

min by name—with the order of St. George in his button-hole, and an interesting pallor on his face. He was about 26. He had come on leave to his estates, which were close to Maria's villa. Maria paid him such attention as none of the others received. In his presence her habitual gloom disappeared. It could not be said that she flirted with him. But a poet, observing her behavior, might have asked, "S'amor nonche, dunque?"

Bourmin was really a very agreeable young man. He possessed just the kind of sense that pleased women; a sense of what is suitable and becoming. He had no affection and was carelessly satirical. His manner toward Maria was simple and easy. He seemed to be of a quiet and easy disposition; but rumor said that he had at one time been terribly wild. This, however, did not harm him in the opinion of Maria, who (like all other young ladies) excused with pleasure vagaries which were the result of impulsiveness and daring.

But above all—more than his love-making more than his pleasant talk, more than his interesting pallor, more even than his bandaged arm—the silence of the young Hussar excited her curiosity and imagination. She could not help confessing to herself that he pleased her very much. Probably he too, with his acuteness and his experience, had seen that he had interested her. How was it, then, that up to this moment she had not seen him at her feet; had not received from him any declaration whatever? And wherefore did she not encourage him with more attention, and, according to circumstances, even with tenderness? Had she a secret of her own which would account for her behavior?

At last, Bourmin fell into such deep meditation, and his black eyes rested with such fire on Maria, that the decisive moment seemed very near. The neighbors spoke of the marriage, as an accomplished fact, and kind Praskovia rejoiced that her daughter had at last found for herself a worthy mate.

The lady was sitting alone once in the drawing-room, laying out grande-patience, when Bourmin entered the room, and at once inquired for Maria.

"She is in the garden," replied the old lady; go to her, and I will wait for you here." Bourmin went, and the old lady made the sign of the cross and thought, "Perhaps the affair will be settled to-day!"

Bourmin found Maria in the ivy-bow beside the pond, with a book in her hands, and wearing a white dress—a veritable heroine of romance. After the first inquiries, Maria purposely let the conversation drop; increasing by these means the mutual embarrassment, from which it was only possible to escape by means of a sudden and positive declaration.

It happened thus: Bourmin, feeling the awkwardness of his position, informed Maria that he had long sought an opportunity of opening his heart to her, and he begged for a moment's attention. Maria closed the book and lowered her eyes, as a sign that she was listening.

"I love you," said Bourmin, "I love you passionately!" Maria blushed and bent her head still lower.

"I have behaved imprudently, yielding, as I have done, to the seductive pleasure of seeing and hearing you daily." Maria collected the first letter of St. Preux in "La Nouvelle Heloise." "It is too late now to resist my fate. The remembrance of you, your dear incomparable image, must from to-day be at once the torment and consolation of my existence. I have now a grave duty to perform, a terrible secret to disclose, which will place between us an insurmountable barrier."

"It has always existed!" interrupted Maria; "I know," he replied, quickly; "I know that you once loved. But death and three years of mourning may have worked some change. Dear, kind Maria, do not try to deprive me of my last consolation; the idea that you might have consented to make me happy if—Don't speak, for God's sake don't speak—you torture me. Yes, I know, I feel that you could have been mine, but—I am the most miserable of beings—I am already married!"

Maria looked at him in astonishment. "I am married," continued Bourmin; "I have been married more than three years, and do not know who my wife is, or where she is, or whether I shall ever see her again."

"What are you saying?" exclaimed Maria; "how strange! Pray continue."

"In the beginning of 1812," said Bourmin; "I was hurrying on to Wilna, where my regiment was stationed. Arriving one evening late at a station, I ordered the horses to be got ready quickly, when suddenly a fearful snowstorm broke out. Both station-master and drivers advised me to wait until

it was over. I listened to their advice, but an unaccountable restlessness took possession of me, just as though some one was pushing me on. Meanwhile the snowstorm did not abate. I could bear it no longer, and again ordered the horses and started in the midst of the storm. The driver took it into his head to drive along the river, which would shorten the distance by three miles. The bank was covered with snowdrifts; the driver missed the turning which would have brought us out on the road, and we turned up in an unknown place. The storm never ceased. I could discern a light, and told the driver to make for it. We entered a village, and found that the light proceeded from a wooden church. The church was open. Outside the railings stood several sledges, and people passing in and out through the porch.

"Here! here!" cried several voices. I told the coachman to drive up.

"Where have you dawdled?" said some one to me. "The bride has fainted; the priest does not know what to do; we were on the point of going back. Make haste and get out!"

"I got out of the sledge in silence, and stepped into the church, which was dimly lighted with two or three tapers. A girl was sitting in a dark corner on a bench; another girl was rubbing her temples. 'Thank God,' said the latter, 'you have come at last! You have nearly been the death of the young lady.'"

"The old priest approached me, saying: 'Shall I begin?'"

"Begin—begin, reverend father," I replied, absently.

"The young lady was roused up. I thought her rather pretty. Oh, wild, unpardonable frivolity! I placed myself by her side at the altar. The priest hurried on.

"Three men and the maid supported the bride, and occupied themselves with her alone. We were married!"

"Kiss your wife," said the priest.

"My wife turned her pale face to me. I was going to kiss her, when she exclaimed, 'Oh! it is not he—not he!'" and fell back insensible.

"The witnesses stared at me. I turned round and left the church without any attempt being made to stop me, threw myself into the sledge, and cried, 'Away!'"

"What!" exclaimed Maria. "And you don't know what became of your unhappy wife?"

"I do not," replied Bourmin; "neither do I know the name of the village where I was married, nor that of the station from which I started. At that time I thought so little of my wicked joke that, on driving away from the church, I fell asleep, and never woke till early next morning, after reaching the third station. The servant who was with me died during the campaign, so that I have now no hope of discovering the unhappy woman on whom I played the cruel trick, and who is now so cruelly avenged."

"Great heavens!" cried Maria, seizing his hand. "Then it was you, and you do not recognize me?"

Bourmin turned pale—and threw himself at her feet.—[From the Russian of Alexander Pushkin.]

## The Emperor's Tribute.

One of the prettiest speeches I have listened to was delivered by the Emperor in answering the toast to his wife in the province where she was born. It was during the great combined naval and military manoeuvres of 1890.

The Emperor's words were: "I desire to express to you, my dearest sir, the gratitude felt by the empress and myself for the kind words we have just heard: at the same time our thanks to the whole for the day we have passed, and for the reception which the province has prepared for us. This day was, however, not needed in order to assure us of the warm friendship we have found here. The bond that unites me to this province, and chains me to her in a manner different from all others of my empire, is the jewel that sparkles at my side, her Majesty the empress. Sprung from this soil, the type of the various virtues of a German princess, it is to her that I owe it if I am able to meet the severe labors of my office with a happy spirit, and make head against them."

The words of the Emperor were unexpected, and to none more so than his wife, whose face beamed with happiness at the compliment she so publicly received. Nor did any one who listened to the speaker at that dinner think to question the spontaneity and honesty of the language.

## Gray Gowns for Autumn

You must have a gray gown. There is no other course open to you if you expect to be in the procession this Fall. Not only must you have a gray gown, but you must be a symphony in gray. Shoes, gloves, ties, parasol, all must match, and this gorgeous array will cost you from \$4 up to \$40, according to the taste, time and ingenuity you can give to it. This is fashion's edict and it behooves you to look about.

A very good quality of tweed can be obtained for a small sum, and if you are at all a homedressmaker, a very good outing dress, with loose blazer-shaped waist and plain skirt can be fashioned—all for the sum of \$4. Silk shirts are to be worn with this. But if you do not care to go to the expense of buying silk shirts a very good substitute can be found by using silk shirt fronts. These come ready made in stores in all colors at the cost of \$1.50 each. They are easily made at home, however, and by buying one silk shirt front to serve as a pattern for the others, any woman with a spark of ingenuity can make a very good and pleasing variety for use this Fall.

The pale, poetic gray, which was fashionable in the Spring, will reign supreme in September and October. But the August gray differs from the June gray in that it is more poetic and more idealized, so to speak. There is a shimmer and sheen and a shine about it which did not appear in the Spring grays. The Spring grays were made of broadcloth, ladies' cloth, cashmere or some other like material, which will also be used next month, but the August grays are of the finest, light silk. They seem scarcely more than a film, so sheer are they and so graceful.

Gray and white-striped China silk is extremely pretty for these light gray suits, because a dress made of it requires no trimming at all, and the white renders it less trying to the complexion than the plain gray. A very lovely suit of gray and white with a little gray and white toque, appeared a few days ago.

The wearer of this carried a little silver and gray shopping bag. She also had a white parasol with a silver handle, and from her belt there hung at least a dozen of those little silver things which are the delight of every woman who can afford to buy them. Bonnetstoo, must be gray.

The favorite form for little French bonnets is the capote-galette. Galette is a term employed by the French, which, upon being interpreted into our language, would mean "flat as a pancake." Only it sounds pretty to say "galette." The capote-galette is therefore simply a flat little capote. The one which seems to be in highest favor just now is made of large gray beads threaded on wire. The wire is twisted around to form little circles. There are enough of these circles to entirely cover the top of the head. Of course only the top is covered, because the capote is very flat and nothing in the way of ever so gentle a curve is allowed. On top of the whole thing there is a bunch of natural roses, preferably pink ones, because pink and gray is such a Frenchy combination. Tiny gray velvet strings are brought down and knotted loosely far below the chin.

## A Home Wedding.

"It's just a year ago to-day," said she who told the story. "We had been school-mates, and she asked me to come by an early train and help her and her mother through the day. It was 9 in the morning when I stepped under the thick woodbine that grew about the door of that angular little house on the edge of a Canadian village. She had a broad hat on and she said, 'Come.'"

"We went out into the pasture land beyond the village and we filled our arms with golden-rod and cardinal flowers. Then we walked back to the house and her mother fetched jars and vases and big bowls, and we put our flowers about in the rooms."

"He came by the noon train and she went to the gate in her print dress and her broad hat to meet him. We had a little dinner together, her mother, he and I."

"Then she went to dress and came downstairs again in half an hour in a simple little white gown. It was 2 o'clock when the neighbors began to arrive. She went to the door to meet them herself, and she took the minister's hat and showed the minister's wife where to put her things."

"Then by and by the minister said: 'Are you ready?' And she said, 'Yes'; and then the two of them stood before the minister, and she put one hand behind her and into the hand of her mother, who sat just there on the sofa. And when the minister began, 'Will you,' she said 'I will' before he got half through."

"After that she put on a white apron and saw that we all had cake and ice cream."

Then when it was time for her to go away she changed her dress again and we all walked to the railway station to see her started. When the train came puffing up she turned to me: 'Stay with mother till to-morrow, and I'll get a letter to her by that time. She'll be lonely this evening.'

"I never expect to attend again so pretty a wedding."

## How to Clean a Hard Wood Floor.

Brush off the dust with a soft hair or feather brush, or wipe it with any cloth of a soft texture. If the cloth is slightly moist the dust will adhere to it more readily, but wipe with a dry cloth afterward.

If there be any dirt that will not come with wiping, wash it off thoroughly with clean water, using soap if necessary, which also cleanse off with clean water as quickly as possible and wipe dry.

When the face of the floor begins to look worn and shabby after cleansing of the dirt and wiping dry, if water has been used, rub the surface all over nicely with a cloth moistened with a few drops of oil, if the floor has a hard oil finish, or brush it lightly with thin shellac if it has a shellac surface.

After the finish is worn down to the surface of the wood, sandpaper the floor all over evenly and give it another coat of shellac or hard oil finish, after which continue to keep as before.

Waxed floors can be cleansed by washing off thoroughly with turpentine or benzine after which they can be re waxed if desired.

## Orders Open to Women.

When you come to look into the matter there are a good many orders, badges and more or less valuable decorations of one kind and another, either instituted to commemorate the patriotism of women or to which women as well as men are eligible. It is true that the British Parliament, before Victoria gave the Red Cross to Mrs. Grimwood, ransacked its records to find some honor it could bestow on the heroine of Manipur without lighting on any. It is also true that the general public displayed a general ignorance as regards the Red Cross by circulating the statement that Florence Nightingale was the only other woman who had received it; the fact being that it is worn by some forty princesses and noble ladies connected with the English royal family, though, to be sure, princesses are hardly to be reckoned as in the running. They do not need to show special devotion or heroism in order to cover their frock-fronts over with medals.

## The Shah's Gallantry.

That interesting potentate, the Shah of Persia, has conferred the Order of the Sun on several women. The order was founded in 1808 by Peth Ali, and in 1878 the Shah sent the badge to Paris to be given by the Persian Minister to Mme. la Marchese MacMahon.

King John of Saxony founded the Order of Sidonia in 1871, in memory of the Duchess Sidonia and designed it especially for the reward of women's services in war. It is a Maltese cross of white enamel edged with gold, and is worn on a sash of violet ribbon. In the same year Charles XII. of Wurtemberg instituted the Olga for his wife's sake, a silver cross conferred like the Sanatory Cross of the Grand Duchy of Hesse on both men and women.

The list is too long to carry it forward to completion, and it would not be worth while. Clara Barton has badges enough to cover herself over with stars and crosses, but they make her neither more nor less of a woman.

## An Old Love Letter.

A Leominster housekeeper, while looking over some old letters of her great-grandmother, ran across the following. "Dear, Good John: We shall have to put off our marriage, mother is making such an awful fuss about it. I don't want to a bit now we are published, but I have to. She says you ain't old enough, and I don't know anything and then there is so much exp. re about it. Now, John, just think of it. A dress will be only 9 shillings (\$1.50), and my new calfskin shoes would do. She says you shan't marry me until you can keep two cows of your own. Father is willing and says he will give us the sheep, but mother says he shan't, and you know she always carries the day. Darn it! I wish she could never have got married herself. Now, John, let us stick to each other. I shall be 18 in about ten months more. Now you will hold on, won't you, John? Come Sunday night with the gray horse and stay and we will ride out and talk it over. Good night." Mary.