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MIRIAM.

The Romance of Heatherleigh Hall.

By Manda L. Crocker.

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Disinheritance would be her doom. That was what had fallen to the others; those that had gone before her, and whose portraits she had so often seen in the gallery.

Oh! yes. She must needs pay a visit to her kindred of the silent room, doubly her kindred now, for the day had arrived at last that another child of the Percivals was ready to depart from the frowning shadows of Heatherleigh. How many sad hearts had gone from beneath its roof, with the day of wrath treasured up against them.

"If it must be, it must," she said, bitterly, as she walked the shadowy, silent length of the low gallery alone an hour before her departure, taking a last view of the reversed faces, hung in line "like so many gibbetted souls," she murmured. "I can not help being that 'eldest child,' neither am I to blame for the curse of an ancestor falling to hapless posterity. Ah! you dear, proud one," she exclaimed, with a tremor of anguish in her tones, as she turned the last portrait of the doomed to the light. "You were a youngest child, poor Allen! and where are you to-day? Ah! my fair, noble-browed relative, I fancy some one will stand here some day and ask that same question concerning me; perhaps not so very far hence, either.

"Alas! alas! that I am one of you!" she exclaimed, wildly. "What a thing love is; to win us all away from our ancestral halls into so-called mesalliances, bringing down

"ALAS! ALAS! THAT I AM ONE OF YOU."

thereby the wrath of our fathers and disinheritance.

"Ah! good-bye— no! farewell to you all; I am doomed also, and must be going!"

She turned the face of the hapless Allan to the wall again, and waving a sad adieu with trembling hand, while tears of anguish bedimmed her vision, she left the long, lonely gallery, shutting the door gently as if on the beloved dead instead of on so many portraits only.

"This is my last visit to the gallery," she whispered with prophetic lips, "the last time I shall come."

CHAPTER IX.

So *it* happened that after having sought her father in a last hope of reconciliation and failed, insomuch that the ending proved to be but a stormy interview and wrathful parting, Miriam stole quietly out through the park to meet her future husband.

The dull gray afternoon seemed surcharged with an oppressive silence, and an evil seemed lurking in the very air; or was it but a nervous fancy lending a miserable influence?

Miriam put her hand on the wicket opening out toward the highway at a quarter to three o'clock with a sigh, and found she was a little early.

Her face had been white and drawn with grief and pain, and her beautiful eyes had in their depths such a wild, despairing look when Peggy Clarkson met her in the hall directly after the interview with Sir Rupert; but now her face glowed with satisfaction, and the fine eyes had a pleasant light as she stood bidding a silent adieu to the dear, familiar grounds.

Ah! what an iron will upheld the fair girl; truly she had the indomitable spirit of the Percivals.

A sound of wheels coming slowly toward the chase, and her heart throbbed wildly with expectation. She stepped outside and crossed the common. "Yes, there he comes," she said, and in a flutter of delight she flew back to the place of meeting. "Dear Arthur," she murmured, "I have never known but two friends, mother and you. She has been taken from me, and I have only you left," and the pearly tears of memory dropped on the trembling hand on the gate. "Poor mother!"

But the carriage drew up and Arthur Fairfax alighted, smiling happily to find his beloved Miriam punctual. He kissed her where the tear-stains showed plainly on the fair cheek. "Why these tears, dearest?" he asked, tenderly.

"I was thinking of—of mother," she answered, and he understood, for his vision was misty with emotion as he held her for a moment in silent caress.

Peggy Clarkson came up with numerous bundles and faltering step. This was to her a sorrow greater than that she felt for the dead mother.

But she bore up bravely for the sake of the beautiful girl before her and whom she loved as her own. Her own! Ah! yes; away across the channel, in the mother country on the shores of Killarney, resting peacefully, was Teddy. Dear little Teddy, who closed his blue eyes to this world in his third year, and was laid away forever, with his flaxen curls clinging to his white baby brow.

Poor Peggy! Many sorrowful days had gone over the cycling arc for her, but this one seemed to her the hardest to bear. She wiped her tears away as she came up with her bundles and tried to appear cheerful.

All unconscious of treachery, Sir Rupert was taking his accustomed afternoon nap, and while his only child was leaving her home forever and caring but little for his gray hairs, he was dozing the hours away in his quiet apartments.

"Perhaps father may relent," ventured Miriam, as her lover handed her into the carriage.

'Oi doubt it, me darlint," sobbed Peggy, wiping the tears away from her dim old eyes in order to get a last sight of Miriam. "Oi doubt it, but may the blissid Vargin protect ye, onyway."

"Do not feel so badly, I pray, Mrs. Clarkson," said Arthur, "if Sir Rupert never forgives us. Surely you can trust Miriam with me, and feel that she will be happy, and that is more than she will be here."

"An' you're livin' roight, me mom, Oi kin thrust the childer wid ye; an' far be it from me to help ye on in yer runnin' away, sir, if Oi couldn't."

"Thank you kindly," replied he, taking her trembling hand in a last good-bye. "Cheer up; you shall hear of Miriam frequently. Have a care, Peggy," he added, in a lower tone, "that Sir Rupert doesn't ever dream of your being mixed up in this leave-taking, or that you were aware of Miriam's going."

The old housekeeper answered him by an affirmative nod, and turned away to hide her tears.

With a final good-bye, away they whirled. Miriam waved an affectionate adieu with her handkerchief as the turn of the road shut them forever from the park and the tearful Peggy at the wicket.

"Och hoon! and me ould heart is broke intoirely," moaned she to the silent landscape, while the clouds lifted and a ray of sunshine shot athwart its dullness.

The brambles and the heath by the wayside were tinged with a beautiful flush of autumnal scarlet, and leaves tinted with the faintest gold went flying hither and thither in the breeze. The sunshine which struggled through the gray canopy and cast a ray of promise across the day for Peggy, lay glinting on the sea for Miriam and her lover as they neared Hastings.

Through the lanes, past the hedges where the blackberry briars formed a dense barrier, with their browning leaves and luscious clusters, all familiar nooks and old friends, who seemed to say "good-bye! good-bye!" past all these they had come, and the downs, the sea and the cliffs were uncommonly beautiful in the setting light. The sea-breezes blew up across the country, refreshing and sweet, the wind-mills on West Hill were whirling their great arms, and the old castle near by caught the western glow with a peaceful contentment, which seemed to say: "I am glad to be left to picturesque ruin and forgetfulness."

The quaint little church at Fairlight was destination, but they had taken a circuitous route to avoid trouble, did the master of Heatherleigh determine on following them.

Miriam's heart went out to the gray-haired, feeble father whom she never expected to see again, and with whom she never could be happy. She revolved the possible scenes of wrath and, perhaps, sorrowful regret that would transpire when he should be made acquainted with her flight. Then her thoughts turned affectionately to Clarkson, who was so "determint to help the childer away unbeknownst," and her heart ached for the old housekeeper when she should fall under the interrogative vengeance of her master. And a great many other things connected with the Hall floated before her mental vision; some of them coming like reproachful reminders, while others were so distasteful that she drew a sigh of relief to find them really turning like a bad chapter in the history of the past.

She looked about her. Ah! would she ever stand here again and look far away to High Wickham and the sea! They were passing gaunt, grim Minnus rock now, and the sea lay a dark strip in the distance with the faint sunset light showing purple-tinted on the sky above.

For answer the breeze swept by with a low, mournful music, and died away in the dusks of eventide.

Arthur, partly divining Miriam's speculations by the pensive look on her sweet face, drew her to his heart with a fond caress, saying: "Never mind, dearest, I will try hard to make all this up to you. Be happy. See! we have left the clouds behind us," and as in happy emphasis the last rays of the setting sun gleamed brightly from beneath a cloud and seemed the seal of promise.

"Yours was a beautiful home," he continued, as she looked up with a smile of trust and confidence, "but you were not happy—perhaps never would have been—within its fateful doors."

"No," she answered, in a positive tone, "that I think were impossible, but I shall be happy with you."

Then the dreary weight left her soul and a wave of happiness, as bright as the circlet of western gold, swept aside all misgivings and the joy of assurance beamed on her face.

Behind them were desolate Beechwood Terrace, which might never more welcome the one, and ivy-crowned Heatherleigh, which could not, would not ever again open its doors to the other. Before them was the quiet, unpretentious wedding ceremony in the little chapel of All Saints; near by also Uncle Earle Fairfax, who was to serve a delightful little dinner just after the wedding and just before their departure for their future home in his pretty villa over there.

Was that all that was before them! No, not by a great deal. There lay a beautiful sea of happy sailing for the two hopeful hearts, but beyond its narrowed limits broke the billows of a dark and moaning flood. Happy for them, as for us all, the future is veiled from our inquisitive hearts; else we would go down into the depths of despair sometimes ere the battle of life should begin.

But with hope for the anchor and love at the helm, their ship had spread sail for the untried waters, which looked fair and serene in the offing.

Ah! here was the chapel at last, in the dusk and silence, open to receive them. Uncle Fairfax and a few friends waited them in the dimly-lighted chancel.

Miriam paused a moment in the shadowy porch for a little whispered prayer and then passed down the narrow aisle on the arm of a friend to where Arthur and his uncle awaited her. A soft, sweet light shone from her dark eyes, and the marriage

"NATURE SEEMS TO HAVE PUT ON MOURNING FOR US."

service was responded to in low, tones, without hesitancy.

On the arm of her newly-made husband Miriam left the chapel, but there were none to strew flowers in her way. All was silent and gloomy without, and the dream of the previous night recurred to the bride as she crossed the church-yard. The headstones gleamed through the darkness like mile-stones of the past, and Miriam Fairfax shuddered ere she rested on her husband's shoulder and shuddered. He noticed it and asked: "What is it, dearest?"

"Nothing!" she answered, "only this is a gloomy wedding night. Nature seems to have put on mourning for us, Arthur."

"Why! why, little wife," he said; "I am so happy I do not seem to remember aught of shadows. As to the gloom, dearest, I had not thought of it. Surely you do not regret—"

"Hush! Arthur, that were impossible, when I love you so."

But the light and warmth and happy reception at Uncle Fairfax's superb home brought back the smiles to Miriam's face, and Uncle Earle's blessing settled like a holy benediction on their heads. Forgotten were all the shadows and gloom of All Saints in the well wishes and God-speeds showered after them as they started for their home near the mines.

Arthur had invested what money he had in buying shares, under the supervision of his uncle, who had great experience in this matter, and who owned much mining stock. He was not going to the mines as a laborer, but sent in the interests of the company; he resolved to be faithful, and hoped to rise to positions of more importance, and double and treble his finances.

And when this was accomplished he would leave the mining districts and retire to comfort and happiness in some beautiful home near the sea, as his uncle had done. Then Miriam should be happy in her elegant home, and he—well, he would be the proudest, happiest husband in England.

Together the happy couple planned the future, as they occupied the pleasant, quiet compartment carrying them to Bradford.

"That seems a koinde of happy omen, though," mused Peggy, watching the sunshine checker the dancing shadows at her feet. "Koinde o' happy, but me heart is broken for a' that," and she wrapped her withered hands in her linen apron and crept along stealthily toward the Hall.

"But poor the swate mistress is boun' to have love and gude thratement where she's goin', an' that's more than she would win from the masther, the darlint."

Through the clustering oaks she passed in fear of being seen by Sir Rupert, notwithstanding he was pretty sure to stay in his own apartments the remainder of the day. "An' concience makes cowards av the whole av us," she muttered, slipping through the shrubbery like some guilty thing bound for a friendly covert.

Poor old Peggy! She had parted with all that was left her to love of the proud family which had known her as housekeeper for years.

The bonnie brown hair that Ancil had praised so much had grown white in the service of the great Hall.

She dragged herself into the servants' quarters, where old Ancil was waiting her return in great trepidation, and sat down, moaning and rocking herself to and fro in the extravagant manner of her countrywomen, expressing her inconsolable grief. Ancil said nothing, but his bearded lip quivered as he sipped his ale and his little blue eyes filled with tears as he looked at his wife.

Sir Rupert, feeling weary and somewhat indisposed, had his dinner served in his own apartments, and never did James serve at a quieter hour.

Sir Rupert said but a word or two, and those were low monosyllables; the servants, knowing of Miriam's flight, went stealthily about their several duties, as if they feared the very walls would cry out and implicate them.

James came and went like a thief fearing detection, and whenever his master looked his way he grew pale with fear; but as Sir Rupert asked no questions he was glad that the revelation had not been his to make, and that the austere father remained in ignorance as yet of his daughter's flight and subsequent marriage.

"Oh! the disclosure," muttered he, as he came down stairs with the trencher, and he shivered in anticipation of the morrow.

CHAPTER X.

"Howly mother! an' we'll put it off till the crack o' doom if we can," Peggy ejaculated later, when Sir Rupert had retired, and the servants had all huddled around her in the west wing to hear the details of Miriam's departure. Nothing suited her better than to entertain them in her graphic way and impassioned manner with weird and strange recitals of fortunes possible and impossible, and often she had held them spell-bound until the great clock of the central hall warned them of midnight.

"But ye all know full well," she reflected, "that the masther *will be* knowin' uv it termorrer by some manes, an' mark ye," moving her right index slowly around the circle like the finger of destiny, "mark ye, there's not a mother's son of ye knows a single wu'rud of the runnin' away whin the masthur's wrath runs hoigh." And she promised with one accord to faithfully keep their knowledge a secret for the "Swate childer's sake," Peggy said, while her auditors knew full well that it was for her own sake as much, and more, than for Miriam's that they were enjoined to such secrecy.

"An' we must kape the saycret for the loife uv us," supplemented the housekeeper once more, as they were about to separate for the night; "ye know if ye don't we'll be whooped out o' the Hall quickern' a wink; ony way, maybe we'll be kilt roight on the spot, an' which is wurrust uv the two Oi'm not to say."

At breakfast the next morning Sir Rupert settled himself in his accustomed seat and looked about him; he would wait for Miriam, something he scarcely remembered of having to do, she being an habitual early riser.

The butler stood respectfully near, quaking in every limb, in dire anticipation of the impending storm about to burst over their unlucky heads, and perhaps sweep them from Heatherleigh like chaff.

"Miriam is late," said Sir Rupert. "Call the housekeeper."

Clarkson was waiting in the next room, and at a look from the terrified James came forward as if by magic, halting at a respectful distance, demure and innocent looking enough to win the favor of anyone, however austere.

It was evident that she was in better trim for the emergency than her fellow-servants were.

"Ask the maid if Miriam is ill," the master commanded, rather than said. Then he relapsed into a silence to be felt. He was thinking that perhaps the disagreement of the day before had unnerved the almost heart-broken daughter. Perhaps he had been too harsh—ah! perhaps he had.

Little did he dream when he asked for the maid that she had gone. Declaring that she would not stay to hear the anathemas sure to fall, little Mary Ferris had left only a few hours after her mistress went away; and, at the time the master of Heatherleigh called for her, she was relating again the instances in connection with the flight of Miriam to the dwellers of her father's vine-covered cottage, some three miles from the Hall.

Clarkson went, without a moment's hesitation, in search of the girl, whom she knew to be far enough away. "Howly mother," she murmured, as she went upstairs, "defind us in swate marcy! The masther'll be for the killin' av us all in less an no toime. Oi feel it in me bones."

Opening the door of Miriam's room she peeped in cautiously, as if fearing that the woeful tradition had taken form unto itself and was but waiting to slay the first intruder. Then, remembering the fair, proud face of its late occupant, Peggy went over to the bed and knelt for a moment in prayer, making the sign of the cross as she did so.

"Oh, me darlint, me swate mauvourneen, an' it's a towerin' pashun yer faythur'll be in!"

After giving vent to her excited grief for a moment longer, she went down stairs slowly and, as she afterward expressed it, "with me heart a-jumpin' roight in me mouth."

"An' shure an' the maid must be shlaping; an' Miss Miriam isn't in her 'partments at all, sir."

"Not there! Then where the deuce is she! Speak!" he thundered, bringing his clenched hand down on the table with such force that the silver echoed to the china service an' inkling of his wrath.

"An' indade it's not Oi that kin tell ye, masthur," answered Clarkson, the wild look deepening in her large blue eyes. "Faith, sir, an' Oi haven't set eyes on her blissed self since she went a-waikin' in the park on yestherdry—'dade Oi haven't, sir."

"And you!" cried Sir Rupert, jumping up and facing the terrified butler.

Poor James shrank back from the towering form of his wrathful master, wishing he might shrink into space for the time, and stammered out that he "thought he had heard Miriam in the hall the previous evening."

For a minute Sir Rupert stood irresolute, looking about him. Suddenly it dawned on him that she might have flown—gone with that impudent, poverty-stricken Fairfax.

This exasperated him beyond endurance, and he fairly shrieked out his next words in angry accusation.

"You are lying, sir; playing the role of hypocritical innocence. She has gone, I verily believe, with that rascally lover of hers; and you are all knowing to it—all in the plot to deprive me of my authority—my daughter."

He waved his trembling hand toward the group of frightened, white-faced servants, who had assembled in the hallway, and stood watching, with bated breath, their passionate master. Having delivered this scathing accusation, he strode past them, bound for Miriam's rooms, and bent on an investigation for himself.

After a fruitless search for the willful daughter whom he had loved and hated alternately all her life, he came down again, breathing vengeance "on the whole crew" for their perfidy, and vowing that it would not be good for them if found treacherous to the interests of Heatherleigh.

"I want the chaise at once!" he yelled, eyeing the coachman wrathfully. "I will sift this matter. He who defies a Percival might as well dare the Almighty," he continued in thunder tones. "I am going to see if she—if they break over my authority in this daring manner."

The parting words of young Fairfax, to which he gave but little heed at the time, aside from treating them contemptuously, rang in his ears now like calls of an avenging angel. It looked now very much as if Fairfax had not spoken idle words.

In a short time the Heatherleigh trap was flying along the quiet lanes at a break-neck speed, and the whole country side was wondering at its haste. Bent on revenge for this insolent disobedience, he spared no pains to overtake the runaways.

"Hi, there!" he shouted to a man whom he knew, and to whom, at any other time, he would not have deigned to speak, "Hi,

"NOT THERE! THEN WHERE IS SHE!"

there! Do you know of the whereabouts of Arthur Fairfax at present?"

The laborer doffed his cap and answered, respectfully:

"Truly, I can not tell you, sir, yet I heard that he was married last evening at All Saints."

With a muttered imprecation he sped on, and soon the pretty little chapel of Fairlight was passed. Earle Fairfax, whose handsome villa smiled down on the fair, quiet churchyard of All Saints, would know, perhaps, all about the disgraceful affair.

To that residence he must be driven, and subsequently the Heatherleigh trap dashed up the drive of the Fairfax home. The horse was covered with foam and dust, and, on the whole, Earle Fairfax thought he had never seen quite such a pitiable sight. A jaded horse, choking with dust, the liveried coachman white and trembling with excitement and the master of Heatherleigh in such an excited passion of rage and pique that he scarcely managed to be understood.

"They, Miriam and Arthur, were married in the chapel last evening; yes. And by this time are pretty well on their way to Bradford, I should judge."

After Earle Fairfax had imparted this bit of news ironically, Sir Rupert cursed his luck and turned his horse's head homeward.

"You knew nothing of this!" he questioned, glaring at his coachman, while they were returning slow-paced and weary, seeming to forget that individual was included in the morning's condemnation.

"No, master; 'pon honor," answered meek-eyed John, turning faint with fear lest his master should order him down and off and go on without him. But Sir Rupert said nothing more and was silent all the rest of the way back to Heatherleigh.

Sir Rupert alighted at the inner gate shutting off the long avenue of elms, and rushed in alone over the flagged pavement, across the terrace and into the hall, more like a lunatic than the feeble old man that he was. John drove off toward the stables, glad to his heart's center of the opportunity of putting space between the irate master and himself once more.

"They are gone; married and gone!" Sir Rupert shouted in desperation, banging the massive doors after him as he entered. "Henceforth she is no daughter of mine!"

Poor frightened Clarkson was the only one present, and, courteesying meekly, she answered: "Yes, masthur." Then under her breath she could not help murmuring: "Oi'me so sorry! Poor childer!"

The father heard and partly understood the sympathetic words in reference to his daughter, and, in his present state of excitement and anger, he could illy brook a word to the contrary. Turning wrathfully upon the sympathetic Hibernian he shouted: "I will not have a word of your puling sympathy, Clarkson. Miriam is poor enough now, God knows! without making mention of it."

Peggy cowered under the frown of the eagle eye bent on her offending head, and the master of Heatherleigh strode on by her, and went upstairs to his apartments. "Send James to me immediately," he called in authoritative tones from the first landing, where he sat down for a moment's rest.

The housekeeper went in search of the butler with hastening step. "Shure an' the masthur's mad as an owl; it betes the very haythun how angry he is. He's all tore up an' he's afthur wantin' ye's this minute; an' it's the loikes of ye to be hurryin' roight off."

James ran upstairs to the bidding, and almost flew along the shadowy corridors, bent on obeying his master's behest, and shortly stood before him. The quiet, airy peacefulness of Sir Rupert's apartments contrasted strangely with the stormy soul of its occupant.

The breeze that came in over the open casement from the sea, fresh and sweet, only fanned an aged face flushed with anger, played with whitened locks timidly, and died amid the silken curtains unheeded.

Nature and nature's soothing influence had no part in the thoughts of the proud soul seething in its own wrath. No; the legendary curse had fallen, and Sir Rupert as one of the victims was busy trying to cope with its influence.

"You sent for me, sir?" questioned James, softly, the strange light in his master's face startling him.

"Yes, I did," returned Sir Rupert, savagely. "Have my dinner here in an hour. Since that undutiful daughter of mine has

"YOU SENT FOR ME, SIR?"

gone with that beggar I'll have no one dine with me hereafter; I'll take my meals in my apartments up here. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir," answered the butler, meekly.

"And hereafter I do not want *her* name mentioned in my home; she has forfeited all right to Heatherleigh, and henceforth she is no child of the Percivals. Now I wish you to remember what I have said." And with an impatient wave of his hand he bade the butler retire, and leave him alone for the nonce.

With another meek "yes, sir," James glided out of the presence of his master, and down-stairs as if the evil genius of the Hall was at his unfortunate heels.

"Lord! what a passion the master is in," communicated he when among his fellow servants in the wing once more. And excitedly, and perhaps with some exaggeration, he repeated Sir Rupert Percival's words.

"Howly St. Pathrick," groaned old Ancil Clarkson from his corner, where he sat with his accustomed mug of ale on his knee, forgetful, for the time, of its deliciousness in the blood-curdling topic of the "master's wrath."

"You may go down now, and if I need you I will ring for you; otherwise I want no one near me to night," Sir Rupert said an hour later, as the punctual butler set down the tray at his master's elbow.

James was not summoned again that evening, and feeling relieved he joined the servants' circle once more, and around the wide chimney, whose flickering flames and glowing embers lighted up their earnest faces, they sat and speculated as to where this last estrangement would lead.

The next day brought a great change in the manner of the master of Heatherleigh It was as if he had gone through some great sea of sorrow. Absent and softened in tone and gesture, he wandered aimlessly about the Hall, thinking.

He opened Lady Percival's apartments and walked through the long silent rooms touching little mementoes of her care here and there gently, as if in communion with the dead.

After this, he took down Miriam's portrait from where it hung by her mother's, over the marble mantel in Lady Percival's private parlor, and carried it away to the lonely gallery. Pausing at the end of the row of fated portraits, he looked long and earnestly on the clear, fine features of his beautiful daughter, and then said half audibly: "Miriam! my daughter, Miriam, I am alone! I am unable to undo what I have done; and, too, a Percival never eats his words.

"I would have saved you, my child, could I have done so; but the fatality of the family has overtaken you, and what could your poor, desolate father do? You have forsaken Heatherleigh for a poverty-stricken companion, and have gone with the choice of your heart, as did Allan here. Alas! Allan, that I have now no brother! Alas! Miriam, that I now have no child. Henceforth you are dead to me; good-bye—aye, worse, farewell!"

Having kissed the portrait of the proud, willful child, he hung it up for a moment for another view of the sweet face. "Truly she was regal then," he said, with a deep sigh. Then he turned the face of his daughter to the wall with a shiver, and sealed the doom of his motherless child.

After this he pottered upstairs to his apartments with much feebler step than he had ever known. Surely this was, by far, the greatest sorrow of his long, loveless existence. Ah! yes, it was the hardest blow he had ever experienced.

Bereaved of his beautiful wife, whom he loved tenderly, how crushed and sorrowful his days had been in the great, lonely Hall.

But he knew where she was resting; this other bereavement, why, this was so different, so different! Poor Miriam! he knew nothing of her wandering away; perhaps might never know aught of her more. The rest of them went that way—Allan did.

The curse of temper and circumstance was worse than death. Yes, in comparison, death was kind!

The threatening breach had now widened beyond repair between Sir Rupert and his child, and "too late" was written across the seal of her doom. He must bow also to the inevitable.

And that day on which the master of Heatherleigh buried his daughter in his heart was but a precursor of many dreary ones to follow. The same silent, crape-shaded routine, admitting of scarcely any variation, went on. A lonely breakfast in his own apartments; long, companionless walks about the grounds with his hands behind him and his eyes bent on the ground as if in deep study; the silent dinner hour next, and lastly, solitary evenings, on whose mournful hours none were allowed to infringe by trying to be companionable.

About this time the servants began to show signs of a general revolt. Sometimes they declared that this prison-life would materially shorten their days.

Ancil and Peggy reminded them that they would be substantially rewarded some day likely if they would only continue to be faithful.

But the mutiny of the western wing of Heatherleigh boiled and effervesced until, at the close of a very trying day when Sir Rupert had been unusually contrary with them, the gardener and cook said, meaningly, "that if the master was found dead in his bed in the morning, why, it was nobody's business—but—" And they wagged their heads ominously.

(To be Continued.)

RUM'S WORK.

According to the testimony of Joseph Thomson, not all the ages of sensuality and idol worship and warring have done so much to demoralize and brutalize the Africans as has been effected in a generation or two through strong drink. It is when removed from drink in the interior that the souls of the natives are comparatively pure and stainless, while brought in connection with the nearest coast they have become black and degenerate. The same was true of the Indian races in this country. With all the ages behind him the red man could never become a fiend and a devil till New England rum made him so. We talk of paganism heathenism and all the rest, but there are thousands upon thousands in our large cities whom strong drink has made more heathenish, depraved and God-saken than paganism could do if it had added centuries in which to work out its natural results. If evolution were to be taken for granted in regard to native races, strong drinks appears to be the one thing above all others which arrests it and sends them on the line of hopeless degradation. In case of mulitudes it equally arrests it in Christian countries, so that nothing is to be hoped for by any natural process, if even through the grace of God.

THE QUEEN'S MISTAKE.

It is so infrequent that the Queen is wrong on a point of detail that the following story is worth telling. An artist who is pretty well-known to fame, was ordered to take down a military picture for exhibition at Windsor. He did so, and the Queen on seeing it at once remarked that in a certain unimportant particular one of the uniforms was incorrectly painted. The artist was so little of a courtier as to protest respectfully that he was right, and her Majesty to convince him sent for a specimen soldier from the guard on duty. He came and an examination of his coat proved that the artist was correct. It is only fair to add that an alteration had only recently been made by the authorities, of which the Queen was, apparently, not aware.

MR. PARNELL AT COLLEGE.

A correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette* writes:—"It is quite true, though not generally known, that Mr. Parnell was a member of Magdalen College, Cambridge, over twenty years ago. He was only up for a term or two, and consequently left without taking a degree. The reason for his leaving before the end of his time was this: he had committed some trifling breach of discipline towards the end of a term which involved a walk to Newmarket and back. For this offence he received on the following day the customary official 'wigging.' But the embryonic Nationalist leader took the 'wigging' so much to heart that he decided not to return. The term was just at an end, so he removed his name from the books of the college, and thus ceased to belong to the university."

A TEST FOR TEA.

A Russian analyist gives the following as a test by which tea can be proved to be genuine or not:—Take a pinch of tea in a glass, pour upon it a little cold water and shake it well. Pure tea will only slightly color the water, while a strong infusion is quickly got from the adultered or painted leaf. Now buil both sorts separately and let them stand until cool, and the difference between them will be most marked. The false tea will become stronger after a long standing, but will remain transparent whereas pure tea will become muddy or milky. This last appearance arises from the tannic acid which is a natural property in pure tea, but which in artificial tea is entirely absent.

A PIGEON DECIDES A LAW CASE.

A novel decison was rendered by Justice Miller, of Youngstown, Ohio, in a suit before him, between John P. Kirby and John Scott, each claiming the ownership to a certain carrier pigeon, which was brought into court in charge of an officer. Justice Miller, in order to settle the ownership beyond question, ordered the pigeons placed in the hands of two disinterested persons, who took it four miles south of the city and released it. After it had started, two chasers were sent up by Kirby, and Scott followed suit by releasing another pigeon. The pigeon in controversey flew straight to the residence of Scott, and, according to the decision of Justice Miller, is now Scott's property.—

A "SETTLER" FOR MRS. X.

The other day we overheard a table conversation substantially like this:—

"What, dear, you haven't heard about it?"

"No, dearie, not a word."

"Why, you see, Mrs. X. (a very prominent lady) tried to get Mrs. Z.'s (another very prominent lady) cook away from her and actually went to Mrs. Z.'s house when Mrs. Z., was away and offered the cook more money."

"My, my! What did Mrs Z. do about it?"

"Well, the next time they met at a state dinner Mrs. Z. didn't notice her. Some one who sat between them said:—

"'Mrs. Z., you know Mrs. X., do you not?'"

"'N-n-o,' said Mrs. Z., 'I believe not. She sometimes calls on my cook, I understand, but I believe we do not exchange those courtesies. Waiter, another, of the breadsticks, please.'"

CUSTOMS AND CASTES.

A Resident of Ceylon Tells of His Experience.

How the Native Ladies Are Attired—Their Costumes and Yards of Necklaces—Fine and Expensive Roads.

A chat about castes and customs in India is always interesting. When a gentleman of intelligence and observation, who has resided in that country spoke on the subject, the conversation is doubly interesting.

R. E. Pineo, the representative in America of the tea planters of Ceylon, who was in the city several days last week, has made the island of Ceylon his home for some thirty-one years. He is a gentleman of culture and intelligence, and during a casual talk on the prospects of the tea industry in India and Ceylon, the conversation turned to some general references to castes and customs.

THE CASTE MARKS.

"The institution of caste," said Mr. Pineo, "has not by any means been broken up in India. Of course when a native becomes a Christian he or she becomes an outcast, which is equivalent to no caste, and, of course, all such are more or less despised by their former friends.

"The various castes are known by their marks, some having a round mark on the forehead between the eyes, and others—the native bankers for instance—have three horizontal, paralled lines on the forehead. They also, in some instances, have three marks on their arms, between the elbow and shoulder.

SOME CURIOUS COSTUMES.

"When a native of lower caste meets a native of a higher caste, or a European upon the street or road, he will remove his slippers, lower his umbrella and stand aside while the others pass. Europeans are treated with as much deserence as natives of the highest castes.

"As for umbrellas, the natives are very fond of them. They like to carry an umbrella, rain or shine, and it is not an infrequent thing to see them walking along at night, when there is no rain, with an umbrella over their heads.

"The slippers are called sirrapoes. They consist of a piece of leather with one strap over the instep and a smaller strap fastened about the great toe. They are a sort of sandal, and are quickly laid aside by the natives when a high caste passes.

A NATIVE SERVANT.

"If you will wait a moment I will have my boy bring in his sirrapoos which are of a curious construction." Suiting the action to the word, Mr. Pineo stepped from his room—at The Tacoma—into the hallway, and called out "Boy," with a rising inflection at the end of the word.

In a moment there was a rustling in the adjoining room, and then the door opened and Mr. Pineo's "boy," a native Ceylon servant, aged 23 years, appeared, with a big varicolored turban on his little black head. In color his face was of a dull black, his eyes were something over a dozen shades darker than his complexion. His native attire from shoulder to hips was covered by a blue roundabout jacket of English sack out, but from his hips to his feet the folds of simple cloth covering for the person could be seen.

MOROCCO COVERED SIRRAPOOS.

Mr. Pineo addressed the servant in his native tongue. When the ebon visaged individual in flopping skirts had disappeared, Mr. Pineo said he always addressed his boy in his native tongue, although the servant could speak English quite well. During a previous chat Mr. Pineo had referred to the customes of the natives as being highly picturesque, but his "boy," in a blue roundabout jacket and a turban as big in the swell as a hornet's nest, and flying skirt, looked anything but picturesque. There was something grotesque, however, about this mongrel costume.

Well, Mr. Pineo's boy returned anon with a red morrocco leather covered sirrapoo in each hand. This pair, however, looked very much like a common pair of slippers, excepting the toe end which curled up like the end of an old fashioned skate blade. The counter of the heel had been broken down, Mr. Pineo said, in order to allow the feet of the wearer to slip out more readily when a high caste man was met in his native country.

MORE ABOUT CASTES.

At a word from Mr. Pineo the servant retired to join his spouse in the adjoining room, and continuing with his reference to caste Mr. Pineo said:

"Now if this boy of mine should be passing along the road in Ceylon, and should meet a native of a higher caste who had a cupand was drinking water from a vessel with it, the man of lower caste might be given some of the water, but he would have to drink it out of his hands, into the palms of which the man of high caste would pour it. The low caste man is not allowed to drink from a cup or vessel which is used by a man of high caste. Again, if a low caste man meets a high caste man who is eating by the roadside, the high caste man, if he is so inclined, may give the low caste man some of his food, on a leaf or a piece of bark, but he will not allow the low caste man to eat from or use any of his dishes or cooking utensils.

THE NATIVE LADIES.

"Here are some photographs of native women," Mr. Pineo said, producing from a travelling bag three photos about 10x14 inches square. The pictures represent Nona young ladies of high caste in the hill or Kandy country. Their parents are wealthy. In the hill country "Nona" means lady, and one of the brands of the Ceylon tea to be placed upon the American markets will be known as the "Nona' brand, and each package will have a picture of this young lady upon it.

YARDS OF NECKLACES.

Here Mr. Pineo held up the picture of a well-formed young lady, with thick, full lips, bright eyes, with shoeless and sandalless feet, hair combed down and fastened with a dark paste over her well-shaped forehead, and attired in a simple native costume, a wealth of jewelry and yards of necklaces.

Her jewelry consisted of two pair of anklets, three pair of bracelets, four finger rings, nine necklaces and two huge pendants. The jewelry was of gold, studded with rubies, pearls and agate. Some of the necklaces passed about the neck several times, and the rings were of a large and showy design.

Included in the list of the jewelry should be mentioned a pair of gold, bell-shaped ear-rings, the size of the half of a hen's egg.

Mr. Pineo thought the jewelry worn by this young lady, whose name is Tillekaratnee, and who will be known as a lady of title or Coomorahome Ettane in the hill country, was worth about $500.

THE YOUNG LADY'S COSTUME.

The young lady's costume consisted solely of a little jacket—Ah! —which covered the breast and arms from a point midway between the shoulders and elbow, and a piece of costly cloth, very broad and 2½ yards long, which was fastened about the waist, and with the little jacket making one continuous costume from the neck to the ankles. A piece of lace had been thrown over the young lady's shoulders, but Mr. Pineo said this was not in accordance with the prevailing custom.

Another young lady was represented in an attire consisting of one piece of cloth, seven and one-half yards long, of pure white, which had been so arranged as to cover the young lady's well rounded form from neck to ankles, her arms, face and feet alone being exposed.

This young lady wore five pairs of bracelets, besides many yards of necklaces, and her black thick hair parted in the middle and combed smoothly back and fastened in a little knot, with a huge pin stuck through it.

All their fine jewelry is made from gold or silver currency, and is taken to the jeweler and made into any desired shape at a small expenditure.

FINE ROADS IN CEYLON.

Speaking of the roads in India and Ceylon, Mr. Pineo said: "They are built at a cost of from $2,000 to $4,000 per mile, the average wages of the laborers employed being 13 cents per day. For every mile a native man or woman is employed to keep the macadamized surface free from paper, chips or other foreign substance."

THE VANCOUVER ISLAND RAILWAY.

Mr. W. H. Newett, General Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, writing in the Manchester *Examiner*, gives an interesting account of a trip from Victoria to Comox on the Vancouver Island Railway. The road is, he says, smooth, although tortuous as a dog out for a walk, and the scenery along the way is decidedly pretty. Here and there are summer hotels, neat little places intended for sportsmen that might probably get plenty of business by advertising for it. The land of thirty miles is mostly rock, but the remainder of the way is through a fine country, bearing no little timber, with a light, dry soil. This extends up all the valleys between the foot hills and the east coast, and there appears to be plenty of room for settlers. The climate is admirable—a little too dry in summer, bleak and rainy in winter, but thoroughly healthy. Mr. Newett's informant further says: "I lately spent some days on a farm that looks down on the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and although there had been much labour in clearing, there was evidence everywhere of health and well-being, and some tokens of affluence. I know of no part of Canada where so lovely a home may be created by a man who understands farming as Vancouver's Island. The attainment of wealth must not be looked for, but health and substantial well-being are to be had, and are