### The Story of the Wedding Ring

By Bertha M. Clay. Continued from 1st l'age.

"I shall die easier, child, when my turn comes," she said, "if I have left you in the charge of a good man.' Would she ever have a chance of doing better? It did not seem probable. The inhabitants of Ashburnham were quiet, prosaic people, they admired her bright beauty, but they were not of the kind who, "looking in a fair face, forgot the whole world." The young squires and farmers, with most laudable intentions, always, to use their own expressions, "married money;" they admired pretty faces, but they required something more. The men who looked up to her with keenest admiration were not men whose position had any attractions for her.

She thought long and seriously over the matter. There were many old maids in Ashburnham, and to Ismay, so bright and beautiful, so full of vitality, their lot seemed almost unendurable. She might spend her life there, and never have another offer of marriage so good

It was a prosaic way of looking at the matter. She repeated the question to herself-should she ever do better?-Not there, in that quiet little town; it was not probable. So one bright summer morning Ismay became Paul Waldron's wife, and he took her home to his pretty

#### CHAPTER III.

Paul Waldron had won the girl he loved; for a few weeks he was perfectly happy, and then clouds, light as the breath of the summer wind came over

tiful. He was so content with it that he wondered his wife was not the same. She was always asking about the great world, longing to be in the midst of it, and he could not understand her. "I have no desire for life, Ismay, outside my own home. Why are you ever

wishing for change?" He was too earnest even to understand her lighter nature; her wonderful beauty had so completely charmed him that he could not see her deficiencies of character. Her discontent troubled him; it seemed to him a want of love-and yet she must, she did love him.

but not with the passionate devotion some mothers give to their children. She was not a heroine; she would never have been a martyr; but she was wondrously lovely, gifted with marvelous grace, and Paul Waldron loved her. Ismay Waldron was far from faultless.

She was vain of her own loveliness. She longed with the whole strength of her soul for wealth. She envied those who were rich and powerful. She was worldly in her way, ambitious, and always craving for one thing-riches. Yet she was amiable and gentle, with a sweet caressing manner that was both irresistible and charming. She was vain of her beauty. She would

look at her face in the mirror and say to "Mrs Schofield is not half so fair, yet she is the wife of a rich squire, and wears jewels and satin. They tell me some of the greatest ladies in the land are plain of face. Yet beauty is a power. It won Paul's love for me-what would it not win for me if I went into the world where men pay such homage to

The little cottage that Paul had taken such pains to make beautiful and pleasant seemed so insignificant in her eyes. She disliked the daily duties that should have been so welcome to her.
"I do wish, Paul, that I had a servant

to do this for me," she would say. And then Paul, against his better judgment, found a servant to relieve her of the greater part of her work. Perhaps that was one of the most unfortunate things he could have done. No one can be really unhappy or discontented who is constantly employed. Ismay had ample time now for her dreams and fancies. Yet, despite all, she loved Paul, and she valued his love. She appreciated his entire devotion. "If I were to ask him to give me his life," she said to herself, with a complacent smile, "he would do

She had yet to learn that men of Paul Waldron's stamp held many things dearer

Their child grew and throve. The beautiful summer came round; the world was all fair and bright, the flowers were in bloom and the birds singing gaily in the trees. There were times when the young man forgot the light shadow in his home, forgot that his beautiful wife was vain and discontented, forgot everything except the heaven of beauty around him, and the heaven that shone in her face; and then he wondered at his own happiness, and was lost when he tried to thank heaven for it.

One night he came home, looking so unusually pleased that Ismay asked him "I have been working out one of my

ideas," he replied. "I have said nothing to you, Ismay, but here is the result of some weeks diligent application." He showed her the model of a steam engine into which he had introduced an

ent so great that, if adopted, it would lead to important results. She took up the model carelessly, as though "I will show you the improvement—I will explain it, Ismay."

She looked at him with a pretty expression of fright. "Nay, do not explain, Paul. I am not quick to understand; things of that kind

His face fell; his sensitive nature always shrank from such careless words. "Everything that interests me should interest you, Ismay," he observed, half

sorrowfully; but she did not even hear "And from this may spring a fortune!" she said, musingly. "Ah, Paul, Paul, make haste! Time is flying. We grow older every day, and youth is the season for enjoyment. Make haste, work hard." He looked earnestly at her.

"Why do you so long for wealth, Ismay!" he asked. "Because of the pleasure and luxury it will bring," she replied, promptly, yet with a smile that disarmed all anger.

"Can I not make you believe, sweet, how many things there are to be preferred to mere money—health, for instance? Of what use would all the wealth in the world be if you were ill?" "I understand all that," she interrupt-

"Again, money could not buy such love as mine, sweet—so true, so tender! Nor could money buy anything one-half so precious as that little darling playing

"I understand all that," she repeated.
"Suppose you had to choose between
me and wealth, Ismay—which would you "What idle words!" she exclaimed, half-laughingly.

"But you do not answer them, sweet Which do you prefer?" She looked up at him with a halfstartled glance. "How could such a state of things be?"

she asked. "How could wealth and you be rivals in my estimation?" "That could never be, of course," he replied. "I am merely supposing such a

He never forgot the hour and the

They had wandered down to the brookside and sat watching the sunset. By Ismay's side grew a large bush of southern wood, and as they talked she crushed the leaves in her hands. To the last day of his life Paul Waldron associated all his sorrows, joys, love and pains with the perfume of southern wood. "You have not answered me," he per-

sisted. "I cannot," she said laughing; "I have not your faculty for supposing cases. I have not the gift of putting myself in other people's places, and trying to imagine what I should do." "But, Ismay, the question is so plain

you cannot puzzle long over it. If you had to choose between money and me. which would you prefer?" "Such a thing can never be." she replied; "why try to make me solve a problem that life will never offer to me? I bave read somewhere that people never

have the one thing they want-I shall never have a fortune.' "Is a fortune your highest ambition?" he asked, impatiently, "It is the ambition of most men," she replied. "They toil for it all day, they

dream of it all night, they give up peace

truth, and principle to obtain it; some of them are willing even to sell their souls in order to win it If I do long for a fortune, I am only like the rest." He looked terribly disappointed.

"There is nothing in the world you would prefer to me?" he questioned. And then she detected his anxiety, and laughed again. "You want pretty compliments, Paul Suppose that I refuse to give them. Is there anything on earth that wives prefer to their own husbands?"

The eyes raised to his were beautiful in their love and tenderness; he could not look at that most fair face and think the heart beneath it anything but pure. He bent down and kissed it. "Do you think I doubted you, my darling. I would as soon doubt the mercy of heaven. It is not that, but when a man's heart lies in the hollow of a woman's hand-when his life lies at her feet-when every hope of his ex-

that he should try at times to measure her love for him?" The passion of his words-the love in his face—the unutterable tenderness of his manner-touched her deeply. She flung away the bruised and broken sprays of southernwood, and clasped her hands around his neck.

istence is centered in her-is it strange

"No one can ever love me as you do, Paul," she said. And he was happy with unutterable content. Life held much that was sad and much that was pleasant for him, but he never forgot that evening by the brook-side.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Another month passed; the beauty of the summer deepened, the corn was growing ripe in the fields, the crimson roses contrasted with the cool, white lilies, the fruit hung rich and mellow on the trees, while Ismay Waldron still looked with longing eyes towards the world which she wished to enter. She still gave every thought to the one master passion of her nature. In vain the ringdoves cooed, and the lark soared high with its triumphant song; in vain the flowers bloomed, and her pretty child stretched out his little hands to her. She was always thinking, always dreaming of that possible future wherein Paul might grow rich, and every desire of her

heart be gratified. She had ceased to wonder about her mother; all her romantic visions that she had once woven faded into obscurity; They had been married a year when her life seemed planned and arranged; their little child was born, and Paul nothing could alter it. She was Paul her life seemed planued and arranged; and that the object was attained. thought Ismay would grow more content then She loved the child very dearly, wished for no greater love than his; but wished for no greater love than his; but if Paul could give her wealth, if he could surround her with the luxury she

loved-ah, then all would be well! Once-and Ismay never forgot it-she went to the Manor House; there was a grand fete to be given to the tenantry, and Paul for the occasion had bought his beautiful wife a dress of white muslin with bright ribbons. When she had put it on, with a flower in her hair, she looked so lovely that he was startled at of herself. her beauty. She read his admiration in

"You will own." she said, "that dress makes some little difference. Ah Paul. if I had but jewels and rich dresses, such as ladies wear!

"You would not look more beautiful, Ismay. Now you gladden my heart, then you would gladden other eyes, and I should not be so happy, love.' Ismay never forgot that day. She looked round the magnificent rooms—on

the pictures, the statues, the superb hangings, the furniture, the rare flowers -and her whole heart ached with longing. She looked on the faces of the ladies—some of them country leaders of fashion-and she saw none that could be compared with her own. She watched the hundred evidences of wealth and her very soul seemed on fire with the eagerness of her wishes.

"Why is there naught for me?" she said to herself. "Why should others have money, luxury and splendor, while I, who am fairer than they, must pass my life in a lonely cottage, counting

each shilling as I spend it?"

She saw the glances of admiration cast upon her; she heard one ask another, "Who is that beautiful girl?" and her vanity was flattered. If, so plainly attired, she could produce this marked sensation, what would she not do when nagnificently dressed?

In the midst of her excitement and pleasure she could not refrain from noticing one thing-amongst all the crowd of men there was not one wh surpassed in appearance her husband Paul. It was the first time she has mixed in society, or had seen what i commonly called the world. She had imagined all those who bore noble name would carry the impress of those name on face and figure. Here were lords baronets, and squires, but she saw amongst them no face more noble that Paul's, no figure more manly; she

heard no voice with so true a ring, sh saw no smile so luminous and frank. "He is one of Nature's noblemen, said the young wife to herself, and he heart grew warm as she looked at him. She had thought that amongst people so greatly above him in position he would perhaps show some mauvaise honte some shy embarrassment or confusion; but on his frank, noble face there was

"There's somewhat in this world amiss Shall be unriddled by-and-by,"

"If it were not so, Paul would occupy one of the grand places these men cannot fill so worthily as he." Sh saw gentlemen of position talking t him, seemingly deeply interested in hi conversation. She noticed another thing -his love was like a watchful presence round her; he never forgot her; h seemed to be always thinking of her comfort, of what she would like, and again the young wife said to herself:—
"No one could ever love me as Pau

There came over her a vague kind wonder as to what she would do without his love. She might as well be withou food to eat, fresh air to breathe. Like without Paul's love! She smiled to herself at the idea, and he, watching he from a distance, came to ask her why she smiled. She looked with frank, sweet eyes into his face.

"I was thinking what the world would be like to me without you," she replied, "and I cannot realize it." "Heaven grant that you never may sweet! I shall never know what the

world is without you, for I could not live if I lost you." The time came when they both remem pered those words. So the struggle went on in her mindthe passionate longing, the eager wishes the thirst for pleasure, the craving for wealth, doing battle always with the

love of husband and child and the spiri She had longed for fortune, and it wa coming to her; she longed for power and position, it was to be hers; but she was unconscious of it, and said to herself a times that her life would be spent i

One morning she sat in the garder making a faint pretence at work, bu the needle had fallen, and the whit hands lay listless and still. She sa under the shade of a large elm-tree, an the sunbeams falling through gree leaves were like a halo around he heightening her marvellous beauty. Sh was engrossed in her day dream of tha golden future, when the little maid-serv ant came to tell her that a gentlema wished to see her.

She rose hastily, a crimson flush o her fair face. A gentleman to see her Who could it be? Before she had time to ask the que tion, she saw a gentleman enterin through the garden gate. He advance

toward her and bowed. "Have I the pleasure of addressing Mrs. Waldron?" he asked. He was differente from the people she had passe her life amongst that she blushed and hesitated. She could not help noticio that the stranger was watching her i tently, and that his eyes lingered on he face with an interest that was not cur: osity; he was studying every feature and when she spoke he listened eagerly t

"I must apologize," he said, "for in truding, but the garden-gate was open threw up his post. He was succeeded by and I saw you here. Time is very preci a young and very handsome manous with me. I thought you would par don me if I followed the maid." She looked at him as though she woul fain ask him who he was; but at the moment the stranger's gaze fell on the lovely little boy who was playing on th grass. Suddenly a change came over hi face; he made a hurried step, and ther stood still.

"Is that your child-your son-Mr.

Waldron?" he asked, eagerly.

stranger; "will you let me nurse him?" looked just as intently in his face. "He is a noble boy," he said, "a princely child. What is his name, Mrs.

Waldron?" she forgot the irregularity of the interview in her delight at the gentleman's admiration. "His name is Lionel," she replied; 'we call him Leo. His father wished him to take my name, but I would not consent."

"Your name must be a peculiar one if subject was one of great moment to him. "My name is Ismay," she said, and at the word a strange flash of delight came over the visitor's face; and then Mrs. Waldron seemed to remember that she had not yet heard the reason of his visit. "Do you wish to see my husband?" she asked.

"No," he replied, slowly. "My object in waiting upon you is to ask your permission to make a sketch of this charming little cottage.'

Ismay looked up in delight. "A picture of my home," she said. 'I think there can be no objection. Are you an artist?" The visitor smiled a strange, peculiar

"Not by profession; but I am fond of Then slowly, and with great art, he drew her into conversation. He told her that he had heard her history and sympathled with her. He asked her if she remembered anything of her life before she came to Ashburnham. "I could not possibly remember," she

replied-"I was but three years old The only childish memory I have is, strange to say, of my mother's hairbeautiful brown waving hair - with which I used to play; her face comes dimly before me at times. I remember nothing more." "You were three years old," he said:

'how do you know that?" "I have heard Mrs. Hope say so," she answered. "When will you begin the sketch?" Here it suddenly struck Ismay that perhaps Paul would not be pleased if he

know how long this soranger had been in the garden. A slow smile spread over his face. A hrewder woman would have divined at once that he had gone there for an object "With your permission, Mrs. Waldron,

about the sketch." After a few more complimentary words, the stranger withdrew, leaving Ismay flattered, yet puzzled. What an interest he had taken in her! How engrossed he had been in her story, and how pleased he had been with Leo! She sat dreaming under the elm-tree. thinking of everything that had been said, until the maid came again to interrupt her; and then she grew ashamed

"How much thought I am giving to a stranger!" she said. "It must be because I so seldom see one."

CHAPTER V.

Bertram, Lord Carlswood, had the reputation of being the proudest man in England. He was proud of his name, of his race, of his pedigree—proud of his instained honor, of his large fortune, of his gentle wife, of his fair childrenproud of the repute in which he was held, of his high standing in the country. As a river gathers force and strength from every tributary stream, so he made every gift Heaven had bestowed upon him tributary to his pride. People in speaking of him said he was just and generous but very proud. This

pride was not shown in patronage of his equals, but in the most rigid observances of class distinctions. He never pardoned any disregard of those distinctions; he was punctilious in the extreme; he gave to all persons the honor due to them and he expected the same in return; he addressed each one by his rightful title and insisted on being so addressed himself. He considered the Carlswoods of Bralyn among the leading spirits of the country, they had few equals, no superiors. "Had the Carlswoods been Kings, they would have known how to reign," he was wont to say.

Another of his most frequent sayings "The Carlswoods were an old family when William the Norman took posses sion of our fair Saxon land; but study their records, and you will see that no Carlswood was ever dishonored. There has never been a fortune-honored. There has never been a fortune-hunter, or traitor, or renegade amongst us; and-thank heaven!-no Carlswood ever made a low

There were some who said that pride of such a kind must have a fall—that it could not remain so arrogant; but the stately head had not yet been bent in humility or sorrow-there was no stooping of the erect figure, no softening of the haughty face.

Lord Carlswood married the daughter of the Duchess of Middleham, a gentle, high-bred, elegant woman. They had four children-three sons and one daughter. The father's face would glow with pride as he looked round on the young

"There is no fear of the old mes dying out yet," he would say. He loved his wife, he was proud of heart-the very light and brightness of his home-was his daughter Katrine, a beautiful, gay, high-spirited girl, who had all the Carlswood spirit, with its attendant pride. Her father literally worshipped her. He watched her beauty as it developed day by day; he pleased him-self by imagining what her future would be. What position could be too exalted for his daughter?

When Katrine reached her tenth year, Lady Carlswood died. Her husband did not marry again. "The Carlswoods never marry twice," he said, grandly; and he was true to the traditions of his race. It was not a matter of great moment to the boys. Little of their time was spent at Bralyn; they went to Eton, and thence to Oxford; they were left principally in the charge of tutors. Lord Carlswood was careful to impress upon them the nobility of their race and the obligation they were under to keep the glory of their name unsullied and their honor unstained; he left the rest to their

But for Katrine Carlswood her mother's death was a far more serious matter. Her father was unwilling to send her to school; he did not wish her out of his sight. He had governesses and masters for her; he did his best for her, but it was lamentably done. He drew up a code of rules and regulations which was to be rigidly adhered to; he made no allowance for girlish galety or exuberance of spirits; and the result was that Katrine grew to look upon home as a prison. She loved her father because she had sufficient intelligence to appreciate his higher qualities, but she considered him to be something like a goaler, and gloried in evading his rules. The method of his training was bad; yet he would never receive advice on the subject. Experienced matrons would tell him that change and relaxation were needful for the girl; he would draw himself up proudly and say, "The ladies of the house of Carlswood are not to be treated after the fashion of ordinary school-girls." When the catastrophe came, no one was

surprised. Lord Carlswood had decided that his daughter should make her debut when she had reached her nineteenth year; until then she was to study hard, and perfect herself in all needful accomplishments by the help of masters. He frowned contemptuously when his friends told him that it was unfair to treat a girl of eighteen like a child. None knew how in the after years he repented of not having followed that advice.

There was a church at Lynn, and before her death Lady Carlswood had presented the rector with a very fine organ; moreover she had asked her husband to set aside a certain sum to pay for an organist, which he had cheerfully consented to do. The first organist employed was an elderly man, who had a wife and family to support. A more remunerative engagement presented itself, and he First Thornton Cameron, a musician of no

considered that his interest in the matter ended when the yearly stipend was paid. He was in London when Katrine wrote to ask if he would allow her to learn the organ-to take some lessons from the organist at St. Luke's-Mr. Cameron. "He is considered very clever," she wrote: "and it would be a great pleasure | Building adjoining the Post Office, Chatham

Lord Carlswood never saw him; he

"Yes," she replied; "That is my baby to me to learn upon an organ that wa Lord Carlswood had no dream of dan ger; to his haughty mind then it would He took the child in his arms, and have seemed as probable that his daugh ter would fall in love with one of h grooms as with her teacher; not ever the faintest suspicion occurred to him and Miss Carlswood's ceverness, who di-

feel some scruples, was silenced by being told that "Lord Carlswood wished is. The handsome young organist though he was making a grand tuture for bis self when he saw a chance of wooin Miss Carlswood. He was very handsom you could give it to a boy," he said; and gay with the galety of youth, gifted if Mrs. Waldron had looked more intently with a fatal, specious eloquence; and light of heart and pleasant of speech at him, she would have seen that the Katrine thought the world had nevseen his peer. They could not converfreely in the quiet seclusion of the ol church, when the light streamed through the stained windows and the governess ness had encouraged him to write little notes, and she had replied to them. He grew bolder, and asked her to steal from

> dearly he loved her she owned that she loved him. Was it love, or was it an amlitious desire to raise himself far above his station, which actuated him? No one ever knew, and Thornton Cameron kept his secret. It was a base betrayal of trust, a cruel fraud-it was an uppardonable deception, a most dishonorable deed-but he succeeded in winning what the poor girl thought as her love, and, after great persuasion, she consented to elope with

beneath her father's roof to meet him.

She foolishly consened; and when the

infatuated young man told her how

She had been so badly trained, was so young, so wild in the flush of girlish spirits, that she thought little of the consequences. The sensation that must follow amused her. She enjoyed thinking of the tright, the search, and the emotion of her stately father when he should hear that she was married. "It will be stealing a march upon

papa," she said, with a gay ringing laugh that should have smote her companion like a sharp sword. "He was so particular that I should not make my debut until I was nincteen; what will he say when he hears that I am married?" There was no excuse to be made for her save that she was charmed with her lover's handsome face, with his musical voice, his eloquent words, his passionate pleading and prayers. She was charmed to be the hereine of a quasi-romance; it would be so amusing to appear in London as Mrs. Cameron, instead of Miss Carlswood. The whole matter seemed to

her simply a delightful adventure; she never dreamed but that her father, after

perhaps reproaching her in a stately

fashion, would again receive her with "No Carlswood ever made a low marriage"-she had heard that expression often enough, but it never entered has mind that hers was what would be called a "low marriage." Thornton Cameron was handsomer than, and quite as polished in manner as, the gentlemen who had visited Bralyn. There was nothing about him that could be called vulgar, much less low and Katrine, although

clever beyond her years, did not know much of the world. She would have considered herself making a low marriage if she had promised to run away with a footman or a groom; but an artist was to her a gentleman. How could a man who created such grand harmonies, who gave his whole time and attention to the cultivation of the purest taste-how could such a man be low? She considered him a genius, and genius, she said to herself. levels all ranks. She had read somewhere of a king who stooped to pick up the brush of a painter. Was a painter better than a musician? she asked herself Certainly not. If, then, a king could honor a painter, surely her father might respect a musician. She had read of such great honors being paid to them--of kirgs and queens who had done homage to their genius, and reverenced their

Still it seemed strange that a girl, reared in the very atmosphere of pride, should have forgotten the lessons of her life; but such was the case when, one fine autumn evening, she stole from the time-honored walls of Bralyn, and eloped with the hardsome young organist of

### CHAPTER VI.

The anger of Lord Carlswood, when he heard of his daughter's elopement, was something terrible to witness. She had written to him-smiling as she wrote, thinking only of the novelty. ignoring the terrible consequences that might follow-telling him that she had found that the happiness of her life depended entirely on her love, and that. before he had read her letter, she would be Thornton Cameron's wife.

He read the words with a frown, and took an oath never while he lived to look upon her face again-an oath which he kept unbroken. He might have taken a dozen different methods of punishing the man who had

robbed him of his daughter; he adopted none of them. He contented himself with casting her off forever. She was no longer a Carlswood; his love for her had changed into bitterest hate. She had broken the long spell—he could never say again that no Carlswood had ever contracted a low marriage; he could never boast that the name was unsullied. She had stained it by running away with a low-born stranger; nothing could back its lost glory. His anger was something terrible—terrible in its depth, its silence, its intensity. To himself he said that if she were lying at his feet dying of hunger he would not give her bread. He made no loud complaints: he never mentioned her name. If any one attempted to condole with him, he held up his hand with a stately gesture that enforced silence. His scorn, his anger, his terrible indignation, lay too deep for words. He went at once to Bralyn, where all the household were prepared to defend themselves; but he did not condescend to ask any questions. His game keepers wished to tell him of rambles in the woods, of stolen meetings in the grounds; the haughty nobleman refused to hear a syllable. He dismissed the governess with a sardonic compliment; he gave orders that everything which had ever belonged to the unfortunate Katrine should be removed from the house; he refused to say where they were to be taken or anything about them, and they were ultimately deposited in the gate-keeper's lodge. Despite his pride, his sternness, his terrible contempt and scorn, there was something pitiful in the proud man's

silent, solitary despair. He took down the record of his children's births; he read over the name of his boys; and then a great mist of tears seemed to hide the word "Katrine" from him-burning tears, all the more painful because since his wife's death he had shed none. He sat alone in his library, and before him rose like so many ghosts all the hopes he had centered in that beautiful daughter; he remembered her as a lovely child-as a lovely high spirited girl. He thought of the dead mother who had loved her so dearly, and a deep bitter sigh came from the depths of his overcharged heart. His daughter-his daughter! Never more was he to hear the gay young voice-never more to watch the beautiful face; she was worse, ten thousand times worse, than dead. Dead, he could have loved her still, he could have visited her grave, he could have spoken of her; but she was dishonored and disgraced, she was unworthy of regret-she who had brought the first stain upon the

to deceive him. To be Continued.

name of Carlswood-she who had stooped

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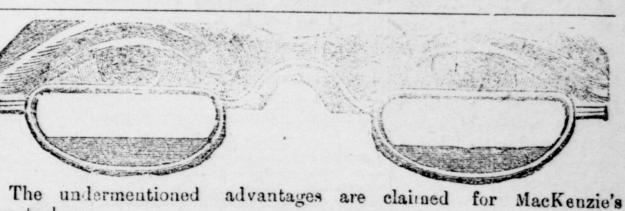
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Creek, Covered Bridge, Zionville, Durham, Nashwaak, Manzer's Siding, Penniac. Express Trains on I. C. R. run through to destinations on Sunday Express trains run Sunday mornings CONNECTIONS are made at Chatham Junction with the I. C. RAILWAY for all points hast and West, and at Fredericton with the C P. RAILWAY for Montreal and all points to the upper provinces and with the C. P. RAILWAY

for St John and all points West, and at Galson for Woodstock, Houlton, Grand Falls Edmundston and Presque Isle, and at Cross Creek with Stage or Stanley.

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