Harrington's Spectacles.

PART I.

CHARMING village is Nestledown, with its wide-halled, green-shuttered white houses; its broad road-ways shaded by stately elms, in whose branches the orioles had their summer homes; its old-fashioned gardens, with their prim box borders, divided by long white fences; its square, white meeting houses, with their slender belfries, around which the swallows curved and darted; its narrow, crooked streets down by the water's edge, smelling of mackerel and fresh-baked buns.

On one of the most quiet streets was a shadowy old place, all gable roofs, stately elms, and fine orchards; here the swallows build under the eaves of the great red barn, and the red-winged blackbirds played hide-and-seek in the meadows. Back of the house, between the garden and the meadow, ran a little babbling brook; across this was stretched a quaint, wooden bridge, over the rail of which one loved to lean, and gaze down into the brown depths where the trout skimmed.

One fine afternoon, about thirty-five years ago, the old place wore the unusual air of festivity. All the windows were open; the ancient, threadbare lace curtains waved softly out against the rose vines, as if to tell that something exciting was going on within. The great brass knocker on the front door kept up a steady tattoo; now and then a heavy, big-wheeled carriage would rumble up to the wide porch, and girls in sprigged muslin and Gainsborough hats, young men in fluffy stocks and long-tailed dress coats, would alight. Then the great oaken door would open, and the guests disappear in the cool shade of the big hall. What was all the excitement about? Had you asked Sambo, the grinning colored "gentleman" who opened the door, he would have said, no doubt, "Law me! ain't you hard yit? Why, Miss Priscilla's gwine ter marry de smartest man in de kentry, Massa Jack Harrington. He's done tuck all de medal deys got at de institoot."

In the parlor a merry company is assembled gayly jesting among themselves. However, they seem to be expecting someone, for, occasionally, one of the party draws aside the curtains and looks long and earnestly down the road. The search seems fruitless, though, for the curtain is impatiently dropped, and a maiden, whose brown locks are caught up by a massive old shell comb, turns to her companion, saying pettishly: "Now isn't this just like Jack Harrington to be late to his own wedding? Why, think of the ridiculousness of it!"

"How could you expect anything different from a graduate of Technology who wears gold-rimmed spectacles." This from Persis Percival, with the snapping black eyes, whose father's rich merchant ships have brought her sky blue, Canton crepe gown from far-away China. Perhaps she had once cherished hopes that she might gain the admiration of this same young bachelor of science with the gold-bowed glasses.

"I know he has forgotten that this is his wedding-day, and is sitting up in that dreary den of his dreaming of his old engines. Why, I am surprised he loves anybody, even dear old Priscilla," said Mary Edgeton, rearranging her swiss fichu before the long pier glass.

"I am sure they are a well-matched couple—Jack and Priscilla. You couldn't find two more such perfect lovers, and, in my mind, to-day will see one of the happiest unions on record. I wish I were as fortunate; I would even be willing to wear gold-bowed spectacles if there were any such advantage gained from it!" exclaimed Dick Rogers, gazing impatiently down the road.