BY JAMES G. HASSON.

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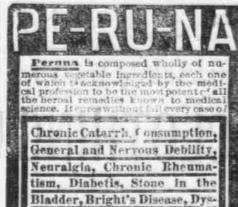
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A MAID FORLORN.

BY THE DUCHESS.

"May I ask where you live, miss?" demands Mrs. Richards, quietly.

"At Branksmere. It must be a long way from this. You know it?"

"Branksmere! The Whitleys' old place—and this is Oaklands. My certie, but you have had a walk!" exclaims the housekeeper, lifting her hands in dismay. "Why, it is four miles from here by the common, and eight by the road! And what an evening for such a journey! See how dark the night has grown" drawing saids the curtains to grown drawing aside the curtains to peer out. "I fear no human being could find his way to Branksmere this hour, in such weather, unless he knew the road well, and even then it would be dangerous to make the attempt. Hear how the storm rages, and the wind howis; and the snow comes thick and fast! It is a wild time, I'm thinking, we shall have before the morning. But we shall have before the morning. But rest easy, miss; if, as you say, you told your mamma you were going to the village, she will believe you are safe there with Mrs. Stilton of the inn."

"I hope so," says Clasy, with a sigh.

At this moment there is a knock at the door, and somebody, without waiting for permission, opens it and walks boldly in. The new-comer is a young man of about twenty-nine, tall, and finely formed, with a well-shaped head. So much can be discerned in the shad-ow; and then he comes quickly up to the table, right within the ray of the lamp, so that Cissy can see him distinct-

He is evidently "the master," the hero of the hour, the one ingredient indis-pensable if she would throw a touch of romance into the adventure; and therefore it is sadly dispiriting that at first sight Cissy must acknowledge him disappointing. In spite of his fine figure and commanding height, he is like anything in be world but a Greek god. In fact he is decidedly plain. His mouth is large his contact. is large, his nose is long, his eyes—his only redeeming feature—are a dark gray, kindly and honest. His hair does not admit of description, being cropped so closely to his head, in the prevailing fashion of the present day, as to be almost invisible. If is forehead is somewhat too square, yet there is a gentleness, a brightness, and withal an amount of strength about his face that redeems its want of beauty.
"May I come in, Mrs. Richards?" says

the young man, with a smile that lights hts whole face—perhaps he is smiling at the absurdity of his question, defrom the made of the roor irs. Remarks courtesies and bids im welcome. Then he comes a little nearer, even to the hearth-rug, and addresses himself to his unexpected guest "Peters has just told me of your un-lucky waik," he says, politely. "I am so sorry about it, but glad more than I can say that you found your way here."

He is gazing with suppressed, but evident curiosity at the pretty girl, who appears half lost in the embrace of the arm-chair, and who has raised herself and is gazing back at him shyly, with heightened color, but clear earn-

"I hope you are quite comfortable," he goes on, with increased cordiality, now he has seen her. "I know Mrs. Richards has done all she can for you; -hospitably-"dinner is ready, and you must be hungry, you know, and I thought I would come in myself and ou to dine with me. There is nobody but myself."

This wind-up to his speech is so naive that Miss Rivers has much ado to sup-press the smile that lurks in the corners of her mouth, threatening every moment to betray her. This is an adventure with a vengeance! She begins to feel like a heroine in a novel, all but in one point. He is right; she is hungry, disgracefully, most unromantically hungry, and thinks with a pleasure not to be subdued of the dinner beyond.

An hour ago when first she arrived she had felt too exhausted to partake of anything Mrs. Richards had laid before but, now that recovery had set in and warmth and rest have done their work, she can not help remembering, she has eaten nothing since two o'clock. and that it is now almost seven. Yet will it not be rather a strange thing to dine tete-a-te'e with her unknown host? And yet again, will it not seem prudish to refuse, as evidently he sees nothing in it? In her perplexity she glances appealingly at the only other woman in

Mrs. Richards is equal to the occa-"I think, Miss Rivers, some dinner will do you good," she says, respectful-ly. "You have eaten nothing since you

came. And, if you will permit me, I shall have a cup of tea for you here di-rectly dinner is at an end." Now this last is a master-stroke on the part of Mrs. Richards! It gives Cissy a feeling of protection, a sort of conviction that she belongs to Mrs. Richards, and that-though parted from her for a little while-she will

ultimately be expected to return and deliver herself up to her rightful owner. She smiles at Mr. Crayen-Cissy's smile is a "thing of beautyand joy for ever"-and, rising, accepts the arm he offers her, and walks away with himdemurely to the dining-room. With the utmost gravity, yet with a good deal of pleasant converse, they both get through a capital dinner; and, by the time it is ended, they discover they both know almost everything it is necessary to

know about each other. Cissy has had a little claret, has eaten all the wainuts Mr. Craven has broken for her, and an unlimited supply of candied fruit, when an ormola clock somewhere behind her tinkles softly. She starts a little, and turning, sees it on the chimney-piece, and that it is half-past eight shemormurs. "Who could have believed it?"

She glances at her host, her face full of genuine surprise, and he feels in-"I am so glad you haven't felt bored," he says, politely, carefully suppressing the warmth he could willingly have

thrown into his tone. "Bored! No. indeed!" But here memory whispers in her ear. Her ex-pression changes, and she glances inuntarily toward one of the windows. I could quite say I have enjoyed myself," sne says, with a rather pensive smile, "if I were positive mamma is not

this moment enduring agonies of glit on my account." She rises from her chair; so does Mr. Craven from his; and, as though divining her thought, he goes to the window. NO CHARGE UNLESS PATENT first pane. With a shiver he pulls down the sash, and they return to the grate-

safe in the village, under Mrs. Stilton's care," he says, soothingly, anxious to resture her to peace of mind. "She may, it she has not sent a mesibifol answer.

"On, hal She wouldn't do that, you know, such a severe night. Who would go? I'm guite convinced she hasn't done that, he asserts, earnestly, though it would have spuzzled him to give a reason for his assertion.
"You think she has not?" asks Cecil.

still doubtfully, though longing to seen as convinced on the subject as he—apparently—is. Some hope revives within her as she remembers that the servants in her house are as ignorant of their way to the village as the servants

"I know it," returns Mr. Craven, with considerable force; "she would, of course, wait until the morning. Why, course, wait until the morning. Why, it would be inhuman, actually unsafe, I think, to send any one abroad on such a night as this."

"And mamma is not inhuman!" murmurs Cecil, with a slight smile, staring thoughtfully into the glowing coals be-

Over the chimney-piece is a large picture, finely painted. It represents an elderly lady, with a charming face, with brown hair arranged in little curls on either cheek, a handsome bust, generously displayed, a waist well in her arms, and a small foot protruding from beneath the satin gown that partly covers her. It is the foot that attracts Cecil's attention. It is very small, and clad in black velvet. She

"I hope you are not making merry over my elderly relative," says Mr. Crav-"Far be it from me; she is much too uncomfortably dignified to excite mirth in any one. I was only thinking of that old adage; 'It is ill waiting for dead men's shoes, and wondering whether it is as 'ill' to wait for a dead woman's, because I am sure I am at this moment wearing your—" She hesitates.
"Great-grandmother?" he prompts.

"Great-grandmother's slippers," cludes Cissy, laughing again, and look-ing down at her velvet shoe, the very fac-simile of that worn by the dead and gone grandam. "What miraculously small feet my great-grandmother must have had!" says Mr. Craven solemnly, regarding

"Oh, no! These shoes are quite loose on me," she replies, innocently "I can see that," he remarks, unwisely, and regrets his speech a second later, when to his chagrin the pretty foot is hastily withdrawn. A silence follows, and then Miss Rivers, as though the thought has just occurred to her, says gently-

her foot with interest.

"I must now bid you good-night, and go to Mrs. Richards; she has promised me tea at nine." "But it is not nearly that yet. It wants quite a quarter to it," protests her host in a somewhat injured tone. "Pray do not hurry yourself. Do you know -warningly - that from the mo-ment you join Mrs. Richards until you elect to go to bed, she will spend the family. I know it, because I have been through it. And it is no joke. Every story is thirty minutes good, not a sec-

"How nice! I adore old stories," says Miss Rivers, sweetly. You won't adore hers: there's not a bit of go in them, not a murder, or a ghost, or a suicide, or anything amus-ing from start to finish. We are a wretched lot, you know, when all is told"—alluding apologetically to his ancestors. "Don't let yourself in for it, if you love yourself.

"You greatly relieve my mind," says Clssy. "I couldn't sleep in a house where a ghost walked." "Couldn't you? I should find even that poor excitement welcome, so dreary is my present existence. You can't think"—dejectedly—"how slow I find it here, with no society. Your coming to-night has been such a relief. Up to this I have had to endure the Major; and, though I'm generally considered rather good-natured than otherwise, he is much too much for any fellow. He was agent, you see, in my uncle's time—who never attended to anything-and now, before retiring from office-thank goodness, he is re tiring-he insisted on coming down here with me to see after things, and behave uncivilly, and harass the very lives out

of my unfortunate tenants "Why do you let him?" reproachfully. "I am afraid to interfere; and besides, doesn't matter much, because he can't stay long, and I'll make it up to them afterward. The gout overtook him yesterday. I'm devoutly thankful that it came down upon him heavily as I have been spared his inane twaddle

for a few hours at least." "Poor man!" says Cissy, vaguely, leaving it doubtful whether she intends her sympathy for the Major or his

"I have often wished I hadn't come here at all," continues Mr. Craven; "my place in Kent is so much prettier and far more comfortable; but I was obliged do so. He talked me into it. But now"—warmly—"I feel I owe even the Major a debt of gratitude, as my com-ing has enabled me to be of some slight

"Even that miserable solace is denied you," returns Miss Cissy, with a calm smile, "if you reflect that, even if you had remained in Kent, Mrs. Richards would still have taken me in, and been very good to me." "True," rejoins her crest-fallen host;
"I have not been of much service to
you, after all—have I?"

Cissy is conscience-stricken. "Yes, indeed you have!" she says im-pulsively, "It wasn't civil of me to say that, was it, when you have been more than kind to me?" Then, as though ashamed of her amiability, she goes on hurriedly, with a rather brilliant color-"Good-night, Mr. Craven; I must go, or Mrs. Richards will think I have vanished in as mysterious a man-

ner as I came." You consign me to solitude?"-halfjestingly, half in reproach. 'A eigar will no doubt console you "And Mrs. Richards's company will be a relief to you. I shouldn't, course, dream of doing combat with a woman of Mrs. Richards's attractions. May I show you the way to her room?

As yet the house is strange to you. She has tea at nine, I believe you said"—with a calm glance, but a faint accession of color that betrays itself even be-neath the bronze that Egypt has lent to his face. "Do you—do you think, if I asked her, she would give me some? If there is anything on earth I covet, it is a cup of tea at nine."
"You know Mrs. Richards four days

longer than I do." answers Miss Cissy, coolly; "you can ask her." So he does ask her after a short preamble about nothing in particular. Mrs. Richards makes her Sunday courte-sy, and assures him she will feel it a great honor to entertain him; whereupon he thanks her gracefully, and, telling Miss Rivers he has some letters to answer, but will be back again in no time, he leaves her for the present. And indeed his promise holds good; because the time that elapses before he again makes his appearance is scarcely worthy of record

CHAPPER III. Cecil falls into a sound sleep that night almost as soon as her head touches the All through the silent, darksome hours she lies, scarce stirring until morning

forces itself rudely through her cham-ber windows, morning so called; but it is dull, and dark as twilight. Springing from her bed, Cecil runs bareinoted to the window, and pushing back the curtains gazes eagerly on the outer world. Nothing but the same uniform white meets her eyes. Through the whole night the snow has fallen unceasingly-even now is falling, thickly, steadily, as when she last watched it

The drive below is on a level with the grassy banks on either side; the fir-trees are bending to the very earth, so weighty is their dazzling burden. Up-on the window-sill a little brown bird lies dead, pathetic in its stiff and mournful quiet.

Cissy, putting out her hand, raises it, and tries to warm it into life again within her hands and besom, but to no avail and sodly she lays it where she found it, and heaps a tiny mound of snow upon it. And then, shivering, she closes the window and rings her bell for one of the maids.

She dresses rapidly, though with a mind pre-occupied. The prospect of having to spend another day at Oaklands, with no chance of letting her mother know of her safety, fills her with anguish. Depressed, but pretty; perplexed, but indescribably charming, in her soft, navy-blue serge gown, with some old lace ruffles, borrowed from Mrs. Richards, or rather from her host's ancestors, at her threat and wrists, she goes dejectedly down-stairs in the direction of the housekeeper's

Being obliged to pass the library on her way thither, she encounters Mr. Craven emerging from it, some letters in his hands. He bids her good-morning in his most genial tone, hopes she has slept well, and that she has not suffered from yesterday's imprudence. Miss Rivers thanks him sweetly, and tells him she has slept well, and that, so far as she can judge at present, she has not succumbed to cold. Then the lachrymose expression returns to her lachrymose expression returns to her face, and she says mournfully—
"Did you ever see such a day! Worse than yesterday. What shall I do about

"I have arranged all that," answered her host, pleasantly. "The post-boy— wretched youth—plowed his way up here as usual, this morning, in spite of wind and weather, and he undertook to show one of my men the way to Branksmere. So I wrote your mother a polite and reassuring note, to say you were all right with Mrs. Richards, but that I feared you could not return to-day, as no horse could travel."

"Oh, how good of you!" says Cecil, gladly. "How can I thank you enough! You have taken quite a load off my mind, and made my heart as light as a feather. But I wish you had told me before you sent your messenger, as I too should have liked to write mamma a little note."

"It was so early"-gently-"and I hoped you were sleeping. And I would not for worlds have had you disturbed after all the fatigue you experienced Miss Rivers is touched by his kindness and thoughtfulness.

"How well you can think for other ple!" she says, a little vaguely, but gratefully, giving him the cool, slim hand she had willfully withheld when wishing him good-morning. Only for a moment, though. Hastily withdraw-ing it, almost before his willing fingers have closed over it, she says, gayly, "How is your friend, the Major?"

"Better-much better," he returns, in a tone that would lead one to imagine had said, "Worse-much "He even spoke of being able to get down this evening in time for dinner. But"-with mock solemnity-"the day is long, and gont is not trustworthy."
"Then I shall dine with Mrs. Richards," says Cecil, reflectively, and as

though, little hypocrite that she is-the idea is rather pleasurable to her than otherwise. "And that reminds me" otherwise. "And that reminds me"—quickly—"I shall also breakfast with her. Good-bye"—nodding to him brightly, and moving on a step or two, until he stays her by an imploring gest-"You won't breakfast with me, then?

How rash of you! Peters, I am positive, can provide twice as good a break-fast as Mrs. Richards. Don't sacrifice yourself on the altar of duty."

"I sha'n'. I, for my part, believe firmly in Richards. She looks like a good breakfast. By and bye, when we meet again, if indeed"—with a quick glance from under her long lashes which is full of coquetry in spite of all her stern resolves—"we ever do meet again—I expect you will be consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the mineral control of the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed with envy when I tall you of all the consumed when I tall you of all tall you of all tall you of all the consumed when I tall you of all tall you with envy when I tell you of all the nice things I have to eat."

"Well, rush upon your fate if you will," he replies. "But at least let us make a bargain. If Peters outdoes Richards, will you promise to throw yourself on his tender mercies to-morrow? The old gentleman"-waving his hand upward to where the Major's room may be-"never enchants me with his society before noon." 'A bargain it shall be," rejoins Miss Rivers promptly. "But, if you lose, you sha'n't get any breakfast at all. That

is my amendment. "I'll risk even that for the chance of the alternative," he says gallantly. "I think, Miss Rivers, you expressed a wish to see the picture-gallery-didn't

"I should like it so much," answers Cissy. "It is now"—drawing out her watch—"a quarter to ten; at twelve I shall be ready to pay my respects to the old people. Will that hour suit you? Yes. Very well then"—with a backward glance, and a smile charming because swift, "Be sure you are not

He is not. Indeed, it still wants fully five minutes to the appointed hour when he presents himself at the door of Mrs. Richards's parlor, to find his guest awinting him.

The picture-gallery proves a complete success. Mass layers, her mind at rest about her mother's anxiety on her be-half, is in her gayest mood, and declares herself, and is in very truth, enchanted with the endless rows of simpering dames and dauntless knights that line the walls. She insists upon hearing every dark legend connected with the grim warriors, every romantic and eerie tale about their wives.

"This gaunt spinster," says Mr. Craven, indicating a withered damsel of sour aspect, "was a lady of advanced notions. In our days she would have gone in heavily for woman's rights. Perhaps' hesitating—"you agree with—" Here he stops, abashed by her reproachful look.

"How could you so misjudge me?" she says. "Do I look like one of those awful people?" She stands a little back from him, as though imploring him to assure himself now and forever that she is not of the

abhorred race. She certainly does not look like it-not in the least like any-thing awful or abhorred; and he tells her so mildly, as far as words go; but with considerable warmth if she can read his eves aright.
It is a pleasant morning, in spite of the wind and the never-ceasing snow; and when luncheon is at an end Mr.

dle of the third some she grows absent, and forgets to play; and her host, looking at her, sees a smile creep over her "What is amusing you now?" heasks, smiling, too. out of pure sympathy, Miss Rivers starts, and looks a little

ashamed of herself.

Craven proposes a game at billiards, to

which Cecil, who plays as badly as most

women, willingly assents. In the mid-

"I have a horrid trick of laughing when amused," she says, demurely, "and it came to me just now that the whole thing is so absurdly funny. Don't you agree with me?" "I am positive I should, he replies, "if I had even the faintest idea to what you are alluding." Why, my proc " in this house

amuse me—an undesired guest."
"Certainly not that," he says, with
rather more earnestness than the occa-

sion demands.

"Well, at least, an uninvited one," she corrects impatiently, the smile fading. "I am afraid you are growing tired to death," says the young man, with some pain in his voice, laying down his cue and coming to her side. "Of course you are; it is only natural. It is so slow for you here, being locked up in a place against your will, with nothing to amuse you. That is the worst of being a bachelor. If now," he continues, de-jectedly, "I had a wife, you might be so much happier, and could talk about dress, you know, and that."

"Yes; and bonnets, and servants. How well you understand women!" says Miss Rivers, curtly, turning away, "Perhaps if you had a wife I should

"Then I'm downright glad I haven't, as that would make your enforced stay even more unpleasant to you than it is, he returns, a little bitterly.

"Did I say I was bored, or found things slow, or that I found anything here unpleasant?" she demands, slowly.
"I don't remember making such remarks. "Well, you looked it, you know," he

replies, still somewhat aggrieved.
"What, all that? Bored and slow—and unpleasant!"—softly. "How rude you are!"
"You misunderstand," he begins,

"Nobody ever made me such an un-complimentary speech before. I think you needn't call me bad names," she interrupts, meekly, turning a red ball round and round between her pretty white hands.

"You know I didn't mean that," he exclaims, eagerly, and is probably going to say a good deal more, when she raises her eyes, and he, seeing the mischief lying in them, foregoes rurther explanation and joins in her merry laugh.

"Shall we mish this long-suffering game," she asks, lightly, "and put off our discussion till another day? Go on, it is your turn." So he goes again to the table, and, by the most flagrant bad play and an evi-dent determination not to hit anything whatever, compels her to win the game "Shall we play another? You should give me my revenge," he says, seeing her lay down her one, and fearing lest a thought of Mrs. Richards may be again

possessing her.

swers, calmly. Now he is the best billiard-player at his club, and is, moreover, rather proud of the fact, yet be bears this aspersion on his skill with the most exemplary patience, making not the smallest pro-

"No, you play too badly," she an-

"Time may improve me," he says with an impassive countenance. "Give me one more chance." "What a hypocrite you are!" returns Miss Cecil, with startling promptitude.

"Don't you think I read your determination to give me that game? And I thought it so silly! No, I shall not play again with you until practice has made me more perfect. Will you come and show me the china in the small drawing-room? Richards says it is lovely, and that it is locked up in the ebony cabinets. "I am not very well up in china, but they say my uncle's collection is rather

pect of having her with him for at least And together they go to the drawing-room and ransack the cabinets. Some tiny tea-cups of the reign of Queen Anne raise in Cissy's bosom feelings of

fine," he replies, delighted at the

the most intense admiration.
"What a darling!" she says, taking out a cup and laying it on her palm.
"Such a little pet, and so preity." They are both kneeling before the cabinet, and are, therefore, close together. In his heart Mr. Craven th every word of praise she has attered to the cup might be applied to herself. "Keep it." he says, genially, alluding to the cup. "Take anything you like. There's any number of them. And it's a pity to leave them there, you know, when I don't care about them." "Oh, no, thank you!"-coloring hotly

and putting back the tea-cup hastily "I would not spoil the set for anything. "Then take the whole set, if you fancy them," he entreats. "I really wish you would. Nobody here ever looks at "Not now. But"-mischievously-

"that wife you spoke of so confidently a little while ago, she will like to look at "Will she?"—thoughtfully. He stares intently for a moment or two at Miss Rivers as she kneels beside him—perhaps the attitude suggests visions of a possible altar; and then he says, rather irrelevantly, "You are very fond of

china, are you not?" "Well, yes, rather," she replies; and then, conquering an inclination to laugh, she rises to her feet and goes over to the fire-place. "I think you said this morning your friend was much better." she says, presently, more from a desire to make conversation than from any overpowering interest in the Major. "Is he still growing toward perfection?"

"Yes"—in a mournful tone—"he is decidedly better. There is no hope. He is coming down to dinner. Nothing would prevent him, though I sent several messages, beautifully worded, to say I thought it foolish to make too free just at first, and that draughts were dangerous."

"Messages never succeed. Why did "He wouldn't let me in-wouldn't see me at any price. I made one or two noble efforts to carry his chamber by assault when first he was laid upinterest in him-but was repulsed with great slaughter. 'No admittance to strangers' should be posted on his door, as no one dares enter it but his own

"How mysterious! But why?"
"That is just what I am not in a position to tell you, never having been there. I suspect"—solemnly—"that he gets himself up—goes in heavily for paint and powder, wigs and teeth, and so on; and, when in bed, without all these structive appliances, is a complete the second of the sec these attractive appliances, is a complete wreck-'sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything!' "What a glowing picture!" says Cissy; and then again, "What an unpleasant

"On, he's all that," assents Mr. Craven, agreeably, "and a good deal morel When a fellow is pretty wall on in years, and certain portions of him have drop-ped away, such as hair and teeth, why can't be confess it? The Major would die first. He abhors wrinkles, and thinks gray hair rude. When he shows

name?" "You shall have all the information in my power. He served in the-th Lancers some few centuries ago. He lives at a place called Lynn Hall, in Kent-oh, that he was there now!-and

he rejoices in the name of Jervis."

"What!" cries Clssy, faintly. "Lynn
Hall! Jervis!" Her breath comes quickly, and she pauses as though the news just imparted has been too much for her. Then she goes on hastily— You say he is coming down to dinner; he may come here, to this very room.

Here you are, doing all you know to Mr. Craven, forgive me; but I must "But why?" demands her puzzled host,

detaining her. "He is my uncle's dearest friend. And my uncle is to leave us all his money; and he is as particular as you please, and so old-fashioned; and if he heard through this dreadful old man of my being here for two days, snowed up alone with—without mainina, or any one, he would disinherit me," winds up Miss Rivers, breathless and incoherent. "But does Jervis know you—personally, I mean?"

"Yes, intimately, and he owes me many a grudge, because Ronnie and I can't bear him, and have often been very rude to him," acknowledges Cissy, in a distressed tone. "He used to worry so. There is no end to the mischief he would make out of this if he knew of my being here. I do hope he has not heard my name mentioned by the servants."

"He sha'n't hear anything," says her host, reassuringly; "but-" At this moment a heavy step in the hall outside, drawing every instant nearer and nearer, fills the hearts of the two within with dismay.

"He is coming," he whispers.
"Oh, what is to become of me?" she murmurs, looking wildly around in search of a sanctuary—trying to discover some faint chance of escape. No such chance presents itself. Already the owner of the heavy step has touched the handle of the door; but not before a bright idea has dawned in Mr. Craven's mind.

"There is an antercom, a large closet -come with me, quickly," he says, grasping her hand, and leading her across the fire-lit room to where some crimson curtains hang apparently with-out aim or purpose. Pushing them aside he discloses a door. Opening it hurriedly, he entreats her to enter the tiny room beyond. She obeys him instinctively, but whis-

pers nervously as she sees him going— "Do not leave me here long. It is dreadfully dark, and I do so hate being without light."
He can only look a reply, which she does not see, and has barely time to close her in, and get back to the fire, before the Major comes slowly up to

"Horrid cold house!" says the new arrival, in a grating tone. "Ugh, ugh!"— coughing—"reminds one of a vault!" "I am afraid you have come to the very coldest room in it, the library is much more comfortable; you don't take half care of yourself," says the young man with great concern, wondering

Night has fallen, and only the glow of the brilliant fire throws light upon the somber apartment. All the corners lie in shadow, only the hearth-rug and part of the carpet stand revealed "I've been there," returns the Major, irritably. "It nearly froze me. Barely

it fit to sit on." "The dining-room," begins Craven, weakly, at his wits' end, but the Major "And dinner preparing"—in disgust.
"If there's one thing I hate, it is being in a place where servants are fussing

and rattling plates and silver. One has eaten one's dinner in anticipation long before one gets it. No, thank you. shall stay here until the gong sounds; it's a degree less depressing than the Draven to this pass Mr. Craven falls to thinking, and happily remembers how Richards, when showing him the

house, had told him of a second door leading from the closet where Cissy is immured into the dining-room. If only the key of this door can be produced Making some frivolous excuse, he forsakes the Shajor, and, rushing head-long through the hall, bursts like a whirly indicate Mrs. Richards's parlor, and asks her, with incoherent anxiety. if the key he hopes for is still in exist-

She thinks so-with maddening hesitation-but is afraid she can not lay her hand on it at this particular moment,

that is, unless-Here she pauses, and meditates for some time, unconscious, dear soul, of the terments her master is enduring. When she has thought it out carefully and when the young man is almost on the verge of lumay, she recollects all about it, and, with a smiling countenance, delivers the key to him.
Seizing it joyfully, he speeds toward the second door, cries, "Open sesame." and enters eagerly—only to find the antercom empty and the bird flown! Horrible visions of discovery, and consequences of the most unpleasant nature, crowd upon his brain as he goes back to the small drawing-room, ex-pecting to find the Major trate and indignant; and Miss Rivers in the midst

[To be Continued.]

A GENEROUS ARISTOCRAT.

of angry argument. But no. The Major

is in his chair, serene, sleepy. There is no sound of discord, not the faintest

sign of Miss Rivers's presence any-

Help a Little Match Girl. "Ma-a-tchist missis, ma-a-tchist Phree for five, ma-a-tchist cried a thin child's voice on Chestnut street, just below Broad, on Saturday afternoon. The voice belonged to a girl less than a yard high, who had big plosding blue eyes and a pert month. The blue-eyed child persistently offered her wares to a man who was walking with a very stylishly dressed young lady.

"Go away?" said a man in a gruff tone. "Ah, the poor little thing," cried the young woman. "Why don't you buy some of her matches, Fred? I'll do it myself. Mere little girl," opening a sealskin reticule and fishing out some coins with her daintily gloved hand. "She's very neatly clad and looks as though she had a good mother. I just believe I'll make her a present," and, suiting the action to the word, she opened her fur coat and un-fastened a knot of bright cherry ribbon that caught up a loop in her black allk dress. Then she quickly pinned the knot on the child's gray hood, and patting the pink cheek, turned away. "What in the world made you do that." demanded the man, evidently much an-

"Oh, why, it will please the poor mother so to think that some one has noticed her sweet-faced child," was the young lady's reply, and the two went down the street. A tail, red-tuced Irishman had been standing on the curb watching the performance with keen interest
"That young lady is better nor the
Quane of England," he remarked, looking after the couple. Be the powers, Of could up in all his war paint, he is perfectly go down on me knase and worship a beauti-chastly." "You make me long to know him.

Your description reminds me of a friend of my own," says Cissy, with an amused laugh. "May I ask this here's A Curious Announcement. to do a keind set to the poor with her own

A Curious Announcement. The following is a copy of a bill posted on the walls of a village near Dundee : "A lecture on total abstinence will be delivered in the open air and a collection will be made at the door to defray expenses."

Chested Out of his Dues. Gentleman-If the world owes every man a living, as you say, why don't you Tramp-I can't do it. The world has

CHARLEY'S CASE.

Busin sas itema first insertion lite, per line ; each

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I was a physician in an obscure country from any feeling of vanity, but because it is necessary to the unfolding of my story-bad scunized some repute for discovering the occult causes, of maindles the first step to whose remedy, in all cases is to discovery that most the most the first state. discover their root, the next to strike

One efternoon a strange lady came to my office, bearing in her arms a wan, strickly-looking child. Though accom-panied by a servant, she seemed loth to trust the little sufferer to any but her own mother y care. "I have come, doctor," she said. "to

consult you about my little boy. For some months he had been declining grad-The quivering lip and checked utterance evipced the depth of the solicitude with

which my decision was awaited. I took the little invalid by the hand. He shrank back at first, but, after a little coaxing, suffered me to take him on my knee, and soon we were prattling together, the best of friends.

While asking him his name, which be said was "Tarley," and his age, which he told me was "free years," I felt she little fellow's pulse and made such other observations as a proper understanding of the case required.

Looking up, I found the mother's gase fixed auxiously on my face.
"What do you think, doctor?" she inquired, tremulously: "can you give me any hope!"

"I detect no symptoms of organic dis-ease," I replied; "nothing but a general method of the system, which, I trust, will yield readily to careful hursing and atrople tonics."

Then you think my child may be saved?" she cried, cagerly.

"I have certainly every hope, madam,"
"Bless you, doctor?" she exclaimed, the tears welling up beyond control. "You see Charley's uncle, the brother of my poor husband, who died six months ago opposed my coming here. We have almost ried the first physicians of the city, and thought it useless to go elsewhere. I'm so gird I took advantage of his absence and came of my own accord. I left Then you think my child may be sence and came of my own accord. I less word for him to join us here on his return, and I'm sure when he finds Charley better he will approve my course. He takes a great interest in Charley."

I prepared a vial of medicine, which ? gave to Charley's mother, who departed with a much more obserful look shoe that with which she had entered. o few days little Charley was so much stronger that I began to think him one of

danger, and his mother's face looked so

happy that I should scarcely have been at our first meeting.
At the end of a week I was waited or by a stranger, who introduced himself at Mr. Lander, little Charley's uncle. His manner and speech were those of a gentleman, but there was something sinister in

his expression not calculated to win at first sight.
"I am glad to find my sephew's health to much improved," he said, "and beg you to accept my thanks. I frust the change thay be permanent."
"I feel every assurance it will be," I an-

awered.

"My great fear is that the disease is bereditary," roplied Mr. Lander, lugubrasis. "The symptoms attending my poor brother's last illness were precisely of out Mr. Lander down for a croaker, and filling up the vial of medicine for which be had come. I got rid of my dole-

ful visitor as speedily as possible. Next morning I received a message that fittle Charley was worse, and a request from his mother to call without delay. I went at once to see the hotel at which the lady was stopping, and, to my sur-prise, tound the child in a state of even reater prostration than that in which I

and first seen him.
"When did this change begin?" I asked. Soon after he began taking the last medicine," said Charley's mother.
"Your child inherits a handsome fortune "The lady looked surprised, as though

question in hand. "May I ask to whom it would go in the event of his death !! I continued. "To his uncle, Mr. Lander," was the re-ty. "It was provided in the will by which the property came to my hisband, that in case he died childless, or none of bis children lived to come of age, the estate should go to his brother." "Parton my ouriesity, madam." I

wendering what that had to do with the

you know." By the way," I added, carelessia de there any of that last vial of medicine The vial was placed to my hand. About e third of the contents remained.
"I will leave this in its place," I said handing Charley's mother another and outting the first in my pocket; and, with

few words of encouragement, I took me

said, "frat every doctor is a bit of a genely.

of met My. Lander at the door of my office, and saked him in . Inviting him to be seated, and excusing myself for a floracut, I passed into a rear room, which i tiged as a sort of laboratory.

"How did you leave little Charley, dootor" inquired Mr. Lander, on my re-

As well as I could expect to find one who had been taking poison!" I showered. "Polson" be gasped, a deathly pation overspreading his face.
"Here is the residue of the physic which I sent by you yesterday," I continued, oducing the vial. "I have subjected it

a chemical test, and find in it a strong directore of a certain vegetable poison which if administered in small but re-peated doses, will, in time, produce death, and leave no trace of the means our What do you mean?" cried Landez

pringing to his feet and quaking with "I mean," said I "that when I gave you this vial yesterday there was no potson in the There is now, and you are the only one whom the child's death would benefit am convinced of your guilt of attempted murder: Whether you have not com-mutted actual murder, also, I leave to your own consciences for, by your own state-frent, you brother died in a manner indi-cating the use of the same foul means, and

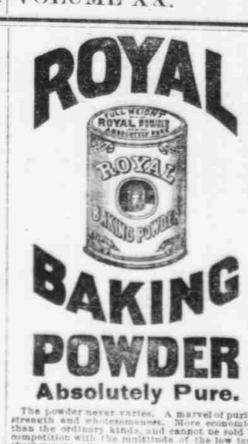
there was the same motive for employing "Do you intend to denounce me to the law?" Be asked.
"Such I deem to be my duty," I sn-Some poisons are slow and some are ordek!" he exclaimed, and hastily taking from his vest pocket a vial of prusses soid, he put it to his Hps and drained the som-

tents, falling dead admost instantly.

My little patient, it is needless to see. and no more refapees. Livre. Bentare the rounds of the "la der of fame" Ice covers the steps of eria "Tie terrible toll to ascend the first

You can step down the last any time. -[National Weekly, How He Wanted It Cut,

you like your hair out?" Oh, like page's



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