Uncle Joseph's Visit

By OWEN OLIVER

My brother William and I were pleased of course, when we heard that Uncle Joseph proposed to pay us a visit in town. If one makes allowance for his eccentricities (which are great indeed) he is a very pleasant old gentleman—except for his temper.

He is unfortunately very free in his expressions, and there are so many people in New York who are ready to incriminate themselves with a word and make for themselves enemies. As his nephew I felt it was our duty to protect him from such persons.

We went down to the train to meet him and warned him that he must be very careful of strangers during his stay in New York. When we took the elevated Uncle Joseph did not speak to the gentleman with a red face. We were glad. He was very quiet and we felt sure Uncle Joseph was going to behave himself.

[illegible]

THEY TALKED ALL THE WAY UP TOWN.

the course which he took; but I am compelled to admit that he had some justification.

"I do not like to private your uncle," he said, solemnly, "by destroying an illusion which bears testimony to the integrity of your own character. But since you force me to say it I know that man as one who preys upon the ignorant—or, [illegible] are unlikely to mistrust assure. In fact, he is a notorious professor of the confidence trick."

Uncle Joseph drew a deep breath. Then he took off his spectacles and wiped them angrily.

"I am, as you say, William, unwilling to mistrust others, but if people try to take me in—" He brought his great hand down on his knee with a bang—"they may look out for themselves. Umph!"

The next day we took Uncle Joseph to the Natural History museum, where he hoped to learn something about cows. The museum is not an exhilarating place, and when he had spent two hours prodding stuffed animals and going into raptures over bee hives, William and I went outside to have a smoke while we waited for him. After about half an hour he came out at a run.

"My dear uncle," I cried, "what is it?"

"My dear uncle," said William, "what is it?"

He did not take any notice of our questions, but waved his umbrella at a passing hansom, bustled us in and told the driver to drive fast. He stood up and looked round the side till we turned a corner. Then he squeezed in between us.

"I regret, William," he said, "that I lost my temper with you the other day."

"Which time do you mean?" William asked. He is, upon occasions, lacking in tact.

"Do you insinuate that I am in the habit of losing my temper, sir?" Uncle Joseph shouted.

"William means that he cannot remember any occasion, uncle," I explained.

"None whatever," William exclaimed, hastily.

"I mean about that confidence trick man," Uncle Joseph explained.

"A person to be avoided," William remarked.

"I think he'll avoid me after this morning," Uncle Joseph stated.

"I hope you haven't met him?" I observed, hastily. It suddenly occurred to me that the professor was likely to visit the museum.

"I've been talking to him for over 20 minutes, the villain! I don't mind owning that I might have been taken in but for William's warning. But I saw what he was leading me up to with his talk about South African nuts and locusts and such things—the scoundrel!"

"I trust you did not have any words with him?" William remarked.

"Not a bit of it! I just let him go to think he was leading me on to his confidence trick. I told him that I was a judge of faces, and could tell at a glance that he was a man to be trusted. He said he could see that I was. 'You wouldn't dare to trust me out of sight with your money,' I told him. He assured me that he would, and gave me $100 in gold to walk around the building with. I promised to trust him with $100 of mine—when I came back. When I go back! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're sure—taken his money?" I gasped.

"Of course I have! Wouldn't he have taken mine?"

"Ye—es; but it will be awkward if he goes to the police about it." Uncle Joseph laughed scornfully.

"A man of that sort doesn't go to the police," he stated. "If he did, William would hear commonly of the character possessed by William."

"Ye—es," said William, "but—" He stopped and thought.

"If people try to take me in they can look out for themselves," said Uncle Joseph firmly. He sat back and folded his arms firmly as the door of his hansom. He was not in the subject.

He was very pleasant when himself all the rest of the day and [illegible] William and [illegible] [illegible] anything else [illegible]

[illegible]

"Well, anyhow, I'm glad you enjoyed yourself," I said.

"I should [illegible] from Dominic [illegible]

[illegible] I said, "I saw that it was necessary to save Uncle Joseph from the [illegible] of his rash action. For [illegible] William [illegible] he [illegible] William.

"A man like that is capable of anything," my dear uncle," I observed as we were finishing breakfast. "He will make up some plausible tale for the police. I really think you had better send William with the money."

"Nonsense," said Uncle Joseph.

"At any rate," William suggested, "I should advise you to remain indoors to-day. It would be awkward if you met him."

"Umph!" Uncle rose and got his hat. "As you are afraid, I will go out by myself." He went. William rose and followed him.

"To keep him out of mischief," he whispered, "while you go and see the professor. You could explain that he is a sort of harmless lunatic."

"I shall do nothing of the kind," I asserted.

Upon reconsideration I altered my mind. It was William's business, of course, but I have, speaking with all modesty, a certain personality, which has not been given to him. So, just after 11, I called upon the professor.

I was denied access to him at first. An [illegible] proved that he was engaged upon his great work, "The Development of Insect Intelligence." A [illegible] special interest to the intelligence of the [illegible] overcame this objection.

I waited four times before he noticed me, and even then he pretended to have forgotten the "Dear." As I called it, though he recollected that he had been talking to some one about it that morning. (I thought it was probably a detective.) However, he took the money and gave me a receipt on a scrap of paper scrawled all over with sketches of abominable insects.

When I arrived home I found William calmly smoking a cigar.

"Where is Uncle Joseph?" I demanded. He smiled.

"You need not worry about him any more, James," he said. "I've squared old Lostowort. I made up my mind just before overtaking uncle, and went there instead. I don't believe the old boy remembered anything about the transaction—in fact, he said so; but he took the money, and—I don't know if you are aware how you are looking, James; but if you'll glance at the mirror—"

"I'll see the next biggest idiot to the one I see now," I roared. "You—you ass!"

William laid down his cigar and stared at me.

"Such a statement," he protested, "requires explanation."

I explained.

I had just finished explaining when Uncle Joseph bustled in. He peered at us over his spectacles. Then he laughed.

"You're worried about that $100," he suggested.

"Yes," we agreed. He laughed again.

"If people try to take me in," he observed, "they may look out for themselves. Umph!"

"As a matter of fact," Uncle Joseph continued, "I happened to know that William was mistaken about that gentleman. He is Prof. Lostowort, the great authority on insects; a man of absolute integrity who has never taken a penny that wasn't his own—. What did you say, James?"

"I—I meant—dear me!" I apologized.

"Since you were so ready to teach me, I thought I would give you a little lesson. I did not meet the professor at the museum. My story was merely a little joke! What did you remark, James?"

"I merely said 'Oh!'" I told him.

I said a good deal more when I was alone with William.

SOME DELICIOUS CANDIES.

Directions for Making Old and New Confections—All of Them Delicious and Worth Trying.

Chocolate Candy.

Put one pound of loaf sugar into a pan and half a pint of cold water and when the sugar is dissolved put the pan over the fire and bring to the boil. When it boils stop stirring and let it boil up, then remove the pan from the fire and half an ounce of butter to the boiling syrup. When it is melted put the pan on the fire and bring it to the boil again, take it off the fire and add another half ounce of butter. In this until two ounces of butter are used up. When the butter is added return the pan to the fire and boil for five minutes, stir in three ounces of grated chocolate. Stir it quickly and boil till it leaves the side of the pan. Pour it in the same way with cold water, add half a teaspoonful vanilla extract and pour the mixture into well-buttered narrow tins.

Butter Scotch.

Put two pounds of brown sugar with two pints of water and a pinch of cream of tartar [illegible] for twenty minutes. Then add in small pieces a quarter of an ounce of butter and [illegible] a small piece dropped into water will harden. Pour [illegible] and when half cool mark into squares with a knife. When quite cold break squares off and wrap each in wax paper.

Walnut Candy.

Put half a pound of [illegible] [illegible] and half a pound of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]