THE PRESCRIPTION.

They were parting at the gate—
Man and maid—
Still he tarried, although late,
Longing much to hear his fate,
Yet to ask it half afraid.

"If I only knew," said he,
"Only knew,"
"Let me give advice," said she,
"Make a confidant of me;
I can be help to you."

"Ah! I know that," answered he,
With a sigh.
"Now I guess it all," cried she;
"You are in love, I plainly see,
And afraid to tell her—fie!"

' You're a witch to guess so well,"
Answered he.
"I would like to have you tell
How to make a sick heart well;
Kindly now prescribe for me."

"Every heart will cure a heart,"
Low laughed she;
"You must find another heart,
Then your own will lose its start—
Try this olden remedy."

' Let me have your heart," he plead.
"Nay!" she said;
"I have none." "No heart?" he said;
"Then I go uncomforted—
Mine a broken heart must be."

"It is yours!" and she laughed low;
"Don't you see?
I prescribed it long ago,
Seeing that you suffered so.
What so blind as men can be?"

"Had I only known before,"
Whispered he,
"What a cure you had in store!"
"You'd have suffered all the more:
"Men are foolish things," said she.

A CRUCIAL TEST.

The fine old mansion of the Alberghi family, near Gluckstadt, was brilliantly lighted, and the sound of music and dancing was borne on the evening air across the rolling, rollicking, sparkling waters of the Elbe. That night a grand ball was given to Count Frederick Alberghi, the only representative of the noble family whose name he bore. The building was massive stone, high and dark, protected by moat, drawbridge and battlemented towers. It was a fine old feudal castle, built in the time of Frederick II. Outside it looked grand and gloomy; inside it was ablaze with lights and redolent with the perfume of choice flowers, which were scattered in profusion not only about in the large reception saloon but in all the smaller apartments which were thrown open to the guests.

In a little room, far removed from the rest, in the eastern tower, stood two persons—a young man, remarkably handsome, though there was an expression of deep care upon his face, and a lady. The lady was not remarkably handsome just now, as she listened to her companion with drooping eyes; indeed, most people would call her simply pretty until she raised her expressive, dark-blue eyes and the brilliant sylph-like smile broke over her face. The two were standing talking carelessly together, the lady leaning against the heavily-carved oaken window-frame, and the young man standing nearly opposite her, caressing a bright-eyed falcon upon his wrist.

"So, Count Alberghi, you will be remembered for a long while as the young noble who gave the most splendid ball as yet ever attended."

The lips of the young man curled, and he answered contemptuously:

"That is surely a name worth gaining at any price."

"Of course," said the lady. "But why so scornful about it?"

"You know Lady Lena, that I care only for your approbation; then the ball is given only in honor and to please you, whose slightest wish I would gratify at any expense."

"Alas, Count Alberghi, I am told that a dozen times each day!"

"Probably; but the words do not come from the heart as mine do."

"Pooh!" said the lady. "They all swear that!"

"Very well, Lady Lena; I may some time be able to prove the truth of my words. I have been a fool. For three years I have hung upon your accent, fulfilled your every wish, as far as lay in my power. My fortune—which is ample—I laid at your feet, that you might have every possible want supplied; and in return for this devotion I have received nothing but coldness and scorn. You know that as few men love—with my whole heart and soul—yet you scorn me. You are rich and noble. I still love you as madly as ever, but to-night is the last time I bow before you. This once I plead, Lady Lena, to be shown some kindness. For the last time I offer you myself. Will you accept me?"

Lady Lena turned very pale as she listened to the rapid, passionate words uttered by the young man who knelt before her. Her eyes grew dark with some inward feeling, but her words destroyed the faint hope which had risen in his heart at the gentle expression on her face.

"Oh, rise, Count Frederick, for I know this is all nonsense—instantly. To-morrow you will be beside me as usual, and the next, and every day, just as you have been for years." The young man rose, and in answer to her taunt, only bent his head and tenderly stroked the glossy head and neck of the bright-eyed bird on his wrist, that looked from one to the other, as if inquiring what was going on. Piqued at his silence, the lady exclaimed:

"Where now is your boasted love? I say a bitter thing to you and you do not retaliate."

"I cannot forget myself so far as to retaliate to a woman."

"No," said she, "but you can sneer. You sneer and stroke your falcon, which I know possesses more of your boasted love than I do."

"Jeannette never wounds me," he replied. "In return for my caresses she does not give me bitter coldness."

"Perhaps she would if she could speak," persisted the lady.

"Actions, Lady Lena," said he, "speak louder than words." The girl's eyes flashed, and she turned to the door, but paused as she neared it, and, looking over her shoulder, said contemptuously:

"I suppose the cause of your love for that bird is because she once belonged to some former lady love?" The tone was very insulting, and this time the young man raised his head with flashing eyes, and his words were rapid and indignant.

"You are right," he replied. "This falcon belonged to a noble lady, whose kind, womanly heart scorned to inflict a wound upon the meanest creature; who trampled not under foot honorable love offered her, as if it were a disgraceful thing. One whom I loved devotedly, and who, had she been unable to return the affection offered her, would yet have rejected it with considerate gentleness."

"Why, then, don't you return to this paragon of tenderness and virtue," sneered the lady,

"She would willingly soothe my wounded spirit," he replied, "but she is dead." Without another word Lena sped from the room, her brain on fire, her eyes full of tears. Could Frederick have seen her as she, leaning far out of a window, weeped bitterly, he would have forgiven the bitter words. As it was they parted in anger.

Left alone, Frederick paced up and down the room. In his despair he murmured aloud: "I have been a driveling fool—a madman! For three years I have devoted my time, heart and fortune to the service of this heartless woman. One day rewarded with smiles, the next with frowns. To-morrow, when the bills are paid for debts incurred this night, I shall be absolutely penniless—all my fortune spent upon this vain flirt, who is undeserving the name of woman. Yes, to-morrow my furniture, horses and plate will be sold, my servants discharged, and all that will remain to me is this old castle and my faithful nurse, Margaret, who will not leave me, and my falcon. This building, now ringing with the sounds of music, dancing and merry laughter, will be closed, to become the sanctuary of rats and owls. For myself, I shall withdraw from society and in this small, gloomy town support my poverty and despair as best I may. I have been worse than foolish—I have been wicked. But this unmanly repining will not do. I must rejoin my guests.

So saying, Frederick replaced the falcon on its perch near the window, and, forcing a gay smile and careless air, sauntered into the ball room, and from that time till the company left he was seemingly the gayest of the gay.

* * * *

"Quick, Susan, fasten this bodice and bring me my hood and mantle and the thick shoes," exclaimed Lady Lena; then added, impatiently, "You'll have to pin this handkerchief and apron string, for my hands tremble so I cannot do anything." The maid obeyed, and soon her young mistress stood before the elegant mirror, laughing to see herself in complete peasant's attire.

"Will anybody know me, Susan?" she asked, laughingly, as she drew the hood over her face.

"No, indeed, Lady Lena," replied the maid; "if I hadn't seen you dress I should not know you myself."

"Then I am off!"

And, suiting the action to the word, the graceful Lady Lena ran out of the room and down stairs in a very undignified way. In the garden she was met by a lover of Susan's, who exclaimed:

"'Pears to me we are in a monstrous hurry, Mistress Susan. Can't you stop to give a fellow a noontide kiss?"

"Away with you!" she exclaimed. "You shall have two kisses when I come back, if you won't stop me now."

"Good bargain, Susan," said he. "I have not much to do, and will wait by the gate till you come back."

Away speed Lena. After a pretty long, rapid walk she reached Crstle Alberghi, and, entering by a low postern door which she found open, made her way to the tower, where she saw old Margaret seated.

"Good noon, Dame Margaret," said Lena. The old woman raised her head and, recognizing Susan, Lady Lena's favorite waiting maid, she returned a very sulky greeting.

"Don't be cross, Margaret," she continued. "I've got a beautiful note for your young master from my lady."

"You needn't come here with it, then," said Dame Margaret. "Your lady's notes have brought sorrow enough to this house."

"But, Margaret, I was sent to deliver it and receive an answer, and I dare not go back without it; it would cost me my place, and you wouldn't be as cruel as that to a poor girl who has never done you any harm." Here Lena began to sob, and Margaret rose saying:

"You have never done me any harm, so give me the note and let me take it up stairs quickly." The note was produced and Margaret grumblingly took it up stairs, muttering as she did so, "much good, much good it will do my poor master. It isn't sealed very closely, and if I could read it, and then if there was anything in it to wrong him, I'd sooner put my hand in the fire than give it to him." By this time she had reached the second story and knocked at the door.

"Come in," said Frederick, who was sitting by the window reading. He looked up as the old woman entered, and asked what she wanted.

"A note for you, sir," she replied. The young man's face turned a shade paler, and his hand slightly trembled as he took the delicate perfumed note. A moment he paused, overcome by his feelings, then impetuously tore it open and read the following words:

"Lady Lena Erfurt, being about to visit England for several years, desires to have the pleasure of meeting once more her friend, Count Frederick Alberghi, who has so mysteriously withdrawn himself from society. She will do herself the honor of dining with him this day at 5 o'clock." A spasm passed over the young man's face and he murmured, "Once more." Then, turning to Margaret, he said: "What is there in the house to eat?"

"As good as nothing, sir," replied the faithful woman, "for there is only the scraps left from your breakfast."

"That's bad, Margaret," said he; "for I have no money; not a kreutzer; and here is a note from Lady Lena informing me that she will dine with me to-day."

"She mustn't come, dear sir! There is nothing to give her."

Frederick seemed lost in thought. Suddenly he raised his head.

"I have it now," said he. "You must serve up my poor Jeannette here. It is all I can do."

"Oh, master! What, roast this poor bird you have loved so long, and which belonged to ——"

"Hush, Margaret—not another word; only do as I bid you. Serve the bird up as best you can. Have the table laid for two in the old dining-room; have it ready precisely at 5. When the lady arrives summon me, and serve dinner immediately. I shall be in my chamber, to which I shall now retire."

Margaret dared not remonstrate, but, sobbing and wringing her hands, she went down stairs. Lena had waited her coming with intense anxiety, and when Margaret entered in such distress of mind she sprang up.

"What is the matter, Margaret? Has anything happened to your master?"

"'Deed there has!" woefully answered Margaret.

"What?" said Lena. "Speak, woman!"

"Oh, only he's gone clean demented. You bring a note from your haughty mistress, who ought to be drowned in the Elbe, for she always makes trouble for my dear young master, one of whose fingers is worth more than all her body; made him waste all his fortune, so that now he is as poor as Job, and now makes him kill his beautiful falcon." A triumphant smile now flashed into the eyes of the false waiting-maid, and she asked, "How so?"

"Why, you see, Mistress Susan, your lady is coming to dine with him, and there is nothing in the house, neither victuals nor even a kreutzer, so he has ordered the falcoon to be roasted for your wicked lady's dinner."

"I have no doubt it will make capital eating," laughed the girl.

"Out upon you!" said Margaret. "You are as heartless as your mistress. Go back to her and tell her that she is welcome. I hope the bird may stick in her throat and choke her, unfeeling woman that she is!"

"Oh, don't take on so, Margaret? I am sorry your master is so poor, but he will offer my lady a dish valuable for its rarity, for I warrant me she has never tasted roasted falcon before."

Margaret's only answer was to throw herself into her chair and sob. The disguished Lena approached her.

"Don't feel so sad, but tell me why should Count Frederick care so much for the poor bird?"

"Don't you know that? Why, it belonged to his blessed mother who is now an angel in heaven."

Tears filled Lena's eyes, and she said:

"Well, I didn't know that, and it is a real shame to roast the bird, and if you will keep it a secret I'll help you. Give me the bird and I'll take it home and send you another in return. Your masters will be none the wiser." Margaret's face lighted up, and earnestly thanking the girl, she left the room and soon returned with the falcon, closely hooded, who gave it to the false Susan, who went off with it.

Punctually to the minute came Lady Lena, and never had she looked more lovely, or been dressed with more elegance and taste. Margaret, with a sullen air, ushered her into the dinning room, where Frederick came forward to meet her. He was struck with her fresh, winning appearance—a bitter change to be wrought in so few weeks. His greeting was frigidly polite, and her's particularly genial and kind.

The dinner was soon served and Lena shuddered as she glanced around the long, dark, unfurnished room, seen last brilliantly lighted and decorated and filled with sprightly guests, and before whom groaned a table loaded with every luxury the season could afford and that money could buy! Now all the gorgeous hangings, furniture, pictures, silver, glass and lights were gone, and in their place stood in the empty room a small deal table bearing two covers and one dish of meat. With all his grace of manner Frederick led Lena to the table and took his place opposite her. The meal was a silent one, for Frederick was abstracted and Lena nearly overcome by everything around her that she could scarcely repress her tears. As they rose from the table the count said:

"I am sorry, madame, to offer you so poor a repast, but——"

"Don't speak of it, count," hastily interrupted Lena, affecting a gayety she was far from feeling. "It was charming—so new; and I never tasted a more delicious chicken."

"I am happy to find that I have pleased you," said Frederick; "but allow me in deference to your taste, to correct one mistake—the bird you have partaken of was not a chicken, but my falcon."

"Your pet falcon!" said Lena in affected astonishment.

"The same, madame," he replied

"Frederick!" she exclaimed, and the tone in which his name was uttered caused Frederick to start. He was dumb with surprise when he saw the haughty Lena burst into tears, but before he could recover his self-possession Lena stood before him erect and pale.

"Frederick, to-day we part forever," said she, "and before we do so I must obtain your forgiveness. You have always treated me with respect and love, and I—I have repaid your devotion with coldness and scorn. Will you forgive me?"

"Most certainly," coldly answered Frederick, making a great effort to subdue the passion her unwonted gentleness had roused. "I loved you, and probably by unceasing devotion, wearied you. I needed a lesson, and I have earned it. I could not expect one who did not love me to—"

"Stop there and listen to me," said Lena, "and if my confession, made in this hour, seems unmaidenly, let my excuse be that it was the only reparation in my power. I am wealthy—the wealthiest woman in all Germany—as it is said. From my childhood I have feared to be loved for my wealth, and, with my earnest nature, I know that a marriage without love would be death. People whom I counted my warm, sincere friends told me that my riches were all you cared for—that you lavished your comparative little wealth upon me only the more surely to gain possession of my princely fortune. I did not believe them, but I wished to try you. In my cautiousness I went too far, too far; for I have lost what I valued more than life—your love!"

"Lena, Lena, be careful!" said the young man.

"I am past care for anything now," she replied. "To-morrow I leave for England, never to return. I could not go without asking you to forgive me; without telling you, as the only balm I can offer, that if I made you suffer I suffered also, and perhaps more acutely, for I was called heartless, cold, unprincipled, by the only being I ever loved in the world, that I—" She could say no more, for she was clasped in eager arms and covered with impassionate kisses. A few minutes she lay there, then freed herself, all blushing and tearful, from her lover's embrace. A moment she left the room, and then returned, bearing a basket, which she gave to Frederick. On opening it his falcon flew out. Resting her beautiful head on Frederick's shoulder, she said, "Take me, dear Frederick. I yield myself to you, overcome by your love and unselfish devotion—actually brought to hand by your falcon."

UNLUCKY.—The unluckiest man in Georgia lives in White county. In attempting to cross the river in a batcau it capsized and threw him into the water. Trying to reach the boat again, his foot caught in a snag, and wrenched it, losing at the same time a $20 watch, his hat, a shoe and a boat. He finally reached the shore, and was hobbling across a field when a large ferocious bull started for him. Reaching a tree, he climbed it lively enough to escape the bull, but also lively enough to get into a hornet's nest. The hornets objected, and he sprang to another limb, which broke, letting him fall to the ground, fracturing his wrist. With a broken branch he kept the bull at bay and managed to escape. All this happened on a Friday.

A gardener of Strasburg-Neudorf possesses a large vine, from which the wasps in one week removed 300 pounds to 400 pounds of grapes. After trying in vain to get rid of the insect pest by attaching to the vine bottles with honey water, which attracts and drowns the wasps, he took a bucket half full of boiling water, placed it under the grapes and by beating the attacked vines he brushed the wasps off into the boiling water. In two hours he killed nearly two quarts of wasps. The early morning, when the warps are stiffened with the cool air, at noon, when they are giddy from the juice which they have absorbed, and the evening are the best times for this operation.

ALL SORTS.

Worth makes man. When Worth makes the dress he breaks man.

Here is a suggestion which may do you good: If every man will mend one we shall all be mended.

A Philadelphia coal dealer recently received from a prominent shoddyite, who had been to Europe, an order for five tons of coal delivered a la cart.

That homely babies make the best looking folks is an adage as old as time itself; but you dare not tell a mother her baby is homely.—New Haven Register.

"It's an ole sayin' dat one bird in de han' is wuth two in de bush," says Uncle Joe. "It may be wuth more ter de man but it ain't wuth half as much ter de bird."

"My gracious, what's the matter? You look all broken up; been up all night with the boys?" "No, been up all night with a girl." "A girl!" "Yes, a girl about ten months old. She's teething."

A female physician in a New York town is charged with commencing a post-mortem examination before the patient was dead. She is entitled to the medal as the most inquisitive woman on record.

When Tecumseh Sherman kissed a whole row of grown-up girls at a reception at St. Louis, Mark Twain stood off in a corner during the blissful episode and groaned: "Who wouldn't march to the sea?"

It is said that the art of making Damascus steel has been lost to the world, but no one need grieve over it. We have state treasurers in this country who would steel Damascus herself if they could get a tow line fast anywhere.

An enterprising chap in New York advertises that he is prepared to receive orders for the composition of dime novels, advertisements and other extravagant pieces of fiction. His lie abilities are not estimated, but they must be immense.

She was a woman of property while her sweetheart was a man with a big head. "Do you love me?" said he. "Indeed, indeed, I do," she modestly murmured. "Well," he replied, "one 'deed' will be sufficient if you put it all in my name."

A bride complained to her husband that she had been too busy all day to get off her feet once, and the unhappy man who had already discovered several make-ups in her construction, exclaimed in amazement, "Good heavens, do they come off, too."

A college paper claims that writing college songs seems to be a lost art, and complains greatly thereat. If it could be definitely ascertained that no more such songs as "Bingo," "Saw my Leg Off," or "Cooachelunk," would ever be written, many hesitating parents would pack their sons off to college instanter.

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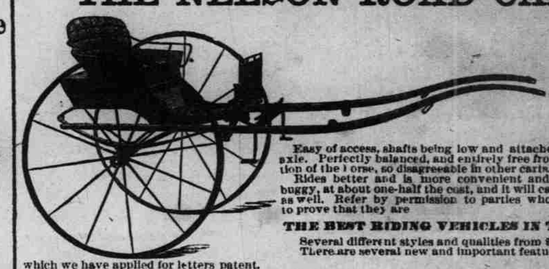

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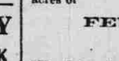

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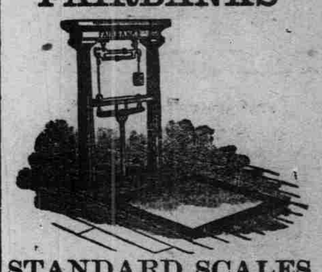

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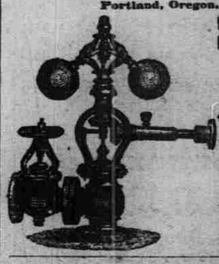

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