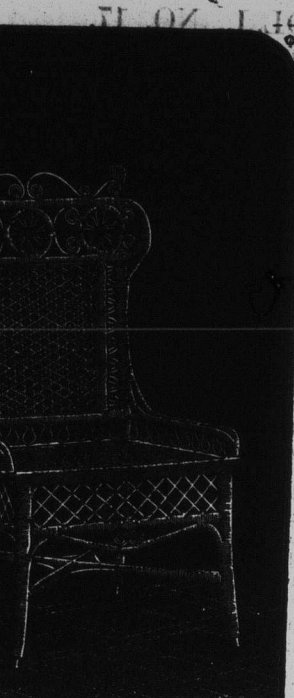
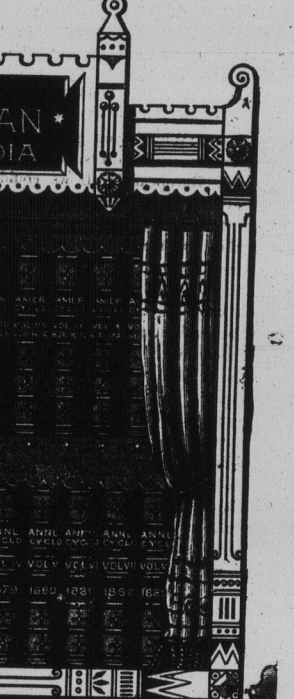


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THE ANSWER.

You ask me why I love thee, little one,
Go ask the leaves that beckon to the rain,
Go ask the flowers that worship in the sun,
Why thus they love, then ask me once again.
Go ask the clouds that through the silent night
Lie still and gray beneath the starry kiss,
Why with the coming of the morning light
They blush to rosy life—then ask me this.
Go ask the wild bird why his sweetest song
Rings through the wood aisles with the dawning
day;
Ask the mad brook that tears its path along
Why to the restless sea it sings its way;
Go ask the violet why its incense sweet
Should recompense the one that crushed it low—
Then question why I kneel at thy dear feet—
Why I should love—why I should worship so.
The sea holds many an Isle to its great heart,
But each Isle knows and loves a single sea;
I know no life from thy dear life apart,
I lay down all the world can give but thee.
Perchance for this when some soft breeze is blown
Across thy lips, thou'lt breathe a loving word—
A secret for my loyal heart alone,
Brought by the odorous summer wind unheard.
Perchance for this thou'lt whisper to the rose
That nestles timidly upon thy breast
That somewhere in the world thy lover goes—
Far from thy love, but by that love confessed,
And bid it breathe thy meaning on the air,
Touched lightly by thy lips are lips dismissed,
And I will kiss the roses everywhere,
And by its sweetness know which thou hast
kissed.
—Anonymous.

SCRATCHED OUT.

During the earlier years of the present century the Russian nobles ruled their households with a high hand. Accordingly, when the Dowager Countess Cherski found that her only son Ivan, a young man of about twenty years, was engaged to marry a beautiful girl, she was so enraged, she forthwith banished him to France, and ordered the girl, to whom he was engaged, to marry another girl immediately. As her commands had to be obeyed, poor Sophia Uschakoff, for that was the girl's name, went with her father, some six days after the Count's departure, to the chapel where the marriage service was to be performed. There were present, beside her father and herself, Michael Tokhtamish (the bridegroom), his father and the priest, an old man who was upward of seventy years of age. The service had scarcely commenced when the door of the chapel opened and Ivan Cherski, the young Count, entered with a revolver in his hand.

"You thought I was out of the country," he said, "but not so; I have been biding my time not far away from here. I know all about the infamous attempt to marry my betrothed to this clown, and I have come to prevent it. Everything is ready—the priest, the altar and the bride. So, my good father, you will please marry me to Sophia Uschakoff at once, or you and Michael Tokhtamish shall die before five minutes are over."

I do not know what would have happened if the priest had refused to obey the Count's order. As I have said, Russian nobles used to be, and very likely still are, rather high-handed, especially in dealing with their dependents. At all events, Ivan Cherski was a nobleman armed with a revolver, and Michael Tokhtamish was only a girl who might have been shot for the fun of the thing, while the priest was a very infirm old man, and bound, moreover, by his religion to discountenance bloodshed. So the priest stood aside, the nobles took his place, and the priest performed the service, and in a few minutes Ivan Cherski and Sophia Uschakoff were man and wife. The service over, the company entered the vestry room, where the priest proceeded to enter the particulars relating to the marriage in the registry book.

Now I must pause here to inform the reader that in Russia it was the custom for the priest, and not the persons who were married, to sign the names of the bride and the bridegroom in the marriage register. Alexander Troubetzki was placed, as the saying is, between two fires. If he had not obeyed the Count's orders he would have been shot. On the other hand, if the Countess Dowager found out what he had done, something else as bad, or worse, would probably happen. To escape from the dilemma he entered in the register Michael Tokhtamish instead of Ivan Cherski, and Tokhtamish instead of the Countess Dowager. The parties who were interested did not observe the substitution. The register was restored to its place, and the Count and Countess Cherski left secretly for Paris that evening.

For five years they lived very happily in France, and then the Count died, leaving the Countess a widow with two children. His mother had died about a year before, and Troubetzki expired shortly after they left the village of Narovel, where the marriage took place, of the death of her husband the Countess went to the province of Minsk, in Russia, to claim his estate on behalf of herself and his children. The claim was opposed by his family, who produced the register which bore evidence of her marriage, not with Ivan Cherski, but with Michael Tokhtamish. There seemed, then, to be no use in resorting to legal proceedings, as the evidence of the witnesses to the marriage, who were all serfs, would be worthless against the evidence of the marriage register. Accordingly the Countess as she was de jure, if not de facto, returned to France. Partly by the sale of her jewelry and partly owing to her husband having invested some money in their joint names in French 5 per cent. rentes she had a little more than £2,000, and with this capital she opened a sort of boarding house in Paris. Here she had been living for about two years when a young Englishman named Edwin Marston came to stop at her establishment for a few days. Up to the present, I have not said anything about the character or appearance of the Countess Cherski, because, so far, I have merely been reciting a number of facts which are necessary to enable the reader to understand the curious tale that we are approaching. That she was either pretty or handsome or beautiful, in some sense or other, the reader will probably anticipate from the fact of the Count having fallen in love with her. If I mention that she was tall, with dark hair and aquiline features, all who are interested in the matter can fill up the rest of her portrait to suit their own tastes. In character she must have been of a rather trustful disposition, as will, I think, appear from her conduct to Mr. Marston. He was the senior by about two years, and had been practicing as a surgeon and physician for some time in a very poor district in the east end

of London. When he first came to her house he did not intend to remain many days in Paris, but his stay was prolonged for one reason or another over a space of about three weeks, during which time he and the Countess had contracted a very sincere friendship for each other. Finally, on the night before he left, she told him her story, and asked him if he could see, any way in which she could establish the rights of herself and children.

"Not at present," said Mr. Marston, when he had listened attentively to her story; "but I shall think the matter over."

The next day Mr. Marston left for London, having bade the Countess a cordial farewell, and promised to write to her at once if any idea should occur to him with regard to the recovery of her title and estates.

More than a month passed away, during which she did not hear from him, and, consequently, was beginning to think that he had probably forgotten all about her, or he would have written, when one evening the servant came up stairs to say that Mr. Marston was in the parlor on the ground floor, and would like to see her.

"I have been thinking ever since I left you," he said, when they had greeted each other, "of the extraordinary history you told me. And I think now that I see my way to overcome your difficulties. But you will have to exercise great patience. It will take me probably a year, perhaps more, to carry out my plans. I shall have to go to Russia and live in the village of Narovel, and I shall want at least £400 in the once, and probably another £400 in the course of about six months. In the meantime you must be content not to ask me any questions and to remain in perfect ignorance of what I am doing. My word is the only guarantee you can have that I shall be honestly doing my best in your behalf."

"It is sufficient," said the Countess. "You shall have the money. When can you start?"

"Tomorrow," was the answer.

Accordingly, next day Mr. Marston started for Narovel, which is a village in the province of Minsk, in Western Russia. Here he took up his abode in the guise of a well-to-do Englishman, who wished to make himself acquainted with the language and institutions of the country, and who had no objection to spend his money pretty freely. He was a good shot, fond of riding, and, apart altogether from the necessity of acting a part which was involved by the business he had on hand, he was a really jovial and pleasant companion. The consequence was that he soon became a favorite with everybody in the district. The man liked him because he was a capital sportsman and could take his bottle with the best of them; the women, because he was a good-looking foreigner, who was always paying them such compliments as circumstances permitted, and who was very fond of children. Among others, with whom he shortly became intimately acquainted was the new priest, a young man named Nicholas Kohl. Kohl acted, as priests very often do in Russia, the part of priest and physician to the district. And since Marston was able to give him a great deal of valuable advice and assistance they soon became fast friends.

One day, about five months after he came to Narovel, he went with Kohl into the vestry-room of the chapel where the Countess was frequently before, and knew exactly where the book in which her marriage was registered lay among some others in a sort of cupboard. Already he had, on the pretense of comparing the Russian system with the English, examined several registers of births, deaths, and marriages, so that he was familiar with the forms, and on looking at a book of such registers could easily find any particular one that he might be in quest of. As yet, however, he had had no opportunity of examining the book which contained the record of the marriage of the Countess. Now, what he had been scheming for during the past five months was to get this book secretly into his possession for about half an hour. Already he had formed a number of plans for getting half an hour alone in the vestry-room, but these he discarded one by one as being unsuitable. At last, as often happens in such cases, an accident gave him the opportunity he sought. On the occasion in question they were going for a long walk, and had only gone into the vestry-room to leave a parcel, which the priest had in his hand. Scarcely, however, had they entered the room when they were followed by a little girl who had seen them go into the chapel. She had been to the priest's house to look for him, as her mother, who was very ill, wished to see him for a few minutes.

"I shall wait here for you," said Marston, speaking to Kohl in French, when he understood what the little girl's errand was. "I can read until you come back." There were some French and Latin books in the room.

"Very well," said Kohl; "it's only a few minutes' walk from here. I shall not be more than half an hour."

When the girl and priest had left the chapel, Marston took out of the cupboard the volume that contained the record of the Countess' marriage, and turned over the pages till he came to the entry he was in search of. Yes, there, in black and white, was the record of the marriage of Sophia Uschakoff with Michael Tokhtamish. Mr. Marston looked at the register intently for a minute or two, during which time he turned rather pale. Then he got up and looked out of the vestry-room to see that there was nobody in the chapel. Having satisfied himself that he was quite alone, he sat down again and examined the characters in which the name of Michael Tokhtamish was written with the greatest care for about a minute. Finally, he took out of his pocket a penknife, a bottle of ink and a pen, which he had always carried about with him in anticipation of an opportunity like the present. With the penknife he had carefully examined the pen to see that the nib was in order he proceeded to write over the erasure the name of—

Let me first ask if the reader has guessed whose name it was that Mr. Marston wrote over the name he had been at such pains to erase? Some people of whom I have asked the question have guessed that he wrote his own name. But why so? On a subsequent occasion he did write his own

name in a marriage register after Sophia Cherski had written her. But on the present occasion he could not have gained anything by so doing. And the same objection will apply to his writing most other names over the erasure.

No. Having most carefully erased the name of Michael Tokhtamish, he proceeded with the very greatest care to write the name of Michael Tokhtamish as nearly as possible in the same place, and characters that it stood in before. When he had done this to his satisfaction, he let the ink dry, and then restored the book to its place. Kohl came back presently, and they went for their long walk.

About three weeks afterwards Mr. Marston found that he had business which necessitated his leaving for England, and very much to the regret of the inhabitants of Narovel, he departed. From Russia he went straight to Paris, where he called upon Countess Cherski, with whom he held no communication whatever during the whole time he was living at Narovel. "You have placed implicit confidence in me," he said, "and I have told you before that you must not ask any questions, and I tell you so again. You must do exactly as I direct you without asking why. Commence proceedings at once for the restoration of your title and estates. I will assist you, when the register is restored to its place, having every word that relates to your marriage most carefully examined. Do exactly as I tell you, and you will find that the result will be most satisfactory. And now good-bye. I must get back to London to see if I cannot get my patients again."

The Countess did as he told her to do. She commenced an action on behalf of herself and children for the restoration of the titles and estates. The register of her marriage was produced, but when it was examined it was found that the name of Michael Tokhtamish was written over an erasure. This destroyed the value of the register as evidence of a marriage between Sophia Uschakoff and Michael Tokhtamish.

The natural presumption—in fact, the moral certainty—was that the somebody else's name had been erased from the place where the name of Michael Tokhtamish was written, and further, that somebody else was the man that married Sophia Uschakoff. Under these circumstances the evidence of Michael Tokhtamish himself and the two marriage witnesses who were present at the signing of a number of French witnesses, that the late Count had lived with her for years as man and wife, was held to establish fully the claims of the Countess and her children to be the lawful wife and issue of the late Ivan Cherski. Tokhtamish, I may mention, gave his young son very willingly, as it was perfectly certain that the Count would never marry anybody else while she was supposed to be his wife.

On the morality of the transaction I pronounce no opinion and abandon that problem to such casuists as may be still extant. The Countess left Russia shortly after she had gained her lawsuit, and was married about a year afterwards to Edward Marston, who, partly through his own abilities and partly with the assistance of her fortune, became one of the leading physicians in London.—Time.

THE DRUMMER BLUSHED.

He Talked Agnosticism for an Hour to a Young Priest and Then Heard His Name.

Coming from Philadelphia on the Chicago limited I noticed in an opposite section two men who, from their garb, I judged to be Catholic priests. They wore silk travelling caps, which made them look like mediæval monks. One was aged, with gray hair curling from beneath his hood, and the other was a young man, who appeared much younger, was spare of form and wore gold-rimmed spectacles. His face was one which commanded instant attention by its benignity, and when he smiled, which he did frequently, it became amiable. I never saw a more inviting smile upon a man's face.

Travelling was tedious, and a Brooklyn drummer, returning from the west, having talked all the other passengers to sleep, sat there alone along the car aisle, and seating himself beside the younger ecclesiastic, said, in an easily familiar way: "Clergyman, I suppose?" The young priest assented with one of those rare smiles which he had captured me. Then the drummer began. He once knew a Catholic priest who was "a mighty good sort of fellow," and with this as a premise, he began a long and earnest statement of his theological views, proudly proclaiming himself an agnostic. He talked for an hour. The man beside him never gave a sign of impatience, and once in a while he interjected a smiling remark, but in a voice so exquisitely modulated that it only crossed the aisle as a faint whisper. The drummer was evidently well pleased with himself and with his agreeable companion. Finally he said: "I could not help hearing him—I would like to come across to you again. Where do you have your church? Who are you with?"

Before the young ecclesiastic could reply, his elder companion, who all this time had uttered not a word, broke in brusquely, saying: "This is the Archbishop."

"Who?" exclaimed the drummer.

"Archbishop Corrigan of New York," said the elder cleric, who then abruptly jumped up and walked to the other end of the car as though very tired of something. The drummer blushed; yes, he actually blushed. The archbishop put one hand on his shoulder, and still with that winning smile he began talking to the man to whom he had listened with so much patience. He talked not as a lecturer, but as a friend. And the drummer listened, and not another word did he say about agnosticism. And when he reached Jersey City he took off his hat to the popular minister of God, and pressed his outstretched hand with reverence.

I rather like the drummer for blushing.—Philadelphia Times.

Forwarned is Forwarned.—Do stop reading, Mr. Bachelor, and listen to the orchestra. The orchestra is playing the "Wedding March" from "Lohengrin." Isn't it lovely? By the way, what are you reading?

Mr. Bachelor—Dickens.

"Indeed! Which of his characters do you like best?"

"Walter. He says so many sensible things."—Philadelphia Record.

FASHIONS FOR MEN.

An American Authority Tells What Will Be Worn in Gotham.

Velvet collars will be used very freely for overcoats.

Grouped waisted diagonals will be used to a great extent.

Gobelin blue is a favorite shade in the new trousseurs.

For suitings, rough, unfinished Scotch cloth will take the lead.

Montagnes, Elysians, Venetians and all fur effects have been in demand.

"Fur Shetlands," a new importation, shaggy and well adapted for ulsters, will probably be largely used.

Very rough, wide waistcoats will be made up into winter overcoats more than any other material.

Blues, browns, olives, drabs, blacks, seals and Oxford mixtures are the leading shades in these rough goods.

Neat stripes and pin-checks prevail in the imported cassimeres. Plaids are used in less volumes than last year.

Wide diagonal worsteds for morning coats and vests will be exceedingly popular during the season.

Corkscrews are not so popular as formerly, and with the exception of blacks and blues will be employed but little.

Rough heavy-weight undercoatings are more in demand in the West and Northwest than elsewhere this season.

Plaids, although not so popular, have been brought freely by the best class trade—particularly in rough Scotch goods.

Striped cassimeres trousseurs are most popular. Medium to wide stripes and dark effects have been generally used.

All Scotch suitings have been in great demand for fall wear; so, too, have been the bright effects which distinguish them this season.

Unfinished worsteds, in which granite, herringbone, powder-chain and basket patterns are introduced will make up very handsomely into suits.

Cassimeres vestings, in which bright silk patterns, such as polka dots, checks, squares, stripes, leaves and sprigs show on a dark ground, are likely to be very much worn.

Domestic suitings and overcoatings show yearly a marked improvement, in some respects, far surpassing the imported of a similar grade, both in appearance and durability.

Cheviots having an indistinct, or "over" plaid, in which tints of red, blue, green or yellow, etc., are produced on a "wood ground," will be employed for the suits for the best-dressed people in the country.

The south and southwest adapt taste in dress to climate requirements. Smooth-faced goods are there preferred, such as fine worsted and cassimeres suitings and miltons, kerseys and other light weight overcoatings are mostly demanded.—Clothier and Furnisher.

A Well-Informed Judge.

Jim Webster and Sam Johnson were up before an Austin justice of the peace for theft. Jim Webster's case was disposed of several days ago, while Sam Johnson's came up soon after. Sam is a simple-minded darkey. On Sam being arraigned, the judge said:

"Your prisoner has already confessed to another theft, in which you participated."

"I reckon yer must be hinting at dem clothes what was missed from Col. Jones' yard night before las," said Sam.

"I never heard of that robbery. That was not the one your partner confessed to."

"Lemme see! O, yes, judge, I remember now. You is alludin' to dem chickens Judge Smith raised sich a row about last Saturday. I believe I does remember sumfin about dat ar."

The judge shook his head.

"I am mighty afeerd I'se losing my memory. Was it some firewood in Ward No. 5, judge?"

"Try again."

"Hit must have been de gemman what missed his pants in de boardin' house, but dat barred by de statutes of limits, judge. Dat happened last mornin' ago."

"You haven't hit it yet."

"Jedge, you knows more about what's stolen in dis town den I does. I don't ask yer to takes me inter yer confidence, but ef yer will jes' say what hit is yer is hintin' at."

"I'll plead guilty. I ain't gwinter take no risks wid a man who am as well posted as you is."—Texas Siftings.

A Bather's Device.

The latest fad among bathers on the Pacific coast is to wear costumes lined with oiled silk. This was told as a secret by a young lady to whom was propounded the interrogatory why she was able to stay in the water so long. "You see the oiled silk prevents the water from penetrating, and enables the bather to stay in the water a long time without becoming cold. This new innovation was gotten up through a wager between two ladies as to which could stay in the longest, and one of them, through natural ingenuity, although herself oiled silk and won the wager. While her rival emerged from the briny with chattering teeth, the other bobbed up in the water serenely and warmly. One woman was seen in with shoes on, because the car as though very tired of something, through natural ingenuity, although herself oiled silk and won the wager. While her rival emerged from the briny with chattering teeth, the other bobbed up in the water serenely and warmly. One woman was seen in with shoes on, because the car as though very tired of something, through natural ingenuity, although herself oiled silk and won the wager. While her rival emerged from the briny with chattering teeth, the other bobbed up in the water serenely and warmly. One woman was seen in with shoes on, because the car as though very tired of something, through natural ingenuity, although herself oiled silk and won the wager.

Prices Vary.

A man went into a provision store in Boston the proprietor of which was German. "How much do you ask for your sausages?" he inquired.

"Twenty cents."

"I can buy them for a shilling from Mr. —"

"You didn't, den?"

"He was all of them."

"Oh! vell, I sells mine sausages for a shilling, doo, ven I was out."—Sunday Globe.

She Recognized It.

Miss Holtsou (who is not a thorough musician). "What a beautiful piece the orchestra is playing now."

Professor Suedberger—"Dot! Vy, dot vas 'Chonny-getcher-goon!'"

Miss Holtsou—"I think those old German melodies are perfectly entrancing!"

New York Sun.

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