

MARRYING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

BY MISS AMELIA THROPP.

James Spooney, vulgarly called by his neighbors Spooney Jim, was the son of a well-to-do farmer in the State of P—. At the time he is introduced to the reader he is in his twenty-eighth year. He had never been very far from home, consequently had seen very little of the world. He was an industrious, harmless young man, whose fortune could never be made by his beauty. He was very tall, thin, and remarkably awkward, with small, dull-looking blue eyes of so pale a hue that they looked as if the color was faded out, abundant red hair, florid complexion, and large, coarse features.

However, there is no accounting for taste, for Jemima Jenkins, the daughter of an adjoining farmer, declared he was "jist the handsumist man she ever cast eyes upon."

Now, James had a great admiration for the fair damsel, who in her personal appearance was as little favored as himself. She was a short, stout, tow-headed girl, with a freckled skin, which looked as if the flies had been sporting with it. The ill-natured in the neighborhood who knew of their courtship, earnestly hoped they might come together in matrimony, arguing that it would be a pity to spoil a good-looking couple with either.

One bright, sunny Sabbath afternoon in mid-summer, as Jim was lying upon the grass in front of the door of his father's house planning for the future, one of the first things that occurred to him was that he should get married.

"Dad's sot on it," he thought, "and so is mam, and I ort tu try and please 'em—it's time. I could rent old Jake Spangler's farm, and the money I've got inter the bank 'ill stock it, and Mimie's daddy he'll furnish the house like he did fur Mat Bunn, who married her sistur Sally Ann. I think I'll jist go over to old Jenkins' and ask hur—there's nothin' like strikin' while the iron's hot."

Suiting the action to the word he sprang up and started for the house, and neatly attired himself, putting some extra touches to his toilet before starting on his important mission. He looked decidedly gay when he had attired himself in his long gray linen coat, bright

red waistcoat, straw hat, with a blue ribbon around it, short, very wide linen pants, and large, heavy shoes. He made fast time as he crossed his father's farm, jumping fences and ditches until he found himself upon Squire Jenkins' land. As he neared the house he beheld his divinity sitting upon a grassy mound, beneath a large willow tree, some little distance from the house.

"Oh, glorious opportunity," thought Jim. "I kin jist settle the matter now, makin' short work on it."

As he approached he felt a slight trembling of the limbs, a nervous sensation, but he made up his mind that he was not going to be frightened from his purpose.

"A gal kin only say no, to du her wust, and there's plenty on 'em if she does. They are jist as thick as blackberries—I kin git another if she's contrary."

Summoning up his courage he shouted:

"Hallo, Mimie! be it you? How does yer be?"

"Fust rate, Jim! how be yer. I am glad yer come, fur I've been lookin' fur yer."

"The purtty critter, she's jist a bustin' with luv' fur me," soliloquised the lover.

"Is yer dog tied up, Mimie?" asked Jim, "fur I'm afeard uv that cus," looking nervously around. "Tother night as Bill Jones an me was going home frum here, he takes arter us. Bill he runs purtty spy, he has sich big feet he kin git over ground very handy, but jist as he went tu jump over the horse-trough, he tripped, and in he goes. He hollered tu me fur help, but, laws! I jist keeps clear out his way, when the tarnal critter leaves Bill and makes fur me, an' hangs on tu my coat tail with sich a grip that when I managed tu shake him off he had the whole uv my spankin' new coat tail inter his big jaws! Bill he jist stood and laughed fit tu split hisself. He was mad cause he got a duckin'."

"Sakes alive! yer might hev bin kilt," said Jemima. "I'll coax dad tu shoot him."

"Mima," said Jim, anxious to proceed to business, whilst his face became as red as a beet, "I want tu ask yer somethin' pertickiler. Yer kin either say yes or no, but course I'd sooner it was yes. Dad wants me tu git married, and so does mam, and I reckon you'd du jist as well as any one else, so I jist thought I'd ask yer."