

A BARTERED LIFE.

BY MARION HARLAND.

INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER III.—(CONTINUED.)

"Perhaps it would be better for me not to change my dress, if I am likely to infringe upon the dinner hour," said Constance, at her chamber door.

"Oh, I do not think my cousin would approve of that!" exclaimed her emphatic conductress. Then she amended her inadvertence. "Of course, Mrs. Withers is the proper judge of her own actions, and I would not appear to dictate, but my cousin is punctilious on some points, and the matter of ladies' attire is one of these. I have known him so long that I am conversant with all his amiable peculiarities. I am confident he would be pleased to see Mrs. Withers assume the head of her table in full dinner toilet. But as I remarked, I do not presume to dictate, to advise, or even suggest. Mrs. Withers is undisputed empress here." Having run trippingly through this speech, she inflicted a third remarkable courtesy upon the novice, and vanished.

"She is underbred and a meddler," decided Constance, while she made a rapid toilet. "I hate to be addressed in the third person. I thought it a form of speech confined, in this country, to kitchen maids and dry goods store clerks."

Before she could invest herself in the dinner dress that lay uppermost in her trunk the bell rang to summon her to the evening meal, and three minutes thereafter the footman knocked at her door with the message that Mr. Withers had sent for her.

"I shall be down directly. Tell him not to wait for me," she said, hurriedly. She did not expect to be taken at her word, but upon her descent to the dining room she beheld her husband seated at the foot of the board and Miss Field at the head. The latter laid down the soup ladle and jumped up, fussily.

"Here she is, now. I resign my chair to one who will fill it more worthily than I have ever done."
"Keep your place, Harriet!" ordered her kinsman, "Mrs. Withers will waive her claims on this occasion, since she is late," designating a chair at his left as that intended for Constance's occupancy. "We would have waited for you, Constance, had I been less faint and weary. My physician has repeatedly warned me that protracted abstinence is detrimental to my digestion. Harriet, here, understands my constitution so well that I am seldom, when at home, a sufferer from the twinges of dyspepsia, that have afflicted me in my absence."

"Those horrible public tables," cried Harriet. "I assure you I never sat down to a meal when you were away without sighing over your evil plight in being subjected to the abominable cookery and intolerable hours of hotels."

"I did not know you were a dyspeptic," observed Constance. "You seemed to enjoy good health during our tour."
"That was because Mrs. Withers does not yet comprehend your marvelous patience—the courage with which you bear pain, and the unselfishness that leads you to conceal its ravages from the eyes of others," explained Miss Field, ogling the interesting sufferer, who was discussing a plate of excellent white soup with a solemnly conscious air.

"Now that you are safe under your own roof, we will soon undo the mischief that has been done. You do not know what a prize you have won, Mrs. Withers, until you have seen him in the retracy of home. His virtues are such as flourish in perfection in the shadow of his own vine and fig-tree; shed their sweetest perfume upon the domestic hearth."

"As you perceive, my good cousin's partiality for me tempts her to become poetically extravagant in her expressions," Mr. Withers said to his wife, in pretended apology, looking well pleased, nevertheless.

"I could not have a more patient auditor than Mrs. Withers, I am sure," rejoined Harriet. "Mrs. Withers will never take exception to my honest enthusiasm."

CHAPTER IV.

CONSTANCE answered by her stereotyped, languid smile, wondering only at the complacency with which a man of her spouse's years and shrewdness hearkened to the bold flattery of his parasite.

The exhibition ceased to astonish her before she had lived in the same house with the cousins for a month. Within the same period she was gradually reduced to the position of a cipher in the management of the establishment. After that first day Miss Field had not offered to abdicate the seat at the head of the table, except at the only dinner party they had given. Then the handsome Mrs. Withers appeared in pearl-colored satin and diamonds as the mistress of ceremonies to a dozen substantial citizens and their expensively attired wives, endured the two hours spent at table, and the two duller ones in the great parlors, where the small company seemed lost and everybody talked as if afraid of his own voice. She was no gayer than the rest by the time the entertainment was half over. The atmosphere of respectable stupidity was infectious, and this pervaded every nook of her new home. In her brother's house she had

and chose the shortest route to the valley, babbling with all its little might. It was joined, before it had gone many feet, by other rivulets, and from a point midway in the descent, where the cliffs were steepest, came up the shout of a waterfall. This, and the tireless murmur of the evergreens, made up the music of this upper sanctuary, until Constance's voice rose from the rocky table, sweet, full, exultant:

"The wild streams leap with headlong sweep
In their curbed course o'er the mountain steep;
All fresh and strong they foam along,
Waking the rocks with their cataract song.
My eye bears a glance like the beam on a lance

As I watch the waters dash and dance,
I burn with glee, for I love to see
The path of anything that's free,
I love—I love—oh, I love the free!
I love—I love—I love the free!

"The skylark springs with dew on his wings,
And up in the arch of heaven he sings—
"Tra-la-tra-la!" Oh, sweeter far
Than the notes that come through a golden bar.
The thrall and the state of the palace gate
Are what my spirit has learned to hate."

The strain ceased abruptly, and, in place of the rapt musician, borne above the power of earthly woes to crush and petty vexations to sting, a woman grovelled upon the mossy cushion, weeping hot, fast tears, and beating against the rough rock with a child's folly of desperation the white hand that wore the badge of her servitude.

What was she but a caged bird, bidden to preen its feathers and warble the notes its master dictated between golden bars? A slave to whom state and thrall meant one and the same abhorrent thing? What had she to do henceforward with dreams of beauty and freedom—she, who had signed away her liberty of spirit and person, voluntarily accepting in their stead the most foul captivity a pure and upright woman can know? She felt herself to be utterly vile—plague-spotted in soul and flesh in the lonely sublimity of this mountain temple—a leper, condemned and incurable, constrained to cry out at the approach of every passer-by, "Unclean! unclean!" It would have been better for her to beg her bread upon the doorsteps of the wealthy, and, falling that, to die by the wayside with starvation and cold, than to live the life of nominal respectability and abundance, of real degradation and poverty, which were now hers.

The tears were dried, but she still sat on the gray carpet, clutching angrily at it and the wild flowers peeping through the crevices of the rock, rending them as passion had torn her; her bosom heaving with the unspent waves of excitement and a mutinous pout upon her lips, when a crackling among the brushwood thrilled her with an uncomfortable sensation of alarm.

Before she could regain her feet or concert her scheme of defense or flight, the nearest cedar boughs were pushed aside, and a man stepped into the area fenced in by the hardy mountain evergreens. With subsiding fears, as her quick eye inventoried the various particulars of his neat traveling suit, gentlemanly bearing, pleasant countenance and deferential aspect toward herself, Constance arose, visibly embarrassed, but dignified, and awaited his pleasure. The stranger betrayed neither surprise nor confusion. Walking directly up to her, he removed his hat, bowing low, with a bright, cordial smile. "Unless I am greatly mistaken I have the pleasure of seeing my brother's wife. And you are more familiar with my name and my handwriting than with my face. I am Edward Withers!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Coining of Pennies.

It is not generally known that all the minor coins of base metal, such as pennies and nickels, are made at the Philadelphia mint, and that nearly 100,000,000 pennies are coined there every year. This large number is occasioned by the fact that thousands of pennies are lost annually, and the government has some difficulty in maintaining a supply. The profit of the government on their manufacture is large. The blanks for making them are purchased for \$1 a thousand from a Cincinnati firm that produces them by contract. Blanks for nickels are obtained in the same way, costing Uncle Sam only a cent and a half a piece. Gold is coined in Philadelphia and San Francisco. Not enough of it comes into the mint at New Orleans to make the coinage of it worth while. Gold pieces are the only coins of the United States which are worth their face value intrinsically. A double eagle contains \$20 worth of gold without counting the one-tenth part copper.

Retrograding.

Lord Nocount (proudly)—"I can trace my descent from William the Conqueror." Cynicus—"You have been a long time on the downward path."—Truth.

Good Advice.

"Mr. X—has threatened to kick me next time he meets me in society. If I see him walk in what should I do?" "Sit down."—Standard.

Gormandizing Insects.

The caterpillars are great eaters, the different species consuming from five to twenty times their own weight of food each day.

IT AMUSED THE OLD MAN.

They Helped Him to Get Away with His Dog.

The old man came down to the suburban station leading a most reprehensible dog. Leading is hardly the word, for in reality he dragged the unwilling animal after the fashion of a sled. With coaxing words he lured the scraggy beast on, and finally he got it safely stowed under the bench on the shady side of the station. He bought a paper, then, and settled down to wait twenty minutes for the cityward train. Mr. Huffman and Mr. Jodyngs had marked the approach of the old man and had smiled somewhat at his trouble when the dog had pulled back with greatest force. "It's funny, isn't it," said Mr. Jodyngs, "that an otherwise reasonable and sane man will take up with such a dog as that and treat it as a pet?" Mr. Huffman assented, and said he supposed the old man would go into paroxysms of wrath if anything were to happen to the dog. That suggested an idea, and Mr. Jodyngs nearly burst with laughter as he thought upon that idea.

"Suppose we steal the dog and put it on the northbound train, and when the old man finishes his paper and goes to take the city train he will be furious." This was Mr. Jodyngs' idea, and Mr. Huffman came near exploding, it was so funny. Mr. Huffman sat down next the old man, so as to conceal the workings of Mr. Jodyngs, and Mr. Jodyngs, with suppressed snorts of laughter, untied the twine and hauled the dog around the corner of the station and into the express office, where he paid a glad dollar and expressed the sorry beast to a fictitious John Smith at a station a dollar's worth up the line. The old man continued reading, while the dog sat on the platform, and he did not wake up until the whistle of the incoming cityward engine was sounded at the road crossing. Then he looked hastily for his dog.

"Where's that dog?" he asked of his city-bound fellow-townsmen, who had gathered about in obedience to the invitation of Mr. Jodyngs. With fierce peals of laughter Mr. Huffman told him that the household pet was on the way to Milwaukee. Mr. Huffman explained the joke, and clapped the old man on the back in delight.

The face of the latter was a study. He looked at Mr. Huffman wondering.

"By thunder!" he cried, "that's funny! You see, I brought the dog to the station to-day, intending to carry him as far in toward town as Jefferson Park and there I had intended to kick him off. He's a blamed nuisance around the house, and I wanted to get rid of him the worst way. Much obliged, Jodyngs."

But Mr. Jodyngs, with his mind dwelling on his dollar, was a pillar of self-kicking silence.—Chicago Record.

How Eagles Fly.

An eagle circling in the air maintains his wings steadily motionless, but he spreads his tail as wide as possible and works it like the quarter revolution of a screw. The reactionary force which he thus displaces drives him forward, and, by exerting more force of pressure with one side of his tail than with the other, he diverts his course either to the right or the left. The change in the bird's position is attended with short, quick motions, as the point of one wing is stretched forward, while that of the other is turned backward correspondingly.

These short, convulsive movements of the tail escaped the observations of the ornithologists until quite recently, and the fact of them not being noted caused many exhaustive articles to be written on the "Mystery of the Eagle's Flight." Stein der Weisen, the Austrian naturalist, appears to have been the first to notice the rudder-like motions of the eagle's tail. He says: "These motions of the tail would probably have escaped me also, but for the fact that I had so often observed the peculiar construction of the side tail feathers." It is interesting to the naturalists and the laymen alike to know that "the mystery of the eagle's flight" has at last been explained.—St. Louis Republic.

Imitation of Rain.

The phenomena of rain are imitated by Prof. Errera of Brussels university in a beaker. The glass, 8 inches tall by 5 in diameter, is half filled with 92 per cent alcohol, covered with a saucer and thoroughly heated over a water bath without boiling the liquid. It is then carefully removed to a wooden table. Soon the alcohol vapor is condensed into visible clouds by the cooling saucer, innumerable minute droplets of rain fall and the clouds become gradually lowered away from the saucer. The miniature storm may last half an hour. The action is intensified if the warm saucer is replaced by a cold one. Whirlwinds and squalls are produced when the alcohol is very warm and if the liquid is warmer on one side the clouds may be seen to rotate around a horizontal axis.—Exchange.

Hopeful.

A gentleman from London visiting Scotland, having heard that a man residing in the district where he had put up had just completed the 100th year of his age, and being anxious to see the centenarian, paid him a visit. In the course of conversation the cockney congratulated the old man on the healthy appearance he had at his time of life. "But," says he, "I presume you do not expect to see the end of another 100 years?" "I'm noo very sure about that. You must mind I'm a heap stronger the noo thin whin I started wi' the firstunner," was the old man's reply.—Tit-Bits.

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Ginger wafers may be made by creaming a quarter of a pound of butter, add half a pound of brown sugar, one dessertspoonful of ground ginger. Beat thoroughly, then add half a pound of flour and a pint of golden syrup; beat thoroughly and vigorously, butter your pan and spread the mixture as thin as possible and yet perfectly even and smooth. Bake in a rather brisk oven. When they are partly done draw the pan to the oven door and roll each wafer into a tiny cylinder. This must be done very expeditiously. Then return them to the oven until they become crisp and brown.—Ladies' Home Journal.

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Mrs. McKinley's Presents.

Mrs. McKinley has an immense collection of badges, given to her by the various organizations that have visited her. The last one to be added to it was that of the Syracuse Woman's Republican club, whose president, Mrs. Frost, with two other members, joined a recent pilgrimage to Canton.

Mr. Edward Wood, Pringham, Iowa, writes: "I have taken Dr. Kay's Remedy and it has cured me of dyspepsia of about ten years standing. I was so bad off that everything I ate soured on my stomach. I can now eat most everything." Sold by druggists, or sent by mail, 25 cts. and \$1.00. See adv.

Among the distinctively literary features of the announcements of the Atlantic monthly for the coming year is a series of papers on "Masters of American Literature," Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Hawthorne, Emerson and Longfellow, in which the writings of each will be studied from the point of view of the present by our most capable younger critics, with the effort to inform readers who come to these authors for the first time what parts of their writings are of present interest, and what relative values should be placed upon each; there will be also reviews of the work of our younger authors, such for instance as Mr. Henry B. Fuller, Mr. James Lane Allen, Mr. Harold Frederick, Mr. Woodrow Wilson, and others.

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Troubles of the Preacher.

To the perplexities ever incident to the study of the human heart a Methodist clergyman of Toronto, the Rev. J. Odery, found an addition in his mail box recently when he received a letter in which the writer said, "I inclose to you a plant leaf from my dead wife's grave and for Mrs. Odery a sample of the bridal dress of the lady I am about to wed."—New York Sun.

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Why He Carried Life Preservers.

It is said on account of their depth and coldness the waters of Lake Superior do not give up their dead. A recent traveler there asked the captain of a Lake Superior steamer why he carried life-preservers, the water being so cold that one could not long survive immersion. "Oh," was the nonchalant reply, "we carry the corks so that it will be easier to recover the bodies!"

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A Russian Reminiscence.

Arditi prints in his reminiscences a pleasant little mot of Rossini. When Mme. Arditì was first presented to him, the great composer bowed and said: "Now, I know why Arditì composed 'Il Bacio' (The Kiss)." Again, when Arditì had done Rossini some trifling service, the composer was profuse in thanks, and cordially offered him as a souvenir "one of my wigs," which were arranged on stands on the chifferoir.

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