two quarts of tepid water, with five drops of blue and a small piece of lump starch into a basin, and into this mixture dip each handkerchief separately, thoroughly wetting it, and then squeezing it as dry as possible. When all the handkerchiefs have been treated in this way, spread them out smoothly on a clean cloth or towel until they can be ironed.

**RECIPES.**

**Fix Padding.**—Break four slices of bread in one pint of milk, add one teaspoonful of salt, five tablespoonfuls of sugar, one cup of chopped suet and fifteen figs chopped fine, three full tablespoonfuls of flour, three eggs and one-half small nutmeg grated; turn into a mould and steam three hours and a half.

**Crab Toast.**—Put one level tablespoonful of butter in the chafing dish; when it is melted add one tablespoonful of minced celery, two level tablespoonfuls of flour; stir until mixed, then add gradually half a cup of cream or milk and a can of crab meat; stir a few minutes; add salt, pepper and paprika to taste; spread on toasted biscuits or on thin slices of brown bread toasted.

**Cheese Straws.**—Mix half a cupful of flour, three tablespoonfuls of grated American cheese, half a tablespoonful of Parmesan cheese, a little salt and one egg beaten; work to a smooth paste, roll out on a floured board until quite thin; cut in strips one-fourth inch wide and four inches long; place on a buttered pan and bake in a rather cool oven ten minutes.

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## BARGAINS!

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