

Griffith's Masterpiece.

By FELIX NOEL.

It was the height of the season, and as Griffith made his way through the park many eyes rested on him with interest.

"Been ruralizing," observed a man to his companion; "away two years. Told me he never saw a newspaper the whole time! Looks somehow other-worldly!"

So thought Victoria Mansel that afternoon, as her old friend sat talking to her mother, a pretty pink-and-white woman, beside whom Griffith, with his three-and-thirty years, looked patriarchal.

"Now, tell me how you have been occupying yourself down in the wilds of Devon," asked Mrs. Mansel, and Victoria, receiving transverse confidences from a girl friend, only caught disjointed scraps of his answers.

"I've been making a motor car," "Making one?"

"Well, I had an expert, but you know I've studied mechanics pretty thoroughly, and I put the whole thing together myself, every bolt and screw."

"Don't you think so, Victoria?" from the girl friend. "Much prettier than Valenciennes?"

"Much"—Victoria's ears strained to catch Griffith's next remark.

"Perfectly comfortable. I've made a kind of—"

"Stitched all over it! Are you quite well-to-do, dear?"

"Quite, thank you," and Victoria resigned herself to wait for another opportunity of hearing about that strange seclusion among the Devon hills.

Two years ago Griffith had dropped out of society; now he dropped in again, and was welcomed. He was wealthy, had no vices and irreproachable manners, and exercised a strong fascination over his great friend, Jack Mansel's young sister, in the glory of her first season, with half a dozen eligible swains in attendance upon her.

"Do you know," she said one day, "I am a little bit afraid of you?"

He looked at her inquiringly.

"There, now!" she exclaimed; "why do you look at me so intently?"

"Do?"

"Yes, I have watched you, and you look at everybody and everything in that same curious, compelling sort of way."

He was silent. Victoria felt uncomfortable.

"I am afraid I have been rude!" she exclaimed, with charming penitence.

Griffith laughed.

"I must have acquired the habit of staring during those solitary years."

"But why—why, did you bury yourself down there?"

"To study."

"But you built that motor?"

"The result of the study."

"Do you really think it was worth while?" asked Victoria, perplexed.

"I do really think so," he answered with an inscrutable expression. Victoria felt baffled.

"Why did not Mr. Griffith bring his motor to town?" she asked her brother.

"Ramsheadle affair, probably," was the reply; "amateur motor making doesn't sound promising."

And she had to possess her soul in patience, while Griffith fell into his old habit of daily intercourse, like many people, finding the Mansel drawing room attractive; for those who did not admire the restless modernity of the mother could repose in the society of the daughter, whose tastes, like her name, were Victorian.

Griffith often found her talking to a pleasant gray-haired man, the Duke of Exton, and he usually joined the pair and enjoyed himself exceedingly.

There was, however, some serenity in John Mansel's mind, for being particularly keen on mechanics, he resented the secrecy with which his friend had surrounded his work, and felt half inclined to refuse when Griffith said:

"Run down for a couple of days with me, Jack. Mrs. Mansel and your sister have promised to spend a week at my place, and I want to get the motor in order before they come."

"I thought it was in order," returned John.

"I believe it is, but I want to be sure; and, being considerably curious, John went."

"Is the car meeting us?" he asked, when, after hours of cross-country traveling, they alighted.

"No," replied Griffith, with a touch of embarrassment, and John followed him into the road, where a trap was waiting.

"Seems an uncommon amount of mystery about that machine of yours," remarked Mansel.

"Well, there is, was the answer. "Look here, old boy, don't feel sore about my not telling you about it. I simply can't, for certain reasons."

"All right, Griffith," Mansel felt a trifle ashamed of himself—"why shouldn't you keep the thing quiet if you wish?"

"It isn't my wish," returned the other with emphasis; "it was—and is—a necessity."

And John went to bed that night to dream of scouring madly over hill and plain, pursued by a demon motor car, with fiery eyes.

He expected something fantastic and unusual, and was conscious of disappointment when he accompanied his host next morning to a building, before whose iron-clamped doors Griffith went through a series of conjuring tricks, in which half a dozen keys took part.

"You take good care of it, old lad!" he said, laughing.

"It is a masterpiece!" answered his friend, gravely. "Nothing like it in existence, I believe. Stand aside, Jack, and I'll bring it out."

And a long white car came gliding out of the shadows, whithering John's visions of a clumsy piece of amateur mechanism into fragments.

The vehicle resembled nothing he had ever seen. He stepped inside it,

and looked about in perplexity. It was like a narrow room on wheels, entirely inclosed by windows of plate glass, draped with green silk curtains. Easy chairs stood about; cushioned lockers ran down each side. At the end was a broad divan.

"The windows slide back," said Griffith; "this curtain can be drawn, shutting off the divan entirely, so that one can sleep here if necessary. The lockers hold provisions."

"Where's the steering gear?"

"It's invisible," was the reply. Mansel, a trifle nettled, walked to the front of the car, where a brass disk was nailed.

"It is this also a secret?" he asked, with some irritation.

"It's my remembrance," returned Griffith, laughing. "Where shall we go? Barstead? Be a nice run before luncheon; we ought to be there by ten-thirty," writing those numerals and "Barstead" on a card and sticking it in the disk. "Bring a chair to the front, Jack."

And the car glided out of the yard. It was the art of locomotion carried to perfection. Without sound or vibration the motor sped down the drive and out into the valley between the wooded hills.

"What do you think of it?" asked Griffith. "What's the matter, old man?"

"Look here, Griff! This is absolutely uncanny, you know! Who's steering?"

"I am."

Mansel regarded the speaker steadily.

"If this is a joke, Griff, it is a bit too weird for my taste! This blessed car is simply going to destruction, unless you have a chauffeur concealed on the roof! What's your motive power? Where's your steering gear, man?"

"You are perfectly safe," replied Griffith, ignoring the questions. "Look there."

A heavy four-horse wagon was lumbering toward them. Mansel held his breath, but in an instant the car swerved aside, passing the staring wagon and its team like a flash. John gasped. Griffith regarded him quizzically.

"Now, don't you think my car an improvement on the ordinary thing?" he asked.

"In the big items of absence of smell and noise, I do, emphatically," answered his friend; "but it gives one the saddest feeling of insecurity to sit here and see no means of controlling it! Look here, Griff! Put me down at Barstead Station; I tell you candidly I don't trust myself!"

"What do you mean?"

"That I can't stay within a few yards of this machine without trying to find out the secret of its working! So, if you don't want me to make a cad of myself, leave me at Barstead, and send my traps after me."

"My dear old lad," replied Griffith, "you shall have the keys of the motor house and examine the thing at leisure; only let me candidly tell you, you will have your pains for nothing."

"You think I can't find out the secret?"

"Sure of it."

"Take a bet on it?"

"No; it would be picking your pocket."

"And you give me leave to try?"

"Do your level best, old fellow. You won't succeed, however!"

And the car glided on, hills and valleys making no difference to its swift, smooth progress.

The return journey was an almost silent one. When the car stopped Griffith handed John a bunch of keys. "It's a letter lock," he explained; "the word is 'secret'; now do as you like, except take the car to pieces."

The following day was young when Mansel locked the door upon himself and the mysterious motor. The lightness of the vehicle's make puzzled him exceedingly. The wheels had none of the usual massiveness, and no trace of tank, or coil, or lever or spring, could be found. He crawled under it, in that happy position familiar to those of us who are owned by the ordinary car; he tapped, examined, measured. He mounted the roof, he searched the cushion lockers, inspected the brass disk, and at length, weary and exasperated, owned himself beaten, and went back to town with his friend, no wiser than he had left it.

"I want to ask you a great favor, dear Mr. Griffith," thus spoke Mrs. Mansel, in her most fascinating manner.

"What is it?" inquired Griffith.

"You are such an old friend, I know you will forgive me. Could you possibly include Exton in that charming invitation of yours? You must have seen how deeply attached he is to dear Victoria—and the dear child is—well—you understand my reticence?"

"Certainly," replied Griffith, courteously. But the July sunshine suddenly seemed garish, and he realized that something dear and precious had gone out of his life.

He had dwelt much on the expected visit, but now the pleasant flavor of anticipation had become dust and ashes in his mouth, and he brook himself again to his Devon solitudes to await his guests. He was gloomy and absorbed when the car carried him to meet them, and his man more than once caught his breath in terror at narrowly escaped collisions. But presently the party arrived, Mrs. Mansel coquetish, the duke agreeable, John goblin, Victoria decidedly sulky and—to Griffith's wonderment—deafant.

"So this is the wonderful motor? Delightful!" exclaimed Mrs. Mansel as they left the station behind them.

"Doesn't go so smoothly as it did, oh?" queried John, aside.

"It's my fault," answered Griffith; and, going to the front of the car, remained there until it stopped.

"I want to speak to you," she began abruptly, regarding him with wrathful eyes. She was hatless, and the wind ruffling her pretty brown hair made distracting little curls on her forehead. Griffith's admiring expression was, however, entirely lost upon its object.

"I've always been nice and friendly—to you," she went on, angrily, "and I think it is abominable of you to serve me such a horrid, mean, shabby trick!"

Griffith gasped at the adjectives fell headlong over each other.

"I always thought you my friend!"—a suggestion of sobs in her voice—"but now! I just hate—and dislike—and—despise you!"

"My dear child!" from the dazed Griffith; "what do you mean?"

"Why?"—she began, when John appeared, and she vanished.

A picnic was arranged for that day, and the car was at the door betimes. John noticed that its course was erratic, and that it stopped with less precision than usual. Griffith looked worried, and replied abstractedly to Mrs. Mansel's apologies, when she suddenly remembered things she wanted, and dispatched John in one direction and Victoria in another for them. The girl was hurrying through the hall, when Griffith barred the way.

"Miss Mansel!"

His tone was urgent. She looked up into his anxious face.

"What did you mean this morning?" he asked earnestly.

"Oh, you know very well!" she answered, resentfully; "please let me pass. They are waiting."

"Not till you answer me!" he answered, masterfully. "Hang the car! Let it go without us! An answer I mean to have!"

"Well—as you insist!"—exclaimed Victoria; "why did you invite the Duke, when you know how miserable I am because mother is trying to make me marry him! I didn't think you would help to make me marry a man old enough to be my grandfather!"

Before the astonished Griffith could reply, there was a shout, and John dashed into the hall.

"Griff! My mother! The car!"

And they reached the door to see that masterpiece vanishing in the distance.

"Merciful powers!" Griffith sat down helplessly on the doorstep.

"What's to be done, man?" cried John, shaking him frantically; "does Exton know the workings of the accursed thing?"

"There are no workings!" answered Griffith, his head in his hands. And Victoria burst into tears.

"Get up, Griff," said John, sternly, "and act like a man. Is there no control over the thing that they can find out?"

"None whatever," answered the unhappy owner of the car.

"And if it meets anything?"

"It's a lonely road over the hills," answered Griffith, recovering himself at the sight of Victoria's distress. "Don't cry, Miss Mansel. I'll have the trap out and follow them."

The car was a well known object to the moor dwellers, but never had they seen it as on that eventful day, when at full speed it plunged hither and thither like an unmanageable horse, Mrs. Mansel's screams and the Duke's shouts for help being barely heard before the vehicle vanished in the distance.

Within chaos reigned. Maddened by Mrs. Mansel's appeals, the Duke, in his search for hidden levers, tore down curtains wrenched off seats and execrated his fate. Flung from side to side, the unfortunate couple at length clung helplessly to each other.

Still suddenly, with a jerk, the car stopped dead on the top of a hill below which reared a little river, and the two precipitated themselves into the dusty road.

They were not a minute too soon. The car wobbled violently, jerked forward, then backward, spun round like a huge teetotum, and, with a mighty crash, rolled down into the river.

A speck appeared on the road behind them. As it drew nearer it resolved itself into a man on a motor bicycle. Too exhausted for speech, the exhausted couple sat on the bank and awaited his approach. He stopped before them.

"Duke of Exton, I believe?" dismounting and drawing out a fat notebook, "and the future Duchess! At what time did your Grace leave Mr. Griffith's place?"

"What business is that of yours, sir?" inquired the Duke, representatively with his usual affability, "muttered the intruder, conveying the sentence to his notebook; "lady, glancing at the unhappy Mrs. Mansel—"considerably upset by the accident."

"What the devil do you mean, sir?" cried the angry Duke.

"I'm on the staff of the Daily Hustler," rapidly sketching the unfortunate pair—"that the car down there, eh? You don't happen to know a short cut down?"

"I know this, sir," foamed the angry Duke, "that unless you take yourself and your confounded notebook out of reach, you may find yourself in a position to study the ruins of that vehicle more thoroughly than you desire."

"Thank you," replied the impatient man of letters, "I've got all I want. Let me tell you—re-mounting his machine and wheeling round adroitly as the Duke executed a species of war dance in his direction—there'll be two columns of 'Single-A Duke in Difficulties' in every London paper to-morrow. Don't excite yourself!"—with another answer—"can't imagine how ridiculous you look! Ta-ta! Sorry for the lady!"

And went off in a cloud of dust and evil odors; while Mrs. Mansel wept, and the Duke cursed motors and the inventors thereof to the third and fourth generation with a vigor worthy of a berserker.

It was night when a cart deposited the adventurers at Griffith's door, to find the mansion deserted by its owner, who presently arriving, was received with a painful lack of cordiality, and only by abrupt promises of fully disclosing his mystery managed to restore tranquility. When the worn-out sufferers had sought a much needed rest, he sat down in the summer darkness with Mansel to smoke the pipe of peace.

"May I come, too?" asked Victoria; and the men made room for her between them. "Now," said John, "tell us all about it."

Griffith looked at Victoria. Her face was white, her eyes shone like jewels; his voice was husky as he began:

"Well, about five years ago I fell in with a man—Jenks—you remember him, Jack?"

"Chap always blabbering about physics forces, and things of that sort. Fire away, old boy!"

"He lent me books, and held forth about occult powers, will development, and so on, until I was wild to try some experiments myself. There was a dodge he showed me—moving a thing by just willing it to come to you, and I resolved to do the same."

"And—?"

"I did it, but it took twelve months of hard labor!"

"Could you do it now?" asked John incredulously.

"Perhaps," Griffith fired his eyes intently on a book on the window seat. The silence was tense; then the volume jerked slightly, moved to the edge of the seat, and fell to the ground.

"By Jove!" John drew a deep breath.

"You see, I couldn't bring it to me? I'm losing the power. Shall I lose it altogether—I've always felt that—by telling about it. Well, I worked on, living as ascetically as any hermit, until the idea seized me of making a car, whose motive power should be the human will. I made a model, and, when the thing proved possible, came down here and gave myself up to it. I wouldn't let other hands touch it. Every inch of it was saturated, so to speak, with my will power. I allowed no other interest even to cross my mind; and perhaps you can imagine what I felt when one night I sped into the moonlight with that car—now lying shattered in the Bra-st—which obeyed my slightest wish, as if it had been a sentient thing."

His voice trembled under the intensity of the recollection. Victoria's hand rested for an instant on his sleeve and Griffith went on.

"I put that brass disk as a mis-leader; people imagined the motive power was concealed by it. I wrote the name of the place to which I was going, and the hour of arrival, and kept it before me, to avoid any vacillation, or unconscious change of purpose; for I soon discovered that any irresolution or disturbing emotion in my mind was promptly reflected in the behavior of the machine. It started off to-day simply in response to a hasty wish."

"You have been disturbed and irresolute during the last few days?" queried John.

"Yes; a stronger, more absorbing power has suddenly dominated my life."

"It is—?" Victoria's voice was very soft.

"Love!"

A silence fell upon the group, and presently John left the two and wandered out into the moonlight, returning to find Griffith in a state of ecstatic blessedness, which rendered explanations unnecessary.

The nine days' wonder over the Daily Hustler's account of the accident had scarcely begun when two notices appeared which effectually diverted the current of gossip into another direction.

"A marriage is arranged, and will shortly take place between His Grace the Duke of Exton and Mrs. Mansel, widow of, etc., etc."

"A marriage is arranged, and will take place in the autumn, between Miss Victoria Mansel, only daughter of the late Rupert Mansel, Esq., and the Duke of Exton, etc., etc."

And the noisy waters of the Bra-st roared and rejoiced over the ruins of Griffith's masterpiece.—The Throne.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Covetousness bursts the bag.—Danish.

Fools grow without watering.—Italian.

As welcome as the flower of May.—Old Saying.

Blue are the hills that are far from us.—Irish.

Narrow is the way which leadeth to life.—Bible.

Whatever makes for order and whatever makes for beauty in the world is practical religion.—John W. Chadwick.

I could think of nothing else this morning than that eternity of good which awaits us, but where all would seem to be little or nothing if it were not for that love of the great God which reigns there eternal, inviolable, active forever and ever.—St. Francis de Sales.

If you say, "I am hedged about, I can do nothing, and I am in vain help, but cannot," your very longing is help. It is never true that we are not helpers; where the fervent heart is, there is the servant of God, and unto him comes ever with the work the reward.—Robert Collyer.

Suggestions For Dr. Wiley.

It is no joke, but a serious and sensible proposition made by a commission of the Russian Duma, that the imperial eagle hitherto placed on labels attached to bottles of vodka, which is a State monopoly, be replaced by skull and bones, indicating its poisonous and dangerous character.—Independent.

John Connors, a farmer, near Beulah, Kas., makes a nice little stake every year selling cornshakes, which are used to wrap hot tamales.

Fashions

New York City.—Fancy coats are greatly in vogue at this time and are to be noted made from a generous variety of materials. All over lace is a favorite, pongee is much in vogue, linen will be extensively worn throughout the summer, and black silk and black satin are both smart and useful. This model is chic and



Jaunty while it includes seams to the shoulders, which mean simple and easy fit. It can be made with the sleeves as illustrated or sleeveless as liked; and the sleeveless coat will be much worn throughout the warm weather. It is pretty, it is greatly in vogue, while for the three-piece costume it makes an exceedingly grace-

Inner Mourning Veil. The French are wearing an inner mourning veil of white chiffon.

Silk Coats Again. At the races in Paris many coats of taffeta silk have been seen that may be worn with any kind of skirt. These are both long and short and generally very loose and soft, but not necessarily of somber black, so universal a few years ago.

Sartorial Hecsy. In past years who on earth would have dreamed of combining tulle and cloth for day dresses or of assembling lace and fur together for outdoor vestments? Heavy trimmings on materials of diaphanous texture; good gracious, what sartorial hecsey!

Elaborate Underskirts. Underskirts are growing more and more elaborate, and broad ribbon plays an important part in them. Many are of peau de suede, while white batiste petticoats are much trimmed with insertions of lace and minutely pleated mousseline de soie.

Handsome Evening Coat. Ornate braiding is a feature of a handsome imported evening coat. The entire garment consists of panels, which are scalloped at the bottom and braided deeply on all edges; within each panel is a trailing, leaf-like design, and the wide cuffs and yokes are covered solidly. The fastenings is made by means of one handsome braid ornament with long tassels.

Girl's Dress. Simple little frocks made with straight full skirts are among the most practical and the most desirable of the warm weather season. This one is pretty and attractive and can be made from almost any really childlike material, the linens, batistes, dimities and the like of the present



ful adjunct to the toilette. In this instance lace or silk braid is arranged over a thin silk lining and is finished with plain silk braid with looped edges.

The coat is made with the fronts and side-fronts, backs and side-backs, and with straight sleeves which are gathered and inserted in the armholes. If the sleeveless effect is desired these last can be omitted and the armholes cut out on indicated lines.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is four and one-half yards eighteen or twenty-one, three and one-half yards twenty-seven or two yards forty-four inches wide, one yard of fancy banding for the neck edge, four and one-quarter yards of braid and of looped edging.

Use of Fringe. A Princess frock is mol-colored satin chamoisee is draped simply across the figure to one side and caught with a heavy, knotted, seven-inch fringe forming a trimming on the right side. On the other is a lovely silken embroidery made of various neutral shades from faintest Wedgwood blue to the palest tone of Bergundy and yellow. These all seem to harmonize with the shade of the frock, and compose a most glorious combination.

Shoulder Trimming. Some of the new afternoon dresses are finished with bands of embroidery that meet in the back in a point at the line of the neck and extend over the shoulders, where they are loosely caught in the front and allowed to hang almost to the knees.

Not a Wrinkle Permitted. It is imperative that the drop skirt be fitted carefully to the figure, as small hips are in style, and there must be no extra fulness at the waist line or a sign of a wrinkle over the hips.

Cotton Voiles. The cotton voiles strike one very forcibly this season, not because they are new, but because they are so plentiful and in such lovely colors.

season and also challis, cashmere and similar light weight wools. In the illustration, however, dotted batiste is trimmed with embroidery.

The dress is made with the waist and the skirt. The waist can be lined or unlined as material renders desirable and can be made with the yoke as illustrated or with the neck cut out on the square outline as liked. The skirt is straight and simply gathered at its upper edge.

The quantity of material required for the medium size (ten yards) is four and five-eighths yards, three and three-quarter yards thirty-two or



three yards forty-four inches wide, one-half yard eighteen inches wide for the yoke, two and three-quarter yards of banding two inches wide for the skirt, one and three-quarter yards one and one-quarter inches wide for the belt and cuffs.

COMMERCIAL COLUMN. Weekly Review of Trade and Latest Market Reports.

R. G. Dunn & Co.'s weekly review of trade says: Trade and industrial activities continue to expand, improvement being due to a conservative nature that promises permanency. There is little disposition to anticipate the future, but current distribution is larger, and mercantile collections are more prompt. There is some complaint among wholesale goods shippers that the big auction sales detracted from regular business, but the general situation was greatly improved by the distribution of those accumulations, and many retailers have remained to supplement their purchases. In manufacturing lines the iron and steel industry is steadily adding to output and shoe shops are receiving substantial contracts, although producers are handicapped by the persistent strength of hides and leather. A few special sales of pig iron have been made at concessions from former quotations, some merchant furnaces seeking all the business offered, but the general level of prices is not materially altered, and there is a distinct improvement in demand. Most recorded transactions are for this year's delivery, each week bringing a little larger consumption at steel mills and some reduction of stocks in furnace yards. Extremely quiet conditions prevail in the primary markets for cotton goods. Export trade is also dull. Inquiries from India and Red Sea points being at much lower prices than are required. The decline in silver had made a resumption of demand from China still more remote.

Wholesale Markets. New York.—Wheat—Receipts, 52,700 bush.; exports, 154,250; sales, 2,100,000 bush., futures, and 24,000 bush. spot; spot market, firm; No. 2 red, 1.00% @ 1.01 elevator, and 1.01 1/2 f. o. b. afloat; No. 1 Northern Duluth, 1.29 f. o. b. afloat; No. 2 hard winter, 1.05 1/2 f. o. b. afloat. Corn—Sales, irregular; Western spring chickens, 12 1/2 @ 13; turkeys, 16 @ 25; fowls, 13 @ 14 1/2. Eggs—Firm. Receipts, 10,613 crates. Western firs, 20 @ 21; seconds, 18 1/2 @ 19 1/2. Philadelphia.—Wheat—Firm and 1/2 c. higher; contract grade, August, 97 @ 97 1/2 c. Corn—Steady; good demand; No. 2, for local trade 85 @ 85 1/2 c. Oats—Firm; No. 2 white natural, 52 1/2 @ 54 1/2 c. Butter—Steady; fair demand; extra Western creamery, 25 1/2 @; do. 10, nearby prints, 27. Eggs—Firm; good demand; Pennsylvania and other nearby firs, f. c. 21c. in mark; do. do., current receipts, in return cases, 20 at mark; Western firs, f. c. 21 at mark; do., current receipts, f. c., 20 at mark. Cheese—Quiet but steady; New York full cream, choice, 12 1/2