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THE COURT OF ST. SIMON

By ANTHONY PARTRIDGE

Author of Passers-By, The Golden Webb, etc.

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CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

"Ronald," she said, turning to her companion, "I am going to be a trial to you this afternoon. I am going to ask you to do me another favor."

"You have only to ask," he murmured.

"You are to leave me this moment," Sophy said. "You are to go and find that Frenchwoman and you are to bring her to me, somehow or other—I don't care how. I must talk to her. Do you understand?"

"No, I'm hanged if I do!" he replied. "Supposing she won't come?"

"You must go down upon your knees to her," Sophy insisted. "It must be done. She is to come. I rely upon you."

"It is such a public place," he objected. "Can't I try and arrange a meeting somewhere else? Supposing there was a scene here!"

Sophy shook her head. "No other place would do," she declared. "It must be now."

The young man rose unwillingly to his feet. "Trying me a bit high, you know, Sophy," he grumbled. "However, what you say must be done."

He disappeared into the throng and was gone about 10 minutes. When he returned, Josephine was walking by his side. Sophy rose to her feet as they came near.

"Mademoiselle," she said, "I want you, if you will, to be so kind as to forgive my persistence. You have a perfect right to refuse my acquaintance, but I want to ask you, even if we remain strangers, to be kind enough to answer me one or two questions."

"Madame," Josephine replied, "I am here to listen to what you have to say."

Sophy hesitated for a moment. Curiously enough, it was she who was ill at ease, and Josephine, still and cold, who was mistress of herself.

"Mademoiselle," Sophy began, "I am perhaps asking you too much, but I am going to be bold. It is difficult for me to talk with you here. Would it spoil your afternoon's enjoyment if I begged you to come home with me for half an hour? My house is at the corner of the park there, and my automobile is waiting. Lord Ronald will fetch it for me."

"I will come," Josephine agreed. "I miss no pleasure here."

The young man hurried off, and they followed slowly. In a few minutes they were in the car. In absolute silence they drove to the little house in Pont street. In absolute silence Sophy ushered her visitor into her sitting-room.

"Tea in half an hour, Charles," she told the man, "and I am at home to nobody—to nobody at all, you understand. You will sit down?" she added, turning to her visitor almost timidly.

"In your house, madame, I would rather not," Josephine replied. "We are alone here and not likely to be disturbed. Let me hear what you have to say to me. You think, perhaps, that I am ungracious. Let me tell you first of all, before you say a single word, that I, Josephine, gutter child, music-hall dancer—what you will—know no woman in the whole world whom I despise as I despise you!"

Sophy's hand touched her forehead. What manner of woman this was she could not divine. Her own sense of things seemed at fault. "I do not understand," she said quietly, "why you should have such feelings towards me. I should have thought that it would have been more natural if I——"

"Stop!" Josephine cried. "Before I answer a single one of your questions I tell you this, and if you do not believe me, then I leave your house and I speak with you no more. You know that I have been acquainted for many years with your husband, Monsieur Valentin, the Vicomte de Souspennier."

Sophy once more began to stiffen. "The affair is common knowledge."

"Then let me tell you this," Josephine continued, "and if you do not believe it, then I go, for there can be no more talk between you and me. Your husband has been the most chivalrous and the most generous friend a human being could have, but to me he has been no more than a friend since the day he took me from the gutter, had me taught dancing and paid for my education, because my antics before a cafe in the street amused him."

Sophy was beginning to tremble. She looked at her companion, and all that she felt was written very clearly in her face.

"Ah, I see!" Josephine exclaimed. "You are one of those to whom it is not given to understand. Now I am glad that I am here, for you shall be made to believe and you shall listen to many things. First of all, then take that from your mind. Monsieur Valentin is not what you have ignobly thought him. Eleven years ago I met him, and he was kind to me. I loved him from the beginning. At first he laughed at me, then one night he grew serious—he had never spoken to me seriously before. I was fond of him and I was young, and I had had no bringing up at all, and I did not understand what there could be in life to keep me from him. And he tried to tell me. He tried to tell me that love did not come like that, that to misuse its gifts was one of the great unwritten sins of the world. And then I asked him whether he had never cared, and he told me no, but that, old though he was—he was not really old, madame—he still hoped. And because he hoped he waited. And after that I was his companion, but we seldom spoke seriously again untilafter his visit to England and then he told me that that thing of which he had despaired had come. Madame, it was you whom he loved.

"I—whom he loved!" Sophy faltered. "That may have been so—for a time. But—but you speak as though Valentin were a good man. Don't you know of the terrible life he lived, what an evil influence he was to my poor weak brother! Don't you know that he spent his whole estates in dissipation!"

"Madame," Josephine declared, "I think that of all the women I have ever met, you are the greatest fool. I did not think that any one of my sex could breathe and misjudge a man so utterly. Monsieur Valentin was always quixotic. He amused himself, it is true, in those days, by consorting at times with criminals, but never was he at any time a party to any act of injustice. I will tell you what he did; I will tell you the extent of his alliance with that nest of criminals in the Rue Druot. He had prepared for him a list of names—men of evil lives, mean men, wicked men—and these he had brought in and whipped, one by one, till they parted with money, which money he sent always to charity. Was there evil in this? One night your brother was presented to him at a cafe. I, too, was there. Your brother—bah! Do I not know the type! Monsieur Valentin, thinking to amuse him, took him to the Rue Druot and showed him one of these men being punished, how he whined for mercy, how he parted with money, all of which was sent to the poor. It is true that that night your brother met the chief of that band of criminals, but what would you have? It was not Monsieur Valentin who encouraged him. The taint of the criminal was there in his blood. Such mild doings as he saw were nothing to him. From the first he made friends with the scum whom Monsieur Valentin would not have touched with the tip of his glove. Your brother, indeed! I tell you, madame, that he was what you call decadent, rotten, long before Monsieur Valentin knew him."

There was a pause. "But afterwards," Sophy began—

Josephine threw out her arm. "There are things, without doubt, which I do not know! I am here to speak just what I have seen of the truth. You came to Paris with your husband to save your brother. Let me tell you this, madame.—no one on earth except Monsieur Valentin could have saved him. They had him imprisoned, cur that he was, in the Silent street—that is the barge they keep moored on the Seine, to which no man can come or any depart without their permission. There were seven of them there with your brother, and out came Monsieur Valentin at the risk of his life. He pleaded for your brother to be given up to him. It was in vain. He would have fought, but that, too, was useless. Then he took the leader on one side and he tried to buy your brother's liberty. At first he was only scoffed at. Ah, you see, I know what happened, for I was one with them in those days! Finally the man Robert, against whom your brother had informed, named his price, and that proce was every penny Monsieur Valentin possessed in the world. Monsieur Valentin paid and your brother was set free."

Sophy went staggering across the room and snatched up the Morning Post. Josephine's finger pointed to her.

"Yes, yes," she cried, "it is there! Monsieur le Vicomte de Souspennier leaves for South America tomorrow morning. He may return, the papers announce, in three years' time. Madame, he will never return. Two days ago I saw him. 'Josephine,' he said, 'for me it is finished, the life. I go that the end may come sooner. In South America one may disappear, one may end one's life calmly and without scandal. And there is the little one.' Madame, when he spoke to me, he spoke as though to the grave, but I break faith and I glory in it. I break faith not for your sake, because I hate you for your coldness, your miserable lovelessness. You—you to have had the love of the best man in the world, and to have treated him as though he were a criminal!"

Then suddenly the positions reversed. Josephine broke down. She flung herself upon her knees, scorning the chair which Sophy pushed towards her, and beat with her hands upon the table. "Oh, how I hate you!" she sobbed. "How I have loathed you all these years for the way you have made him suffer!"

"He has not cared," Sophy whispered. "He came back here; it was the same thing over again."

"You lie!" Josephine almost shrieked. "He lived as a man should live, until that cursed brother of yours turned up again. Always the same! Always the same! Nothing but criminals! It was insanity, I tell you. I know myself the beginning of it here. It was your brother who found out Monsieur Valentin and besought his help. It was through him that Monsieur Valentin ever went near the Swiss House. He has saved his life more than once; saved him from being beaten a dozen times. I have heard Monsieur Valentin beg and pray to your brother that they might go abroad together, anywhere, and start life differently, but Monsieur Guy only scoffed. Listen! Listen, woman! But for your brother, Monsieur Valentin would never have been stripped of every penny he possessed. But for your brother, when he was forced to come to England he would have lived quietly, perhaps, but like those other great Frenchmen who were forced to leave their country years ago. He was giving French lessons, enjoying his afternoon papers and coffee and a cheap seat at the theater, when your brother found him out again. If he were not dead—if he were not dead, that brother of yours—I should curse him! Between you, you have wrecked his life. Never did I think that chains would drag me to your door. Now that I am here, I am glad to tell you these things—glad—glad to see you suffer! I'd like to feel, but for his sake, that you would spend every hour of your life, from now until you die, with a pain always at your heart-strings, knowing by day and remembering even at night, in your dreams, that you had broken the heart of a man who is as much your superior as those in Heaven are to those who walk upon the earth."

Neither of them knew how long the silence reigned that followed. Josephine was sobbing without disguise, with her head buried upon her arms, kneeling still at the table. Sophy had gone away alone to a quiet corner. The dog upon the hearthrug yawned and curled himself up again. The clock ticked. The faint murmur of distant traffic came like a far-away echo into the room, where two women were living out a brief chapter of their lives. Then at last Josephine rose to her feet, and somewhere from the shadows Sophy came out, a strangely altered woman. Timidly she held out her hands. Josephine made no movement.

"No," she said, "I cannot do that—I cannot take your hands. I cannot feel any kindness toward you. I think that, where you stand, even though the tears are in your eyes, I think that if I dared I would strike you to the ground, because for one tear that dims your eyes, he has shed a thousand; for one half hour of suffering you have known, he has known a thousand. You are the good woman we hear about! Well—I do not envy you."

"Don't!" Sophy begged. "I did not know—I never understood. He should have told me."

Josephine laughed scornfully. "He—the proudest man who ever breathed—defend himself from your suspicion. If there were anything in your heart against him, why not go and beg for the truth? That is what, in my country, we do. But you—you are cold and hard. At the first whisper of suspicion you shrivel up, you draw away. It is perhaps a morbid pleasure you find in believing the worst of those you love, and in steeling your heart against them. No, I do not touch your fingers, Vicomtesse! I do not think of you without a shudder. But I tell you this. Monsieur le Vicomte does not sail tomorrow. He sails on Saturday. For two days he is with his sister at Carlingford Court. God knows that I tell you this for his sake, and not yours!"

She let down her veil, picked up her muff.

"You will not let me thank you?" Sophy cried.

"Never!" was the fierce answer.

To be Continued Tomorrow.

DAILY FASHION HINTS
BY MAY MANTON

6972 Empire Night Gown for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16 and 18 years.
WITH SLEEVES GATHERED INTO BANDS OR PLAIN.

Every dainty girl likes pretty lingerie. This night gown is sure to appeal to them. The gown consists of front and back portions and little sleeves that can be finished with bands or left loose. The front includes tucks at the shoulders that provide fulness, while the back is plain. The gown can be drawn up at the Empire line by means of beading and ribbon or it can be left loose. The neck is cut on a square outline. The gown is slipped on over the head so that there are not even buttons and buttonholes to be provided. Crepe de chine makes a very delightful material for gowns, and many girls like cotton crepe. Nainsook is always a standby for lingerie garments. In this case that material is trimmed with lace and beading, and the effect is extremely pretty. The edges of the neck and sleeves could be scalloped and buttonholed, and, if liked, some further bit of handwork could be embroidered on the front of the gown.

For the 16-year size, the gown will require 4½ yards of material 36 or 3½ yards 44 inches wide, with 2¼ yards of beading and 2¼ yards of edging to trim as illustrated.

The pattern of the gown 6972 is cut in sizes for girls of 14, 16 and 18 years. It will be mailed to any address by the Pattern Department of this paper on receipt of ten cents.

PATTERN NO. 6972.

UPON RECEIPT OF 10c. THE PATTERN DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN will send the above-mentioned pattern, as per directions given below, to

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No..... Street.....

Town..... State.....

Measurement—Waist..... Bust.....

Age (if child's or miss' pattern).....

CAUTION.—Be careful to give correct number and size of pattern wanted. When the pattern is bust measure you need only mark 32, 34 or whatever it may be. When in waist measure, 22, 24, 26 or whatever it may be. When miss' or child's pattern write only the figure representing the age. It is not necessary to write "inches" or "years."

All orders for patterns, accompanied with 10c. for each, must be addressed to Pattern Department, Baltimore American, Baltimore, Md.

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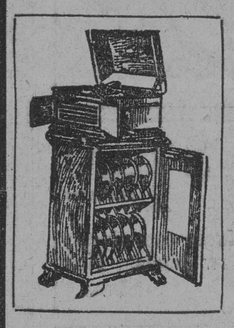

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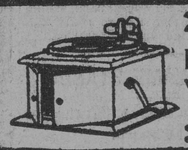

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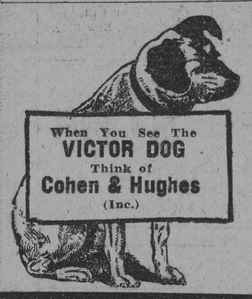

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FEMININE CHAT AND CHATTER

GOSSIP AND ADVICE FOR THE WORLD OF WOMEN.

Use of Milk in Cooking—Milk Can Be Made to Add Considerably to the Food Value of Meals—The Main Nutritive Ingredient Is Found in Skim Milk—Fat May Be Supplied by Butter.

If freely used in the preparation of other foods, milk can be made to add considerably to the food value of the meals. Many dishes are, of course, richer in flavor if whole milk is used rather than skimmed, but for the purpose of increasing the food value of the diet the main nutritive ingredient, that is, the nitrogenous material, is in the skim milk; if the extra fat is needed, it may be supplied in the form of butter, which is usually a more economical source than the whole milk, or in the form of lard, or other culinary fat.

Most persons consider that the choice between bread made with milk and that made with water depends simply upon the taste and appearance. There is, however, a difference in the food value, as will be seen from figures showing the average composition of various foods prepared with milk, and of similar dishes in which it is not used.

Milk soups furnish an excellent means of increasing the food value of a meal, or of using up superfluous milk. Sometimes the milk is mixed with "stock" made from meat, and sometimes, as in vegetable purees, it forms the basis to which the pulp of some vegetable, such as beans, peas, potatoes, corn or celery, is added to give flavor and "body." Oyster stew made with milk owes its food value more to the milk than to the oysters.

Milk, or "white" and "cream" sauces are also very useful, not only for the nutritive material they supply, but also as a help in using up "left-overs." Bits of meat can often be made very attractive by serving them on toast minced and "creamed," and many warmed-over vegetables are improved by the addition of milk or white sauce, while the same sauce also helps in giving variety in winter when not many kinds of vegetables are to be had.

There is almost no end to the puddings and desserts in which considerable milk is used. Blancmange is practically flavored milk, jellied with starch, Irish moss, or some similar material, and the simplest kinds of ice-creams are milk and cream mixtures flavored and frozen. Junket is simply milk curd separated by rennet, as in cheese making, and eaten before the bacteria, which give the cheese its flavor developed. Then there are all the puddings made of some form of cereal and milk and flavored in some way, as bread puddings, cornstarch, rice and tapioca puddings, and the countless forms of custard, of which milk and eggs make the basis.

Almost all of these, if carefully made, are nutritious, easily digested and economical. For children and persons of weak digestion the simpler ones, like blancmange, cornstarch and rice puddings, are almost indispensable.

EGGS—WASHINGTON.

Boil 12 fresh eggs for eight minutes; remove, plunge in cold water for a minute, lift up and shell them; cut a piece off the thicker end of each so they will stand up; cut a quarter of the white from the top so as to enable you to easily scoop out the yolks; when all are scooped out, place the yolks in a bowl with one ounce finely grated Virginia ham, one saltspoon chopped parsley, one saltspoon chopped chives, one saltspoon chopped chervil, a tablespoon of good butter and two tablespoons thick cream; season with half-teaspoon salt, a saltspoon grated nutmeg. Mix the whole together to a puree, place in a paper cornet and carefully press into the scooped-out eggs; cut 12 round pieces of bread, quarter-inch thick and one and one-half inches in diameter; toast to a nice golden brown; lay an egg on each toast and place on a tin; cover the eggs with the cutoff tops, spread evenly over the eggs the following sauce: Heat in a saucepan one and one-half tablespoons melted butter, add two tablespoons sifted flour, stir well, then add one and one-half gills hot milk; season with one-half teaspoon salt, two saltspoons cayenne pepper and a saltspoon grated nutmeg; sharply whisk for two minutes; add one ounce grated Parmesan cheese and whisk for two minues; add one egg yolk, briskly mix while cooking for two minutes without allowing to boil; after spreading over eggs, set in the oven to bake for 10 minutes, or until of a golden color; remove to a hot dish and serve.

ABOUT SLEEVES.

There is certainly a great variety in sleeve styles this season, and no particular feature dominates. Couturiers are designing sleeves to suit the individual style of the frock.

Where the sleeves are joined is the most variable point. It is at the regular shoulder line, two or three inches below or just above the elbow.

Many of the imported models show the bishop sleeve with a decided puff over the tight-fitting cuff.

Other sleeves show tucks or pleats set in on top of the arm, producing fulness at the middle.

A sleeve which seems to be favored shows a cuff extending to the elbow. This is slashed at the hand and finished with narrow pleatings of lace.

Pipings of a contrasting color are used to trim many of the sleeves, and buttons are extensively used. Embroidery insets and lace are also employed to adorn the smart sleeves.

The jumper dress calls for the yoke and sleeves of allover net, lace, embroidered batiste or mull. Tiny pinch tucks extend in vertical lines from both top and bottom toward the center, where the fulness is produced.

Bell-shaped sleeves of the material to match the frock show undersleeves of net, fine linen or French mull. Frequently a turned-back cuff edged with lace finishes the undersleeves.

BOILED FROSTING.

Boil one cup sugar and half cup water together until it threads with a pinch of cream tartar in sugar, beat whites of two eggs containing a pinch of salt until stiff (never stir syrup when cooking; then add syrup, a few drops at a time to the beaten egg, with the egg beater, slightly flavor, when the right consistency and cool spread over cake.

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