

## Literature, &amp;c.

Graham's Magazine for June.  
MISS THOMPSON.

A TALE OF A VILLAGE INN.

By Mrs. A. M. F. Annan.

It may be out of keeping with one subject to apply the homely epithet of a 'fish out of water' to Mr Bromwell Sutton in the rural village of G—— but as no periphrasis suggests itself which would express his position as well, we must fain eschew elegance for the occasion, and let it stand. It was a sultry afternoon in the middle of summer, when he arrived at the Eagle Inn, and after changing his dress, stepped to the door to see what could be seen. He looked up the street, and down and across, and not a living thing was visible besides himself, except a few sheep dozing in the market house, and two or three cows silently ruminating in the shade of the town hall, both of which edifices were near at hand. Then having decided that there was nothing in the architectural aspect of the straggling village worth a second look, he concentrated his scrutiny upon himself.

The result of his investigation stood thus; that he was a very charming young man, was Mr Bromwell Sutton. He had a slender, well formed figure, which was encased in a fresh suit of the finest texture and most unexceptionable make. His features were regular, and of that accommodating order which allows the spectator to assign them any character he may choose. His complexion was fair and clear, his teeth were very white and his eyes very blue. His hair was dark, daintily glossed and perfumed with oil, and of a length, which, on so warm a day, would have made a silver arrow or a gilded bodkin a judicious application; and he had two elongated tufts on his upper lip, and a round one on his chin corresponding to the space between them. He wore a Panama hat of the most extensive circumference, and carried a pair of white gloves, either to be drawn on his hands or slapped on his knees, whichever circumstances might require; and the corner of a hem stitched handkerchief of transparent cambrick stuck out of his pocket.

A handbill posted on the sign-post next caught his eye, and though it was a favorite saying with him that he never read, to be understood of course, not that he never had read, but that he knew enough already; he so far conquered his disdain of literature as to step forward and ascertain its purport. This, set forth in the interesting typographical variety which veteran advertisers so well comprehend, of large and small Romans, and Italics leaning some to the right and some to the left, and some standing perpendicular, was as follows:

'Mr Azariah Chowders, celebrated throughout the Union for his eloquent, entertaining and instructive discourses on miscellaneous subjects, proposes delivering a lecture on the present inst., in the town hall of G——. The theme selected is the Genius of the American People, one which, from its intrinsic importance, requires no comment.'

He was interrupted by the rattle of a distant vehicle, and looking up the street, saw a chaise approaching which contained a single 'individual,' as he mentally pronounced him. He drove a fine horse, and drew him up before the door of the inn. The chaise was a plain, common looking concern, full of travel worn trunks and boxes, and its occupant was dressed in a light summer suit, rather neat, but entirely too coarse for gentility.

'It's only a Yankee pedlar,' said Mr Sutton to the landlord who was coming out, and entirely careless of being overheard by the stranger; and he walked up to his chamber, where he awakened a diminutive poodle, his travelling companion, from the siesta with which it was recruiting after its journey, and occupied himself in cracking his handkerchief at it, until an additional stir in the house indicated the approach of the time. He then came down, carrying Cupidon, for as was the animal appellated; and found in the bar-room a young gentleman, a law student, to whom he had delivered a letter on his arrival, and who was a boarder in the house. The other stranger had, meanwhile, entered the room, and was cooling himself at an open window, with his short curling hair pushed back from a forehead remarkable in its whiteness and intellectual development, and crowningly handsome lineaments and prepossessing expression.

'How do you contrive to exist in this stupid place?' asked our dandy of his new acquaintance, whose name was Wallis; 'they say there are some genteel people about here, have you any pretty girls among them to flirt with?'

'We have some pretty young ladies but don't use them for that purpose exactly,' replied Wallis; 'we admire them, and wait on them and try to please them, and then, when we can afford it, we marry them, if they don't object.'

'Have you seen anything of a lady vagabondizing in this region,—a Miss Valeria North?'

'Miss Valeria North, the fashionable heiress of B——? the niece of the celebrated Judge North? what should she be doing here?'

'Oh, I don't know,—it's beginning to be genteel for people to get tired of society, and to go hunting up out of the way places that one knows nothing about except from the maps; I heard in the railroad cars that she was making a tour along the river here, and was in hopes that I might fall in with her.' 'What do you know of her?'

'I heard a great deal about her at Saratoga last summer, where I happened to stop for a few days. Every body was talking about her beauty, talents, and accomplishments, and in particular about her plain and simple manners, so singular in an heiress and a belle. The young men, mostly, seemed to have been afraid of her; regarding her as a female Caligula who would have rejoiced in the power of decapitating all the stillness; stupidity and puppyism in the world with one stroke of her wit.'

'Indeed!' said Sutton, with a weak laugh that proved him not to apprehend what he was laughing at: 'I hope she'll soon come along; I'm prepared for a dead set at her. Girls of two or three hundred thousands are worth that trouble; it's a much pleasanter way to get pocket money than playing the dutiful son for it.'

Wallis elevated his eyebrows, but made no other reply.

'That, I suppose, is one of your village beauties,—that one walking in the garden with the pink dress on and the black apron,' resumed Sutton.

'No; she is a stranger boarding here; a Miss Thompson.'

'Miss Thompson!—it might as well be Miss Blank for all the idea that conveys. Who, or what is she?'

'She does not say;—there is the name in the register beside you,—Mrs. Thompson and daughter—so she entered it. She and her mother stopped here a week or two ago, on account of the lady's health.'

'Thompsons!—they oughtn't to be found at out of the way places; all the genteel Thompsons that I ever heard of go to springs and places of decided fashion; it is absolutely necessary, that they may not be confounded with the mere Thompsons,—the ten thousand of the name. But that is a pretty looking girl,—and rather ladyish.'

'She is a lady—a well bred, sensible girl, as ever I met with, and very highly educated.'

They were interrupted by the bell for tea, and on entering the eating room, they found the young lady in the pink dress at the table, with a delicate looking woman (Mrs. Thompson, of course) beside her. Mr Sutton advanced to the place immediately opposite to her, and a nearer view suggested that she might be one of the genteel Thompsons after all. She was a spiritual looking girl, rather under the middle height, with a clear and brilliant, though not very fair complexion; large black eyes, surmounted by wide and distinctly marked eyebrows, and broad, smooth forehead; a nose, that most difficult of features, if we may judge by the innumerable failures, a nose beautifully straight in its outline and with the most delicately cut nostrils possible; and the most charmingly curved lips, and the whitest teeth in the world. Having made these discoveries, Mr Sutton decided that if her station should forbid his admiring her, he would not allow it to prevent her from admiring him. To afford her the benefit of this privilege, it was necessary that he should first attract her notice, for she had bestowed but a single glance at him on his entrance, as had her mother, the latter drawing up her eyelids as if she had been very near sighted, and to effect this, he called, in a peremptory voice to the servant attending.

'Waiter, I wish you would give my dog something to eat.'

'Your dog, sir?—where is it?' asked the colored man, looking around the room, and then giving a loud whistle to call the invisible animal forth.

'Here,' replied Sutton sharply; 'or you may bring me a plate and I'll feed him myself;' and he pointed to the miniature specimen, lying like a little lump of floss silk on his foot.

'That! I—I—he! he! ha! ha!' exclaimed the waiter, attempting at first to restrain himself, and then bursting into a chuckling laugh: 'is it really a dog, sir—a live dog?'

Cupidon, as if outraged by the suspicion, hereupon sprung into the middle of the room, barking at the height of his feeble voice and showing his tiny white teeth, while his wicked little eyes sparkled with anger. The cachinnations of the amused and astonished servant increased at every bark, and drew a laugh from Wallis and a smile from each of the ladies. Sutton with difficulty silenced his favorite, and finding that the desired impression had not been made, he proceeded to another essay. 'Waiter' he slowly enunciated, with a look of disgust at the steel implement in his hand, have you no silver forks?'

'Sir?' said the attendant with a puzzled expression.

'Any silver forks?' he repeated emphatically.

'No sir; we don't keep the article.'

'Then you should not put fish on the table, they ought properly to be inseparable;' he returned magisterially, and rising from his seat, he approached the stranger of the chaise who had quietly placed himself some distance below them and asked 'Have you any such things as silver forks among your commodities?—I believe that persons in your vocation sometimes deal in articles of that description.'

The stranger looked up in surprise—and after scanning him from head to foot—a frown which was gathering on his face gave way to a look of humorous complacency.—'I am sorry I can't accommodate you sir,' said he; but I might probably suggest a substitute;—how would a tea-spoon do?'

He returned to his seat, rather dubious about the smiles he detected, and as a third effort, addressed himself in nearly the following words to Wallis, whose interjections are unnecessary. 'How far did you say it was to the Sutton Mills?—only four miles, isn't it? I shall have to apply to you to show me the way. I have a curiosity to see them, as they are one of my father's favorite hobbies. I often laugh at him for christening them with his own name. Calling a villa, a fashionable country seat, after one's self, is well enough, but mills or manufactories—it is rather out of taste. Is the fourth finished yet? I believe it is to be the finest of all; indeed, it seems to me a little injudicious in the old gentleman to have invested so much in a country property—there are at least half a dozen farms, are there not? but I suppose he was afraid to trust his funds to stocks, and he has already more real estate in the city than he can well attend to. However, if he had handed over the amount to me, I think I could have disposed of it with a much better grace. He did offer me a little to them, some time ago, but it was on condition that I should come here and manage them myself, but I begged to be excused, and it was only on agreement that I should have a hundred per cent. of the revenue this year, that I consented to undergo the trouble of visiting them, or the sacrifice, rather—there are so many delightful places to go to in the summer,' and so forth.

Having, from these indirect explanations, made a clear case that his society was entitled to a welcome from the best Thompson in the world, and to that with thanks, if his fair neighbor was only a crockery Thompson, he arose and returned to the front of the house. The village had, by this time awakened from its nap, and the larger proportion of its inhabitants were bending their steps to the town hall. Numerous well appointed carriages were also coming in from the surrounding neighborhood, whose passengers were all bound to the same point. 'Where are all these people going?' asked Sutton.

'To a lecture announced in that handbill,' replied Wallis—and Miss Thompson presenting herself at the door, ready bonneted, he walked with her in a neighborly sort of a way across the street. After a while the throng ceased, and from some impatient expressions of a loungee about the tavern, Sutton ascertained that the lecturer had not yet appeared.

'Why, that man I mistook for a Yankee pedlar must be he, I should judge,' said he to the landlord.

'Who?—where?' said a young man, who had not heard the last clause.

'That tall fellow, in the garden.

there, dressed in the brown holland pantaloons and Kentucky jean coat.'

'Indeed!—I thought he was to stop at the other house; and he hastened down the street, while Sutton, finding that every body was going to the hall, strolled there also.

Meanwhile, the stranger in the coarse jeans was enjoying himself in a saunter through the quiet and pretty garden of the inn, which was so hedged and enclosed as to admit of no view of the street when a consequential personage presented himself, and saluting him stiffly, introduced himself, as 'Mr. Smith, the proprietor of the G—— Hotel.'

'I am happy to make your acquaintance, sir,' said the young stranger, courteously.

'I have taken the liberty to call, sir, and inform you that the audience has been waiting for some time. It is full fifteen minutes past the time announced in the handbills;' pulling one from his pocket—'I felt a reluctance to intrude, but putting the best construction upon your conduct, in not informing me of your arrival, after I had been at the pains to prepare for you, I presumed it proceeded from a mistake; you are at the opposition establishment.'

'There certainly is a mistake,' interrupted the stranger.

'Very well, very well, sir, as an entire stranger you can be excused,' hastily proceeded Mr. Smith; 'but there is no time to talk about it now—we can settle it after a while. Be good enough to hurry over; the people are getting impatient. You will have a large audience sir; they were afraid they would be disappointed, which would have been a bad business, as we very seldom have lecturers from a distance. It was lucky that you happened to be found out by one of my boarders, for some of the gentlemen were talking about dispersing, and if that had occurred, we would all have been up in arms against you;—we are pretty fiery, some of us!'

'Then you would not be willing to wait another evening?'

'To wait! certainly not; I hope we have no such idea!—let me beg you to hurry, sir!'

'Well, but—'

'My dear sir!—let me insist—you have announced a very interesting subject—'The Genius of the American People;' the very thing for our audience—American through and through—very patriotic!'

'Very well, sir—I'll try to do my best—let me change my dress a little, and I'll attend you.'

To the surprise of the inmates of the Eagle excepting, indeed, Mr. Sutton, who paid a mental tribute to his own sagacity—in a few minutes their fellow lodger entered and mounted the rostrum. A figure as graceful and commanding would have struck the fastidious assemblage of a fashionable city lecture room. He showed some embarrassment after casting his eyes over the really large audience, but a round of applause gave him time to collect himself, and he commenced a modest preface, stating that he had not had time to arrange his ideas on the subject proposed, in such a form as he could have wished, yet it was one that ought to be familiar to all good citizens, he hoped he should not entirely fail.

We regret that our space will not permit us to edify our readers with the critique on his performance which duly appeared in the village newspaper. Suffice it, that after an elaborate eulogium on his fine person, captivating voice, and expressive gestures; his sparkling wit, elevated imagination, and extensive reading, he was pronounced *ex cathedra*, 'a patriot, a scholar and a gentleman.'

The next morning, when they ate in the breakfast room, Miss Thompson and Wallis were fluent in commendation of the lecturer. 'I was most agreeably disappointed,' said the lady; 'having been prepared for nothing more than the flippant inanities we usually hear from itinerant lecturers. The gentleman is an orator—one that would draw crowds among the most intellectual communities in the country. The subject was so hackneyed, that to announce it appeared ridiculous; but he treated it like a statesman, and made it really imposing by evidences of original thought and profound information.'

She was interrupted by the object of her remarks entering the room—and after he had taken his seat at the table, she turned and remarked to him, with respectful complaisance, 'you had a large and very attentive auditory last night, sir.'

The stranger bowed and returned, 'I was surprised to find an assemblage so numerous and respectable, and had