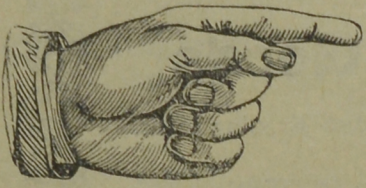


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Of Moscow

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

[CONTINUED.]

"I wish I could see him," returned Rosalind half to herself.

"You cannot mistake him if you ever do see him, my mistress. He is a strange looking man, and, then, he dresses differently from most of our church officers. He dresses all in black—today it was in black velvet. But his shape is his most striking characteristic. He is the fattest man in Moscow. His belly shakes when he laughs, and his chin seems to sink clear out of sight. He would be a funny man and would make me laugh if he did not puzzle me so."

"And did he ask you about anything else?"

"No; only he asked me if I knew how the duke stood with the emperor, and I told him I thought he stood very well. Then he said he had heard that they had had some dispute concerning the duel between Count Damonoff and Ruric. But I told him I guessed that had result-

ed in no estrangement, for the duke was as much at court as ever. And after that he told me about the duel, as he was there and saw nearly the whole of the affair."

And Zenobie went on and told all that the monk related about Ruric's bravery, and Rosalind listened now attentively and eagerly. It was a theme that pleased her. The attendant saw how gratefully the account came upon the ears of her mistress, and she closed the recital with some opinion of her own wherein Ruric Nevel was held up as a pattern after which all men who wished to win the love of woman should be made.

But before any answer could be made by Rosalind the door of the apartment was opened, and the duke entered. He smiled very kindly as he bowed to his ward, and then, with a wave of his hand, he motioned for Zenobie to withdraw, and after the attendant was gone he took a

seat close by his fair charge. The maiden looked up into his face, and, though there was no serious look there as yet, still she could plainly see that he had something of more than usual importance on his mind. She shuddered as she gazed upon him, for she could not help it. There was something in the look of the man—a sort of hidden intent, which came out in his tone and glance; a deep meaning, something which he had never spoken, but which was yet manifest—that moved her thus. What it was she could not tell. It was the prompting of that instinct of the human soul which may repel an object while yet the working mind detects no harm.

But she was not to remain in the dark much longer. The evil one was loose, and his bonds of restraint were cast off. He had marked his prey, and the meshes were gathering about it. "Rosalind," the duke said in a tone which he meant should have been easy and frank, but which nevertheless was marked strongly with effort, "there is some talk among the surgeons now that Conrad Damonoff may recover."

"Oh, I am glad of that!" the fair girl uttered earnestly.

"Yes, I suppose so," resumed Olga, eying her sharply. "But you have no particular care for him, I presume?"

"For—for the count?"

"Aye; it was of him I was speaking."

"No, sir. I care only for him as I care for all who need to become better ere they die."

"Aha, yes!" said the duke, biting his lip, for in his own mind he had the frankness to acknowledge that he was about as needy of virtue as was the count. "But," he resumed, with a faint smile, "you never loved the man?"

"No, sir," the maiden answered, gazing up into her guardian's face, with an inquisitive look.

"So I thought, so I thought." As Olga thus spoke he smiled again and moved his chair nearer to Rosalind. "I am well aware," he resumed, "that your affections have not as yet been set upon any one who is capable of making a proper companion for you through all the ups and downs of life."

Rosalind's eyes drooped beneath the steady gaze of the speaker, and her frame trembled. But ere she could make any reply the duke went on:

"My dear Rosalind, I have come now upon a business which I may justly call the most important of my life. I have not approached this subject lightly nor with overzeal, but I have come to it through careful consideration and anxious study."

Here the duke stopped and gazed into Rosalind's face. She met his gaze, and her eyes drooped again. She trembled more than before, and a dim, dreadful fear worked its way to her mind.

(To be Continued.)

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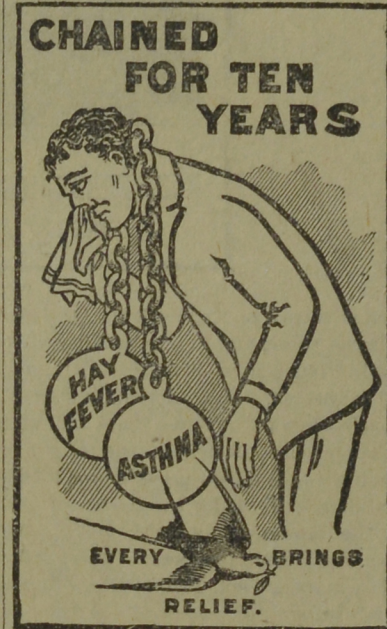
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Rabbi of the Cong. Bnai Israel.
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Gentlemen: Your Asthmalene is an excellent remedy for Asthma and Hay Fever, and its composition alleviates all troubles which combine with Asthma. Its success is astonishing and wonderful. After having carefully analyzed, we can state that Asthmalene contains no opium, morphine, chloroform or ether. Very truly yours,
REV. DR. MORRIS WECHSLER

Avon Springs, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1901

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Gentlemen: I write this testimonial from a sense of duty, having tested the wonderful effect of your Asthmalene, for the cure of Asthma. My wife has been afflicted with spasmodic asthma for the past 12 years. Having exhausted my own skill as well as many others, I chanced to see your sign upon your windows on 120th street, New York. I at once obtained a bottle of Asthmalene. My wife commenced taking it about the first of November. I very soon noticed a radical improvement. After using one bottle her Asthma has disappeared and she is entirely free from all symptoms. I feel that I can consistently recommend the medicine to all who are afflicted with this distressing disease.
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