

The Member and the Minx.

By EMERIC HULME BEAMAN.

A severe attack of election fever had left the Minx a little limp. It had originated in a different opinion between herself and the Member before the election—not in the first instance a difference of political opinion, for the Minx could not strictly speaking have laid claim to the possession of any political opinion; but it degenerated into that, as the result of a slight disagreement on the subject of a hat. The Hon. Algernon Faringford, the Conservative candidate, had asserted that the hat did not suit her; that he disliked the size and shape of it; and that, in short, he would not accompany her to the matinee unless she changed it for another. The Hon. Algernon was not only particular in these matters, but he was also a man of a dogmatic and obstinate turn of mind; and, as he pointed out to the Minx, it was her duty, as his future wife, to consider in some small degree his feelings and wishes—well, his prejudices, if she chose to put it that way—on these and all other subjects relating to their mutual happiness and welfare. Upon which, with an impudent tilt of the nose, the Minx had reminded him of the terms of their compact—to wit, that she would only consent to become his future wife on condition that he won the forthcoming election.

"That," said the Hon. Algernon, waving aside the objection contemptuously, "is practically a foregone conclusion; otherwise I should not, of course, have been such an idiot as to consent to the bargain at all."

"Well, I don't care twopenny whether you get in or not," the Minx had calmly assured him. "The hat is ripping, and I'm going to wear it; so there!"

"Not, my dear little angel," rejoined the Hon. Algernon firmly—"not in my company."

"Then you needn't expect me to marry you," she retorted.

"You'll have to," he pointed out judiciously. "You've promised."

"Only if you get in," she again reminded him. "You're not in yet, and it's simply absurd to pretend that the hat doesn't suit me."

"That hat is outrageous, and I shall win the election without the least doubt. We expect a four figure majority."

"Outrageous!" exclaimed the Minx indignantly; and then a sudden inspiration seized her. "I just hope you won't get in now!" she said with icy composure. "In fact, I shall do my best to keep you out."

"To keep me out?" The Hon. Algernon stared at her. "Why, what on earth do you mean? To—keep me out?"

The Minx nodded mysteriously. "You'll see," was her cryptic rejoinder. "Its people like you who drive helpless women to the suffragettes. * * * Anyhow, we can canvass."

She added with apparent inconsequence.

"Of course," allowed Mr. Faringford, a trifle puzzled. "You can canvass. I see no harm in that—there are, in fact, some good creatures in the Primrose League who are canvassing the district for me now in a most praiseworthy and industrious manner. If you are keen on that sort of thing, there's no reason why you shouldn't join them occasionally—I dare say you'd find it good fun."

"Good fun, indeed!" retorted the Minx, repudiating the implication with a glance of unmitigated scorn. "Do you imagine that women take all this trouble to get a lot of wretched men into Parliament just for fun, pray?"

"They have," the candidate hastened to assure her soothingly, "their political creeds, of course—nobody denies that. They work for the cause. Many of them are most serious minded and intelligent ladies."

"But it was not of these that I was thinking at the moment. I was thinking of you."

"By which you dare to insinuate that I am not a serious minded and intelligent woman!" the Minx accused him.

"On the contrary, when it's a question of hats," he corrected, "most serious minded. I was not, however, aware that you had hitherto put yourself to much inconvenience in the matter of returning wretched men to Parliament. I am sorry that these superhuman exertions of yours should have happened to escape my notice."

"Don't jeer," interrupted the Minx. "It doesn't suit you. Besides, I was referring to the women who work—for the cause," she added vaguely. "I haven't begun yet—but I'm going to."

"Good!" said the Hon. Algernon, rubbing his hands. "When do you propose to start?"

"To-morrow," announced the Minx, with decision.

"Then I will inform Mrs. Greene, who is in charge of our Ladies' Canvassing Committee—she will be delighted to welcome such a charming recruit!"

"Don't trouble," said the Minx loftily. "I shall not require to avail myself of Mrs. Greene's good offices. You see, I'm going to canvass for the Liberal candidate."

Mr. Faringford gave a soft whistle, while the Minx continued to meet his incredulous gaze with a look of warlike defiance.

"I see," he said slowly. "You wish my friend the enemy to win, so that our bargain may be cancelled—"

"You had no business to call my hat outrageous," was the somewhat elliptical retort.

"It was a rash statement, I admit," conceded the Hon. Algernon, sighing. "But how could I possibly see the far-reaching results of such an innocent expression of opinion? Men are but shortsighted creatures at best. * * * Are you quite determined on this fateful course?"

"Oh, quite," said the Minx carelessly.

"Then," observed the candidate, with a tragic gesture of despair, "our cause is lost—utterly lost!" He shook his head reproachfully at the Minx and sighed again. "It's really too bad of you," he added, "just as we are beginning to feel so confident of victory."

"It's entirely your own fault," she explained; "and I hope it may prove a lesson to you not to make rude remarks about me in future."

"I am sure," replied the Hon. Algernon penitently, "that it will."

The Minx, true to her word, commenced her campaign in the interests of the Liberal cause the following morning, by calling upon the wife of a prominent local politician belonging to that party, whom she knew.

"I've come to help you canvass," she announced to the astonished lady, pressing her hand with a sweet smile. "Help me canvass?" repeated the other, taken aback. "But I thought—we all imagined—we quite understood that—that, in fact, you were engaged—I mean, that you were a staunch supporter of Mr. Faringford?"

"Oh, that's all right," replied the Minx airily. "I've changed my opinions, and I want the Liberals to get in."

"O—oh!" The slightly drawn out inflection was discreetly significant, suggesting at the same time a subtle comprehension of motives and a prudent resolve not to probe too far. "In that case, of course, we shall be delighted to have your assistance. I am visiting one of the outlying districts in my motor car presently. Would you care to come, too?"

The invitation happening to coincide with the Minx's other arrangements, she accepted it, and found the experience agreeably stimulating.

"Some of these country people are very stupid," she remarked on the homeward drive. "They don't seem to grasp facts, do they?"

"They grasp facts well enough," her companion dissented, "but they usually grasp the wrong ones."

This statement made the Minx thoughtful for several minutes, after which she said a trifle irrelevantly.

"You mean that you think he'll get in?"

"I hope so, dear," replied the matron, alluding to the Liberal candidate; "but we shall have a very hard fight for it; the Conservatives are fearfully strong down here, you know."

The answer seemed to satisfy the Minx, for she leaned back with a little smile. During the next few days the electioneering fever took hold of her, and she found canvassing a much more exhilarating pastime than rinking or bridge. She conscientiously read the political literature provided for her by the Liberal ladies, and in order to preserve an unbiased outlook perused the columns of a Conservative paper daily. Thus fortified, she felt herself equal to discussing the most complicated political issues with the most recalcitrant voters, and at the end of each day registered the results of her efforts in a little Russia leather notebook, which she triumphantly exhibited to the Hon. Algernon when he next called.

"I got six dear old laborers to promise to vote for Mr. Clump today," she announced joyously—Mr. Clump being the Liberal candidate for the division.

"Hum!" commented Mr. Faringford, stroking his mustache. "I was afraid we should have no chance once you began to go on the warpath. * * * What arguments did you employ, by the way? Did you point out to these intelligent sons of toil the unspeakable disadvantages of fiscal readjustment, or did you dwell merely on the blessings of an unlimited supply of beer?"

"Both, of course," replied the Minx promptly, "though they were much

too stupid to understand what I meant till I gave them a pound of tobacco each. They seemed to brighten up wonderfully after that, and grasped the facts at once."

"They would," agreed the Hon. Algernon. "But don't explain your method of argument to any one else, there's a dear, or you might be indicted for bribery and corruption."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the Minx, somewhat alarmed. "What's the harm, pray, in giving a poor old man a few pipes of tobacco? I call it charity, not bribery."

"The terms," said Mr. Faringford patiently, "are interchangeable—in politics. I'm not sure that your smile alone—without the tobacco—might not be construed into an indictable offense under the act. I merely warn you, of course. * * * It's no business of mine. * * * since you are acting on the other side."

"Well, whose fault is that?" demanded the Minx hotly. "Probably I also admired the hat. * * * It was simply pigheadedness, I believe. Anyhow, Mr. Clump will get in, you'll see!"

The Hon. Algernon shrugged his shoulders. "I shouldn't be at all surprised," he remarked philosophically, "as for the hat—"

"Oh, bother the hat!" she interrupted. "We expect a simply enormous majority."

"I trust," said the candidate politely, "that you will not be disappointed."

"I consider that an abominable rude remark!" retorted the Minx. "It means that you do not want to marry me."

"I was under the impression it was the other way round," murmured Mr. Faringford, with an air of mild remonstrance. "If I am mistaken I apologize."

"You needn't trouble," the Minx assured him sweetly. "You aren't—that is, I mean, it was."

"Thanks," observed the Hon. Algernon, brightening. "The explanation is quite lucid. But a bargain's a bargain—of course."

"Of course," agreed the Minx doubtfully.

The unremitting efforts, however, of the gallant band of ladies who were actively engaged in advancing the cause of Mr. Faringford's opponent seemed powerless to stem the tide of Conservative prejudice (so they described it) which had swamped the constituency. Nevertheless, the Minx enjoyed herself thoroughly, and did not appear in the least disheartened by the apparently uncompromising outlook. Indeed, although she far more often allowed herself to be persuaded by the arguments of a voter whom she was canvassing than she succeeded in persuading the voter, this circumstance, so far from discouraging the Minx, only served to accentuate the excitement and novelty of electioneering.

"One never knows," as she expressed it, "which is going to get the best of it—you, or the creature you're talking to—"

"Yes," interposed her companion, "but you should stick to your point, dear, and not give in to them. It's no use saying every time, 'Oh, no doubt you are right; and in that case perhaps you'd better vote, as you say, for Mr. Faringford.' That's not the way to get votes, you know."

"No, I suppose not," admitted the Minx; "but it's awful fun, all the same. And besides," she added thoughtfully, "the poor fellows ought surely to be allowed to vote as they like? One can only point out things to them."

On the day of the poll the Minx rode up and down the main streets in a car profusely decorated with the Liberal colors, and answered at the Hon. Algernon whenever they happened to pass each other. And when, on the following morning, the result was declared, and Mr. Faringford proclaimed the winner by a round majority, she beamed contentedly on her fellow canvassers. "So very disappointing!" she cooed. "But we did our best, didn't we?"

The inevitable reaction after such a stirring period of excitement set in the same evening. Now that the fun was over, the Minx began to wish that she had not quarrelled with the Hon. Algernon, for she was consumed with a desire to see her photograph in the illustrated papers as the future wife of one of the new members. It was in this state of limp protest against the fate which seemed bent on denying her so trifling a gratification that the

Hon. Algernon found her the next morning.

"How do you do?" he said with frigid politeness. "I looked round early to say 'Goodby,' as I have to catch a train to town at once."

"Oh * * * goodbye," said the Minx, half turning in her chair. "Don't trouble to stop—you might miss your train. * * * I congratulate you, of course. * * * And, oh, by the way—how about our bargain?"

The Member gravely deposited his hat on the floor and sat down. "That," he answered, "is mainly my reason for calling. It's very unfortunate. But, you see, you have lost."

"Yes," sighed the Minx, "it can't be helped. You've won * * * and * * * and those six wretched old laborers promised to vote for you—not for Mr. Clump at all. I must have mixed the names up somehow, I suppose."

"These accidents will happen," sympathized the Hon. Algernon, dolefully shaking his head. "One always feels a bit sorry for the loser, especially after such a gallant fight; but one's grief in the present instance may at least be tempered by the reflection that the loss is not irreparable."

"I don't see how you make that out," objected the Minx, with a little frown. "The loser can't win after the game is over—"

"Unless," suggested Mr. Faringford thoughtfully, "the winner resigns—"

"But even then Mr. Clump couldn't get in—that is, without another election; and besides," added the Minx, a horrid fear suddenly assailing her with regard to the photograph in the illustrated papers, "you don't surely mean that you would be such a donkey as to—"

The Member raised a deprecating hand.

"I was not referring," he remarked dispassionately, "to Mr. Clump, but to you—to our—our bargain, in fact. It seems such a shame that you should have lost. I could hardly sleep last night for thinking of your distress and chagrin; and so at length I was forced to arrive at the only decision possible under the circumstances. I decided to—"

"Go on," urged the Minx, regarding him stonily. "To—what?"

"To resign my claims," concluded the Member, in a tone of sad though determined renunciation, "in favor of the loser."

"Am I to understand by that," retorted the Minx, with icy hauteur, "that you wish to imply that you intend to—that is, to—to—"

"Cry quits on a division," put in the Member amiably. "You have caught my meaning to a shade. It seems only fair, don't you think, considering—"

"I will consider nothing of the sort," announced the Minx emphatically, "and I don't in the least understand what on earth you are trying to drive at."

"I am driving at this," explained the Member, with studious calm. "By your energetic endeavors to return Mr. Clump at the head of the poll—endeavors which would appear to bear but one interpretation—you have led me with some clearness to infer that you desired our matrimonial engagement to terminate—"

"That sounds like a prepared speech," objected the Minx.

"It isn't. I am speaking extempore," Mr. Faringford informed her with dignity. "And I was about to add, when you interrupted me, that under these circumstances my line of action seems to be clearly indicated. As one is strong one should be merciful. I therefore do hereby give you back your freedom."

"Then I won't take it!" declared the Minx, looking very red and determined.

"You must!" said the Member inflexibly.

"Rubbish! I tell you I won't—so there! I'll—I'll have you up for breach of promise!"

"Bless me!" ejaculated the Member, gazing at her in surprise. "Do you mean to say that you really want to marry me after all?"

"Do you think I should have got those stupid laborers to vote for you if—I didn't?" she demanded wrathfully. "You are really too idiotic for words!"

The Member rose, and taking the Minx firmly by one arm, assisted her to a vertical position, and so, by gradual stages, to a close proximity to his waistcoat.

"Then you actually wanted me to get in all the time, you little Minx?" he inquired sternly.

"Oh, Algy, you old dear," sighed the Minx, lifting a pink face to his, "I should have been simply mad if you hadn't."

"Ah! * * * And as for the hat—"

"Oh, never mind the hat!" interjected the Minx hurriedly. "I know exactly what you think about the hat, that it's just—"

"Adorable!" murmured the Member in her ear.—The Sketch.

The Turkish Government has prohibited the importation of wines and beers containing more than a certain proportion of alcohol, and the importation, manufacture and consumption of beverages containing alcohol not made from grapes or grape products.

A lock of Napoleon's hair, cut by his servant on May 31, 1811, at the Hotel de Lorz, Brussels, was sold recently for \$4 at Stevens' auction rooms, Covent Garden, London.

The climate of Holland is damp and rainy the year round.



WORTH TRYING.
A ticker for the hen-house
The farmer would supply.
The hens agree
Could watch the tape
And see when eggs are high.

A ticker for the hen-house
Large dividends should pay.
The hens could note
The rates we quote
And know just when to lay.

AS USUAL.
"Mrs. Parker is back in town."
"Has she any servants yet?"
"No! She's screaming for help."
—Halper's Bazar.

COLLEGE GOSSIP.
"Where is Bill these days?"
"Fired."
"Oh, yes. I believe I did hear the report."
—Lampoon.

THE ODD CORNERS.
Dentist—"Good morning, Mr. Giles, and how do you like the false teeth?"
Giles—"Well, zar, they fit a bit tight under the ears."
—Tatler.

PROBLEM.
Knicker—"No holidays now until Decoration Day."
Bocker—"Goodness, who will the President find to hang a speech on?"
—New York Times.

RATHER HARSH.
"A female Judas, I call her."
"How now, girl?"
"Pretends to like me, yet always tries to kiss my powder off."
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

MISPLACED.



Miss Threescore—"Gracious! Haven't you found that ribbon for my hair yet?"
Her Maid—"Yes'm."
Miss Threescore—"Then what keeps you so long?"
Her Maid—"I can't find your hair."
—From Pick-Me-Up.

HEREDITARY.
Hoax—"Poor old Henpeckke has to mind the baby."
Joax—"Yes, it's wonderful how that baby takes after its mother."
—Philadelphia Record.

EXCUSED.
"Shame on you! You came home last night actually tipsy."
"So I did, my dear. I just couldn't resist the pleasure of seeing two of you at once."
—Philadelphia Ledger.

A COMBAT.
"Terrible affair at the club last evening."
"What happened?"
"Cholly struck Ferdie with a table-spoon."
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

VALUED RESULTS.
"Was your garden a success last year?"
"In some respects," replied Mr. Crosslot. "I got some of the best fishing worms out of it that I ever saw."
—Washington Star.

WE SEE THE POINT.
Pupil—"Teacher, may I be absent this afternoon? My aunt's cousin is dead."
Teacher—"Well—yes, I suppose so; but really I wish it was some nearer relation."
—Boston Transcript.

WHAT IT MAY COME TO.
"I've just thought of a brand-new philanthropy," said Mr. Dustin Stax.
"What is it?"
"I'm going to found a home for ex-billionaires who impoverish themselves by donations."
—Washington Star.

THE MODERN WAY.
"I wonder what old Biffins will pay the count when the latter marries his daughter?"
"I understand the count wants \$100,000 and fifty per cent. of the moving picture rights."
—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

THE STREAMER TICKET.
"Them railways haven't much consideration for the boys that sell newspapers an' magazines," said Farmer Cortossel.
"What makes you think so?"
"I bought a ticket last week to visit my son-in-law out West. It had enough readin' matter on it to keep me interested all the time I wasn't eatin' lunch."
—Washington Star.

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The Way to Read.

It was Oliver Wendell Holmes, he it not, who owned up to his performance for reading in books to reading through them? "When I set out to read through a book," that autocrat wrote, "I always felt that I had a task before me—but when I read in a book it was the page of the paragraph that I wanted, and which left its impression and became a part of my intellectual furniture. If we were only franker, most of us would confess to being like Holmes in this matter of our reading. To be sure, we have an old-fashioned disinclination to set down a book in the middle of it; we feel it our duty to finish whatever we have once begun at the beginning; yet if we yield to our New England conscience herein, we are only deterred from "beginning"—books I mean neither reading straight through their tedious opening pages, nor hastening, like a woman, to learn by the concluding chapter how it all "turns out." Open your book in the very thick of it; that is the true way of getting at its soul.—Atlantic.

More Civilized as to Feet.

It has been stated frequently during the last year or two that the practice of artificially deforming women's feet is dying out in China. This strange method of beautification, differing only in degree from the practice, not unknown among white women, of wearing leather shoes several sizes too small for the feet, has been for many years practically universal among the real Chinese women. The ruling race of the country has, it is said, never practiced it. Despite the work of the anti-foot binding society, says a European traveler now in China, fully 95 per cent of the Chinese women still present mutilated feet. Imperial edicts have been launched against the practice and may eventually drive it out of use, but as yet little improvement is apparent.—New York Press.

Great Lakes Traffic.

The growth and the cheapness of traffic on the Great Lakes are due in no small degree to the effectiveness of terminal machinery at their head. Duluth and Superior handled more tons in 1907 than any other seaport, and it was all carried into or taken out of the port by a few railways. These cities have less than 300 miles of terminal track, as against 2,000 miles at Buffalo. But at Duluth-Superior a cargo of 12,000 tons of ore can be loaded in an hour and a half. So much better are terminal facilities at the head of the lakes than elsewhere that they handle in seven and a half months of open navigation more business than any other port in the world handles in 12, and do it more satisfactorily.—J. J. Hill, in World's Work.

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