

A SOCIAL TRIUMPH.

The Sweet Country Girl Who Took Society by Storm.

By F. A. MITCHEL.

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"My dear," said John Rowland, after reading the morning mail at the breakfast table, "Sarah writes that she would like us to have Theodora come to us for a little polishing."

"Oh, heavens, John, must we bring a country girl here to introduce into society? It will be an awful load to carry. I suppose we'll have to do it, but heaven protect us from poor country relations."

"I don't know anything about Sam Clemence's affairs, but I'm sure he is not very poor. He owns his farm free of debt, and he once owned some land in a region where oil was discovered."

Dora Clemence arrived one afternoon just before dinner. She was a fresh looking country girl, but her clothes were several years behind the fashion. She had a winning way with her, though she did not win her aunt and her cousin, Ida Rowland, the latter a couple of years her senior, for they were not to be won by a guest they considered an imposition. But demonstrative Dora did not display a bit of chill at the underdramatic reception she received at the hands of her aunt and cousin. She prattled about affairs at her home, the interest she expected to take in city life and how kind it was in her relatives to let her come and visit them. Mrs. Rowland and Ida said that she was very welcome in a tone indicating that she was not welcome at all.

"She doesn't seem to realize," said Ida to her mother, "that we don't want her."

"What can one expect from a country girl?" replied the mother.

"The bachelors' ball comes off on Thursday. I suppose we'll have to

take her. I won't be responsible for her getting partners. How about her evening dresses?"

"Her father wrote that we must do the best we can on short notice and not to mind expense. I'm going to take her to Mrs. Marier's and have something made for her. Marier will hurry it for me."

The next morning Dora was driven to the dressmaker's, and madame, who was a natural artist, got up a very simple costume for her that accorded well with her rustic beauty. When her cousin saw her arrayed for the ball she remarked that Dora looked well enough, but that the men would not pay any attention to a girl who had no "chic."

But the men of that set had been surfeited with "chic," and as soon as Dora appeared in the ballroom Ida was besieged by them for introduction to that "pretty little country girl." Dora's card was soon filled with names, and as she sallied over the floor her Madonna-like face, the simple manner in which her hair was done, the unadorned arrangement of her costume, so unlike the elaborate toils of the others, attracted every eye.

Two young men, both frequent visitors at the Rowlands', George Herbert and Edward Dickinson, secured the pick of Dora's dances early in the evening when her card was a blank. Herbert was a young man with his way to make in the world. Dickinson was prominent in society and a cottillion leader. Dora was naturally graceful, and she and Dickinson were much observed when dancing together. Ida Rowland had designs on Dickinson and noticed his attentions to her cousin with ill concealed rancor. When the ball was over the unique feature among the ladies had been Theodora Clemence.

The next morning Mrs. Rowland sat down with her niece to do some coaching.

"Dora," she said, "I owe it to your father and mother and to you to warn you against some of the snares of social life. Many of the young men have nothing better to do than win hearts merely to throw them away. There's Ned Dickinson. He has no occasion to work, having \$20,000 a year income. He would like nothing better than to amuse himself with a poor girl from the country like you."

"Oh, dear! You don't mean it, auntie! How careful I must be!"

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"A what?"

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"Oh!" exclaimed Dora in that soft child's voice of hers and with a mild expression of wonder in her eyes.

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