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Pippette's Emancipation.

By EDWARD PARSHALL.

(These short serial stories are copyrighted by Bachelier, Johnson & Decheler, and are printed in The Tribune by special arrangement, simultaneous with their appearance in the leading daily journals of the large cities.)

Pippette was emancipated. To be sure, she did not wear knickerbockers and she could not vote, but her emancipation was complete. The New Woman has not developed in the Italian colony that inhabits Mott Street Barracks, opposite the Police headquarters building, but the emancipated maiden was making up a bed in the single light room of one of the tenements on the top floor, with a heart as happy as her fingers were deft.

She was undoubtedly beautiful, despite her decorative effect. Her blood-red handkerchief, he drew never so tight over her smooth, parted hair, could not spoil the saintly oval of her olive face--saintly despite the fact that she was the belle of Little Italy; her short, coarse skirt only heightened the daintiness of her trim, brown ankles, although they rose from cheap pattens, none too clean; the broken buttonholes in her waist might have seemed slovenly to the captious, but to the seeker after loveliness--a natural--they must be regarded with gratified admiration because of their native revelations, and, although Pietro sat within two yards of her, smoking his pipe of gloom and tobacco, Pippette did not care. She was the belle of Little Italy, and in Little Italy conventionalities go as a beggaring, although virtue holds high place. (I have heard it whispered that in speaking of some places this statement may truthfully be reversed.)

But all of this is by the way. It has nothing to do with Pippette's emancipation. It was Pietro who had brought that about and it was Pietro who had suffered by it.

In the bare brick building, five grimy stories high, punctured by many staring windows, and fed by black doorways every twenty feet or so, love and hate, mirth and misery, run high. When Neapolitans come to Gotham, they not only die faster than any other race in New York city, but they live faster, too. America throws Italians off their balance. In Italy they drink soft wines; in America, slum whiskey. When they gamble here it is not for the pleasant fun they knew at home, it is with greed that makes eyes leady and breathing quick, that makes stilettoes flash and sometimes takes a life. If it were writing sociology and not romance, I might explain that Italians come here for one thing--money; that the moment they leave the steamer's ganplank they are either full of wild work or an idleness so frugal that it cuts three cents a day--no more. The very food that nourished them at home--macaroni and fruit--overseer here--helps raise their death-rate. That, in

fact, of all races, that of Southern Italy is least fitted to cope with American ways, American climate, American America. But I am not writing sociology, I am writing the tale of Pippette.

The only smile in the room was hers. Indeed, while her face broke into the merriest of ripples as she pulled and patted at the soft, gauzy pile of bedding, not only was Pietro sad and solemn, but Pippette's bent and crouny mother, working at the washtub down in the court between the front and the rear tenements, her father, sweeping streets away uptown, and Pietro's parents in their abiding places, were sad and gloomy too, and all because of Pippette's emancipation.

It all grew out of her Italian love, brought over so successfully, and a Naples custom that could not be transplanted. It should be understood that in Naples marrying and giving in marriage are conducted on a basis different from that of the American matrimonial institutions. Pippette and Pietro were tiny children when the alliance was arranged and certain financial

the match, she had never for a moment doubted that she loved Pietro. But the knowledge gained in that short month changed the whole aspect of affairs to her. Plainly she saw the injustice of it all, plainly she saw the deep-laid plot to steal away her brand-new independent spirit, plainly she saw the outrage offered to her womanhood.

Night by night when she went home she treated Pietro less lovingly. Night by night she grew more gloomy and more silent in her parents' presence. Her mouth, that had in the past been ever smiling, drooped and quivered. She wept at night and woke red-eyed. The merry girl changed into a maiden of most sorrowful and sullen mien. Both parents and Pietro were amazed. Not guessing the real cause of her grievance, not knowing that she even had a grievance, they decided that she was ill. They worshipped her, all five, and held a consultation. When the month's end came they told her that she need not go out to tend the banker's children any more, that she need do no work at all, that if she did not mend they would have to try a doctor.

Pippette submitted after protest. It was assumed that she was to be cut off from her new-found friend was another piece of tyranny. She was a double martyr for a week, while her family and lover worried and wondered at the change in her.

When the doctor came--a fussy, greasy-haired Italian--she told him nothing of her trouble, only sitting silent while he wisely shook his head and figured out a pill. After he had gone away she wept quietly for hours, refused to see Pietro and turned her head toward the tenement's wall when her mother spoke to her.

The next morning, after a night which was most miserable for every one concerned, she declared her intention of going to see the banker's wife. There was some demur, but she was most determined, and finally tramped sulenly away, leaving behind her five of the most thoroughly puzzled Italians in New York. Pietro almost wept. Her mother was in acute distress. Her



Pietro Sat Within Two Yards of Her Smoking.

father swore softly in his native tongue, but not at her. Pietro's parents called ardently upon the Holy Virgin to witness that the girl had not been bewitched.

When Pippette found the banker's wife she poured out her woes.

"But if you do not want to marry the young man, simply do not marry him," advised that Americanized signora.

"Oh, alas! but it is that they will force me to!" exclaimed Pippette, with despair, which she had really learned to feel as an actress felt her part.

"A thousand million tortures will they inflict upon me if I thwart their wills of it!" she had succeeded in bringing herself to believe that she was terribly abused.

"For pity's sake!" remarked the progressive banker's wife, staccato. "For pity's sake! Not in America, can you do that! Not here! Go! Defy them! Should they still demand your marriage to this beast?" the banker's wife, full of romance, had conjured up in her mind a humpbacked and squint-eyed Pietro with a leer--"should they still demand your marriage to this beast, defy them again, and then send for me."

"But how can I send for you?" sobbed Pippette. "Suppose I am confined or tied by my hair or beaten?"

It will be observed that she had imagination.

"She," said the banker's wife, with grandeur, "then we shall rescue you! It is an alderman who is my husband's friend, and in New York--bless Virgin Mary!--an alderman can do very much." In all her life she had never had anything fill her with such delightful, romantic indignation.

To Pippette the title alderman meant only something which must be very grand. She finally planned with the banker's wife to go home boldly, and when that very day, as she assured her friend they would, her wicked relatives tried to force to submit to the sacrifice of herself upon the altar of Old World oppression, she would boldly defy them. Then she declared that she would, without doubt, be confined in the front room of the tenement, where it would be the intention of her parents to starve her or beat her or otherwise force her into obedience. But, no! She would casually hang her bright red petticoat out of the window, and the banker's wife, who would be watching, would notify the alderman,

who would notify the police, or, if they were not strong enough to overcome the plotting foreigners, the mayor. The banker's wife went on with great enthusiasm, and stated that sooner than permit such a wicked Old World conspiracy to be carried out in free America, the mayor would go to the president of the United States, if he stood, and he would call out the standing army with his guns, and the navy with its ships. Oh! the banker's wife had never so thoroughly enjoyed herself in her whole life before. And Pippette, when she walked home, had a head full of visions of ranks of armed men, each a hero, and each with a black feather plume in the side of his hat (like an Italian soldier, marching down Mott street and bravely fighting a great mob made up of her relatives and their friends, all willing to shed their last drop of red, red blood in order to force her to marry Pietro against her will.

So she fanned home and up to the rooms in the fifth story. The miserable five who thought her to be strangely ill were all waiting for her, and all anxious to know that the visit to the banker's wife had not hurt her most delicate and precious health.

They set up a chorus of rejoicing when they saw how red her cheeks were (with excitement) and how her eyes sparkled (because of the romantic thoughts behind them). But she quelled this with a quickly assumed tragic air, which threw them into a new worry. In a few moments, after they had frightened solitude tried again to learn what ailed the girl, she told them. For the first time she explained the secret of her mysterious malady. Striding to the center of the room, as



The Doctor Came--A Greasy-Haired Italian.

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tragedy queen might take the center of the stage, she declared: "I will not marry him. Torture me, lock me up, tie my hands, abuse me and maltreat me as you will--I will not marry him!"

They looked at her in stupefied amazement. At first they did not understand, but when she pointed her finger at Pietro and exclaimed: "It is you and your abettors whom I defy! In Italy, yes, you could force me to become your wife. You could buy me with your gold. You could take me and I could not resist. But in America, no! It is not that I say! No! No! No! I refuse! I WILL NOT!"

The word amazement but poorly describes the feelings of her audience. Not one of them had ever before for a moment supposed that she objected to marrying Pietro. It had never even been a matter of comment. The plan had been as much a part of their simple lives as the day and the night had for a moment, they gasped in horror. She assumed that this was the first move of coming battle, and, backing slowly into the front room, exclaimed:

"Yes! Yes! Kill me! Tear me limb from limb! But first let me tell the tale that I have protector!"

She unpinched her red petticoat and slipped it off quickly, without once removing her eyes from their faces, and with a delicious revelation of well-rounded calves below the shorter skirt underneath, which no one noticed. "I have but to wave this petticoat from the window and my friend the banker's wife will come with an alderman, who will bring the police and the mayor and the president of the kingdom and the army with guns and great ships which shoot vast iron balls! Oh, I am ready! I have protectors! I defy you all!"

Pippette, half conscious of the nonsense of it, was still conscious of the sensation she was creating, and enjoyed it from the bottom of her romantic heart. No one threatened her, but she waved her red petticoat from the window, and was somewhat disappointed to find that only the little banker and a fat Irishman responded. The banker's wife had told the story to her husband, with many variations and additions, and the alderman, willing to believe anything of Italians, was really prepared for great things. He attributed the submissive and puzzled attitudes of the five nearby persons whom he met to their craft, and impressively warned them.

"Here now! Here now!" he commanded. "None of that over here in America, you bloody doges! The girl is free to marry any one she likes. Don't let me hear any more of coo-ee-ton, or O'H! have the police after you. Moind now phwat OI say!" and he left majestically.

After he had gone, the little group--all of them except Pippette--broke into tears. They had begun to understand that Pippette had, for some unaccountable reason, decided not to marry Pietro, and were filled with woe. And worse than that, they saw that she looked upon all of them--who worshipped her, each one--with fear and defiance. This was crushing!

Finally, unhappy and dimayed, they held a council and decided that all should withdraw except Pietro, who was to remain with Pippette, and try to make his peace, or, at least, to get at the bottom of the mystery. Just before they went away, Pippette's fa-

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