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THE HALF-CASTE.

AN OLD GOVERNESS'S TALE—
FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY MISS MULLOCK.

"Tell me, my child, the plain truth, as you always do—where were you going?"

She stammered out: "I was going to—Belfast—to be married."

"Married to your cousin?"

She hung her head and murmured: "Yes."

At this frank confession the bridegroom interposed. He perhaps was all the braver for reflecting that he had only women to deal with. He leaped in at the chamber-window, and angrily asked me by what right I interfered.

"I will tell you," said I, "if you have enough gentlemanly feeling to leave my apartment, and will speak with me in the open air."

He retreated, I bolted the window, and still keeping a firm hold on the trembling girl, met him outside the front door. It certainly was the oddest place for such a scene; but I did not wish to admit him inside the house.

"Now, Miss Pryor," said he imperatively, but still politely—a LePoer could not be otherwise—"will you be so kind as to relinquish that young lady, who has confided herself to my care, and intends honoring me with her hand?"

"Is that true, Zillah? Do you love this man, and voluntarily intend to marry him?"

"Yes, if you will let me, Miss Pryor. He told me you would be so pleased. He promises always to be kind to me, and never let me work. Please don't be angry with me, dear Miss Pryor! Oh, do let me marry my cousin!"

"Listen to me a few minutes, Zillah," said I, "and you shall choose." And then I told her in as few words as I could, what her position was—how that it had been concealed from her that she was an heiress; and how by marrying her, her cousin Augustus would be master over all her wealth. So unworldly was she, that I think the girl herself hardly understood me; but the lieutenant was furious.

"It is all a lie—an infamous cheat!" he cried. "Don't believe it, Zillah! Don't be frightened, little fool! I promised to marry you, and, by Heaven! marry you I will!"

"Lieutenant Le Poer," said I very quietly, "that may not be quite so easy as you think. However, I do not prevent you, as indeed I have no right; I only ask my dear child Zillah here to grant me one favor, as for the sake of my love to her"—(here Zillah sobbed)—"I doubt not she will; namely, that she should do as every other young woman of common sense and delicacy would do, and wait until to-morrow, to ask the consent of one who will then probably be here, if he is not already arrived—her guardian, Mr. Andrew Sutherland."

Lieutenant Augustus burst out with an oath, probably very mild in the mess-room, but very shocking here to two women's ears. Zillah crept farther from him and nearer to me.

"I'll not be cheated, so!" stormed he. "Come, child, you'll trust your cousin? You'll come away to-night?"—and he tried to lift her on the ear, which had approached—the Irish driver evidently much enjoying the scene.

"No, cousin; not to-night," said the girl, resisting. "I'd rather wait and have Miss Pryor with me, and proper bridesmaids, and a wedding-dress, and all that—that is, if I marry you at all, which I won't unless Miss Pryor thinks you will be kind to me. So good-bye till to-morrow, cousin."

He was so enraged by this time that he tried forcibly to drag her on the ear. But I wound my arms round my dear child's waist and shrieked for help.

"Faith, sir," said the sturdy Irishman, interfering, half in amusement, half in indignation, "ye'd better have the women alone. I'd rather not meddle with an abduction."

So Zillah was set free from the lieutenant's grasp, for, as I said before, a

second child is a great coward. I drew the trembling and terrified girl into the house—he following with a storm of oaths and threatenings. At last I forcibly shut the door upon him, and bolted him out. Whether this indignity was too much for the valorous soldier, or whether he felt sure that all chance was over, I know not; but when I looked out ten minutes after the coast was clear. I took my errand, wronged, yet still more wronged than erring child into my bosom, and thanked Heaven she was saved.

The next morning Mr. Sutherland arrived.

After this night's events I have little to say, or rather I prefer to say but little of what passed during the remainder of that summer. We all traveled to England together, going round by Yorkshire in order to leave Mr. LePoer's daughters at their own home. This was Mr. Sutherland's kind plan, that the two girls might be kept in ignorance of the whole affair, and especially of their father's ill-fate. What they suspected I know not; they were merely told that it was the desire of Zillah's guardian to take her and her

sister home with him. So we parted at Halifax and I never saw any of the family again. I had no scruples about thus quitting them, as I found out from Mr. Sutherland that I had been engaged solely as governess to his ward, and that he had himself paid my salary in advance; the whole of which, in some way or other had been intercepted by Mr. LePoer. The money of course was gone; but he had written to me with each remittance, and thus I had lost his letters. That was hard!

I also found out, with great joy and comfort, that my Zillah was truly Zillah Le Poer—her father's legitimate daughter and heiress! All I had been led to believe was a cruel and wicked lie. The whole history of her father and mother was one of these family tragedies, only too frequent, which the actors in them being dead, are best forgotten. I shall not revive the tale.

In late autumn Mr. Sutherland sailed for India. Before he quitted England he made me sole guardian in his stead over Zillah Le Poer, assigning for her a handsome maintenance. He said he hoped we should all live happily together—she, my mother and I—until he came back. He spent a short time with us all at his country seat—a time which, looking back upon, seems in its eight days like eight separate years.

I ought to speak of Zillah, the unmoved center of so many convolving fates. She remained still and silent as ever—dull, grieved, humiliated. I told her gradually and gently the whole truth, and explained from how much she had been saved. She seemed grateful and penitent; it was clear that her heart had never been touched by love; she was yet a mere child. The only evidence of womanly shame she gave was in keeping entirely out of her guardian's way; nor did she take much notice of her except in reproaching himself to me with being neglectful of his charge; but he had so thoroughly trusted in the girl's uncle as being her best protector.

The only remark he ever made on Zillah's personal self was that she had beautiful eyes, adding, with a half sigh, "that he liked dark Oriental eyes." One day his mother told me something which explained this. She said he had been engaged to a young lady in India, who on the eve of their marriage had died. He had never cared much for woman's society since, and his mother thought would probably never marry.

After his departure I learned the whole story. My heart bled over every pang he had suffered; he was so good and noble a man. And when I knew about his indifference to all women, I felt the more grateful for the trust he showed in me, by making me Zillah's guardian in his absence, and wishing me to write to him regularly of her welfare. The last words he said were asking me to go and see his mother often; and then he bade God bless me, and called me "his dear friend." He was very kind always!

We had a quiet winter, for my health was not good—I being often delicate in winter time. My mother and Zillah took care of me, and I was very grateful for their love. I got well at last as the springtime advanced, and went on in my old ways.

There are sometimes long pauses in one's life—deep rests or sleeps of years in which month after month and season after season, float on each the same; during which the soul lies either quiet or torpid, as may be. Thus, without any trouble, joy or change, we lived for several years—my mother, Zillah, I.

Poer and I. One morning I found, with a curious surprise, but without any of the horror which most women are supposed to feel at that fact, that I was thirty years old!

We discovered by the same reckoning that Zillah was just nineteen. I remember she put her laughing face beside mine in the glass. There was a great difference truly. I do not mean the difference in her from me, for I never compared that, but in her former self. She had grown up into a woman, and, as that glass told me, and my own eyes told me, a very striking woman too. I was little of a judge in beauty myself; still I knew well that everybody we met thought her handsome. Likewise, she had grown up beautiful in mind as well as in body. I was very proud of my dear child.

I well remember this day, when she was nineteen and I thirty. I remember it, I say, because our kind friend in India had remembered it likewise, and sent us each a magnificent shawl; far too magnificent it was for a little body like me, but it became Zillah splendidly. She tucked me under her arm as if I had been a little girl, and walked me up and down the room; for she was of a cheerful, gay temper now—just the one to make an old heart young again, to flash upon a worn spirit with the brightness of its own long-past morning.

I recollect thinking thus at the time—I wish I had thought so oftener! But it matters little; I only chronicle this day, as being the first when Zillah unconsciously put herself on a level with me, becoming thenceforward a woman, and my equal—no longer a mere pet and a child.

About this time—I may as well just state the fact to comfort other maidens of thirty years' standing—I received an offer of marriage, the first I had ever had. He who asked me was a gentleman of my own age, an old acquaintance, though never a very intimate friend. I examined myself well, with great humility and regret, for he was an excellent man; but I found I could not marry him. It was very strange that he should ask me, I thought. My mother, proud and pleased—first, because I had the honor of a proposal; secondly, that it was refused, and she kept her child still—would have it that the circumstance was not strange at all. She said many women were handsomer and more attractive at thirty than they had ever been in their lives. My poor, fond, deluded and deluding mother, in whose sight even I was fair! That night I was foolish enough to look long into the glass, at my quiet little face, and my pale, gray-blue eyes—not dark like Zillah's—foolish enough to count narrowly the white threads that were coming one by one into my hair. This trouble—I mean the offer of marriage—I did not quite get over for many weeks, even months.

The following year of my life there befell me a great pang. Of this, a grief never to be forgotten, a loss never to be restored—I cannot even now say more than is implied in three words—my mother died! After that Zillah and I lived together alone for twelve months or more.

There are some scenes in our life—landscape scenes I mean—that we remember very clearly; one strikes me now. A quiet, soft May day; the hedges just in their first green, the horse-chestnuts white with flowers; the long, silent country lanes swept through by a traveling carriage, in which two women, equally silent, sat—Zillah Le Poer and I.

It was the month before her coming of age, and she was going to meet her guardian, who had just returned from India.

Mrs. Sutherland had received a letter from Southampton, and immediately sent for us into the country to meet her son, her "beloved Andrew." I merely repeat the words as I remember Zillah's doing, while she laughed at the ugly name. I never thought it ugly.

When we had really started, however, Zillah ceased laughing, and became grave, probably at the recollection of that humiliating circumstance which first brought her acquainted with her guardian. But despite this ill-omened beginning, her youth had blossomed into great perfection. As she sat there before me, fair in person, well cultured in mind, and pure and virgin in heart—for I had so kept her out of harm's way that, though nearly twenty-one, I knew she had never been "in love" with any man—as she sat thus, I felt proud and glad in her, feeling sure that Mr. Sutherland would say I had well fulfilled the charge he gave.

To be Continued.

If you want your piles cured and are willing to pay for it, call at the office of Dr. Johnson, on C street. I am not working for fun, or for glory, but for money. No charge for consultation. I. C. Taylor, M. D.

NEW TO-DAY.

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Will chop Feed for \$2 per ton or one-tenth toll.

(o)

Farmers and others having grain to chop can come to my mill, and attend to any business in the city to better advantage than driving two miles out of town to get their chopping done. JOHN J. SAX, McMinnville, Or.

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SEVENTH ANNUAL



FIREMAN'S FAIR

—OF THE—

McMinnville Fire Department,

—AT—

Garrison Opera House,

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday,

February 22d, 23d and 24th,

1887.

LIST OF PRIZES.

There will be prizes given on the following named exhibits:

1st and 2d prize for best and 2d best exhibit of Kensington painting.

1st and 2d prize, for best and 2d best exhibit of Kensington embroidery.

1st and 2d prize, for best and 2d best exhibit of outline work by a child under 14 years of age.

1st and 2d best, for best and 2d best exhibit of work of any kind by a boy under 14 years of age.

1st and 2d prize, for best and 2d best exhibit of crayon work.

There will also be a prize given for the heaviest, lightest and prettiest baby under 1 year of age.

Following is a list of prizes offered: For the prettiest baby, gold necklace; lightest and heaviest baby under one year of age, each a gold ring; outline work by a child under fourteen years, first prize, ear rings, second prize, scrap book; Kensington embroidery, first prize, napkin ring, second prize, box writing paper; Kensington painting, first prize, manicule set, second prize, bracket; crayon work, first prize, paper holder, second prize, pitcher; boy's work, first prize, paper holder, second prize, inkstand.

Parade of Firemen Tuesday afternoon.

Doors will be open at 7 o'clock, p. m. daily, during the Fair.

—All are invited to Attend—

Admission 25 Cents.

By Order of

COMMITTEE.