THE HEIR OF ROMNEY. BY CHRISTINE FABER.

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Information

One hundred years ago there stood in one of the north western counties of Ireland -a land of lakes and hillsone of the fairest domains that ever graced the sod of that unhappy isle. Report said that it had been one of the Catholic estates forfeited in King William's time, and given as a per-quisite to one of his Majesty's titled The proprietor at the period of which this tale is written, was a of which this tale is written, was a wealthy absentee, who rarely visited the place, but who, because of the tales of cruelty attached to his family name, was held by the surrounding people in universal detestation. It was said that one of his ancestors had ruthlessly murdered an Irish Chieftain, and that, ever after, each visit of any member of the family to the estate was marked by some deed of

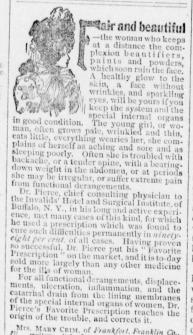
The fair Romney lands lie yet in almost the same picturesque state as when the Irish Parliament met in College Green, and the volunteers marched to the stirring notes of the Irish airs. Fair and fertile, with meadowy downs and breadths of forest and, with gentle undulations occasion ally rising into bold hills, and streams born of the same birth but severing in their progress, the magnificent estate stretched at that time for two miles to the westward. The house was a large, cumbrous building of rough gray stone, and somewhat oddly shaped, containing halls, dormitories, and offices sufficient to accomodate a royal retinue. A carriage road shaded by tall oaks would from the right of the massive entrance to the iron gate that shut the domain from the highway. In summer the branches of these oaks net, and, twining, formed so dense a canopy that no ray of the sun could penetrate it; but in winter their leafess branches shook in the night wind ike the wierd arms of ghostly things The steward of these broad lands

lwelt in what once had been the gate lodge, but which had been enlarged and improved until it presented a very comfortable and even mansionike appearance. No one resided in he great house, and its furniture and ppurtenances remained exactly as they were when Sir Hubert Romney made his last brief visit there. About a mile from the lodge, in an

asterly direction there was a cottage ; monthly roses grew across its front, and the woodbine thrust its tendrils on ose parts of the whitewashed wall which the roses did not cover, causing the whole exterior to suggest thoughts of a tasteful and happy abode. leatly graveled path bordered by tal fir trees, led from the cottage to the ighway, and down this path on a bright summer morning in 17-

young girl was slowly walking. She was of the fairest type of Celtic beauty, with the clear, blooming com-plexion for which Irish maidens are famed, yet with hair and eyes that evinced she was not wholly of Irish extraction, for those two features were extraction, for those two leatures were black. Her dress was simple and rustic, but it was worn with a gracs that made it charmingly becoming. She was singing as she walked; some simple, Irish ditty trilled out in the clearest and sweetest of voices, and the whole fair scene, having sweet Catherine Dominick for its centre, on that bright summer morning, was one to win admiration from the most indiferent lover of nature.

A horseman slowly cantering down the highway, as if actuated by some



THE CATHOLIC RECORD

such feeling, reined up his animal and gazed about him. He was a tall, rather slenderly built man, but grace-He seemed ful, and evidently athletic. to be young, despite the bronze of for-eign suns upon his countenance and his somewhat haggard expression. His black hair was worn long, sweep ing the whole length of the deep collar of his coat, and his steeple crowned hat pushed far back exposed the whole of his ample forehead. He wore kneebreeches buckled at the side, and long riding boots with yellow tops, and hi ungloved hand that rested on the rein of the powerful black animal he rode through somewhat tanned, was small and delicate as that of a lady. As he continued to gaze, his keen

black eye sparkled with an expression which might be only pleasure, but which seemed to be triumph, until he saw fair Catherine coming from the cot tage road to the highway when a lock of undisguised admiration flashed over his whole face. "By jove," he muttered, "she sur-

passes every foreign beauty I have ever seen," and gently urging his horse he cantered forward until he reached her side.

She had paused and turned at the sound of the hoofs, but then modestly dropping her eyes, she continued her course until arrested by his voice ask ing the way to "Romney Castle."

She answered him simply and mod estly, lifting her eyes for a second only but that one glimpse which he obtained of them enhanced his admiration, and his desire to talk further with her ; so measuring the pace of his horse with her light, graceful gait, he asked again

" Is it true, fair maid, that the castle is as deserted as a few miles from here they report it to be-that its master

has not been here in a dozen years? "He has not been here in a dozen years: "He has not been here in my life-time," she answered without looking up, and slightly quickening her steps. The handsome rider bent from his steed, and while he put into his manner all the deference that would befit his address to a court dame, said softly " Pardon my apparent rudeness, but I have been sent here in the interest of Sir Hubert Romney, the present pro-prietor of Romney Castle. I know little of him beyond the acquaintance of a few short months, but I fear his character may be just as cruel, and bad as

they report it to be a few miles above here. If so, it will be well for me to be careful in my dealings with him. Do you, or your people know aught of him "I have only my father, sir," she

replied simply, "and he lives in the sottage at the end of yonder path," pointing to the end of the fir-bordered walk Thanks, fair maid ; then I shall not

detain you longer, but turn my horse in that direction." And, dofiing his hat, he bowed with

all the grace of a finished courtier and cantered away. Old Lawrence Dominick was slightly startled from his morning smoke by the advent of the courily stranger, but with the humble, though true courtesy which is natural to every native of the Id land, he tendered to the gentleman the hospitality of his house, and while the horse was taken in charge by a man whom Lawrence summoned from an out house, the stranger entered the little parlor. The taste and neatness so evident

without were quite as manifest within, and the gentleman's eye rested admiringly on the surroundings evidently disposed by a woman's hand -- a woman who must have been cultured and re-

Without stating the business which had brought him to that part of the country, further than it concerned the interest of Sir Hubert Romney, the little pressing told all that he knew about the present proprietor of Romney Castle "I never saw him, sir," he said, lay-

almost to the horse's mane in a parting to that. salute. Out on the highway with the hoofs of his steed striking sparks from the flinty portions of the road, the rider laughed loud and long. "It is the same with them all," he

said, "a woman wears her heart in her eyes, and the rest is easy game. And thus muttering and laughing he did not slacken his pace until he highway, and prepared to precede with the lantern. drew rein before the door of the "Romney Arms," where, alighting, he The storm grew wilder ; flash upon haughtily gave his horse to an hostler, flash of lightning appeared, and terri fic peals of thunder sounded. Jimmy and walked with long rapid strides in to the large room that in these days served for bar room and sitting room. crossed himself and muttered sundry aves for protection, but the horseman The loungers, as loungers always do

though at times he stooped in his saddle to shield himself from the blast, in a country hotel, looking sharply at him, but, without deigning to notice laughed at intervals as if from some their observation, he called hastily for brandy. The obsequious Boniface hurried to obey the order, and the stranger returned to the door as if to merry thought. As they neared the castle, a flash more vivid and longer. in its stay than avy of its predecessors, showed the grim building distinctly, and while Jimmy hurried forward to unlock the be certain of the fulfilment of the commands he had given for the care of his horse. When again he went

his horse. When again he went toward the bar he was followed by another new comer, but one not unknown to the loungers, judging by the nods and smiles which greeted him. waited Jimmy's return. Both men reached the long low

counter together, and as they stood for a moment beside each other the reong at the lock before the key would semblance in their forms was strik-ingly apparent: both had the same fit, and, auguring ill from even that triffing circumstance, he shook his height, the same grace, and the same evidence of athletic strength, but head and said to himself while one had black hair and eyes and for he's one of them, I'm afeered. a bronzed countenance, the other had blue eyes and light hair, with a com-"The massive door swung back at length, and Jimmy shuddered afresh plexion as pure and brilliant as the in the cold draught that swept through

fairest of Ireland's daughters. The first new comer took up the tumbler into which the host had poured a moderate quantity of brandy. " Half fill it, man- you will be paid for it.

open, the stranger dismounter, put of bridle of his horse into Jimmy's hand, and, taking the lantern, strode burriedly into the house. He went hurriedly into the house. He went through every room and hall, flashing "I am not afraid of that," humbly answered the host, as he obeyed the order. Then he asked if a room should his lantern into every space, and laughing occasionaly as if with be prepared for the stranger, to which triumph. receiving an affirmative reply, accom panied by a command to send for some luggage, left at a tavern a few toiles had been used as a banquet hall. immense space and antiquated furniture bore forcible reminders of the old Norman baronial times, when the

he glass to his lips and drained it at a draught, after which he drummed impatiently on the counter until inormed that his room was ready.

there, ending his observation by a loud, shrill, and prolonged laugh question of the landlord relative to the expected coming of some one to the Romney Arms, turned to depart, Then muttering : but on his way out he stopped for a and rejoined Jimmy. Waiting only to give him the lantern, he vaulted on moment to speak to one of the loung ers. While he did so the dark looking his horse, dashed back to the highway. stranger departed to his room, and that was a signal for a general unand on to the Romney Arms, where, having superintended in person the care of his horse, he strode into the bosing of tongues - for such guest vere very unusual at the "Romney bar room, called for more brandy, and silently departed to his room. Arms

said one white haired old man, and the other voices ceased, and the other Callahan his wonted spirits, after the startling visitor he had received, and the drenching he had undergone ; and oungers gathered about the speaker whole opinions were regarded with auch deference. to the old man who was preparing the

vho resembled the stranger in form. "Like Sir Hubert Romney," was the reply

heavily, and drew his hand across a scar that disfigured his forehead; then sipping from the reeking bowl now leaned heavily on his black thorn ready, the ardent contents seemed to have some soothing effect upon him stick

for he said cheerfully : "But we're very comfortable now, thanks be to God, and so long as Sin Hubert laves us alone as he does, we should be very contented."

"Aye, father, said Jimmy, who

JANUARY 18, 1897,

THE ROMANCE OF A PORTRAIT.

I was just starting my professional career, and it was necessary to secure a convenient office. I did not want The horseman laughed and patted a convenient once. I did not want the neck of his dripping charger, anything pretentious — an office for while Jimmy unfastened the iron gate myself and a small ante chamber for which separated the domain from the the boy whom I had engaged as a clerk of all work would amply suit my re-quirements. I had served my articles with an old established firm of solicitors in the city, and had been a tomed to great rooms filled with calf. bound volumes and shelves of anc parchment, and I laughed to think of the difference there must be betwee the little office I had in my mind's and the big place where I had learned my law. Nevertheless I was well con tent to make a small beginning, to trust to the future for bringing

an increase of business and of fort Perhaps because I had two or three professional friends thereabouts, selected Holborn as being a likely sp entrance, the horseman stood erect in his stirrups to obtain a better view of wherein to pitch my tent. After a good deal of looking about me, I de-cided to apply to an agent, with whom the dark massive structure, but all was black in a second, and he impatiently went to inspect a place he Callahan, with many a muttered prayer and pious ejaculation, fumbled mended, a third floor of Parchment Buildings.

"Here you are, sir," said the agent, unlocking the door of the office on the third floor. "This is a sort of clerk' office ; the principal room is beyond i and looks out into Parchment Passage as I told you. Nice situation this, ain't

before answering him. As regarded size and situation they were certainly all that I wanted. The outer o would do very well for my boy cle and the inner would suit me. the less it was evident that a good d of cleaning would have to be done fore anybody could tenant either room Two years at least had passed since th rooms were placed in the agent's bool

I said that the rooms would suit me providing that the rent was not excess ive. Therewith we fell a bargaining and eventually hit on terms which a my approval. A week later I was full occupancy of my office. My b clerk sat at a little desk in the out office and pretended to work very hard. while I sat at a big desk in my own sanctum and read law. There wa really little else to do in those earl I sent in my own office appoi days.

ments, and spent two or three days i seeing them put straight. Wanting some place in which to store a quant of old books and papers, I had a cu board cleared of a quantity of rubbievidently left there by the last tenant. It contained a vast amount of old letter invoices, and papers, but these had been torn into small scraps and thrown into a corner. The woman who cleaned my rooms complained a good deal about the mess caused by these scraps of paper.

In reply to my inquiries, the woman told me that it would be about three years since the rooms had been oc-cupied. Farther interrogated, she said that she could not remember the last tenant's name ; it was something foreign, and she did not know how pronounce it. She did not know what his business was. He was always writing, she said, and sometimes had other foreigners to see him. His name was never painted upon the door of his rooms not on the lintel down below, and it was her belief that he was no good because he kept himself so quiet. While the woman talked she was en gaged in removing the mass of torn and scattered paper from the cupboard. Suddenly she detached something from the contents of her basket and handed it to me.

"He got that the very day he went away," said she. "For I remember going down and fetching his letters from the box in the hall below. The first thing he took out of 'em was that there card, and he laid it down on his desk and stared at it like as if he couldn't make it out. That's it, sur enough ; though I ain't never set eyes on it since. Spect he chucked it away with this here heap o' letters and papers.

clock, which indicat

the evening. Lifting the lamp made my way to the ly flung it open. Th amazement, for there before me, his face as seen in the lamplig tattered, sickly lookin concerted than myse middle age apparen more than usual sig tear at that, for his plentifully shot with lid face was deeply lin My first glance at hin things-that he was in want.

I was so much aston of this unexpected vi staring at him for a He, on his part, stood At last I found my to:

"Are you looking said I, lamely enou think you'll find any time. He shook his head.

"No," he answerd. Was looking for you. "For me? Why?" "Will you let me co

ment?" he said. "On if you please. Oh, th be afraid of me. I'm though I dare say I loo I hesitated. He lool

and said quietly : "I used to live in th I walked in and inspected both room "Oh," said I, dimly

that the mysterious ter me. "Come in." He followed me the

office into my own ro saw the cheery fire, arm-chair by the hear per tray laid on the sighed. It struck me was both cold and hu vited him to eat. But his head.

"I had better tell y first," said he. "I ha stairs outside for more wondering whether yo me to enter this room used to live here, and denly about three year say," he added, "th wondered why I left so s

I quietly opened the desk in which I had play ous ace of hearts, and dr laid it before him. 'Had that anything

said. He started to his feet

on the card, and I saw perspiration burst acro ander the shock which t nysterious emblem und him. He looked from

from me to the card ag sighed heavily and sat of "Where did you g asked quietly.

"It was found amo It was found amo torn papers which you, thrown into the cupl May I inquire what th said. "Is it some sigr ing, or a secret message it had a meaning for y you received it."

"It had a meaning," "It meant that my life an hour's purchase -- tha sentenced to death -- th tioners were on my tr ussian, and familiar w of conspirators from my have just told you is the agent of a secret soc offended those in power demned ; and that's the v "So you fled."

" More fool I ! I fledat last as you see me. -starving, homele

Again I pressed him ascinated by his story,

"Not till I have told yo

here to night. I came to thing that I left here w

eft it because I knew i

the hiding place I had con

sibly into rough places lesperate men. I come

London at last, and a g

came over me to see i That is why I came to

night, resolved to ask you

The picture is here, and

He rose, and crossing

proached a corner of t

carefully removed the ca

had laid down. Lifting

underneath, he present from the cavity a parce

nany sheets of strong par orward to the light again

"You did not know !

his so near you," he said

dust away from the par ceeding to unwind the y pings. "And now, look

An exclamation of wo

ight burst from my lipefore me the portrait of

ovely woman, evidently

me great miniature

ramed heavily in gold

The frame must have b

scarcely noticed it, so b the face it contained.

The stranger held the

im and looked steadily

amp-light. Then he drand kissed the face revere

died a martyr. She was

that the world calls good :

exile and in poverty.

He restored the frame

sister.

"She is dead," he said.

mall fortune in itself,

was going I knew not w

ear more.

below, he bustled off to superintend in person the preparations for his guest. The dark looking stranger raised The other new comer having asked

"He is very like-very like him,

"Like who ?" asked the young man

"He has the same dark eye, with the tiger look in it, that I remember well — the eye that marks the bad breed. I saw Sir Hubert when he was a boy, and the first thing that struck me was his eyes, and the last time he was down here they hadn't hanged a whit. And the old man shook his head and

"You are mistaken," said the young an. "It isn't in that way such a man. great gentleman would be traveling down here. But the others of the party seemed

to be of the old man's opinion, and a having solemn silence prevailed for some approac Biranger contrived to impress old solemn silence prevailed for some Dominick so favorably that he with minutes, in the midst of which the last speaker departed. A storm came up that evening-a

But your honor takes a quare time to look at it, and, to make bolder, your honor is so much like Sir Hubert himself, save being younger, that I was startled at first.

"This sudden coming bodes no good.

When informed that the castle was

open, the stranger dismounted, put the

At lenght he came to what evidently

game was brought in freshly from the

orest, and dressed by the sturdy old

barons themselves, and when huge

tankards of liquor graced the board.

The stranger looked long about him

"This will be worth all," he turned

It required an unusually strong

owl of punch to restore to Jimmy

comforting beverage, he said, shiver-

ingly: "Make it strong, father; sure, my very marrow is chilled from the sight

"Ah, then, you may well say that ame, Jimmy, if he looks like Sir

same, Jimmy, if he looks like Sin Hubert-sure I have my rayson to re

member him." And old Larry Callahan sighed

the long hall.

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A STATE OF THE OWNER OF THE OWNER

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ing his pipe slowly down lest the ashes might sully his daughters's neatly swept floor, "for I was in Dublin the last time he was down here. But they say that even that short time he was here, there wasn't wanting an act to show his bad blocd. He struck down old Larry Callahan, the present lodgekeeper's father, for making him an answer — and the poor old man was only vindicating himself — left him weltering in his blood ; sure he bears the scar to this day. But that's neither here nor there, he may be honest in his dealings otherwise.

From communications about Sir Hubert Romeny, Lawrence Dominick was easily induced to talk about him self. The good wife he had lost but a ew years after the birth of his only child, Catharine ; her subsequent education by an uncle who was a priest, now also dead, and her inimitable gentleness and goodness, and just a his stage of the conversation fair Catherine entered.

Perchance she was hardly displeased at the apparent friendly terms of her father and his guest, for the latter's respectful manner to herself had already won her favor, and her eye sparkled with secret pleasure when she heard his acceptance of her father's invitation to the midday meal.

When at length he prepared to take his leave he told them he would remain at the "Romney Arms," a tavern a mile distant, for some days, during which it would be necessary for him to visit Romney Castle, and he solicited permission to call again on hospitable awrence Dominick-a permission that

furious, howling storm -- that filled the bar room of the Romney Arms with more loungers than usual, and made its cheerful aspect very inviting to dripping passers by. When the storm was at its height, the dark stranger walked suddenly into the bar-room and ordered his horse, regardless of the stares of wonder and the exclamation of dismay uttered by mine host "The cross o' Christ about us, said one of the loungers, when rider had mounted and spurred his horse forward into the very teeth of he storm, and again there burst forth a babel of remarks about the stranger

But the latter dashed on almost as i he enjoyed the fury of the elements beating about him, and he drew rein only when he reached the lodge of Romney Castle.

It required sundry calls, and at last a rattle of pebbles against the window, before Jimmy Callahan could be induced to come forth from the comforts of his pipe and a bowl of eeking punch, and then he was slow in opening the door, and still slower in

getting his lantern into position to view the unusual visitant. Hout, man ! have you come from

the land of the dead, that it takes you so ong to answer a knock !" said the lorseman. Jimmy Callahan flashed the lantern

full in the stranger's face, then suddenly started back, muttering : 'It's himself, sure.

"I wish to see the castle," said the horseman, as if he had not heard horseman, as 11 ne had hot neard Jimmy's half-suppressed exclamation. "I am down here on business for Sir Hubert, and have authority from him to visit the castle when I will." "As for the matter of seeing the

was cordially granted. Catherine, from the door, watched castle," answered Jimmy whohad rether checks flushed with innocent van-ity when he defied his hat and bowed castle, answered Jimmy whonad re-to any one ; Sir Hubert never objected and success. Remember Hood's cures.

langed his wet garme pproached the table where stood the eaming punch.

"But he'll not lave us alone, any more, I'm afeered, - the stranger's face was as like Sir Hubert as two peas -maybe he's Sir Hubert's son ; anyway it has a bad look for him to be coming a night like this.

Old Larry shock his head. "Don't be frightening yourself that way, Jimmy, avourneen. Sir Hubert's son would never come down here like that, for Sir Hubert is a very proud, high man, and he'd want great doings about here, if one of his family was to visit us-more especially his son and heir. No, Jimmy; its only a chance ikeness; some one, maybe that Sir Hubert sent down to see how we're keeping the old place." "Be he who he may," Jimmy mut-

tered, "he's black enough looking to warrant all I'm thinking about him." And then he finished the contents of his bowl, and proceeded to fill his pipe. TO BE CONTINUED.

Hooć's Sarsaparilla, taken at this season, ill make you feel strong and vigorous and sep you from sickness later on.

keep you from sickness later on. Fagged Out.—None but those who have become fagged out, know what a depressed, miserable feeling it is. All strength is gone, and despondency has taken hold of the suffer-ers. They feel as though there is nothing to live for. There, however, is a cure—one box of Parmelee's Vegetable Pills will do won-ders in restoring health and strength. Man-drake and Dandelion are two of the articles entering into the composition of Parmelee's Pills.

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I took the thing from her and looked at it. It was one of a pack of cards, the ace of hearts, and would have attracted no attention from anybody but for one slight fact. Through the crimson heart in the centre of the white card some hand had drawn a stiletto with scrupulous fidelity. I had to look at it narrowly to make sure that the stiletto had not been engraved with the red heart. Engraved, however, it had not been ; the trace of the artist's pencil was clear enough.

I took possession of the card and put it aside. During the somewhat lazy time which followed I often looked at it and wondered what it signified. I could not help fancying that it had conveyed some sinister message to the man who had occupied my three years previously. Certainly he had left his chambers hurriedly immediately after the receipt of it. came to the conclusion that my prelecessor in the offices in Parchment Passage had been engaged in some mysterious transactions of a not gether safe nature, and had been warned to go elsewhere by the transfixed ace of hearts.

It was spring when I entered into occupancy of my office, and the year went by very quietly until winter set in. My practice had been remarkably limited at first, but as the mouths went by I obtained an increase of work, and had less time to spend in reading my calf bound volumes. The first day of December brought me a case which promised to produce some-thing considerable, and I remained late and went on reading until a slight

pings and fastened it up rather against my reco placed it in its old hiding sound on the landing outside made me look up, only to catch sight of the



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