

He pleaded that his education had been neglected in that direction.

"Then you are going to begin at once," and she handed him the spoon. He took it and began spreading the cornmeal thickly over the ground.

"No, no, that's not the way," she interrupted him. "You are doing it as any farmer's wife would and consequently you are not receiving the full benefit of your labors. To do it properly you should encourage the weaker and less determined chicks by throwing the meal near. That makes the others angry and when they grow older I shall have lots of fun settling their quarrels."

Delancy attempted to look shocked. "You surely do not encourage them to fight over their food, do you?"

"Oh, no," she answered mischievously. "I am only training them in the ways of the world. You know that the battle generally goes to the strong. It is often not so much a matter of strength as of confidence. I am teaching them to be self-assertive and confident."

"Yes, but is it not a rather hard school?"

"Perhaps it is, but the ancients brought up their children upon much the same principle and remember what great and brave races they were. You can teach children the same lesson in more than one way. Chickens are less intelligent and this is the only way that I know."

"Why is it necessary to teach them anything?"

"Well," she exclaimed, "I never thought of that. I have formulated a treatment without seeking cause. But then I am a woman."

"There," she said, as he threw the last crumb away, "that will do nicely. I suppose you would like your breakfast now?"

He was positive on this point. The morning air of the country, he learned was a good appetizer.

When he had finished he went for a long walk, not returning until noon. As he arrived in front of the house he found Phyllis taking leave of a young lady in a pony carriage. The lady turned her head in his direction and he glanced at her and then, with a jerk, his hand went to his hat.

"How in the world comes Mrs. Stevens in Pocohasset?" he wondered.

The lady was even more surprised. "Why, Mr. Delancy where did you come from? I never expected to see you here. I don't know, though," she added reflectively, "that one should be surprised at seeing you anywhere or at meeting you at any moment. I think I am entitled to say that much after meeting you unexpectedly as we did last winter in Hong Kong and the year before in Australia. But Pocohasset! Why, it's almost as bad as the Desert of Sahara. But I am so glad to see you, and as for Jack, I'll make him do two whole days' work as a reward for my bringing you home with me!"

"And where is Jack?" he asked. His proper name was Mortimer, but it was reserved for state occasions, visiting cards and introductions. Everybody who knew him passably well called him 'Jack.' He and Delancy had gone through college together. This was, as far as the college was concerned, all that they had done, and the question that troubled them most on commencement day was whether they had not worked, after all, a little harder than was absolutely necessary.

"Yes, of course, he is," answered Mrs. Jack. "We have rented a house four miles from here, a lovely little place. We came, principally, because Jack wanted to work. As usual, he has not touched a brush since his arrival. He is enjoying himself. He spends three-quarters of the time in the hammock, smoking and reading, and tells me that he is studying atmospheric effects and conditions. The other third of the day he spends endeavoring to convince me that it is necessary to study atmospheric conditions. It is my firm belief that he is lazy."

"I think he must be," remarked Delancy. "I don't think that the atmosphere calls for any great undivided attention on his part."

"Oh, thank you," she answered. "You must come over and tell him that. I suppose that you already know Miss Van Hasset. Phyllis and I were at school together in New York and we were firm friends because we both hated it."

"She has been teaching me how to