George Caulfield's Journey

By Miss M. E. Braddon.

CHAPTER I.—(CONTINUED.)

He took the card from his breast-pocket and handed it to the station-master.

"Mr. Elsden, Briargate," the man read aloud.

"Elsden," said the doctor. "I know an Elsden of Briargate—a big man with large white whiskers?" he interrogated, turning to the curate.

"No, this was a young man; pale, dark and good looking."

"Ah, I don't know who he can be. There'll have to be an inquest to-morrow morning, and the best thing we can do is to telegraph to Elsden, of Briargate, directly the office is open. Very strange that the lady's friends should not have appeared."

"I shall lose my train," cried George Caulfield, seeing the last lingerers hurrying to their places. "Here's my card," handing one to the doctor. "You may communicate to me at that address. Any assistance that I can give—"

"Beg your pardon, sir," said the constable, laying an authoritative hand upon him. "I shall be obliged to detain you till this business is settled."

"I shall be wanted as a witness at the inquest."

"Yes, sir; most likely, sir. It will be my duty to detain you. Better not talk too freely, sir. Any statement you now make may be used against you later on."

The curate looked at him with surprise.

"Do you mean to say that I am your prisoner—that you want to lock me up?"

"Well, yes, sir. Very suspicious case, you see. Young lady poisoned—friends not forthcoming. No doubt you'll be able to explain matters to-morrow; but for to-night you must consider yourself in custody."

"Yes, of course, I shall be able to explain," said George Caulfield, calm and bold, now that he found himself face to face with actual peril, "but it is a most painful position. I feel that a trap has been set for me."

"You had better hold your tongue," said the doctor.

So the London Mail left without George Caulfield, who was conveyed in a cab to Millidale Jail, where he was subjected to the ignominious process of having his pockets searched by a jailer. In one of them was found the little bottle given him by the gentleman at Grandchester, and this, together with a few other trifles, was handed over to the authorities for investigation.

CHAPTER II.

INSTEAD of making any vain attempt at sleep, George Caulfield asked for pens, ink and paper, and a lamp that would last him for the best part of the night; and on these luxuries being conceded, he sat down to write a long letter to his mother, relating all the circumstances of his miserable journey, and entreating her not to take alarm at his situation, whatever she might read about him in the newspapers. This letter, which would travel by the morning post, could be preceded by a telegram, informing the old lady that her son was safe, and detained at Millidale on business. Some hours of anxiety the son could not spare that beloved mother; and it was more painful to him to think of her trouble, when five o'clock came and brought no returning traveler, than to contemplate his own position.

"Dear old lady! I can fancy her and all her neat and careful arrangements for my comfort," mused Mr. Caulfield. "I know how distrustful she will be of the maids, and how she will insist upon getting up at four o'clock in order to see about my breakfast. And then when the time comes, and the parson drives up to the gate, what agonies she will suffer! For I have never accustomed her to disappointments. I have never broken my word to her in my life."

The curate fretted and fumed at the thought of his mother's anxiety. He was an only and an adoring son—at thirty-two years of age a confirmed bachelor, loving no one on earth as well as he loved the widowed mother whose cherished companion he had been from childhood upward. Had she not removed her dearly loved goods and chattels to Eton, and lived in a small house in the High-street all the time her boy was at school there? Had she not followed him to Cambridge as faithfully as a sutler follows a camp? And now she had one of the prettiest houses in South Kensington, and her son the first curate at the most intensely Gothic church in that locality. George Caulfield's mother was the love of his life. He had been assisting at a choral festival at a small town near Grandchester, where an old college friend of his father was vicar, and had been only three days away from the dainty little nest at South Kensington, where blue china plates had just broken out like pimples, on a sage-green wall, and where the Queen Anne mania showed itself modestly in divers inexpensive details.

"Poor mother!" sighed George; "a telegram can hardly reach her before nine o'clock at the earliest."

He read his Tennyson; he dozed a little; he got rid of the night somehow and at seven o'clock he had written and dispatched two telegrams.

The first was to his mother; the second was to the vicar, from whom he had parted at eleven o'clock the previous morning, and to whom he was inclined to look for succor, as one of the cleverest and most energetic men he knew.

This latter message was brief:

"From George Caulfield, Millidale Jail, to Edward Leworthy, Freshmead Vicarage.—Come to me at once, for God's sake! I am in a great difficulty."

Mr. Caulfield's janitor brought him a comfortable breakfast by and by, and was inclined to sympathize. He knew a gentleman when he saw one, he told the curate, though he had had to deal with a rough lot in this beastly hole.

He had seen a good many murderers in his time, and the possibility of his prisoner's guilt made very little difference to his feelings. Guilty or not guilty, a man who was free-handed with half-crown pieces was entitled to respect. The difference between a half-crown and a florin, was just the difference between your real gentleman and the spurious article. The actual amount was not much, but that odd sixpence marked the distinction.

This functionary informed Mr. Caulfield that the inquest was to take place at four o'clock that afternoon.

"Which gives you time to communicate with your solicitor," he added, grandly.

"But I haven't any solicitor," answered the prisoner. "I never had any law business in my life."

"So much the better for you, sir," responded the jailor, sententiously; "but you must have a lawyer to watch this here case for you."

"I'll wait till my friend, the Vicar of Freshmead, comes; and take his advice about it," said George. "I know he'll come as soon as the rail can bring him."

His confidence was not ill-placed. Soon after noon Mr. Leworthy was ushered into his room. He was between fifty and sixty—a man with a countenance full of vivid intelligence, bright brown eyes, and gray hair, worn longer than the fashion. It was altogether a poetic head; but the man's temperament fitted him for action and effort as thoroughly as his intellect gave him mastery in brain-work.

Such a friend as this was verily a friend in need. The two men clasped hands; and for the first minute George Caulfield was speechless.

"Tell me all about it," said the vicar, sitting down by his friend's side with a fatherly air, as if it were a common thing for him to find a friend in prison.

George Caulfield related his dreadful adventure of the previous night, the vicar listening intently, with knitted brows.

"It looks very like murder," he said at last. "The poor creature was carried to the station in a dying state, and that stertorous breathing you noticed when the train started was the last struggle. Let be afraid, my dear boy; there's not the slightest reason for uneasiness. Our business is to find out all about this poor lady, and the man who placed her in the train. She must have been brought to the station in some kind of vehicle—cab, bath-chair—something. The first thing to be done is to have inquiries made among the cabmen and cab proprietors. The police will do all that; but I shall have to watch your interests in the matter. You must have a clever lawyer, too, to watch the case. Brockbank, of Grandchester, will be the man—always about the criminal court there, up to every move. I'll telegraph to him instantly. The inquest is to be at four, you say. I must get a train at 11:30."

"How good you are!" exclaimed George, "and how clever!"

"I'm a man of the world, that's all. Some pious people think that a parson has no right to be a man of the world, forgetting who it was that told us to be wise as the serpent. I'm not the popular idea of a parson, you know, by any means; but I can serve a friend as well as your strait-laced specimen of the breed."

He was a man of abounding cheerfulness and infinite capacity for work, as prone to embellish his conversation with occasional flowers of modern slang as he had been forty years ago at Eton. He was just the man George Caulfield wanted in this crisis of his life.

He telegraphed to the Grandchester attorney, and got the inquest postponed from four till five. He saw the medical man; he talked to the police. A police officer had started for Grandchester by an early train to hunt up the owner of the station, and obtain as much information as could be got in a few hours.

The inquest was held at the chief hotel in Millidale, in a large dining-room, which was only used on civic and particular occasions. Here, under a blaze of gas, the curate of St. Philemon's, South Kensington, found himself for the first time in his life face to face with a British jury and a British coroner.

Mr. Hargrave, M. R. C. S., general practitioner at Millidale, declared that the deceased, name unknown, had died from the effects of a large dose of laudanum. There had been no post-mortem, and he saw no necessity for one. The color of the face, the odor of the breath, the abnormal coldness of the corpse, were sufficient evidence as to the nature of the poison. The bottle found in the prisoner's possession contained laudanum. Sensation!

The railway guard and station-master stated all they knew about the arrival of the deceased at Millidale Junction. Both described the prisoner as violently agitated.

The constable who had been sent to Grandchester was next examined.

He had found Mr. Elsden, of Briargate—a man of sixty, stout, gray, bald, in every attribute unlike the man described so graphically by Mr. Caulfield. Mr. Elsden had been able to offer no suggestion as to the stranger who had made such a shameful use of his card.

The constable had afterward gone to no less than four cab-yards, where he had made all inquiries possible in the limited time. He had been unable to find any cabman who had driven an invalid lady to the station on the previous evening. He had next been hunted out the only bath-chair proprietor in Grandchester, with the same result. Time had not allowed him to visit the numerous chemists' shops in that thriving city, and that remained to be done.

There was no evidence on Mr. Caulfield's behalf, except the Vicar of Freshmead's evidence as to his character and antecedents, and to the fact that he only parted with him at eleven o'clock on the previous morning at the Freshmead Road Station. Freshmead was seven miles from Grandchester.

"What was Mr. Caulfield going to do when he left you?" asked the coroner.

"He was going to spend the day in Grandchester."

"Has he any friends or acquaintances in that city?"

"No. He was going to look at the cathedral and law-courts, and to spend an hour or two in the Oldbury Library."

"He was to dine somewhere, I suppose?"

"He meant to dine at a restaurant. There are a good many dining-places in Grandchester; he could take his choice among them."

After this witness had been examined the inquiry was adjourned for a week.

At the close of the proceedings Mr. Brockbank, the lawyer, asked if his client might be released on bail, the Vicar of Freshmead being prepared to offer himself as security to any amount, but the coroner replied that the case was of too serious a nature to admit of that.

So Mr. Caulfield went back to the stony place whence he had come, where the utmost privilege that could be accorded him was the liberty to see his friends at stated hours, and to have his meals supplied from an adjacent hotel.

His spirits would have assuredly gone down to the point of utter despondency on that gloomy winter evening, when the moldy fly that had conveyed him to the George Hotel carried him back to the jail, had he not been supported and sustained by the indomitable cheerfulness of his friend the vicar.

"What do you think of the case now?" he asked.

"Think!" cried Mr. Leworthy. "Why, that I shall have so much to do in Grandchester ferreting out this mystery of yours during the next six days that I don't know how the deuce my parish work is to get done."

"Won't curate do?" suggested he.

"Of course I shall; but I shall employ myself too. Don't you be downhearted, George. I mean to see you safely through this business, and I shall do it right away, as they say on the other side of the Atlantic."

George Caulfield's confidence in his father's old friend was unbounded. He had seen in the past how the Vicar of Freshmead could conquer difficulties which the ruck of men would have found insurmountable. Mr. Leworthy dined with him as cheerfully as if they had been eating whitebait at Greenwich or turtle in Aldersgate street under the most exhilarating circumstances; and stimulated by the force of example, George, who had scarcely broken his fast since he left Grandchester, found himself enjoying the tavern steak and tavern claret."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

The Real Meaning of the Policy of Obstruction.

Many people set him down merely as a man who, out of some sort of sinister purpose or malignity, wished to interfere with and harass, obstruct and irritate every English government and the whole house of commons, writes Justin McCarthy in "A History of Our Own Times." Mr. Parnell had no feeling of the kind. His was a deliberate purpose, and it was even by the process of exasperation that he tried to fix the attention of the house and the country on the fact that there was an Irish national demand which it would be well for it to listen to and take into consideration. Parnell's creed was that the house of commons was the one great public platform of the country. From that platform he was determined to appeal to and arouse the English people. Therefore he said in substance to the house of commons: "If you will not listen to our Irish national claim, then we will not allow you to discuss any other question whatever or which we can prevent the discussion."

He acted on the inspiration of the woman in the eastern story—of which woman he had probably never heard —who, having tried in vain to get a petition delivered to the sultan, took her place with the little children in the public street, and waited until the sultan rode that way, and then flung her own babes in front of the horse's hoofs, and declared that she would not move from that spot until he had listened to her appeal or had trampled her and hers to death. That was the real meaning of the later policy of obstruction. It had its effect.

HE MOVED THEM ON.

But Didn't Arrest Them for Being Drunk and Disorderly.

Their fixed and glassy eyes were sufficient indication of their condition announced to all the world by the placards they wore on their breasts bearing the legend, "I am blind," in large black letters, says the New York Telegram. In the left hand of each was a tin cup and in their right hands they carried walking sticks with which to direct their steps. Their arms were locked together and the sticks were kept busy directing their wandering steps. They lurched around the corner of the Herald building and brought up one on either side of the bulletin board.

From this colgn de vantage the two emitted shrieks of hearty, whole-souled merriment from time to time, for both were drunk, gloriously drunk. Blindness was for the time being a forgotten affliction. Visions as good as really started out of the darkness before the sightless eyes of each. All humanity was kin to the two, and they were proclaiming the fact to the attentive world represented by the night birds that make the street their home. A torpid cop was aroused from his slumbers by the unusual noise and prepared with uplifted club to enforce the majesty of the law. When he saw the cardboard placards, however, he changed his mind and muttered: "Poor devils! it's little enough fun they have. I'll just move them on a bit and leave them be."

Drunkenness is no respecter of conditions but, strange to say, the law sometimes is.

Got It from a Book.

Mrs. Porkley—I often wonder how people manage to understand each other in France. Mrs. Gotham—How absurd! Mrs. Porkley—Well, both my daughters speak French, and they can't understand each other.—Up-to-Date.

AN INDIAN WAIF.

FOUND AFTER SLAUGHTER AT WOUNDED KNEE.

Zintha Was Adopted by Gen. Colby and Taken to Washington—Civilized Surroundings Do Not Seem to Curb Her Wild Instincts.

HE recently threatened Indian uprising in the west has directed attention to a little Indian girl, now a resident of Washington. She is the adopted daughter of General Leonard W. Colby and wife, who reside at No. 1325 Tenth street, N. W. The child's name is Zintka Lanual. Her legal name by adoption is Zintka Colby. She is now nearly 7 years old, a typical Indian in facial appearance, physique and actions. Thus far it has been impossible to curb the wild blood that flows through her veins, and, although surrounded by all the advantages of a modern American home, good to school, Sunday school, has been taught to pray and has as companions refined children of the neighborhood, Zintka is what her foster mother frequently calls a bad girl. She is wild and at times ungovernable, stubborn and possessed of the well known revengeful spirit of the Indian. She will resent the real or fancied offense of a playmate, no matter how long it takes, and is equally as eager to appreciate any kindness done her. Zintka is of a roaming disposition. She runs away from home every day, her favorite amusement being to ride on the belt line street cars past the Capitol and circuiting the city.

All the conductors on the line know

ZINTHA.

her, and she rides free. Frequently she is out until long after dark, but always finds her way home. No amount of correction or admonition has yet had any effect on her uncontrollable spirit to roam. Zintka was found on the battlefield of Wounded Knee creek, on the afternoon of Jan. 1, 1891. She was then three months old. The massacre of Big Foot's band having occurred on the morning of Dec. 29, it was over three days that she lay on the battlefield in the arms of her dead mother. The latter had been shot and killed in the fusillade of the United States troops. The day after the battle there was an attack on the agency, which kept the relief party from going over the field, and the day following there was a fearful blizzard, in which they could not venture out. When the baby was found she was only slightly frozen on the head and feet, having been protected by warm clothing, by the body of her mother wrapped in a heavy Navajo blanket and by a covering of drifted snow. General Colby learned to love the infant, and, having no children of his own, consulted his wife, and they determined to adopt her.

HENRY CLAY AT SIXTY-FIVE.

The Famous Kentuckian at the Time of His Retirement from the Senate.

In an article on "When Henry Clay Said Farewell to the Senate," on March 21, 1842, after thirty-six years in public life, John F. Coyle, in the Ladies' Home Journal, presents this graphic pen-picture of the "Great Commoner," whose close friendship he enjoyed for many years: "Mr. Clay (in 1842) was sixty-five years old, at the very zenith of his great popularity, the notable, central figure in the arena of politics and statesmanship. More than six feet tall, slender, erect, graceful and commanding, he was the personification of dignity and noble bearing. He was a perfect master of the language, tone and gesture, and possessed of a voice remarkable for its volume and range, and its capacity to express every shade of feeling of passion of the human soul. Deep, full-toned and melodious, it was indeed magical in its power of controlling the feelings of those who listened to its varying cadences and exquisite modulations. An admiring biographer adds to an analysis of Mr. Clay as an orator 'His mouth large and prominent, upper lip working quietly, or in agony, as occasions require; his eyes resting in calmness, or beaming with lively emotion, or sparkling with strong feeling, or flashing with high passion like the thunderbolts of heaven in the darkness of storms; his long frame hanging easy by his side, or outstretched, or uplifted, or waving with grace, or striking with the vehemence of passion, his fingers pointing where his thoughts direct.' As an orator he drew upon his every resource to charm alike the ear and eye, and was unquestionably the most fascinating speaker of his day and generation."

Wonderful Natural Records.

Prof. Stanislas Meunier, of the Paris Museum of Natural History, recently called attention to the surprising variety of the records which the rocks of the earth contain, relating to the simple daily occurrences of millions of years ago. Among such records are to be found, not only the tracks of extinct animals and the impressions of rain drops left in wet sand or clay, but also distinct traces of the effects of wind and of sunshine upon the sea beaches. Professor Meunier illustrated, by means of experiments, the manner in which these records had been preserved by nature.

THE AMERICAN GIRL IN FICTION

As a Heroine She Is Smart, and Delights in Managing Men.

"Sometimes the characteristic type of the American heroine of fiction is vulgar, sometimes cold-hearted, or unkind, or willful, or indiscreet, but she is never stupid," writes "Droch" in the Ladies' Home Journal. "That is the verdict of contemporary observers on the American girl. Whatever she may be or do she always has her wits about her; she is 'smart.' While her father delights in managing factories, stock operations, or railroads, she delights in managing men. And in every kind of fiction which she dominates the men seem to be uniformly glad to be managed by her. Often in fiction she has been lacking in certain graces—chiefly the supreme grace of tact. But there are signs that our novelists have discovered that the American girl possesses this grace also, and so it happens that today she trails through fiction not only with fine clothes, and a beautiful face, and generous deeds, and witty, if impertinent, remarks—but there is developing around her a gracious manner, an unconscious simplicity that shows itself in consideration for the weaknesses of others—in addition to that keen knowledge of their foibles which was always hers. What we have yet to hope for is that her wealth or her poverty may be made less obtrusive and less a significant part of her always attractive personality."

Insuring Workingmen.

The German government provides a system of compulsory insurance for workingmen. Under this system a workman 20 years of age pays an equivalent of 40 cents a week for three years, and at the age of 65 he receives the sum of $77, in the meantime having had an insurance against accident. The annual premium is divided into three parts, one of which is paid by the workman, another by his employer and the third by the state. The report for 1896 shows that 18,389,000 persons were insured under the law, of whom 3,409,000 were employed in mines and factories, 12,290,000 were employed in agriculture and 690,000 were in the employ of the state. In that year the number of accidents was 74,897, of which 6,448 terminated fatally. The total expense of the system for the year was $13,400,000.

Noosh! a Sea-Lion.

A correspondent of Ram's Horn narrates a pulling match between a sea lion and a farmer: Near Tillamook, Ore., an old German farmer chanced to be driving along the beach when his watchful eye was greeted by the sight of a large sea lion some distance out on the sand, fast asleep. It was the work of a moment for Jacob to make a lasso of a stout rope he had in his wagon, fasten the end of it to the hind axle, and adjust the noose over the sea lion's head. Then Jacob jumped into the wagon and started homeward with his prize. The sea lion did the same, and as his team was the stronger of the two, Jacob started seaward at a good pace, and only saved himself and his "outfit" by springing quickly to the ground, grasping his jack knife and cutting the rope.

LAST MONTH

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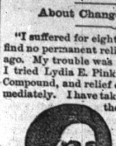
MRS. KRINER'S LETTER

About Change of Life.



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W. N. U.—DETROIT—NO. 39—'97

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March 8, 1897. Samuel Pitcher, M.D.

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