

TA-TAT'S TRANSFORMATION.

The Grand Coup of an Indian Maid.

By JOHN HAROLD HAMILIN.

The languorous mists of a perfect Indian summer shrouded the purple peaks of the Cone mountains. Locusts sang shrilly from every grease-wood bush, and whole choruses of the same insects droned forth from the mahogany shrubs. The landscape had a peculiarly conical tendency; each individual hill was cone-shaped; the nut-pines, punctuating their gray-blue slopes, tapered to a dull green cone; and down at the base of a pyramidal mountain clustered a few peaked wickiups. A cloud of reddish dust floated skyward and mingled with the shimmering veil of autumn haze that blurred the hill tops. The reddish dust arose from a trail that twisted in sinuous loops up and over the Cone mountains as three ponies picked their way along its winding course. A roan pony led the trio; he was ridden by stern old Meloxi, an Indian of wide repute among the Washoe tribe. The second animal, a strange little pinto, bore the daughter of Meloxi, and bringing up the rear came Washoe Billy, mounted on his sturdy bay.

The riders were silent, but, being Indians, this seemed matter of fact; something might be learned from the expressions stamped on the countenances of the three redskins. Meloxi looked stern and dignified; Ta-tat, his daughter, rebellious and indignant; while Washoe Billy wore a victorious half smile every time he glanced at Ta-tat, which was not infrequently.

The ponies were tired and dusty—the riders cramped and dusty, too. Several dogs began to yelp as the tiny cavalcade approached the wickiups; half a dozen airy clad papooses skurried up from the trickling stream in the nearby arroyo, and stared at the sorry-looking party. By the time the ponies were halted before Meloxi's tepee, the whole village had gathered about them. Neither Meloxi nor Washoe Billy caused this unusual interest; Ta-tat, the rebellious countenanced daughter of a chief, had returned into their midst; not willingly, but forcibly brought home by her father and future husband, Washoe Billy.

It was this maiden, the pride of the Cone mountain Washoes, that excited the curiosity of the villagers. Ta-tat, from mere infancy, attracted considerable attention. On her right temple grew a glistening wisp of white hair, which accentuated the raven duskiness of her abundant locks. This splash of white among the shining black resembled a magpie's plumage, and for this reason she was called Ta-tat, the Washoe word for the chattering magpie. Then Ta-tat was very clever, and one day Meloxi listened to the appeal of a home missionary lady, which resulted in his sending bright little Ta-tat away to the Carson Indian school. No other Cone mountain papoose had ever attended the school, consequently the relatives and friends of Ta-tat took a deep interest in her progress at the institution.

For five years she had been acquiring the book-lore of the palefaces; often Meloxi received letters that were carefully read to him by Rancher Bannon's wife, who lived not far from Cone mountain. All reports reaching Meloxi's ears were good, and quite creditable even to a big chief's daughter. So Meloxi spoke proudly of his clever Ta-tat, and deposited her letters in a dainty willow basket, from which he took them to demonstrate to every visitor the accomplishments of this Washoe princess.

But one day a startling revelation was made to the Cone mountain Washoes. One of their own villagers, while visiting Carson, saw Ta-tat walking with Horace Hop-Foot, and promptly reported the fact on his return home. Now the Washoes do not object to their maidens keeping company with young braves—far from it; but Ta-tat's had long been promised to Washoe Billy, and to think that she could so far forget herself as to walk with another brave, and he a Piute at that, and one whose reputation was quite notorious, roused the wrath of Meloxi and Washoe Billy, and all the villagers besides. After a brief consultation, the old chief, accompanied by Ta-tat's intended and an extra pony, journeyed Carson-wards, intent upon conducting the fickle and disloyal girl back to the paternal lodge.

That his mission terminated successfully was clearly illustrated when the expedition returned to Cone mountain. Ta-tat deigned not to greet with any show of cordiality the companions of her childhood days. She slid off the weary pinto, shook out her dusty garments, and walked with haughty indifference the gauntlet of inquisitive Washoes. She did not halt until the flag of her father's wickiup hid her from view. This was a far different home-coming than had been planned for Meloxi's famed daughter. Her disgrace assumed gigantic proportions; the villagers were amazed to think that Washoe Billy still desired to marry her. Washoe Billy understood

matters better than his people. Ta-tat never pretended to care for him; Meloxi made the match. Even though he was a chief, the title proved but an empty honor, and Billy's numerous ponies and three guns appealed to his covetous nature; therefore, when Billy sued for Ta-tat's hand, Meloxi consented upon learning that two ponies and a ghot-gun would be his portion of the wedding contract. In addition, Meloxi possessed his quota of racial pride, and never could lose his hatred for the Piutes, so firmly had his father instilled in his mind the bitter details of the old feud existing between the two tribes. And to think of Ta-tat's professed partiality to a miserable Piute more than strengthened his desire for a speedy marriage between her and Washoe Billy. Ta-tat safe in his wickiup, Billy eager to claim her as his wife, and the ponies and gun withheld until after the ceremony—these facts prompted Meloxi to set an early date for his daughter's wedding.

The news had apparently no effect upon the sulky Ta-tat. She realized how little sympathy would be forthcoming from her people; yet she determined to be the bride of no one but Horace Hop-Foot, her noble Piute lover. Ta-tat's schooling had taught her to read and write; she had laboriously waded through a highly colored novel in her career at the institute, and from it had contracted romantic ideas.

With all Hop-Foot's glaring faults, she loved him madly, and was more than willing to renounce her connection with the Washoes, especially the possibility of being bride to that ugly Billy. Hop-Foot had acquired a little learning at the Carson institute; he owned a small shanty down near Reno, and was the best gambler among the Indians for many miles around. To be sure, he imbibed freely of firewater, but then that was not such a grievous fault, according to Ta-tat's reasoning.

With the instillation of white men's ideas, many of Ta-tat's superstitions were eradicated. For instance, she thought it wise to forget the old feud long nursed between Piute and Washoe; she also laughed at the Washoe's tradition that certain birds and beasts were the forms assumed by good and bad spirits. The magpie, for which she was named, could be either a wicked woman in disguise, or the spirit of a wise old man, so claimed the Washoe medicinemen; but the white teachers scoffed at those ideas, and Ta-tat agreed with them.

Hop-Foot's first gift to her was a scrawny young magpie (he thought it an appropriate token), which she tenderly cared for, and taught to say a few words, both in the English and Washoe languages. This bird, with the majority of Ta-tat's belongings, still reposed in her room at the institute. Meloxi had allowed her scarcely time to gather up a few necessary garments when he rode up to the school and abruptly carried her away.

Now, sitting in lonely dudgeon beneath her father's peaked roof, Ta-tat's mind worked actively, and she conjured up mental pictures—first of a slave's life with Washoe Billy; then a blissful vision of love in Hop-Foot's shanty on the outskirts of Reno. Prospects seemed decidedly gloomy for the dusky maiden.

Great preparations were gaily planned for the approaching wedding; the feast would eclipse any previous similar attempt since the grand barbecue of 30 years ago, when 10 fat horses were stolen from a dance hall at Washoe City, and nicely roasted ere the palefaces missed them. Invitations circulated freely among the Carson Valley Indians, barring, of course, the Piutes. The orgies would be appropriate for the nuptials of a princess, even though that princess was sadly disgraced; still her father commanded universal respect, and the Washoes were only too eager to seize upon an opportunity for a big time.

While the preliminary arrangements hummed merrily along, and the wedding morn but five days away, Ta-tat hit upon a brilliant scheme. She brightened up as a willing bride should, and for the first time since her return took a decided interest in the coming event. That afternoon, in company with Washoe Billy, Ta-tat tripped lightly over to Farmer Bannon's. Mrs. Bannon had always been extremely fond of the girl; and, since the bride-to-be requested Washoe Billy's attendance, no one objected to the visit, and every one felt highly pleased at the happy turn of affairs.

Mrs. Bannon and Ta-tat, carried on a very ordinary conversation, with Washoe Billy a close listener. He heard nothing to alarm him; but, just before departing, Ta-tat stepped into the kitchen, placed a letter in Mrs. Bannon's hands, and begged her to mail it that very day. Washoe Billy failed to observe this little side play, and grunted in serene contentment as the twain walked back to the village.

Shrill and sweet sounded the locust choruses in the thick sagebrush; happy insects that could sing in blissful ignorance of slain comrades parching under the September sun at the Cone mountain village—daintiest of delectable Indian eatables, those parched locusts. The sun's rays lost their wonted fierceness as they filtered through the soft, misty autumnal haze; the Indian braves glided here and there, veritable sun-gods, arrayed in scant breech clouts, their skins glistening like burnished copper, and their befeathered heads and painted faces resembling those of warriors of early days. Meloxi and Washoe Billy were untiring in their efforts to do full honor to this occasion, and the villagers felt equally desirous of pushing things to a grand climax.

Ta-tat, in accordance with an old custom of the Washoes, sat in solitary magnificence within her father's wickiup, awaiting her lord's first command. Her dainty, beaded moccasins tapped the earthen floor nervously; there remained but a few hours ere the closing of the ceremonies, and her claiming by Washoe Billy. She cautiously peered through the loose flap and watched the festivities. Long shadows stretched out from the conical mountains; the sun hung like a blood-red disk just above the horizon; the feast had begun in earnest, and her people and the wedding guests were gorging themselves in barbaric Indian fashion. Three hours of feasting, two hours of dancing, and then the surrounding of her lodge by the revelers; the brief ceremony of the oldest medicine man, and she would be Washoe Billy's slave, and her dreams of love with Hop-Foot things of the past.

The molten sun rested on the apex of the loftiest cone-shaped peak; the feast progressed beautifully. A rim of fire, a sky of brass, and Sol sank on Ta-tat's wedding day, and the aggregation of redskins had all but removed the last vestige of the barbecue. Katy-dids chirped; an owl hooted mournfully; stars blinked in the high, darkened vault of heaven; fires lighted up the cluster of wickiups, and the wild dance was on in earnest. Two more hours and Ta-tat's fate was sealed.

The black-fringed, liquid eyes of the Indian girl flashed; her bosom rose and fell with suppressed emotion. "He has failed me! Hop-Foot has failed me!"

The words were but half-articulated, and Ta-tat held her breath as if their echoes startled her.

"Ta-tat, Ta-tat!"

The girl's heart throbbed painfully. "Oh, 'tis he! Hop-Foot, here I am!"

Under the tepee's flap rolled a lithe body. It was Hop-Foot, the Piute, the favored lover of Meloxi's daughter.

The brave and his dusky sweetheart gazed at each other in profound silence for a moment. Ta-tat's beauty dazzled the dauntless Piute; her wedding finery, her magnificent eyes, her superb figure! Ah, she was well worth the risk!

"Quick, the moments fly!" breathed Ta-tat.

Hop-Foot gave her a closely woven basket. The young squaw raised the lid, and took from its shallow depths a small lump of black and white feathers—her magpie—Hop-Foot's first gift to her.

"You have saved me, Hop-Foot. We are saved!" gasped the girl.

"Goodby, Ta-tat. Goodby." With a farewell caress, the maiden placed the uncanny bird on a heap of rabbit skins, snatched up the tall-tale basket, and hurriedly slipped out of the wickiup at the heels of Hop-Foot. The katydids still chirped, the stars twinkled knowingly, and the dizzy dancers were almost exhausted, as Hop-Foot and the Washoe princess crept through the sage brush, around the base of the pyramidal hill to a nut pine tree, where two wiry ponies were tethered.

Tom-toms signaled the dance to cease; torches were lighted, and the procession, headed by Meloxi and Washoe Billy, advanced toward the bride's commodious tepee. The throng encircled the wickiup, torches cast a glare of light into every nook. Meloxi threw back the entrance-flap, and Washoe Billy rushed in to claim his bride.

"I'm Ta-tat, Ta-tat! Ta-tat's hungry! Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

The laughter was demoniacal, the voice harsh and frightful. The eager groom fell back in terror; a frenzied yell curdled the blood of the encircling braves and squaws. Washoe Billy leaped sheer out the wickiup and fell in a quivering heap at the feet of Meloxi. The torches lit up the scene with the brightness of day, and there, in the doorway, the amazed Indians beheld that most terrible of all bad medicine birds—a magpie.

"I'm Ta-tat! Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ta-tat's hungry. Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Away up on the last curve of the pyramidal mountain's trail two ponies halted, and their riders gazed down at the Cone Mountain village and chuckled as a frightful din rent the quiet of this beautiful Inman summer night. Ta-tat, the Washoe princess, enjoyed her romantic escape, for she knew full well that her people would forevermore look upon Ta-tat, the magpie, as the transformed daughter of Meloxi.—San Francisco Argonaut.

NEW IDEAS in TOILETTES

New York City.—Smart blouse waists are much in demand to wear with jacket suits and the very necessary separate skirts that have come to



A FANCY BLOUSE.

stay. The simple style illustrated exemplifies the fact that tucking is not indispensable to the realization of a fashionable waist. Ivory white peau de sole of good quality is here charmingly combined with Irish crochet lace over corn colored satin and trimmed with shaped bands of the silk piped with black panne velvet and stitched on each edge, tassel ornaments finishing the pointed ends. Velvet belt closed with fancy clasp. The lining is fitted with single bust darts centre back, under-arm and shoulder seams and closes in front under the plastron that is included in the right shoulder seam and hooks over on the left. The blouse proper has single pleats laid at the end of each shoulder seam and is cut away at the neck and fronts to disclose the

seamed to the lower edge and the belt conceals the joining. The coat sleeves flare stylishly over the hands and the garment is warmly interlined and lined with white satin. Velvet, corduroy, kersey, broadcloth, cheviot and all heavy wool suiting will develop satisfactorily by the mode.

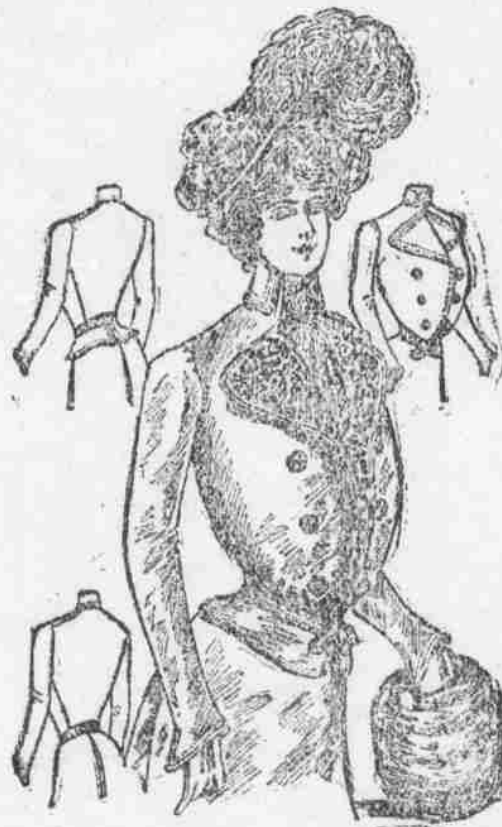
To cut this jacket in the medium size four yards of material twenty-one inches wide, three and three-quarter yards twenty-seven inches wide, two yards forty-four inches wide or one and three-quarter yards fifty-four inches wide will be required, with five-eighth yards of facing eighteen inches wide to make as illustrated.

Handsome Velvetten Costumes.

Louis coats of velvet and separate waists of velvet will be much worn; also shirt waists of velvet in dark shades are relieved of their plainness by a vest of bright color or white material, giving a sharp outline to the coat.

Girl's Long Coat.

The comfortable long coat that closes to the neck is a favorable style for cold weather. The stylish example here illustrated by May Manton combines with this feature the triple capes and may be varied by the omission of one, two or all three. Dark red kersey cloth is the material chosen, the edges being smartly tailored with machine stitching in black and smoked pearl buttons close to the double breasted fronts. Hat of black beaver trimmed with soft loops of red Liberty satin ribbon and black tips. The fronts are stylishly loose in box style and join to the backs by under-arm seams that with the centre back curves becomingly to the figure, wide revers roll back above the closing and the neck is



A SMART ETON BLOUSE.

plastron and yoke of lace. The sleeves in bishop style are arranged on fitted linings which are faced at the lower edges to form cuffs, shaped straps being added to match the waist trimming. Shapely epaulettes of the lace give length to the shoulders, but these may be omitted if not desired.

To cut this waist in the medium size three and three-quarter yards of material twenty-one inches wide, two and three-quarters yards twenty-seven inches wide or two and five-eighth yards thirty-two inches wide or one and seven-eighth yards forty-four inches wide will be required, with one and one-eighth yards of lace and four and a half yards of piping to trim as illustrated.

Woman's Eton Blouse Jacket.

In spite of the tendency toward long and three-quarter coats the smart blouse Eton has renewed its hold on the popular fancy and is more in demand than ever for suits as well as for separate wraps. The added basque gives a more seasonable effect, but none of its smartness is lost when that portion is omitted. As represented in the large drawing by May Manton it forms part of a zibeline costume in rich dark red and the lapels are faced with fancy velvet in black and white, the edges being simply tailored with double rows of machine stitching. The garment is simply fitted with wide under-arm gores and shoulder seams. The fronts lap in double breasted style when closed, but may gracefully be worn open as illustrated. The neck is finished with a double collar that rolls over at the seam. The basque portions fit smoothly over the hips, meeting closely at the back and flaring slightly apart at the front. It is



COAT FOR A GIRL.

yards twenty-seven inches wide, two and three-quarter yards forty-four inches wide or two and a half yards fifty-two inches wide will be required.