

HARRIS.

Grace, Beauty and Caprice
Build this golden portal:
Graceful women, chosen met
Dance every mortal.

MRS. DOBBS' "WHIM."

From the Argosy.

Mr. and Mrs. Dobbs lived at Clapham. They were a very worthy couple, their friends said. That is about the best people will say of an elderly pair if they are not intellectual or troublesome.

Mrs. Dobbs was reputed a respectable and virtuous matron for other reasons. Imprimis, she had no taste in dress; neither did she paint her face or excite the envy and spite of her female friends by beautifying her house.

Mr. Dobbs was "something in the city" and his big office and many clerks brought in something more than a comfortable income. Yet he made no parade of wealth and kept household accounts strictly.

As years went on Josiah philosophically gave up wishing for an heir, seeing his Dorothy had grown portly and middle aged. He subscribed largely to the various charities not having a legitimate outlet for his human kindness.

Mrs. Dobbs did not however, view such matters with equanimity. Seeing the undue and unwelcome number of olive branches round about other people's tables, she resented nature's cruelty to herself.

For a long time Mrs. Dobbs had displayed no extraordinary caprices. Josiah was sailing along in wonderfully smooth matrimonial waters.

"I'm going to adopt a child, Josiah. Now it's no use your contradicting

me, because I won't listen," said the lady one evening over dessert. She spoke aggressively, cracking the shell of a walnut with decision.

"Aren't you going to speak?" she said at length. "A child," remarked Josiah, dropping his fat chin into his shirt.

"When I say a thing I mean it, as you know, Josiah. I have considered that you indulge your hobbies without restraint. It is high time my benevolence found something to occupy it."

"Dorothy, my dear, how often have I reminded you in the past three years that your poor sister—left a child. As I have said before, it is your clear duty."

"Mr. Dobbs!" The lady rose, and swept her black satin skirts to the door. Here she paused to add: "I repeat, I remember no sister. A disgraceful marriage severed all connection of birth. I beg that you will never allude to that shameful matter again."

Perhaps the episode alluded to was well remembered by Josiah, for he sighed several times in his after-dinner solitude. He knew the mad-cap girl he had sheltered for many years beneath his roof was dead, but he knew, too, that her child lived, and he would fain have cherished it for the mother's sake.

In the course of the evening Mrs. Dobbs resumed the question of adoption. Josiah was a peaceable man, and he loved his wife; but this last whim was a serious one, and would inevitably entangle her in difficulties.

"I'm going to advertise at once," she said. Mr. Dobbs looked very blank. "I should advise you to try some other plan that would give less publicity to the matter," he said mildly.

"That would bring any amount of beggars and impostors about you," Mrs. Dobbs looked over her crewel work in an injured way.

"There you are again, Josiah; always trying to oppose me and make my life miserable. I declare you contradict me every morning and evening about something. Haven't I told you before what a lonely life I lead? It's all very well for you, who go away to the city every day to make money. You are just like all men—you are selfish to the core."

With this final female platitude, Mrs. Dobbs began to whimper. Mr. Dobbs felt guilty of heinous cruelty. "A companion, might—" he began. The lady lifted herself from the sofa cushion and Josiah quailed.

"A companion!" with withering sarcasm, "to make love to you, no doubt, Josiah. I know their scheming ways. Didn't I have enough of Miss Griggs and her maneuvering tricks, working you braces, the hussy, and sending you Christmas cards. How dare you mention a person of that sort after all my sufferings with them?"

Of course in the end the lady prevailed, and Josiah passively consented to the adoption. Matters were soon set in order for the fulfillment of the latest whim.

Yet verily her heart failed her during the week following her advertisement. Her lonely condition had never been so apparent to her before as when she was beset by a crew of parents and guardians bearing some puny or blighted infant for her adoption. All sorts and conditions of men craved her pity for their wretched children. She was bewildered by the offensive bearing of bolder applicants. More than once Mrs. Dobbs had to ring in her respectable butler to get rid of some insistent parent who endeavored to intimidate her into an immediate purchase.

The result of all this was a cessation of all that went on, though an interview with his butler one evening threw a little light on things that had occurred. "I wish to give a month's warning, sir," said this gentleman in privacy to his master.

"Why, now, Tinker, what is the matter? I'm sure you've a very comfortable place, with a boy to do all your dirty work."

"Tinker coughed and stammered a few words before coming to the point. 'Well, now, sir, to speak plain it's a lone of that wild crowd of vagabonds, as Mrs. Dobbs she's seeing of every day. Babies by the score, they're brought by impudent rascals such as I ain't been accustomed to. One of 'em she wouldn't go out of the gate till I called the police. It aint respectable in a gentleman's house, I do assure you, sir.'"

Somehow or other Mr. Dobbs managed to soothe the outraged feelings of his man servant, and prevailed upon him to put up awhile longer with the inconvenience of the situation. The worthy Josiah was concerned for the protection of his wife.

"How are you getting on with your business, my love?" inquired Mr. Dobbs that evening. "Oh, pretty well," said the lady cheerfully, yet persistently avoiding her husband's eyes. "I find it very difficult to make up my mind; and I want a pretty little boy, not quite a baby, with no disgraceful connections to hang about him. No doubt I shall see one to suit me in a few days."

After the appearance of this advertisement the persecution of Clarence Villa died away, and only now and again a respectable man or woman, leading a little boy, was heard inquiring for Mrs. Dobbs' residence of a local policeman.

"I have come about the child, Mr. Griffith," she said, going at once to her point. "How is it you have sent me none that are pretty or interesting?" From the force of habit, Mrs. Dobbs was apt to speak dictatorially to strangers.

"My dear madam, pray remember children are not made to order." Mrs. Dobbs winced. "I see I must except no assistance from you, sir," she said loftily. No doubt my husband's opposition to my object has influenced you, I will trouble you no further in this matter. You may consider your quest at an end. Good morning."

Weary of her undertaking, Mrs. Dobbs had almost resolved to abandon her whim. She chewed the cud of bitter thoughts on her homeward way that day. Providence or fortune was against her success. That evening Mr. Dobbs came home in an unusual degree of haste, and of a cheerful mien. "Love," said he, tripping over the dining-room mat, "I've found a child for you."

Mrs. Dobbs looked up coldly. "It's impossible I shall like it," said she perversely. "No one wants to part with a child unless there's something the matter with it." Mr. Dobbs beamed yet more brightly. He was not to be snubbed by any wet blankets. "It's a little boy, and he is 3 years old, fair, pretty and most intelligent. His father is just dead."

"What about his mother?" queried Mrs. Dobbs cautiously. Josiah reddened, stammering a little. "She—ah, poor soul—is dead too. This is no beggar's brat. He is well born, Dorothy, on one side. I can give you every proof."

The next day the child was brought to Clapham and left a Clarence Villa by a clerk from M. Dobbs' office. He was poorly dressed, but a handsome little lad, lively and spirited. He was not at all shy, and addressed himself freely to the pug and parrot. The piping treble voice and shrill, childish laughter touched the maternal chord in Dorothy's heart. She went a little sadly that day while her eyes followed the child. He stroked her velvet gown and fingered her rings while he sat upon her knee, chatting about the things around him.

"What is your name?" questioned the lady. "Harry," answered the boy readily. But nothing more could be elicited from him. He did not seem to understand that he could have a second name. He was but a baby boy, scarcely three.

In the afternoon Mrs. Dobbs telegraphed to her husband that he must make arrangements for her to keep the child a day or two. It would not be necessary to send any one to fetch him that evening. The day passed quickly, with little feet pattering beside her, exploring the wonders of garden and greenhouses. Towards 7 o'clock Mrs. Dobbs began to look anxiously for her spouse's return. She had quite decided that she would keep the child, but still there were questions to be asked—preliminaries to be settled. The boy must be hers entirely. None must ever claim him, or interfere with his welfare. Mr. Dobbs came leisurely up the garden at his usual hour, carrying his fish-bag. His stolid face changed a little when he looked through the window and saw the child on his wife's knee.

"He is a pretty boy, Dorothy," he said nervously, when he came near. "A darling little boy; I mean to keep him, Josiah," she said, gently disengaging the chubby hands from her chair. "Will you stay with me, Harry?"

The child laughed gleefully, tossing back his curls. "Stay with oo; pity, pity flowers," he cried clapping his hands.

"Tell me all you know about him, Josiah. What is his parentage, and will his nearest relatives surrender all claim upon him?"

Josiah shifted uneasily in his seat. He had the appearance of a man oppressed with guilt.

"He is an orphan," said he looking speculatively at his own broad toes.

"So much the better for me," said Mrs. Dobbs. But I will have no distant relatives hanging about. He must belong exclusively to me."

Mr. Dobbs drew nearer to his wife. "Dorothy, he ought to belong to you if to anyone."

"Indeed!" said White. "The last time I met her was at the Hotel Continental in Paris, when she presented me to Clara Louise Kellogg."

"And that reminds me," said Greene, "that the last time I saw her I was seated by her side in her carriage, driving up Fifth-ave. for a turn in Central Park."

And then the three gentlemen looked at each other, and shook hands, and laughed. How small this world is.

The Long One and the Short One. New Zealand Times.

There is a story of old Peter Faucett, the New South Wales Supreme Court Judge who lately retired. He was somewhat short-sighted, and one day a very diminutive barrister appeared before him to move something or other. When the short man stood alongside "Jumbo," a very tall barrister, who was sitting down, their heads were about on a level, and as soon as the small man began: "If your honor please, I—" "Ye must stand up when y' address the court," interrupted old Peter, irascibly. "I am standing up," said the small man, with dignity. "Then tell the gentleman alongside ye to sit down."

Joe Jefferson's Home.

Across the marshes and bayous eight miles to the west from Petite Anse island rises Orange island, famous for its orange plantation, but called Jefferson island since it became the property and home of Joseph Jefferson. Not so high as Petite Anse, it is still conspicuous with its crown of dark forest. From a high point on Petite Anse, through a lonely vista of trees, with flowering cacti in the foreground, Jefferson's house is a white spot in the landscape. We reached it by a circuitous drive of 12 miles over the prairie, sometimes in and sometimes out of water, and continually diverted from our course by fences. It is a good sign of the thrift of the race, and of its independence, that the colored people have taken up or bought little tracts of 30 or 40 acres, put up cabins, and new fences round their domains regardless of the traveling public. We zigzagged all about the country to get round these little enclosures. At one place, where the main road was bad, a thrifty Acadian had set up a toll of twenty-five cents for the privilege of passing through his premises. The scenery was pastoral and pleasing. There were frequent round ponds, brilliant with lilies and fleurs-de-lis, and hundreds of cattle feeding on the prairie or standing in the water, and generally of a dun-color, made always an agreeable picture. The monotony was broken by lines of trees, by cape-like woods stretching into the plain, and the horizon line was always fine. Great variety of birds enlivened the landscape, game birds abounding. There was the lively nonparrel, which seems to change its color, and is red and green and blue—I believe of the oriole family—the papabotte, a favorite on New Orleans tables in the autumn, snipe, killdeer, the cheerooke (snipe?) the meadow lark, and quantities of teal duck in the ponds. These little ponds are called "bull-holes." The traveler is told that they are started in this watery soil by the pawing of bulls, and gradually enlarge as the cattle frequent them. He remembers that he has seen similar circular ponds in the North not made by bulls.

Mr. Jefferson's residence—a pretty rosevine-covered cottage—is situated on the slope of the hill, overlooking a broad plain and vast stretch of bayou country. Along one side of his home enclosure for a mile runs a superb hedge of Chickasaw roses. On the slope back of the house, and almost embracing it, is a magnificent grove of liveoaks, great gray stems, and the branches hung with heavy masses of moss, which swing in the wind like the pendant boughs of the willow, and with something of its sentimental and mournful suggestions. The recesses of this forest are cool and dark, but upon ascending the hill, suddenly bursts upon the view under the trees a most lovely lake of clear blue water. This lake which may be a mile long and a half a mile broad, is called Lake Peigneur, from its fanciful resemblance, I believe to a wool-comber.

The shores are wooden. On the island side the bank is precipitous; on the opposite shore amid the trees is a hunting lodge and I believe, there are plantations on the north end, but it is in aspect altogether solitary and peaceful. But the island did not want life. The day was brilliant, with a deep blue sky and high-sailing fleecy clouds, and it seemed a sort of annual holiday; squirrels chattered; cardinal birds flashed through the green leaves; there flitted about the red-winged blackbird, bluejays, red-headed woodpeckers, thrushes and occasionally a rain-crow crossed the scene; high overhead sailed the heavy buzzards, describing great aerial circles; and off in the still lake the ugly heads of the alligators toasting in the sun.—Charles Dudley Warner, "The Acadian Land" in Harper's Magazine for February.

The World Not so Very Large. From the Washington Post.

The world is growing smaller every day! Three gentlemen were standing together in the East Room of the White House at the last State reception. Richly dressed and beautiful women were thronging into that magnificent parlor from the Green Room, having "been through" as the expression is for a presentation to the President in the Blue Room. The social mill was in furious operation that evening, and an enormous grist was being ground out.

Suddenly a medium-sized, fascinating lady from New York, in an elegant and becoming costume, emerged from the hopper. She was the wife of a high railway official in that city. The three gentlemen glanced at her. No one of the three knew that either of the others had ever seen her before.

"Ah! said Browne, "the last time I saw her I was pouring sand into her shoes at Long Branch."

"Indeed!" said White. "The last time I met her was at the Hotel Continental in Paris, when she presented me to Clara Louise Kellogg."

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PLAGUE OF CHOLERA. How the Dread Disease has Penetrated America—Several Times. From the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Asiatic cholera is an epidemic disease of great virulence. It has been known from a very remote period, and has visited at one time or another almost every country on the globe. The first account published in detail was in the first part of the sixteenth century. The disease seems to have prevailed first in India, and the various epidemics in other countries can be traced as having been brought from that country. The invasion of India by the Portuguese and afterward by the English during the sixteenth century served to introduce the disease into Europe. It again was brought into Europe during the eighteenth century by the English invasion of India. In 1832 it again prevailed in Europe, and 2,000,000 people died from it during that year. It first appeared in America during that year (1832) and was brought here by a French emigrant ship, which disembarked along the St. Lawrence river and spread the disease to the various towns along the river and the great lakes as far as Fort Dearborn, near where Chicago now is. From thence it spread as far as the Mississippi. In the same year another ship brought it to New York, and from thence it spread southward along the coast to the Gulf, and westward into the interior, along the course of the great highways of travel.

It first appeared in Pittsburgh in 1833. It next appeared in 1845, and again in 1853. In 1865 it occurred again, but had a limited extent, and its last appearance was in 1878, at which time it did not prevail to any extent.

All the cases that have ever prevailed can be traced to pre-existing cases of cholera, proving that it does not arise spontaneously, but is always caused by pre-existing cases. This is almost absolutely proved, and teaches a lesson with regard to prevention of the disease. What the specific contagious material is that causes cholera is a subject yet of much investigation and dispute. The investigations of Koch, of recent years, would seem to point toward a micro-organism as the cause, an organism called the comma bacillus. Yet this is not absolutely proved, and in fact there are some grave objections to the theory. This organism is found in great numbers in the intestinal canal of cholera patients, and it is not found in patients suffering from any other disease. Yet these germs, when dried, die in a very short time.

Now it has been proved that the contagion of cholera has been carried long distances and for spaces of time in dry clothing and other matters. Koch's theory, consequently, is not universally accepted. Some think the disease is due to a chemical compound, which is unstable. Cholera prevails during warm weather, and is most fatal in tropical climates. Cold weather is almost sure to stop an epidemic. It undoubtedly effects its entrance into the system through the alimentary canal—that is, stomach and intestines—and does not enter through the lungs, in all probability. Yet in effect it is much the same, as the contagious material often disseminated by the atmosphere may lodge in the mouth, and, being swallowed, cause the disease. Its origin can often be traced also to water into which some of the excrement of cholera patients has gained access.

The prevention of this disease consequently limits itself down to destruction of the morbid product which produces it, and isolation of those affected with the disease to prevent its spreading—the destruction of everything about these patients calculated to retain the poison. The best method of doing this is by fire and disinfectants.

We think that not only should the clothing be burned, but also the bodies of those who die of the disease. The safety of the community at large depends upon the thoroughness with which this is done. Isolation of the patients and prevention of the possibility of carrying the disease by a strict quarantine, both at seaport and inland should be urged. The objection to quarantine is found in its interference with commerce, but the interference, as a rule, affects only a minority of people, and the rule that few should suffer for the benefit of the many should be applied here. Experience, the great educator, has taught that the safety of the masses depends upon the efficiency of the quarantine.

The symptoms of the disease are too well known to need repetition. During the first part of an epidemic the disease usually is more violent and the mortality greater than later on, the disease seeming to spend itself, to wear itself out. In very severe cases death may take place in a few hours. One peculiarity noticed about persons dying from this disease is the contraction of the muscles, which takes place a few hours after death. It is sometimes horrifying to those about the body to thus see a dead man move. A Mr. Ward reports the following: "I saw the eyes of my dead patient open and move slowly in a downward direction. This was followed, a minute or two subsequently, by the movements of the right arm, previously lying by the side, across the chest."

Another case is reported of the body turning clear over by the muscular contractions on one side of the body. In many cases of cholera no treatment is of avail. In the less severe forms it is of the utmost importance for the patient to have early treatment. Dr. Austin Flint attaches great importance to this, and says that in an experience of three epidemics, during which he attended hundreds of cases, recovery was the rule if he saw the patient early in the disease. The deaths during an epidemic occur largely among the poor, poverty and neglect being largely the cause.

A shortage of \$24,000 has been found in the accounts of Col. W. H. Webster, late treasurer of Merrick county, Nebraska. Webster offers to turn over all his property, amounting to \$20,000.

What We Are Made Of.

Professor Langley.

In the South Kensington Museum there is an immense collection of objects appealing to all tastes and all classes, and we find there at the same time people belonging to the wealthy and cultivated part of society, lingering over the Louis Seize cabinets or the old majolica, and the artisan and his wife studying the statements as to the relative economy of baking powders, or admiring Tippeco Saib's wooden tiger. There is one shelf, however, which seems to have some attraction common to all social grades, for its contents appear to be of equal interest to the peer and costermonger. It is the representation of a man resolved into his chemical elements, or rather, an exhibition of the materials of which the human body is composed. There is a definite amount of water, for instance, in our blood and tissues, and there on the shelf are just so many gallons of water in a large vessel. Another jar shows the exact quantity of carbon in us; smaller bottles contain our iron and our phosphorus in just proportion, while others exhibit still other constituents of the body, and the whole reposes on the shelf, as if ready for the coming of a new Frankenstein to recreate the original man and make him walk about again as we do. The little vials that contain the different elements which we all bear about in small proportions are more numerous, and they suggest not merely the complexity of our constitutions but the identity of our elements with those we have found by the spectroscopic, not alone in the sun, but even in the distant stars and nebulae, for this wonderful instrument of the new astronomy can find the traces of poison in a stomach or analyze a star, and its conclusion leads us to think that the ancients were nearly right when they called man a microcosm, or little universe. We have literally within our bodies samples of the most important elements of which the great universe without is composed, and you and I are not only like each other and brothers in humanity, but children of the sun and stars in a more literal sense, having bodies actually made in large part of the same things that made Sirius and Aldebaran. They and we are near relatives.

The Military Frontier of France. The cession of Alsace and Lorraine placed Metz and Strasburg, the keys of the old French frontier in German hands. It gave France a new frontier and a very open one, a frontier unprotected by any very great natural obstacles, for the Germans now held both sides of the Rhine, and the northern passes of the Vosges (the passes by which the French army used to march to the Rhine under Napoleon I.) were well within the new German territory. Moreover, this naturally open frontier might be said to be wholly unprotected by art once Metz and Strasburg were gone. True there was the fortress of Belfort on the extreme right, guarding the well marked valley between the Vosges and the Jura, which French geographers call la trouee de Belfort. But Belfort, shattered by the successful siege which was the last act of the war, was only the wreck of a fortress, and in any case its works were not of such a character as to fit it for its new position on the very frontier line. Taught by the hard lessons of defeat, the French Government at once set to work to put the new frontier into a thorough state of defense. Successive War Ministers have steadily worked upon the lines originally laid down by the engineers charged with the task in 1871. Money has not been spared. It has been spent by millions, and now, after the labor of 16 years, the work is done. Probably so vast a scheme of military engineering was never before planned and executed in so brief a time. The French engineers have not been content to erect upon the new frontier three or four first-class fortresses to serve as points of support for a defending army. They have closed it with a double line of works, linked these together by an elaborate system of railways, and, besides fortifying Paris, they have constructed two other great fortresses in the heart of France to serve as bases of operation for her armies if, as in 1870, the barriers nearer the frontier were again pressed by invading armies from beyond the Rhine.—Rural National Review.

How Much Can be Dreamt in Five Seconds. Revue Scientifique.

I was sitting with a police official at his office, and we were discussing some fantastic story, when an employe came in and sat down beside us, leaning with his elbows on the table. I looked up and said to him, "you have forgotten to make the soup." "No, no; come with me." We went out together, going across long corridors, I walked behind him, at the college where I had been brought up. He went into a wing of the house which I knew well, and which led to the class rooms. Under the stairs he showed me a stove on which stood an oyster shell with a little white paint in it (I had been mixing water colors the night before.) "But you have forgotten the vegetables. Go to the porter at the other end of the courtyard; you will find them there on the table." I waited for a long time; at last I saw him making signs to me that he had found nothing. "It is at the left hand side," I shouted, and saw him cross the yard, coming back with an immense cabbage. I took a knife from my pocket, which I always kept there, and at the moment when I was going to cut the vegetable I was awakened by the noise of a bowl of soup being put heavily on the marble top of the table next my bed.

It appears to me that the idea of soup was suggested to me by the smell at the moment when the door was opened by a servant bringing in the soup while I was asleep, and it takes five seconds at the most to walk from the door to the bed.