

ALPHONSE AND JOSEPHINE

Alphonse wandered by the trout stream. He had a rod in his hand, but he didn't attempt to fish. He hadn't the heart.

"Ah, finny ones," muttered he, "you may frolic in security. You may leap out of the water and secure your fly. Your ingenious trust shall not be betrayed. The plump blue-bottle will be the genuine article. My hook shall not intrude upon your gills this day." Then he cast his tackle from him; and flinging himself upon the daisied turf he gave liberty to a long pent sigh.

Alphonse was in love. Josephine was as beautiful and as bright as the glowing sunshine of this summer's day. Josephine was exquisite. Josephine was celestial. Venus herself could not have eclipsed his Josephine.

The thought had scarcely flashed through his mind, ere Alphonse started with surprise. He leant on his elbows, and gazed entranced into the waters. Was he enchanted? Could what he beheld be real? He was thinking of Venus, and lo! there he saw Josephine, not rising from the sea, but shimmering amidst the weeds and fishes.

Of course, it was only her shadow that the stream embraced. But think of embracing even that! Oh, lucky stream! And the fishes bobbing up and down caught flies under the very nose of Josephine's reflection.

"They are stealing kisses," cried the amorous Alphonse in a fit of jealousy.

It was then that he felt a gentle "prod." It had been administered by the ferrule end of a lady's sunshade. He looked up into Josephine's face, and was about leaping to his feet, when with a grace and charm peculiar to herself, she spread out her handkerchief and sat down upon it, by his side.

Rapture! He had such a lot to talk about that he didn't know where to begin; so for some moments they merely gazed into the stream together, and said nothing. That's the worst of love; there's often so much in it that nothing expresses so well as silence.

After a while, Alphonse found his voice, and he murmured: "Josephine!"

The tone in which he uttered this, and the look which accompanied it, spoke a whole volume of love, and was not merely so wearisome. Josephine must have understood, for she blushed and sighed.

This emboldened him; he caught her dainty gloved hand; he clasped it, conveyed it to his enraptured lips, and—ah, we won't listen to their soft cooings, to their sweet warblings of love. Have we never been caught in Cupid's net ourselves?

How time sped! At last Josephine declared she really ought to be going, and she looked at her watch and wound it up. It was during this trivial operation that Alphonse indulged in a rascally trick. Quick as lightning he had drawn from his pocket a pair of scissors, and he adroitly snipped off a curl—one of her ambient locks—without her being aware of it. It was one of those ringletty tresses that ladies wear clustered up behind sometimes. So the theft was not difficult to accomplish. Craftily, he secreted his treasure; then he escorted his unwitting lady-love on her way home.

Their road lay for the most part by the margin of the trout stream, and the little fishes would now and again peep up, and of course, envy them. When the little fishes disappeared they would leave behind a bubble and an eddying circle. This did not escape Alphonse's notice; nor did he lose the poetic opportunity. He whispered to Josephine that the bubbles were congratulations—as congratulations frequently are—and the circles were a pretty piscatorial way of suggesting the ring.

Ah, what an erratic being Alphonse was, and what an imagination he had! The lovers were duly engaged.

Alphonse became so jealous of Josephine that he hated her to be looked at, and, like a turbaned Turk, he desired she should wear a veil. She wouldn't. Then the green-eyed monster batted on his prey. Alphonse had a bosom friend, and to him he confided the secret of his agony. This friend, who was of a philosophic, not to say mystical, turn of mind, advised a proceeding somewhat out of the common.

"Josephine," said he, "is no doubt, as you have told me frequently, exceedingly beautiful, and, lucky man that you are, I believe her charms are entirely for you. There exist men, myself included, who do not exactly see her with your adoring eyes. I am very fascinating. Now, bewitching though she may be, I should never have imagined it. That, of course, is my blindness, but, nevertheless, it may be fortunate for you, for I am very fascinating. Now, Josephine appears to me, and I think to the world in general, a frigid sort of a girl, and—pardon me, not so young but that she might be younger. You have no cause for jealousy."

"But," responded Alphonse in sombre tones, "what if I tell you I am jealous of the past, and of what through that past, may be looming in the future?"

Nearly to the roots of his hair did

his friend's eyebrows elevate themselves. What was he about to hear? "Josephine has told me she has a secret." This confidence was whispered, and with a glance askance, as if he expected his innamorata to appear at his elbow and denounce him for the betrayal.

"And that secret is—"

"Still in her own keeping; but she assures me she will reveal it some day—some day. Ah, Gustave, my friend, can you not now comprehend the jealous pangs that rack my heart?"

"Women are apt to enlarge upon small matters, my dear Alphonse. This may only be a woman's wile to test your love, to try your faith. Think no more of it; and if she ever reverts to it, laugh at it."

"You can never have loved, for you cannot realize the intensity of my passion. Your advice is an impossibility."

"Then turn the other way about. Insist on knowing this secret at once."

"You are a brute. How could I be so indelicate?"

"Then unravel it by other means. Find it out yourself and tax her with it. Then it would be at your own option to forgive her or to break off the match."

"Either would break my heart. But I think your advice good. Only how am I to set about it?"

"Has she not given you some clue?"

"She has never given me anything."

"Dropped some suggestion?"

"She has dropped nothing."

"Umph; then I see but one way out of the difficulty. I have a friend who is a clairvoyant."

"I don't understand."

"He is also a psychometrist."

"And that is—?"

"Give him any small article of your apparel—a glove, a handkerchief, and by holding it against his forehead he will tell your character, and will give you a resume of your past life. I have tested his powers, and what he has told me has been far more truthful than either flattering or pleasant."

"It is humbug."

"I should be sorry to say so from my experience. Would you like to test it?"

"Well, I don't know. Yes; there can be no harm in that."

"Have you a glove, or ribbon, or anything that belonged to Josephine, anything that she has frequently worn?"

"I have—a lock of her hair."

"Excellent. To-morrow we will visit the scientist."

"Maximilian, my friend, let me introduce you to an old chum of mine. Alphonse, this is Maximilian the renowned clairvoyant and psychometrist." And very soon they were all cozily seated in the latter gentleman's library.

Gustave soon broached the object of their visit. "Max," said he, "I wish you would give us some evidence of your skill. My friend here is a sceptic."

"Sceptic is scarcely the appropriate word," interrupted Alphonse, and bowing politely to his host, "I am utterly unacquainted with your strange science," said he, "and am not so foolish as to form an opinion upon a subject of which I am entirely ignorant."

"That is certainly proving yourself a sensible person," replied Max, returning the bow. "Unfortunately, the rule is, people begin by pooh-pooing what they don't understand. It gives such an air of superiority, and it saves so much trouble."

"Here is your test," continued Gustave, and, at a glance from him, Alphonse intrusted the cherished tress to the hands of Maximilian.

"This," continued he, "was snipped from a lady's head only a few days ago, and has never since left my friend's possession."

"And I suppose you want me to tell you something about that lady?"

"Exactly."

Maximilian held the precious curl in the palm of his hand and pressed it gently against his brow. He remained quite still for a moment; then he looked angry; and then:

"Oh, oh!" said he with a start.

"What's the matter?" inquired Alphonse, awaiting the reply with bated breath.

"Oh, nothing, nothing—merely—umph—this hair has been dyed."

"Ah, that's the secret," and Gustave jumped up slapping Alphonse on the shoulder. "That's the secret," cried he, "rest assured—dyed hair."

"Oh, there's a secret is there?" muttered the scientist, and he added quietly: "but I presume you know the past of the person?"

"No," interrupted Alphonse, in hasty eagerness, leaning forward in his chair. "No, that's just what I want to find out."

Maximilian quietly returned the lock: "I should rest contented with what I already know. I don't care to tell you anything further."

It was only after great pressure that the scientist could be persuaded to take the hair in his hand again.

"I do this under protest," said he, replacing it against his forehead.

"Well, if you must have the truth the person whose head this was cut from was—well, let us say, not a desirable individual to be acquainted with."

Alphonse crimsoned. Gustave got fidgety.

"A woman of—well—umph—just so."

Alphonse nearly fainted. Gustave looked serious.

"Must I go on?"

"If you please."

"I see the interior of a prison; I—oh, no, I'm extremely sorry to disoblige you, but I positively decline telling you more."

Alphonse, white as a lily to the very lips, mechanically took the proffered tress and thrust it into his pocket.

Bidding the psychometrist a hasty adieu, the two friends were soon in the street, and for a while they pursued their way in silence.

Suddenly Alphonse stopped short, and striking his fist upon a post, "I will go to Josephine at once," said he, "and have all this explained."

"Bravely resolved," cried his friend; and so that he couldn't change his

mind, Gustave took him by the arm and accompanied him to the very door of the house. Furthermore, he knocked at that door, and himself inquired for Josephine. On ascertaining that she was at home, he abruptly shook hands with Alphonse, and left him no option but to face the lady and the difficulty.

Alphonse was ushered into his sweetheart's presence. Oh, he looked so ill and haggard! Josephine was knitting him a pair of socks when he entered and she looked up to smile; but she dropped the wool and the needles, and she ran toward him in terror.

"My own, what is the matter?" she cried.

Her surprise may be imagined when he, in reply, seized her by the wrist and hissed into her ear: "Tell me your secret—or I shall do something desperate."

But she was too startled to utter a word.

"Josephine," he hurriedly continued, "I'm on the rack, and I can't stand it."

Then, scarcely knowing what he was doing, he dragged the stolen curl from his pocket, and cast it at her feet.

"Ah, you have discovered," cried she, and with a little shriek she hid her face in her hands.

"Oh, forgive me for deceiving you," and she burst into tears. "I would have told you all before, but I hadn't the courage. I didn't know how you'd take it."

"Go on."

"It wasn't my fault. I couldn't help it, I—"

"This is torture. Confess all, Josephine."

"It's very short at present."

"Short! Who's short? What's short?"

"But it's growing slowly, but it's growing."

"Josephine, do you want to send me mad?"

She raised her beautiful head and turned her tearful eyes toward him. She said no word, but clutching those ambient locks he loved so well, she took them off—she wore a wig.

A fever, a shaved head, a wig until her own hair grew again—this was Josephine's terrible secret.

WAS A LOVE MATCH.

In view of all the gossip from time to time about the Prince and Princess of Wales, the following about their first meeting is of interest. It seems that the eldest son of the Queen fell in love with the photograph of a young girl in a simple muslin frock, with a velvet ribbon around the throat, which a boon companion drew from his pocket.

"Who is that beautiful girl?" asked the Prince.

"The daughter of the Prince of Denmark," was the reply.

The Prince of Wales said nothing, but he lost no opportunity in dispatching a confidential friend to the Danish court to judge if the Princess was as lovely as the picture represented her. The answer was that she was even fairer, and the courier gave a dewy clear complexion, gazelle-like eyes and chestnut hair, who was as amiable as she was accomplished and whose qualities of heart equaled those of her form. The Prince made speedy arrangements to visit Denmark. His introduction to the Princess took place—so runs the story—by chance in the cathedral at Worms. While the Prince was talking to the Princess his equerry, it seems, took pity on a quiet-looking gentleman who was wandering about the cathedral and whom he supposed to be of the Princess' suit. After chatting to him for a time he discovered to his dismay, that he had been patronizing the father of Princess Alexandra.

A pretty act of the Princess just before leaving Denmark was her allotment of some 6,000 thalers as dowries to six poor brides who were to be married on the same day as herself. She reached Gravesend three days before her wedding, and the Prince, in his haste to greet her, caused some amusement by rushing down the gangway and kissing her heartily in view of all onlookers. The decorations at Gravesend were elaborate. A pleasant little surprise had been prepared by Princess Alexandra for her royal mother-in-law. She arrived in a white dress, but before leaving the yacht changed it for a gown of lilac poplin, having heard that the Queen's favorite color was mauve and that she preferred poplins to other materials. Consequently the Princess had ordered a dress on these lines from a well-known Dublin firm with the intention of wearing it on her entry into London.

RETURN OF BIG BOWS.

Big bows for the neck so much in vogue seem to be a reaction from the tiny cravats. One must have the bow small and the ends long and sweeping. Ribbon is, of course, the favorite, but silk, mouseline de soie, taffeta, lace and mull are some of the many materials employed. These bows and ends are not at all in keeping with the tailor made effect of the shirt waist, with which they are too often worn, but fashion is a strange inspiration, and combines the most unlikely caprices of toilet with the utmost disregard for seeming. The long bows and ends have certainly the merit of covering deficiencies, which is, perhaps, their reason for existence.

MORE FORCE.

Our doctor keeps a medical battery in his office. Ours don't need one. How does he manage when his patients need a shock? Hands in his bill.

HOUSEHOLD.

GENUINE RUSSIAN TEA.

The genuine "Russian" tea is not made and allowed to cool, but tea just brewed. One teaspoonful of tea is allowed to each cup of boiling water, which is then allowed to steep on the hearth or table for fifteen minutes. The glasses are then filled three-quarters full of cracked ice, chipped so fine that it cools the tea immediately, and then boiling tea is poured on. One teaspoonful of lemon juice and one slice of lemon completes the "cup which cheers." In making tea scald the pot, which should be either of silver, granite or earthenware, not tin. For moderate strength allow one teaspoonful of tea to half a pint of freshly boiled water. Pour slowly over the tea, and let the pot stand where it will be at the boiling point, yet will not boil, for from three to five minutes keeping tightly covered. Serve in hot teacups.

EGGS IN RECIPES.

Those readers who give attention to recipes appearing in different forms cannot fail to have observed that sometimes the writers calculate the quantity of eggs to be used either by number or weight. The general rule is by number, although we think that it would be better if confectioners would adopt the plan of weighing eggs instead of using them by number. Eggs vary in size to such an extent that it is often a matter of difficulty to find medium ones, and in cake-making there will sometimes be an egg that is only half the size of another. Although eggs are sold by the long hundred, of 120 to the hundred, there is also frequently a discrepancy in the value of them, and it is a very difficult matter to get an egg merchant to admit that his eggs are small. An egg merchant is usually a person with very little conscience; he is prepared to swear that black is white, and that as sure as eggs are eggs all those he sells are of a fair average size. They never fail to point out that a case contains a very large proportion of heavy eggs; but when they come to be in some cases a little larger than a marble, the seller will declare they are as fine and large eggs as what he has handled for sometime. To obviate this unpleasantness, and also for the sake of fairness, it would not be a bad plan if eggs as well as being calculated by weight for recipes, could also be purchased by the same standard. Attention is being given to this subject at present in Canada, and some exporters are drawing the attention of buyers to go back to the system of sellings eggs by weight. When this system was in vogue it induced farmers to pay more attention to breeding birds that would lay the largest eggs.

WARMING UP LEFT OVERS.

Cold soda or baking powder biscuits may be warmed up by dipping each one quickly into cold water and placing in a pan in a moderately hot oven. Light rolls should have tops and bottoms brushed over with cold water and treated in the same way; unless left in the oven long enough to re-bake and thus get hard; their "last estate is equal to their first," and they can scarcely be told from those freshly baked.

If pies are lightly sprinkled with cold water before setting in the oven they can be warmed up with little danger of scorching, and be as good as fresh, says the Housekeeper.

Gingerbread is so much better warm than cold, but it is too much work to bake it fresh every time it is wanted. We used to try steaming or reheating in the oven, but neither is very satisfactory. Finally we tried baking it in small round or square loaves, about enough for two meals in each one. To warm them up, brush the top lightly with cold water and put in a pan on the oven grate, with at least a quart of boiling water in the oven under it. The steam from this keeps it moist and fresh as it warms; it can be reheated a second time and still be as good as when freshly baked. A pan with a perforated bottom is preferable to a tight one, to use in warming up bread or cake.

Rice, oatmeal or other cereals may be warmed up by returning to the double boiler, and heating, in that way, but as they must be stirred occasionally to heat evenly they are nicer to put into a pan in a closely covered steamer over a kettle of boiling water, and steamed until thoroughly heated. Almost all vegetables, excepting potatoes, that are left over are better to be warmed up in the steamer than by adding a little hot water and reheating on the stove, as is usually done. It takes longer but they lose none of their flavor in that way, as they do by escape of steam when heated on the stove. If not convenient to use the steamer, the next best way is to set them on the grate in the oven, with a pan of boiling water underneath. They require less attention than warmed on the stove, are not so apt to scorch, and have a better flavor.

PROTECTIONS FROM MOTHS.

Nothing is more trying among the smaller ills of life than to have clothing and furs and carpets eaten by moths. Very often articles are not

put away soon enough in the spring; the eggs are already laid, in the stuffs before they are packed, and hatch in the profound darkness in which they revel.

There is a general impression that camphor or pepper or moth balls keep away moths, but it is not so. They do not in the least object to odors, and why such stuff is used at all is really a mystery. Buffalo bugs seem really to thrive on camphor, and to find especially congenial quarters in cedar shelves or closets or trunks.

Every article should be carefully brushed—all the pockets turned inside out, brushed, and then turned smoothly back again, and every spot of every description carefully cleaned—for moths always seize upon a spot of any sort as a particularly choice morsel. Each garment should be folded separately, and very smoothly and wrapped in old linen, or cotton sheets, or parts of them.

Newspaper is an excellent thing to fold things in, as for some reason moths particularly object to it. The chests that things are to be packed away in should be carefully wiped out perfectly clean with a wet cloth, so that not a particle of dust lingers. It is well to spread a large old sheet over the open trunk, and push it down, leaving the surplus outside, and then to fold that over when the trunk is packed, for even one moth miller, if it slips in, may undo all your work and care. Never leave a trunk open a moment, after it has been wiped out, before packing it.

Very valuable furs should be examined and beaten every two or three weeks at the outside. It is a great deal of care to do all this, but people must pay for fine possessions and must so regard the care. Never trust to a cedar closet for keeping valuable woollens or furs.

The very best sort of chest to pack clothing away in, is a good, solid chest of good size and heavy, well fitted as to joints and cover, that any good carpenter can make, and if given a coat of shellac or varnish outside, it will in time be very handsome. Old paper-lined trunks should never be used, for under the paper the moths are more than likely to have deposited their eggs. Carpets that are nailed down close to the baseboard are often eaten there—even when the room is open and most carefully swept. The only way to prevent it is to saturate the carpet once a week in spring and summer with a little turpentine on the places where the moths have eaten or are likely to eat. The turpentine will not injure the most delicate colors, and is the best preservative from moths known.

MODERN RUSSIA.

That Country Still Feels the Influence of Peter the Great.

All nations feel more or less the original impetus given them by one great man, but probably none so much as modern Russia. It may almost be said to have been the creation of one man, Peter the Great, and the features he impressed upon the Russian state are still distinctly visible. A mass of barbarism was transformed by him into a powerful and active member of the family of civilized nations. He gave to his subjects an army, a navy and an educational system. Commerce with foreign countries, previously forbidden, he warmly encouraged. The autocrat transferred his capital to the shores of the Baltic, and built the great city which bears his name to be the open door to the civilization of the Western world. He introduced the arts, the literature, the sciences and the economic theories of the advanced nations. Russia at the present day is actuated by the ideas of the great Czar. In its restless ambition, its subtle and unscrupulous policy, its varnish of culture, scarcely hiding the ferocity of the barbarian, its intolerance of popular liberty and its real solicitude for the material welfare of the people, the Russia of to-day is the Russia of Peter the Great.

EFFECTIVE HOSIERY.

The advance samples of what we are to expect in summer hosiery give evidence that no whim of the loom or dream of color will be omitted in the display for the coming season. The fancy front style seems best represented, and truly the opportunities for elaboration are in this mode best developed. This front may extend only to what is known as boot top, although they must mean a high bicycle boot thereby; others reach almost to the knee, while still others only cover the instep well. This front section is often of an entirely different shade, and may closely resemble a real lace. It is drop-stitched in every conceivable manner, and framed all around by some outlining of silk embroidery or richly clocked up the sides. A pair we have in mind was of pale old rose silk, drop-stitched at wide intervals and having a front of a rich mellow cream tint in a twisted effect and indescribably thin and gauze-like. All around this center was embroidered a little wreath of rose buds and leaves in natural colors. Nothing more beautiful could be conceived, unless it is a pair of pale green silk, with a front of white lace, running up to a point calf depth, and clocked in white silk. There are dozens of styles, each prettier than the other, but a delicacy of color seems to have succeeded the brilliance of last season, and even where darker tints are selected they are brightened with a touch of pale color either in the fairy front or in the embroidery, which was never before so handsomely wrought. Expense seems not to count at all, but after viewing the higher-priced samples it is quite a comfort to know that really pretty designs and colors are also reproduced at reasonable figures.