

THE THREE ROBES.

There lies across the mother's knee, And gathered in her hand, A little robe of puffs and lace, With an embroider'd band.

A DISH OF NUTS.

—IN WHICH THE NUTS ARE REMEMBERED. "The train must be late," "Trains always appear to be late to impatient lovers."

John laughed, but her gray eyes grew dim beneath their long and silky lashes. "Have you forgotten the factory, Cowper?" she inquired.

He again fitted the glass in his eye, and surveyed the building with the cool and studied disapproval which was his usual expression, especially in his native land.

Then Mrs. Bemrose gained the platform, her gait a toddle peculiar to fat ladies, and she forgot to summon "a man" in conversation with a neighbor.

"How could she look! I should be all in a flutter," thought the young person in the telegraph office, envious of the phaeton, and keenly observant of the trimming on Miss Gordon's hat.

"My eye! I should like to scare her boss," retorted Tommy, meditatively. Mr. Mulooly lounged over the fence of an adjoining coal-yard, swarthy and grim, a short pipe between his teeth, and paid his tribute to beauty with national gallantry.

"She is a fine lump of a girl, anyhow," he soliloquized. All the world is a stage, and Iris thus received her meed of criticism from her little public.

Then the train arrived, the pony shivered but stood firm, and Cowper Debenham appeared, tall, slender, elegant, in a commonplace throng. "How are you, Iris?" "Welcome home, Cowper."

Such was the public greeting of the lovers. A wave of bright color overspread the girl's face, but her words were few, and none of the flutter considered indispensable to the occasion by the young person in the telegraph office was perceptible in her manner.

"I don't mind doing it to oblige you, Cowper," said this friendly native, extending a brown hand in greeting. "I guess Iris is mighty glad to see ye back home agin; she's been lookin' kinder down and peaked lately."

person in the telegraph office, thrust her head through the window to inspect him. "Hooray!" cried the small boys, with juvenile instinct of enthusiasm and decision blended.

Mr. Mulooly removed the pipe from his lips, and unable to recognize any reason why a cat may not look at a king, ejaculated, with Celtic humor, a single word—Bedad!

The train rushed on once more, the phaeton disappeared along the village street, and Gordonville resumed its usual vocations.

Cowper had returned home after his second European tour. That was the note rung through many changes on this eventful day; even the pony's hoofs, trotting soberly homeward, were in unison with the cadence humming in the ears of his young mistress.

Cowper had been intensely English on the first occasion, while a few moments in his company now revealed a fine flavor of the Boulevards, the Champs Elysees and the Bois de Boulogne.

"You drive well," said Cowper, in his languid accents. "Why do we turn to the right instead of to the left? The English always turn the left, while the Continental races choose the right. Now we are of English descent."

Iris laughed, but her gray eyes grew dim beneath their long and silky lashes. "Have you forgotten the factory, Cowper?" she inquired.

He again fitted the glass in his eye, and surveyed the building with the cool and studied disapproval which was his usual expression, especially in his native land.

"How could she look! I should be all in a flutter," thought the young person in the telegraph office, envious of the phaeton, and keenly observant of the trimming on Miss Gordon's hat.

"My eye! I should like to scare her boss," retorted Tommy, meditatively. Mr. Mulooly lounged over the fence of an adjoining coal-yard, swarthy and grim, a short pipe between his teeth, and paid his tribute to beauty with national gallantry.

"She is a fine lump of a girl, anyhow," he soliloquized. All the world is a stage, and Iris thus received her meed of criticism from her little public.

Then the train arrived, the pony shivered but stood firm, and Cowper Debenham appeared, tall, slender, elegant, in a commonplace throng. "How are you, Iris?" "Welcome home, Cowper."

Such was the public greeting of the lovers. A wave of bright color overspread the girl's face, but her words were few, and none of the flutter considered indispensable to the occasion by the young person in the telegraph office was perceptible in her manner.

"Much obliged, old fellow. I should hate to be kissed—by a man." "Sly dog!" laughed Cowper. "Besides, I have not traveled," added John, with a touch of irony in his tone.

"Why do you not travel?" "I have not the time, and would rather save the money," said John, curtly. Cowper shrugged his shoulders and entered the house.

He had studied the gesture before the glass. "You always were an incomprehensible fellow, John." "Commonplace is the term," echoed John, steadily.

Greetings of welcome were over at last. Mrs. Bemrose, Iris Gordon, Cowper Debenham and John Cleaver had dwelt beneath the same roof in harmony for many years, linked together by circumstances, while claiming no mutual relationship.

Their history was not devoid of interest, at least to Gordonville and the surrounding country. Each new-comer learned it speedily. The fathers of Iris and Cowper respectively had met on an emigrant ship outward-bound from Liverpool—two shabby young men, with a few shillings in their pockets, and heads full of intelligence.

A chance had thrown them together, and mutual sympathy cemented a life-long friendship, taking the form of partnership. Gordonville, the noisy factory, the large house built of wood, with a wide piazza in front, were the results of their industry.

Henry Gordon and Thomas Debenham had not lifted their eyes above axes and ploughs in their day, and glad enough they were to be able to fashion them. Cowper wore Poole coats and Paris boots in his time, while Iris had a phaeton, a grand piano, and had learned French at a fashionable boarding school.

The wheel of fortune had turned a trifle for these young people in the muscular grasp of their seniors. Both parents had married and lost their wives. When the cashier, Mrs. Bemrose's husband, was crushed in the fall of machinery, the widow had become an inmate of the Gordon house, and was given an interest in the manufactory which had so cruelly despoiled her.

When John Cleaver's father, the manager, died, he said: "Let my savings remain invested in the business until John is a man, and can choose for himself." The partition and contest of the family circle, the years had swept away Henry Gordon and Thomas Debenham, even as the night wind swept the leaves which fell from the maple trees planted by their own hands before the door.

Faithful to each other in the firm tenacity of an upright and honorable manhood, they had schemed that their kingdom should remain undivided in the marriage of their children. The arrogance of prosperity had characterized their projects.

"We shall never be moved, our name will endure," they had reasoned, bending over the fire, two hale old men; and the night wind, death had swept them away. The youth and maiden loved each other, and when the terms of his father's will were fulfilled, in education and foreign travel, Cowper Debenham, whose mother had been an invalid, fond of writing verses, was to become the head of the house, with Iris as his wife.

Mrs. Bemrose presided at the supper table, wearing her best cap, which imparted to her head a curious resemblance to a cauliflower, and surveyed her young companions with maternal benevolence. Mrs. Bemrose, by nature hazy, had already evinced extraordinary aptitude in getting all Cowper's descriptions wrong, and hopelessly muddling facts.

Opposite sat Iris, her slim cheeks flushed in proportion as the strawberry short-cake before her had acquired a brown and crisp aspect. She was a girl of nineteen, whose gray eyes, lustrous black hair and mobile features had gained her readily the reputation of being the beauty of the region. Heiress, leading lady of Gordonville, high-spirited and impulsive, Iris was seldom characterized by that somewhat vague term, "a sweet creature."

"Foreign fashions are always interesting," murmured Mrs. Bemrose. "Yes," assented Cowper. "Only you must not put on a hat wrong side foremost just because it comes from Paris. I have taken the liberty of ordering a costume for Iris on the Rue de la Paix."

"The toilet of a true Parisienne, quiet and elegant, or an eccentric dress adapted for exportation?" inquired Iris, mockingly. "Why not make a Venuese, a fashionable lady of Berlin, an Italian of me?"

"Impossible. There is a finish about those women which you have not yet attained," drawled Cowper, piqued by banter. Iris went to the piano, and soon her sweet voice was heard singing the old ballad.

"Do you know the truth up in Heaven, Douglas, tender and true." Iris left the piano abruptly; her fingers had struck discords. "I have news for you, Iris. The railroad is completed, and another territory opened to the world. My friend Hampton proposes to give a town on the line my name, and I have decided to christen the infant city in the wilderness Gordonville." John was speaking in the window.

Iris was interested. Cowper was now exhorting admiring Mrs. Bemrose on accent and idioms, and the means whereby one may disguise American individuality as much as possible. "I intend to go out there, Iris. Why not? I do not wish to remain here—always."

"Going away to live, John?" Iris swayed forward, and a cloud seemed to pass before her eyes. John's arm caught and drew her to him. Surely, in the magic moonlight which rendered the girl so fair, and the young man so noble in his profound emotion, their faces touched.

"When shall we learn to call a parlor a drawing-room?" said Cowper, in the background. "The parlor is a room back of a shop, or the place where nuns receive visitors in a convent."

An hour later the house was silent. Cowper yawned in his chamber and soliloquized: "How dull life is here! Of course I am one of Iris, but I wish she had the style of Lydia Welch. High—ho!"

Then he slept the sleep of a bored man who is comfortable while rendering others unhappy. Iris sat at her own window for hours, lost in thought. John Cleaver plunged into the woods, and rambled about until sunrise.

A month elapsed, during which Cowper made the family uncomfortable by comparisons, criticisms and innovations. Iris, belle of Gordonville, was forced to tread the red-hot plowshares of perpetual suggestions in manner, dress and use of speech. Cowper found John's coat of rustic cut, and John in turn was hurt by Cowper's change of bearing. Like George Eliot's hero, Cowper's mind "was furnished as hotels are, with everything for occasional use, and a European tour had excluded not only Gordonville, but the whole American continent."

"Shall we ever cease to deluge ourselves with ice water?" he mused at the breakfast table one morning. "I wish you would not eat hot cakes, Iris. I fancy your complexion suffers."

The girl's eyes flashed. She went to the bookcase and took down a volume. Cowper laughed softly. One would have inferred that he enjoyed irritating another, such was his own discontent. "What book have you there?" he drawled.

"Edmond About's Maitre Pierre." "Ah, and what interests you in it?" "A dish of nuts," said Iris.

admire. Yes, I found it described in Edmond About's Maitre Pierre. Listen in the Landes a suitor presents himself before the peasant girl he wishes to marry. Her parents understand the object of his visit without any irksome discussions about marriage settlements and a mutual adoration. He does not criticise the bride-elect, nor seek to remodel her on the pattern of the women of other countries, because he finds her perfect. I have reason to believe he never alludes to Paris—toilets and the manners of London society.

The suitor and his friends are politely received, and invited to remain to supper. The bride-elect has the right to place a covered dish in the center of the table. At the close of supper she reveals the contents to all the world. If the dish contains nuts, and she offers them to the suitor, she rejects him, and he departs. What a charming form of conge, giving the mitten! All explanations are avoided. You are right, Cowper; some foreign fashions are worthy of imitation."

Iris uncovered the dish in the middle of the table. It was filled with nuts. A sudden stillness pervaded the room. "Cowper, I offer you some nuts, after the custom of Les Landes," she said, and her face grew cold, severe.

Cowper stared in stupefaction. Iris heaped his plate with the nuts by a quick movement. "My dear girl, I do not wish it," he finally expostulated. "But I wish it!" she retorted, imperiously. "You mean to throw me over, Iris?"

"Now you are a mere commonplace American, Cowper. I offer you a dish of nuts in the fashion of Les Landes." Cowper reddened; he understood even in his bewilderment. "Our parents desired our marriage," she said. "Our parents did not require us to be unhappy. Mary Lydia Welch, whose photograph and letter, dated last week, I found on the floor in your room this morning."

"She would not have me," he exclaimed. "She is a tremendous heiress and an awful coquette. I traveled with her party. You are jealous, that is all. I much prefer you."

"Thank you," said Iris, haughtily. Mrs. Bemrose sat blinking like an owl in direct consternation. John had escaped by the window. Half an hour later a white-robed form glided to his side and a tender face looked up into his.

"Was the farce well played? Cowper was even unfaithful to me; but I forgive him because—"

"In Heaven's name, what does it all mean?" cried John, hoarse with passion and doubt. "Are you going alone to the infant city in the wilderness, John?" she whispered, tremulously.

"Will you go with me?—share my fate? Oh, my love, what have I done to deserve such joy? Now I know why you were named Iris in your cradle," replied the young man, in vibrating tone, full of tenderness.

Mrs. Bemrose and Cowper appeared in the open doorway. "Dear friends, we have decided to desert the old nest, and found a new Gordonville in the far West," said Iris, placing her hand within the arm of John Cleaver, and always with that tinge of mockery in her voice. "We were made for pioneers, and not to adorn society, peripatets."

A flood of exclamations, questions, and tears on the part of Mrs. Bemrose. A hand-shake, intended to be magnanimous, on the part of Cowper Debenham, who felt the breath of that cold night wind which had chilled the heart of Iris Gordon on the day of his return home, and earlier had swept the parents away. What was the cable wrought by Thomas Debenham and Henry Gordon but a rope of sand, after all? Mrs. Bemrose, shorn lamb, otherwise comfortable widow, alone beheld the solace of the situation as guardian of the old house in the future.—Harper's Weekly.

A Cribbing Horse. A subscriber asks if there is any cure for cribbing in a horse, and in what it consists. Cribbing is a habit, and a bad one, as it is also an indication of disease. Its cause, nor indeed the progress and results, has never been fully demonstrated. The horse will seize the manger with his teeth and move his mouth clinking, making a peculiar wheezing sound as if drawing in air through his mouth. It is considered hereditary. Its presence in a confirmed cribber may readily be detected, without witnessing the act, by the wear upon the incisor teeth, and to a great degree where the habit has been long continued. A cribbing horse may be strong and capable of all ordinary work, yet he will not carry his flesh so well nor have the same power of endurance.

DESTRUCTIVE BOILER EXPLOSION.

Explosion of the Boiler of the Steamer J. S. Robinson at Albany, N. Y.—Three Persons Killed, Several Injured, and Much Property Damaged—Several Narrow Escapes.

ALBANY, N. Y., Sept. 23. Early this morning the boiler on the steamer J. S. Robinson, which lay at the foot of Westerloo street, exploded with frightful force, instantly killing the captain, George S. Warner, and fireman, Wm. Cleary, and seriously injuring Fred Tenlar, engineer, who was blown into the water and narrowly escaped drowning, and Willard Durand and Melville Ryan, deck hands. Richard Van Zandt, son of Capt. Van Zandt, of the tug Cora, from New Baltimore, lying alongside the Robinson, was also killed. Capt. Robinson of the Hattie M. Betts, was blown from his pilot-house onto the wharf and severely injured. The Betts, which lay at the stern of the Robinson, was damaged \$1,000. The Cora, alongside, was a total wreck. The C. P. Groat, lying ahead of the Robinson, had joined work carried away and machinery damaged. The Robinson sank immediately, carrying with it the body of Cleary, the fireman. One section of the boiler, weighing two or three tons, was hurled 400 feet against the top story of a three-story building, crushing in a portion of the wall. Another section, weighing nearly a ton, crushed in the roof of the coal barge E. M. Downing, and still another section was hurled to the rear grazing the cabin of the coal boat Apollo and tearing away the roof before it fell into the river.

Buildings were shaken, windows broken and general consternation prevailed in the vicinity. The exploded boiler was built by Robert Livingston of this city in 1882. The explosion was probably caused by negligence of the engineer in allowing water in the boiler to get too low.

Captain McAndrew, of the canal boat Apollo, in the rear of the Robinson, and his wife had a narrow escape. They were asleep when a piece of the boiler carried away a section of the roof about three and a half feet long and one and a half feet wide, together with a portion of the cabin, nearly down to the bed. The roof was only two feet above their heads. McAndrew says the first thing he knew he was sitting on the floor, and looking back against the wall and things flying all around him. His wife was senseless in bed covered with the ruins of pictures and a looking-glass. Captain Robinson and his wife were asleep in the pilot-house. He turned a complete somersault in the air and suddenly found himself on the dock. Officers in the first precinct, about eight blocks distant, were thrown from their beds on the floor and the whole building shook violently for three seconds. They at first thought it was an earthquake.

IMITATING THE JAMES BOYS. Robbery of an Express Car on the Washak Road near Peru, Indiana, by Masked Men.—The Messenger Bound and Gagged and Otherwise Roughly Handled.—The Robbers Secure \$1,500.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., Sept. 23. Bert Loomis, the Washak Express messenger and baggage-master on the Detroit express, which arrived in this city at 2:15 this morning, was overpowered by robbers about midnight between Roann and Peru, on the main line, and a large sum of money, supposed to be about \$1,500, was taken from the car. The robbery was unknown to any of the train men until Peru was reached. Loomis was the only one in the baggage car, and, not appearing at Peru, where the train stopped, investigation discovered him lying insensible on the floor of the car, bucked and gagged, and badly bruised and bleeding. His legs and feet had been tightly bound with quarter-inch cords, his hands twisted and tied immovably behind him and his mouth filled with handkerchiefs, heavily knotted. Conductor C. E. Wells and his brakeman immediately believed the messenger and his stinted search for the robbers, who apparently had had things their own way and had successfully escaped with the money packages.

The train brought all the parties to this city and gradually the true story was learned, but not until the wildest rumors had obtained wide circulation. The sum stolen had reached, by rumor, \$40,000, a fact as narrated to a reporter by Mr. Loomis are sufficiently thrilling, although the amount taken is shown down to \$1,500. He says: "After the train had passed Roann, twenty miles from Peru, three masked men entered the car from the rear. There was no other train man besides myself in the car. Two of them stopped to fasten the door and the third approached me with a cocked revolver and said, 'Throw up your hands.' I dropped behind a chest and, pulling my pistol, answered, 'I have no money.' I followed up my remark with a shot, which he quickly answered with another. We then clinched, and I threw him behind the seats and he fell. The other fellows took a hand, and I heard one of them say: 'Knife him if he will not give in.' I was struck heavily in the pit of the stomach and became insensible, and nothing further until I heard somebody calling my name at Peru." Mr. Loomis further stated that he was certain that only \$1,500 was taken. The money was in the safe, which the robbers opened with the keys taken from Loomis' pocket. It was railroad money consigned to the Third National Bank of St. Louis.

The messenger to-day exhibited the evidences of harsh treatment. The skin was peeled from his wrists by the tight cords, and his neck was swollen and black from the effects of the vise which was clamped at the hands of the robbers who came to the help of their mate. Mr. Loomis is a well-built, muscular young man, and has the reputation of having everlasting grit. His home is in Detroit, and he runs regularly between that city and Indianapolis. Wells' theory of the robbery is that the masked men boarded the train in the woods about Chicago and Atlantic crossing, where the last stop was made this side of Laketon. They passed at once into the express and baggage car, the door to which by some mischance had not been locked. Two suspicious characters have been arrested at Logansport, supposed to be implicated in the robbery.

A Bold and Shrewd Operator Victimizes Retail Produce Men to the Tune of \$100,000. MONTREAL, Sept. 27. In August last an Englishman named C. J. Dewey came here from Liverpool and began business as a produce shipper to England. He showed letters from the best houses all over England, ordering goods, and got all he wanted. He raised \$25,000 from Molson's bank on the strength of bills of lading. The drafts were duly honored when presented in Liverpool. The next shipment was on the 14th inst., and he got advances from the same bank of \$30,000, also on bills of lading. It is now discovered that Dewey had passed forged bills of lading in Boston and New York for advances there to a large amount. One bank in Boston is taken in to the extent of \$1,000 and the agents of the Bristol produce house in New York for over \$20,000. A produce merchant in London, Ont., was also defrauded out of one thousand boxes of cheese, for which he holds forged securities on New York. The total amount of the absconder's frauds will reach at least \$100,000. Detectives are after him, and a large reward is offered for his arrest. He is supposed to be in the Eastern States.

Warren McChesney of St. Louis has been indicted for forgery and bribery.