

A BARTERED LIFE.

BY MARION HARLAND.

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CHAPTER I

It is always a thankless office to give advice in these matters," said Mrs. Charles Romaine, discreetly. "Your brother and I have decided not to attempt to influence you in any way, Constance; not to bias your judgment in favor of or against Mr. Withers. You, as the one most nearly interested in the consequences of your acceptance or refusal of his offer, should surely be able to make up your mind how to treat it and him."

"I should be, as you say," responded the sister-in-law. "But I cannot."

She was a handsome woman, in the prime of early maturity, whose face seldom wore, in the presence of others, the perturbed expression that now beclouded it.

"That does not affect the fact of your duty," answered Mrs. Romaine, with considerable severity. "There are times and circumstances in which vacillation is folly—criminal weakness. You have known Mr. Withers long enough to form a correct estimate of his character. In means and in reputation he is all that could be desired, your brother says. Either you like him well enough to marry him, or you do not. Your situation in life will be bettered by an alliance with him, or it will not. These are the questions for your consideration. And excuse me for saying that a woman of your age should not be at a loss in weighing these."

Again Constance had nothing ready except a weak phrase of reluctant acquiescence. "I feel the weight of your reasoning, Margaret. You cannot despise me more than I do myself for my childish hesitancy. Mr. Withers—any sensible and honorable man deserves different treatment. If I could see the way clear before me I would walk in it. But, indeed, I am in a sore dilemma." She turned away, as her voice shook on the last sentence, and affected to be busy with some papers upon a stand.

Mrs. Romaine was just in all her dealings with her husband's sister, and meant, in her way, to be kind. Constance respected her for her excellent sense, her honesty of purpose and action—but she was the last of her friends whom she would have selected, of her free will, as the confidante of such joys and sorrows as shrink from the touch of hard natures—refuse to be confessed to unsympathizing ears. Her heart and eyes were very full now, but she would strangle sooner than drop a tear while those cold, light orbs were upon her.

In consideration of the weakness and ridiculous sensitiveness of her companion, Mrs. Romaine forbore to speak the disdain she felt at the irresolution and distress she could not comprehend. "Is Mr. Withers personally disagreeable to you?" she demanded, in her strong contralto voice.

"I liked him tolerably well—very well, in fact, until he told me what brought him here so regularly," Constance stammered. "Now I am embarrassed in his presence—so uneasy that I wish sometimes I could never see or hear of him again."

"Mere shyness!" said Mrs. Romaine. "Such as would be pardonable in a girl of seventeen. In a woman of seventeen it is absurd. Mr. Withers is highly esteemed by all who know him. Your disrelish of his society is caprice, unless—the marble gray eyes more searching—"unless you have a prior attachment?"

Constance smiled drearily. "I have never been in love in my life, that I know of."

"You are none the worse for having escaped an infatuation that has wrecked more women for time and for eternity than all other delusions combined. A rational marriage—founded upon mutual esteem and the belief that the social and moral condition of the parties to the contract would be promoted thereby—is the only safe union. The young, inexperienced and headstrong, repudiate this principle. The mature in age know it to be true. But, as I have said, it is not my intention to direct your judgment. This is a momentous era in your life. I can only hope and pray that you may be guided aright in your decision."

Left to herself to digest this morsel of pious encouragement, Constance drew a low seat to the hearth register, clasped her hands upon her knees, and tried, for the hundredth time that day, to weigh the facts of her position fairly and impartially.

She had been an orphan for eight years, and a resident in the house of her elder brother. Her senior by more than a dozen years, and in the exciting swing of successful mercantile life, he had little leisure for the study of his sister's tastes and traits, when she first became his ward, and conceived the task to be an unnecessary one, now that she was to be a fixture in his family, and appeared to get on smoothly with his wife. In truth, it never occurred to him to lay a disturbing finger upon the tiniest wheel of the domestic machinery. His respect for his spouse's executive and administrative abilities was exceeded only by her confidence in her own powers. She was never irascible, but he knew that she would have borne down calmly and energetically any attempt at interference in her op-

erations as minister of the interior—the ruler of the establishment he, by a much-abused figure of speech, called his home. A snug and elegant abode she made of it, and, beholding Constance well dressed and well fed, habitually cheerful and never rebellious, he may be forgiven for not spending a thought upon her for hours together, and when he did remember her, for dwelling the rather upon his disinterested kindness to a helpless dependent than speculating upon her possible and unappealed spiritual appetites.

For these, and for other whimsies, Mrs. Romaine had little thought and no charity. Life, with her, was a fabric made up of duties, various and many, but all double-twisted into hempen strength and woven too closely for a shade of fancy or romance to strike through.

She had coincided readily in her husband's plan to take charge of his young sister when her parents died. "Her brother's house is the fittest asylum for her," she had said. "I shall do my best to render her comfortable and contented."

She kept her word. Constance's wardrobe was ample and handsome, her room elegantly furnished, and she entered society under the chaperonage of her sister-in-law. The servants were trained to respect her; the children to regard her as their elder sister. What more could a penniless orphan require? Mrs. Romaine was not afraid to ask the question of her conscience and of heaven. Her "best" was no empty profession. It was lucky for her self-complacency that she never suspected what years of barrenness and longing these eight were to her protege.

Constance was not a genius—therefore she never breathed even to herself: "I feel like a seed in the cold earth, quickening at heart, and longing for the air." Her temperament was not melancholic, nor did her taste run after poetry and martyrdom. She was simply a young, pretty and moderately well-educated woman, too sensible not to perceive that her temporal needs were conscientiously supplied, and too affectionate to be satisfied with the meager allowance of nourishment dealt out for her heart and sympathies. While the memory of her father's proud affection and her mother's caresses was fresh upon her she had long and frequent spells of lonely weeping—was wont to resign herself in the seclusion of her chamber to passionate lamentations over her orphanage and isolation of spirit. Routine was Mrs. Romaine's watchword, and in bodily exercise Constance conformed to her quiet despotism—visited, studied, worked and took recreation by rule. The system wrought upon her beneficially so far as her physique was concerned. She grew from a slender, pale girl into ripe and healthy womanhood; was more comely at twenty-seven than at twenty-one.

CHAPTER II.

BUT all this time she was an hungered. She would cheerfully have refunded to her brother two-thirds of her liberal allowance of pocket money if he had granted to her with its quarterly payment a sentence of fraternal fondness, a token, verbal or looked, that he remembered whose child she was, and that the same mother love had guarded their infancy. Her sister-in-law would have been welcome to withhold many of her gifts of wearing apparel and jewelry had she bethought herself now and then how gratefully kisses fall upon young lips, and that youthful heads are often sadly weary for the lack of a friendly shoulder, or a loving bosom, on which to rest. She did not accuse her relatives of willful unkindness because these were withheld. They interchanged no such unremunerative demonstrations among themselves. Husband and wife were courteous in their demeanor, the one to the other; their children were demure models of filial duty at home and industry at school; the training in both places being severe enough to quench what feeble glimmer of individuality may have been born with the offspring of the methodical and practical parents. Constance found them extremely uninteresting, notwithstanding the natural love for children which led her to court their companionship during the earlier weeks of her domestication in their house. It was next to a miracle that she did not stiffen in this atmosphere into a buckram image of feminine propriety—prodigies of starch and virtue, such as would have brought calm delight to the well-regulated mind of her exemplar, and effectually chased all thoughts of matrimony from those of masculine beholders. Had her discontent with her allotted sphere been less active, the result would have been certain and deplorable. She was, instead, popular among her acquaintances of both sexes, and had many friends, if few lovers. This latter deficiency had given her no concern until within two years. At twenty-five she opened her eyes in wide amaze upon the thinning ranks of her virgin associates, and began seriously to ponder the causes that had left her unsought, save by two very silly and utterly ineligible swains, whose overtures were, in her esteem, presumption that was only too ridiculous

to be insulting. Her quick wit and knowledge of the world helped her to a solution of the problem. "I am poor and dependent upon my brother's charity," she concluded, with a new and stifling uprising of dissatisfaction with her condition. "Men rarely fall in love with such—more rarely woo them." She never spoke the thought aloud, but it grew and strengthened until it received a startling blow from Mr. Withers' proposal of marriage.

He was a wealthy banker from a neighboring city, whom business relations with Mr. Romaine drew to his house and into his sister's company. His courtship was all Mrs. Romaine could desire. His visits were not too frequent, and were paid at stated intervals, as befit his habits of order and punctuality. His manner to the lady honored by his preference was replete with stately respect that was the antipodes of servile devotion, while his partiality for her society, and admiration for her person, were unmistakable. He paid his addresses through Mr. Romaine as his fair one's guardian, offering voluntarily to give his beloved whatever time for deliberation upon the proposal she desired.

"You had better think it over for a week," advised her brother, when he had laid the case duly before Constance. "It is too serious a matter to be settled out of hand."

After that, neither he nor his wife obtruded their counsel upon her until the afternoon of the seventh day. Then Mrs. Romaine, going to her sister's chamber to communicate the substance of a telegram just received by her husband to the effect that Mr. Withers would call that evening at 8 o'clock, was moved to grave remonstrance by the discovery that she whom he came to woo had no answer prepared for him. Constance was no nearer ready after the conversation before recorded.

"I cannot afford to be romantic," she had reminded herself several times. "And who knows but this irrational repugnance may pass away when I have once made up my mind to accept him? This may be—in all likelihood it is—my last chance of achieving an independent position. It has been a long time coming, and my charms will be on the wane soon. True, a marriage with Elathan Withers is not the destiny of which I have dreamed, but their dreams are but foolish vagaries after all. Life is real and earnest."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A ZOOLOGICAL DIVERSION.

A Elephant That Used to Play a Clever Trick on Visitors.

The elephant at the Jardin des Plantes, at Paris, used to play his visitors a trick, which could not have been thought of but by an animal of much intelligence. His house opened upon an inclosure called the Elephant's park, containing a pond, in which he would lay himself under the water, concealing every part of him except the very end of his trunk—a mere speck that would hardly be noticed by a stranger to the animal's habits.

A crowd would assemble around the inclosure, and, not seeing him in it, would watch in expectation that he would soon issue from the house. But, while they were gazing about, a copious sprinkling of water would fall upon them, and ladies and gentlemen, with their fine bonnets and coats, would run for shelter under the trees, looking up at the clear sky and wondering whence such a shower could come. Immediately afterward, however, they would see the elephant rising from his bath, evincing, as it seemed, an awkward joy at the trick that he had played. In the course of time his amusement became generally known, and the moment the water began to rise from his trunk the spectators would take flight, at which he appeared exceedingly delighted, getting up as fast as he could to see the bustle that had caused.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

USES OF ICE WATER.

In Health It Should Not Be Used for Drinking Purposes.

Ice water is no one to drink ice water, for it has occasioned fatal inflammation of the stomach and bowels, and sometimes sudden death. The temptation to drink it is very great in the summer. To use it at all with safety the person should take but a single swallow at the time, take the glass from the lips for half a minute, and then another swallow, and so on.

It will be found that in this way it becomes disagreeable after a few mouthfuls. On the other hand, ice itself may be taken as freely as possible, not only without injury, but with the most striking advantage in dangerous forms of disease. If broken in sizes of a pea or bean and swallowed as freely as practicable, without much chewing or crunching between the teeth, it will often be efficient in checking various kinds of diarrhea, and has cured violent cases of Asiatic cholera. A kind of cushion of powdered ice kept to the entire scalp has allayed violent inflammation of the brain, and arrested fearful convulsions induced by too much blood there. In croup, water as cold as ice can make it, applied freely to the throat, neck and chest with a sponge or cloth, very often affords an almost miraculous relief, and if this be followed by drinking copiously of the same ice-cold element, the wetted parts wiped dry, and the child wrapped up well in the bed clothes, it falls into a delightful and life-giving slumber.—New York Ledger.

Buttonless Campaigns.

In Canada no campaign buttons, ribbons or badges can be worn between nomination and polling day. The carrying of flags as a party badge is also forbidden. The penalty is a fine of \$100 or three months in prison, or both.—Boston Journal.

DEAN OF THE EDITORS

NEW TITLE BESTOWED ON CHARLES A. DANA.

The Greatest Journalist Since Greeley's Time—Would Not Cheapen the Style of the Sun—It's Old Rival Only a Shadow of Its Former Self.

HARLES A. DANA of the Sun is still president of the United Press, remaining like the white cap on a mountain after nearly all the other snow has melted in spring sunshine. Mr. Dana is called "the dean of American journalism," and it may be truly said that it was he who lifted journalism to the dignity of a profession. There are those who attribute to his influence the fact that newspaper writers have been enabled to earn salaries more or less commensurate with the intelligence and ability involved in their work. Mr. Dana is now 78 years old, and most of his long life has been spent in work connected with the writing and editing of newspapers. He worked with Horace Greeley on the Tribune and was paid \$20 a week for work that he afterward avowed was worth four times the money. It was these early rebuffs that determined his career. He was not impressed with the newspaper hack of the early days and he set to work to teach newspaper men the real meaning of their calling and to establish a code of journalistic ethics which will long survive him. He had the pleasure of repaying Greeley's roughness by supporting him for the presidency of the United States. The date of his real greatness in the newspaper field is that

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SCHOOLS IN LOG HUTS.

With Stockades Built to Wage War on the Indians.

Colorado enjoys the proud distinction of having enrolled in her schools 94,686 pupils; at least those are the figures given in the biennial report issued by Mrs. A. J. Peavey, the superintendent of public instruction of that commonwealth, says the St. Louis Republic. Thirty odd thousand of these pupils do not regularly attend school, and there may possibly be a reason for that, inasmuch as in the same report Mrs. Peavey presents some excellent pictures of most of the public schools of the state. In Colorado probably as much as in any of the western states it is not always handy for young people to go a great distance to attend to their intellectual training, and owing to certain financial conditions, the schools cannot be maintained where there are only a few taxpayers scattered over a considerable area. It must not be understood that Colorado children have to secure their learning in the open air and under the blue skies of heaven, for in every county of the state there is at least one public schoolhouse, but such buildings as they are might frighten the wits out of the ordinary schoolroom of the more thickly populated east. In many portions of the state money has been lavishly expended for modern school buildings, and in some of the outlying districts the schools in which the pioneers had their children taught to read and write still hold the fort. It is expected that in a few years all this will have been changed and that the peculiar dugouts and stockade buildings will have been superseded by school buildings with every modern convenience. A few years ago, with the exception of the large cities or towns, where people were more heavily taxed, the school buildings consisted mostly of either dugouts or log huts. Many of the log houses are still scattered over

the state. The disease left him an object of pity and a great sufferer. He was covered with blisters, and the burning and itching were terrible to bear. A lady told us to try Hood's Sarsaparilla. He began taking it and soon improved. After taking a few bottles he was entirely cured. That was three years ago, and there has been no return of the disease."—S. C. BOYLAN, East Ligon, Mich. Get only Hood's Sarsaparilla. It is sold by all druggists. Price, \$1; six for \$5.

Grilled Fresh Herring.

These are very tasty and dainty if properly prepared. First clean the fish, cut off the heads and tails, removing the backbone and what small ones you can. Next flatten out the fish with a knife. Sprinkle the inside with pepper and salt and set the two sides together again in pairs, pressing both firmly. Dip into coarse oatmeal and grill over a very clear fire. Serve on a hot dish with caper sauce.

There is a Class of People

Who are injured by the use of coffee. Recently there has been placed in all the grocery stores a new preparation called GRAIN-O, made of pure grains, that takes the place of coffee. The most delicate stomach receives it without distress, and but few can tell it from coffee. It does not cost over \$4 as much. Children may drink it with great benefit. 15 cts. and 25 cts. per package. Try it. Ask for GRAIN-O.

Equally Lucky.

Sympathetic Lady—"So your husband was killed?" Mrs. Rooney—"Shure, an' he was, m'm, and it was from the thirteenth floor he fell." Lady—"An unlucky number for him." Mrs. Rooney—"It was that; but I'm thinking it would have been just as unlucky for him, poor man, if he had fell from the twenty-sixth."—New Tribune.

Opportunity for Homeseekers.

There are excellent opportunities along the line of the Chicago & North-Western Ry. in western Minnesota and South Dakota for those who are desirous of obtaining first-class lands upon most favorable terms for general agricultural purposes, as well as stock raising and dairying. For particulars and landseers' rates, apply to Agents of The North-Western line.

Infantile Brag.

One Little Girl—My father belongs to one of the first families. The Other Little Girl—My paw always sees the first bluebird every spring.—Indianapolis Journal.

Drugs at Cut-Rate Prices.

Send 2-cent stamp for postage and we will send you our complete CUT-RATE DRUG CATALOGUE. We can save you money on everything in Drugs, Patent medicines, Prescriptions, Rubber Goods, Wines and Liquors. PAUL V. FINCH & CO., Grand Rapids, Mich.

The largest bronze statue in existence is in St. Petersburg. It represents Peter the Great, and weighs 1,000 tons.

I believe Piso's Cure is the only medicine that will cure consumption.—Anna M. Ross, Williamsport, Pa., Nov. 12, '95.

A Newark (N. J.) judge last week sentenced a bicycle thief to a two years' term in state's prison.

To Cure Constipation Forever.

Take Cascarets Candy Cathartic. 10c or 25c. If C. C. C. fail to cure, druggists refund money.

The heart of a virtuous man never grows old.—J. F. Marmontel.

TO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY.

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. 25c.

Even the light minded must venerate virtue.—Krumacher.

Coe's Cough Balsam

Is the oldest and best. It will break up a cold quicker than anything else. It is always reliable. Try it.

Every delay gives opportunity for disaster.—Napoleon.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children lessening aches, reducing inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25 cents a bottle.

Curfew bells ring in three towns in West Virginia.

There is no message which brings more gladness to a true woman's heart than the sweet assurance that a little one is coming to bless her life and call her "Mother."