



Devizes Petty Sessions Miss. Anne Phillips

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“Broody” Fowls - **Mrs. Hester Smith** of **Rowde**, summoned **Miss Anne Phillips** for knocking the skin off her knuckles during a quarrel over their “laying” hens. It appeared **Mrs. Smith** kept “laying” hens, and that her neighbor kept “laying” hens; but, whether it was that Miss Phillip’s accommodation was more desirable for nesting or whether she encouraged **Mrs. Smith’s** fowls to be dishonest could not accurately be ascertained. One thing, however, seemed certain – **Miss Phillips** got all the eggs from all the hens-for lay in her nests they would. This had frequently very much disturbed the equanimity of **Mrs. Smith’s** temper-for as she said, what could be more provoking than to have one’s own hens coming in for their barley quite “broody” fluttering their feathers, and strutting off with a chuckle into neighbor Phillip’s hen-house-just as if one kept fowls to feed other people in new-laid eggs for breakfast.

Repeated remonstrance’s had been forward to **Miss. Phillips** on the subject, without producing any effect on the hens; till one morning into her neighbor’s house walked **Mrs. Smith** herself, determined to know what right she had to encourage the roving propensity of her birds?

A conversation on so exciting a subject, as might expected soon assumed a warm tone; and the ladies, themselves had got quite “broody” when **Miss Phillips**, after defending herself with her tongue as long as she was able, seized a weapon, something (by what **Mrs. Smith** could signify) like a spade, and rapped her neighbor’s knuckles to that degree that they were quite raw.

The Magistrates, without entering into the egg story, told Miss Phillips that they thought the assault had been proved; and that they should fine her 4s, and the costs.

“Then I shan’t pay it,” said **Miss Phillips**

“I hope you will,” replied **Admiral Bouverie**; “because if you don’t we shall be under the necessity of sending you to prison”

“Yes, Sir, and there I’ll go,” said **Miss Phillips.**,

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“Perhaps you had better ask someone to assist you,” mildly suggested the Admiral.

“Not I,” said **Miss Phillips** with indignation. “I want no assistance from anybody. I thought people might do as the liked in their own houses!”

“oh you did, did you,” said the Admiral.

Here **Miss Phillip’s** father stepped forward and hinted his wish to pay the money; whereupon **Miss Phillips** grew more outrageous than ever.

“No you shan’t you shan’t pay the money, I tell you –that you shan’t. I’ll go to prison- I’m determined I will!” vehemently exclaimed **Miss Phillips**.

“And that’s just where she ought to go,” chorused **Mrs. Smith** - “That’s just where I want to see her!” And so they kept on, - one saying she would go to prison - another she ought to go - and a third she shouldn’t go - till at last **Miss Phillips** yielded with final resignation to her father’s wishes, and the parties escaped from the office - one from one door, another from another.

