

Kit Kennedy

BY S. E. CROCKETT.

CHAPTER L.—(Cont'd.)

But before he had time to reach his desired haven of a sony meat tea he discerned through the drift, the bleak moorland, a number of dark figures advancing on foot up the long steep ascent.

At this Hoggie threw down his broom with a justifiable expression of disgust.

"Mair and mair! They may be wantin' to stop ten days like you drawing crairs that cam' at the time o' the snow-storm three year syne, and nearly ate us out o' hoose and hame. At the best they'll be bidin' for their tea, and Hoggie will hae to wait till the mistress and Meg has them served. May the black deil tak a' staveagers and run-the-countries that are sae far left to themselves as to forsake their ain comfortable fire-sides in sic weather."

Hoggie was at the gate by this time, and the stoutest of the party of four came forward to speak to him. "Are ye the master of this inn?" he said, politely.

Hoggie shook his head with a curious little smirk.

"Na," he said, "I wadna tak' that upon myself—just yet. But the mistress is busy-ben the hoose, and—wee!, ye may say anything to me that ye hae to say to her."

"We are three friends out from Edinburgh on a walking tour in our Christmas holidays. At the last moment my daughter wished to accompany us. I fear there is a storm brewing. Could we have any accommodation, however humble, at your inn?" Hoggie scratched his head.

"Weel," he said, "ye'll hae to gang into the auld hoose. For there's a lady and"—Hoggie paused—he could not conscientiously add "a gentleman"—"a man here already, and they hae engaged the best rooms and the parlor. They hae had them bespoken mair than three weeks. Sae gin ye want any accommodation, ye'll e'en hae to gang to the auld hoose."

"A double-bedded room, and a small one for the young lady, will be all we shall want, and we are willing to go anywhere you can put us. Where is the 'auld hoose' of which you speak?" Hoggie turned on his heel, and pointed to a long, straggling, single-storyed thatched house, whose small windows looked into the quadrangle of outbuildings at the back of the larger inn.

"That's the auld hoose," he said; "it was here before ever there was a Baxter."

The two seniors—who were, of course, the "Orra Man" and Daniel Bisset, looked at each other.

"That's a fine house," said Mr. Bisset, "but we go in now and we'll see what we can get, and ease the take off our wet boots."

"Ye maun hae been ill-fixed at that that ye cam' aff on a walkin' tour, and wi' a lassie too, in weather like this! But I suppose ye'll be English, an' the Almighty if He has gien them siller, has surely withaidden a' common sense frae the pair crairs. Come your ways ben. I bide in the auld hoose myself—for the present. And I'e warrant ye'll no be waur dune there than if ye had the best bedroom in Baxter's. Come ben! Come ben!"

CHAPTER LI.

"HOW LONG, O LORD, HOW LONG?"

Lillias Mac Walter sat in a little chillish sitting-room in the contracted grate of which a fire of wood and peat was reluctantly burning up with a maximum of smoke and a minimum of flame. She had thrown down her shawls and bonnet upon the sofa, and now she sat in the armchair by the fire looking straight before her, a dull and hopeless ache wrenching stolidly at her heart. She had suffered so much that the acuteness had gone out of the pain itself. Death and life seemed now very much alike to her. Walter Mac Walter grew every day more sullenly enraged. Sometimes he would sit and watch her for hours with hateful, malevolent eyes.

Again, without any apparent occasion, he would hector and rage, threaten and bully, till only the dullness of weariness and indifference preserved her sanity.

On this occasion he strode restlessly up and down the narrow apartment. He had the whip still in his hand, clutched in the middle, and every other minute he would stop at the window and curse the snow, which appeared somehow to irritate him past endurance.

"But for this I might have had it over to-night," he muttered. "Pshaw! nothing goes right with me! But I am glad, though, that the place looks different."

He stopped before his wife.

"Woman," he said, "rise up and look after the fire, and see that the idle people bring us something to eat."

Lillias stooped obediently, and began to arrange the smouldering peat and dying embers. She blew ineffectually till the man, laying his hand upon her shoulder with a sudden fierce access of anger, thrust her rudely aside.

"Stand away from there!" he cried. "You blow all the ash into the room. Get the dinner laid, and leave me to attend to the fire myself."

Lillias moved listlessly towards the door.

"No," thundered her husband, "did I not tell you that you were not to go out of my sight on the peril of your life? Dare to disobey me on your peril! Ring the bell!"

And as the woman did not at once see the bell-pull, which was hidden behind a deep curtain, he rushed thither himself and pulled it till the cord came off in his hand, and the released

lever sprang back with a wheezing screech.

Mistress Conachar of Baxter's Inn appeared a moment after at the door of the private parlor, a little flushed in the face, partly from the shortness of breath natural to her years and manner of life, and partly from an excusable anger at being summoned thus imperiously in her own house.

As she entered Walter Mac Walter threw the green cord of the bell-pull on the floor.

"Can you not bring up dinner at once? I ordered it to be ready upon my arrival. Is three weeks too short notice for you?"

"You are nearly an hour before the time you specified in your letter, sir," said Mistress Conachar with dignity. "But I will spread the cloth."

"Yes, spread it and be done!" returned Walter Mac Walter, striding to the window, and standing there a tall, gloomy figure, the whip still clutched nervously in his right hand.

Mistress Conachar erected herself, and sailed out with the stately port of a galeon before the wind.

"Indeed," she said, indignantly, "is this the King o' Muscovy that we hae gotten at Baxter's? Spread the cloth and be done! It's not likely that Elspeth Conachar will bide where her conversation is not esteemed a privilege. Where's that guid-for-naething Hoggie Hough—out at the auld hoose, ye say, wi' mair tourist bodie? I wonder what's ta'en the hale world to travel at Christmas. Never was sic daft-like ploys heard o' in my young days. Babble, tak' ben the sic best service. Buid gens what sic a monster might no do to my best cheena. Faith, I'm heart-sorry for you pairtifu'-lookin' thing that he has for a wife. She appears no to be lang for this world. An' gin it was her I wadna muckle care, wi' sicca a giffin' Hottentot for a man!"

When Walter Mac Walter was left alone with his wife he sat down opposite her.

"You do not ask why I have brought you here," he said; "I know your play and pretence of meekness. But, my lady, I learned from a source you cannot guess at, of your letters to the old stonebreaker, your father. I doubt not they were the means you took of sending my money to the drunkard's son. Now it seems that I cannot watch you closely enough in your own house at Kirkoswald. But I can here. I will not once let you out of my sight. You shall see your old father on the parish before you die. And I will make of your son just what his father was. I cannot say more than that!"

Lillias had eaten nothing, and now sat with her head turned away from her tormentor, looking into the fire with an expression of more than mortal anguish.

"How long, O Lord, how long?" she was saying within her own heart. And it was not to be long. For so the Lord of the snow and of the sea of the heart of man had decreed, and Walter Mac Walter went on. His cord was lengthened yet a little.

"And let me tell you that now you are in a place where you can do nothing to help your beggar's brat or alter that which is coming to him. I saw Sowerby of Cairn Edward the other day, and he told me that the brat was already proving the blood he came of. He is spending his bursary money like water in the vipest places. He will soon come to the end of it and be disgraced. That is why I will take good care that you do not send him any more. In a year I will see him back at the hedge-root, where I have seen his father lie. I shall live to have him sent to gaol, and you shall go to the trial—Lillias, pretty Lillias that once flouted and despised Walter Mac Walter. Have not I paid my debts in full?"

And the sound of his voice reached the ears of three who listened beneath in the snow, and was heard also by a fourth, who stood a little way behind.

"Aye," this last communed with himself, "oot o' my mind, I wad say sae. That's never the voice o' a man in his seven senses. Ye may coont on Hoggie Haugh to keep an' e'e on him. I'll never tak' a wink o' sleep this night 'til that pairt thing in his pooper."

For the excellent thought had come to Mr. Bisset, so soon as he had heard Hoggie describe Walter Mac Walter as a "black-a-vised hyena," that they should take the ostler partly into their confidence. A crisp and "crunkly" pound note wonderfully assisted the process, and the "Orra Man's" discriminating appreciation of the horses in the stable beneath the auld hoose o' Baxter's bought Hoggie Haugh body and soul.

"He's gane to his ain bed and barred his door, flingin' it to wi' a brangle that shook the hoose!" was Hoggie's last bulletin. "I'll listen whiles at the pair lassie's window through the nicht, and gie ye a cry if need be."

"I also will watch with you!" said Christopher Kennedy, M.A.

CHAPTER LII.

THE NIGHT WATCH.

Lillias Mac Walter had long known her husband's essential insanity. For years he had dwelt morbidly upon her past. The boy Kit Kennedy was to Mac Walter the outward sign and token of her former love for his father. Of a cast of mind originally coarse and brutal, without mental or moral reserves of power, Walter Mac Walter had grown to believe that his chances of happiness depended upon the removal of the boy out of his path, and for this purpose he had systematically endeavored to separate Lillias and her son. But recently an idea far more dangerous had taken its place. He had made a mistake. The wife herself was the barrier to happiness. The son must be ruined,

NURSES

The Toronto Hospital for Incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women, having the required education, and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and traveling expenses to and from New York. For further information apply to the Superintendent.

The mother would die of grief. He himself would be free—or, if this failed him or proved too slow, he must discover other means to free himself.

His return to places familiar to him in his boyhood, his fits of a terrible kindness and brutality would, to a medical man accustomed to cases of delusion, have indicated influence and homicidal mania, and have diagnosed Walter Mac Walter as belonging to the most dangerous class of lunatics.

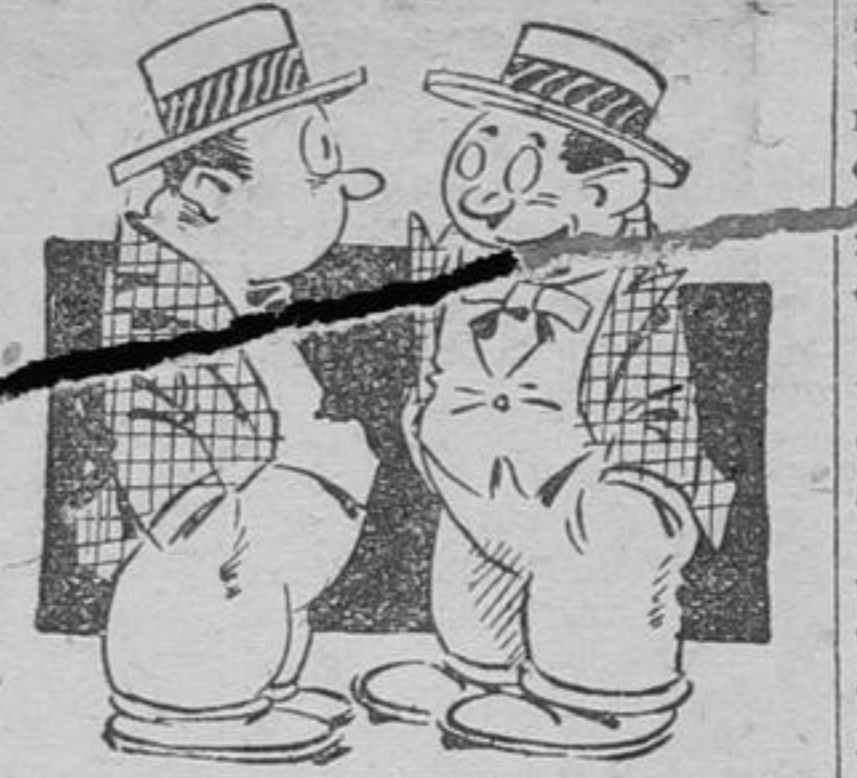
Yet he was a man of money, power, and responsibility. It was impossible to restrain or confine him. His mental states were not noted save by his wife, and she, wearied and made even indifferent by long-continued cruelty, mistook his moods for the natural bias of a perverted jealousy, though a specialist on the alert would rather have noted them as strong evidence of dementia. There are lunatics who, being sane in the ordinary affairs of business and the outward relations of mankind, and having no one in any sort of authority over them, cannot be proved to be insane till some overt act of mania suddenly startles their world into dreadful knowledge of their condition. Such maniacs are perhaps the most dangerous of all.

It was, for instance, no unusual thing for Lillias to awake in the night to the affrighting consciousness that her husband had entered the room and was standing silently by her bedside with arms folded across his breast. Hour after hour he would remain so, never for a moment removing his gaze from her face. And then as the grey light of the morning stole into the fearful chamber, and the blinds edged themselves with brighter light, he would steal back to his own room on tiptoe and fling himself upon his bed, still fully dressed, only to repeat the performance the following night.

It was a vigil like this, for the first time spied upon by other eyes than those of the persecuted woman, who had borne her trouble so silently throughout the years, that Walter Mac Walter kept that stormy night of midwinter in the inn of Baxter's Polly high on the cliffs of Sandhaven.

The two men, watching at the edges of the blind through which the feeble glimmer of the night-light shone like an illumination, saw Walter Mac Walter come in and stand by his wife's bed. Motionless for a full hour they watched him. Their hands were on the window sill ready to throw up the sash and spring into the room if he should lay hands upon her.

(To be continued.)



Literary Work.

The Acrobat—"That ventriloquist guy says he writes all his own stuff."
The Hooper—"He ain't got the brains. His stuff sounds like it was written by his dummy."

It is better to be able to look back to a day well lived than ahead to a month of promises.

Minard's Liniment for stiff muscles.

BRIGHT REMARKS THE CHILDREN MAKE

It was Teddy's first term at school, and his mother had been telling the rich old uncle how well the boy was getting along with his studies and how dearly he loved his school.

"Well, my little man," said the uncle, "what do you do in school all day?"

"I wait till it's time to go home," was Teddy's matter of fact reply.

A school girl who was asked to define drawing replied:

"It is just thinking and then marking round the think with a pencil."

Dick had had his first lesson in astronomy and when he came home from school he began to enlighten his small sister on the mystery of the stars.

"Do you know," he said, "that the little star you see way up there is very much bigger than this whole earth?"

"Then why doesn't it keep the rain off us?" she asked.

Joan, aged six, and Kathleen, aged eight, were having an argument as to who was the taller.

"Of course you are not as tall as I am," said Kathleen. "You are only as high as my shoulder."

"Yes," admitted Joan, "but your feet don't go down any farther than mine; so I'm as tall as you that way!"

A little girl had been to church for the first time. On returning home her mother asked her what she thought of the service.

"I liked it very much," she replied, "but there was one thing I didn't think was fair."
"What was that, dear?" asked the mother.

Where Prison Means Honor.

Prison life in this country has lost many of the terrors, but the "prison taint" remains. We are still very far removed from the point of view of the natives of West Africa, who consider a term of imprisonment in one of the Government prisons the greatest honor that could be conferred on them.

In this part of the world convict labor is almost universally employed for such tasks as road-making, laying out public gardens, and building houses. In addition, householders who want any kind of job done are in the habit of sending to the town prison, which will supply a gang of competent convicts in charge of a warden to carry out the work.

As a result, the West African gets it into his woolly head that he has been specially selected to render service to the Government, and, when he is released and returns to his own home and friends, his prestige among them is enormous. In fact, one man who had had his sentence shortened, because of his good conduct, took the respite as a great insult and inquired what he had done that he should be turned out before the proper time.

One reason for this queer notion is that prisons, with ideal sanitary arrangements, separate beds for each inmate, and three meals a day, are palaces of splendor and delight compared with the average native hut, with its mud floor and squalid surroundings.



Strange Occurrence.

"How did the accident happen?"
"Mistook a puncture-proof tire for a life-preserver—and went down."

Chilblain Time.

In a few weeks the chilblain season will open. If you are a sufferer, you know from painful experience what chilblains feel like. But do you know what causes them?

Most people are under the impression that the causes are external—cold weather, snow, frost, and so on. That, however, is wrong. The causes of chilblains are internal. A chilblain is merely the outward and visible result of a wrong internal condition—stagnant blood, poor circulation, wrong or poor nutrition. Nutrition, it must be remembered, does not depend on the quantity of food eaten, but on its quality and suitability to winter conditions.

Those who get plenty of exercise, who clothe themselves warmly, and eat nutritious "heating" food, never get chilblains. The clothing, by the way, must be loose, for tight boots, tight gloves, or anything that impedes the circulation is certain to produce chilblains. Porridge, fat bacon, dripping, and so on are "heating" foods.

There is no external cure for chilblains, but the following is the approved medical remedy for broken ones: Coptiba (one ounce) and methylated colloidion (three ounces) applied night and morning.

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A Real Fire-Eater.

Some of the performances that one sees at fairs or circus sideshows are so inexplicable that the spectator usually takes it for granted that they are not what they appear to be. Knife-swallowing and fire-eating are accomplishments which it is hard to convince the ordinary observer are anything but sleight-of-hand. Yet we find in Rev. S. Baring-Gould's delightful Reminiscences a story of his sojourn in Freiburg, Germany, which shows that at least, did exactly what he pretended to do.

"Perhaps the most curious exhibition at the fair was this—a man stripped save for a pair of drawers and a sleeveless jersey, who called himself the Modern Pluto, and performed with red-hot irons in a manner in explicable to me. I was close to him and saw that there was no deception. He first got an iron scraper, about the size of a hoe-iron, which was heated red hot in a charcoal fire that was kept burning at my feet, and in which several irons were glowing. With this he scraped his arm, legs, both his cheeks and throat. The white ash from the iron fluttered about, and some fell on my sleeve. Then he took a red-hot poker and licked it with his tongue until the iron cooled. To make sure that there was no deception, I tried to touch it, but had to withdraw my finger pretty smartly, and an English friend of mine standing by lit his cigar at the poker after it had left the tongue of Pluto.

Then the man took a thin flat iron bar, red hot, and worked at it with his teeth till he had bitten off a piece about three-quarters of an inch long, which he spat down from his mouth. Next he trod on red-hot plates, but I did not think so much of this, as he only drew his feet over them one after the other without resting his weight upon them.

Lastly, he swallowed a couple of spoonfuls of boiling oil. This seemed to be a greater effort than the rest of the performance, for his face turned purple, and drops of sweat stood on his forehead. I was too close to the man—I could touch him with my hand—for any deception to be practiced. All this, moreover, went on for eight days from eleven a.m. till late at night. I was told that he went through the performance twenty times upon the principal day of the fair. He has been examined by some of the doctors here, who have warned him that he must give up swallowing the boiling oil or he will ruin his digestion. He replied that he knew that he would have a short life. He had tried other expedients to gain a livelihood, but had failed; he was driven to this by prava necessitas."

When hoarse use Minard's Liniment.

A Mozartian Reason.

A young composer went to Mozart one day and asked how he should set about writing a symphony. "A symphony!"—exclaimed Mozart—"You are much too young for that." But, master," objected the youngster, "you had written many symphonies before you were my age." "Yes," replied the great composer, "but I didn't need to ask how it was done." In other words, he did it because it was in him to do it.

High Finance.

Mrs. Newlywed—"And how much are these crackers?"
Grocer—"Twenty-seven cents a pound, ma'am."
Mrs. N.—"Oh, that's too much. I'm going to get them at Blood's." (Blood's is four blocks away.)
She leaves, but returns in a few minutes.

Mrs. N.—"Oh, they are twenty-eight cents a pound there, and yours are only twenty-seven, so I'm going to get yours."
Grocer—"How much do you want?"
Mrs. N.—"Half a pound!"

He Was Immune.

Two students were discussing their chances in an examination.
"Well," said one, "if I fail I shall sue the examiners."
"How can you do that?"
"Because the law expressly forbids anyone 'to utilize the ignorance of others to harm them in any way.'"

Labor worketh a harshness upon sorrow.—Montaigne.



A CHIC NEW STYLE.

The two-piece mode—the classic of the season. If your wish is for a sports suit that reflects unmistakably the mode, you will find it in the model pictured here. The jumper blouse is in the new finger-tip length, with collar fastening to one side under the chin, or turned back to form revers. A slight fullness is introduced over the bust by gathers, and set-on bands are button trimmed. The belt, coming from the sides of the trimming-bands, ties at the centre of the plain back. The skirt is joined to a bodice top and is distinguished by two inverted plaits either side of the front. The diagram pictures the partly finished costume, and No. 1243 is in sizes 16, 18 and 20 years (34, 36 and 38 inches bust only). Size 18 years (36 bust) requires 4 1/2 yards of 36-inch, or 2 1/2 yards of 54-inch material. The bodice top alone requires 1 1/2 yards of 36-inch material, or with ribbon straps over the shoulders 3/4 yard. Price 20 cents.

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