

A BARTERED LIFE.

BY MARION HARLAND.

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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 em- phatic conductress. Then she amended her inadvertence. "Of course, Mrs. Withers is the proper judge of her own actions, and I would not appear to dic- tate, 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 con- fident 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 ad- vise, or even suggest. Mrs. Withers is undisputed empress here." Having run trippingly through this speech, she in- flicted 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 occu- pancy. "We would have waited for you, Constance, had I been less faint and weary. My physician has repeat- edly warned me that protracted abstinence is detrimental to my digestion. Harriet, here, understands my constitu- tion 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 dyspep- tic," 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 retiracy 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 expres- sions," Mr. Withers said to his wife, in pretended apology, looking well pleased, nevertheless.

"I could not have a more patient and- ither than Mrs. Withers, I am sure," re- joined Harriet. "Mrs. Withers will never take exception to my honest en- thusiasm."

CHAPTER IV.

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

The exhibition ceased to astonish her before she had lived in the same house with the coun- sel for a month. Within the same pe- riod 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 abdi- cinate 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 cer- emonies to a dozen substantial citizens and their expensively attired wives, en- dured the two hours spent at table, and the two duller ones in the great par- lours, 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 re- ceivable stupidity was infectious, and she conveyed 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 sanc- tuary, until Constance's voice rose from the rocky table, sweet, full, exultant:

"The wild streams leap with headlong sweep
In their curbsome course o'er the moun- tain 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 des- peration 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 up- right woman can know? She felt her- self 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 respectabil- ity 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, read- ing 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 un- comfortable 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 moun- tain evergreens. With subsiding fears, as her quick eye inventoried the vari- ous particulars of his neat travelling 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. Walk- ing 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 With- ings!"

OUR SPRINGFIELD LETTER.

Senator Monroe's bill to amend the parole law, which has created consid- erable discussion here, seems not to have had much notice from the press of the state for some reason. It is worthy of more attention. There is a wide difference of opinion in regard to the advisability of the present law.

The police authorities of the state have objected strenuously to it, while the prison officials insist that it is work- ing good, and will not consent to its abandonment until they have time to show that it is advantageous. It is one of the numerous improvements which prison reformers have advoc- ated, and while this does not prove anything, it does argue that it should have a fair trial, and live or die on its merits. I am more familiar with its scope and workings at the reformatory than at the penitentiary. There a pa- role depends first on the uniform good behavior of the inmate; second, on get- ting an offer from some responsible person of work and oversight, and thirdly, on the judgment of the board of managers as to whether it shall be granted. The first is easily determined by the daily reports. The second is where trouble commences. It is so easy for the person who wants to get an inmate paroled to secure certificates from the public officials, clerks of court and even from the judges to the good character and standing of the sponsor that the officers of the reformatory find themselves imposed upon and learn afterward that the person asking to stand as sponsor for the care and supervision of the prisoner during his parole is not a proper person for such duty. The five persons who made themselves such a terror under the "long and short" reign of holding-up in Chicago were all paroled prisoners and their care and moral welfare had been vouchered for by persons who were certified to by Chicago officials. These cases have called out a deal of adverse criticism, but it is well to bear in mind that it is only the cases of those who go wrong that ever get into the papers. Secrecy in regard to paroling is practiced and many young men are now engaged in honestly earning their living all over the state who are not known as paroled prisoners, so that we never hear any praise of the system, but only adverse criticism when 'bq' had goes to the bad.

Ex-Senator Palmer is now 80 years old. In his walk, his talk and his force as a speaker he shows little the decrepitude of age. He carries a cane, but apparently only from habit, and is daily at his law office in this city at- tending to his practice, which did not slip out of his hands while in the senate. I think he realized the reasonable probability that he would go out of office with the close of his term. He has never in his life been re-elected to an office. Indeed, in speaking of himself recently in the senate, he said: "I come into fashion about once in ten years, but do not seem to remain in fashion long." He was elected gov- ernor in 1868. He did not want to be governor, but did want to be senator. He declined the nomination which Col. Ingersoll sought at the Peoria con- vention, but it was thrust on him and he accepted it. The salary of the of- fice was at that time \$1,500 per annum. The constitution of 1870 increased it to \$3,000. He then wanted a renomina- tion, but the Republicans would not give it to him for several reasons. First, the bitter opposition which he had made to the course Gen. Sheridan had taken in the army at the time of the Chicago fire, and second that they had made up their minds to put Ogles- by forward and make him United States senator. Palmer was not "in fashion" that year. He left the party at the exact time that he discovered that he was not to be the party's can- didate for governor and senator, but it is perhaps unfair to say that discovery was the cause of it. He was always and at all times Democratic in his views on state's rights and tariff. Dur- ing the war and just before it, as well as during a few years after it, the tariff was not an issue between the parties. As soon as it became an issue, Palmer was certain to be on the Demo- cratic side of it. He was a consistent anti-slavery man and as such became among the earliest anti-Nebraska Democrats and through the pledge he and his comrades made to Lincoln was a Lincoln Republican as long as he lived. He never, however, agreed with Mr. Lincoln on the tariff. In his re- marks on that subject, and in his speeches, he says: "You can't tax yourself rich," showing that he either cannot or will not give the weight to the doctrine of protection which all Re- publicans do.

Of late years he has not been given much to going into different parts of the state except on his campaigning tours, but he went last summer to Galesburg on the occasion of the cele- bration of the Lincoln-Douglas debate there. He does not think Mr. Depew was just in his remarks in regard to Senator Douglas, and wanted at the time, if it had been a proper place, to make a retort. He says that his in- tercourse with Douglas, after the elec- tion of Lincoln, as well as his former acquaintance with him, both when he was in close political affinity as well as when they were bitterly opposed, renders a fair estimate of his character not only possible but certain, and that estimate is that Douglas was a patriot without any sham or ifs and ands. He was at heart a Union man of such strong sentiment that no condition of things could have made him anything else. He certainly had better oppor- tunities to form an estimate of his character than Mr. Depew had. He had

been a partisan, and afterward a most pronounced political opponent. Later he was thrown into close connection with him, and it is fair to believe that Palmer's estimate of the great senator is a correct one.

The house bill (Mr. Cochran's) to amend the Chicago civil service law so as to give preference to veteran sol- diers in right of appointment was passed. This law was one of the two civil service acts passed last legisla- ture, the other being for the county service. For some reason no move has been made to amend the county service law. The veterans had a big time try- ing to get recognized as eligibles for office under that law. By the rules adopted by the commissioners they were cut off entirely. The rules pro- vided that no one over 45 years of age should be examined for appointment. This caused a big row, and Billy Mason was retained by the old soldiers to com- mence a suit against the board. They concluded to change the rules. This is the bill as passed: "Section 1. Be it enacted by the people of the state of Illinois, represented in the general assembly, That an act entitled 'An act to regulate the civil service in cities,' be amended by the addition of a sec- tion to be known as section 10 1/2, which section shall read as follows: 'Section 10 1/2. Persons who were engaged in the military or naval service of the United States during the years 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864 and 1865, and who were honorably discharged therefrom, shall be preferred for appointments to civil offices, provided they are found to possess the business capacity necessary for the proper discharge of the duties of such office, and it shall be the duty of the examiner or commissioner certifying the list of eligibles who have taken the examinations provided for in this act, to place the name or names of such persons at the head of the list of eligibles certified for appointment.'

Littler's coal miners', or operators' bill, was defeated, as it was two years ago. You cannot get out of the minds of some legislators the idea that the anti-trust legislation of the past few years is the essence of reform. These various laws punish and forbid all combinations formed in the interest of keeping up prices. The argument which the senator uses in favor of this bill is something like this: By the re- straining authority of these laws coal operators cannot combine to keep up the prices of coal to a fair living rate. With the fall of prices, down go the wages of miners. We are continually crying out that we want to legislate to protect labor. This bill will permit those engaged in such occupation as pay for labor a larger proportion than for all other expenses, to agree among themselves upon a schedule of rates that will keep the price of labor up to a fair standard. This is more important than fustian about the laws against trusts. Mr. Dunlap opposed it. Mr. Crawford spoke for the bill. He said he had a record on this matter. He was the only state senator who voted against the anti-trust legislation of eight years ago, and he stood by that vote. Mr. Dunlap asked him to name, if he could, a single occupation of which a majority of its expenses did not go to labor. He promptly replied, "The office of state senator."

The governor has finally come to the scratch and appointed the good Van Cleave superintendent of insurance. It is understood that Van was very desirous to return to private life and at- tend wholly to his own private affairs, but the demand coming up from every nook and corner, every county and township, hamlet, hill and dale, for official recognition of his great worth, could not be resisted. The people have an idea that the chief duty of the su- perintendent of insurance is to insure the state against loss by flood and frost, by cyclone and lightning, by storm, bad luck, dishonest treasurers and wrecked banks, and they want a man in there right off in whom they have confidence. The losses we have suffered within the last few months by the elements and the politicians, the Andrews, the Dreyers, the Spaldings, et al., is something enormous, and we want a man of parts, an officer of un- impeachable worth, and proof against city comptrollers.

Buried After Two Centuries. A singular case of most abnormally posthumous interment took place re- cently at Revel, a Russian town near the Gulf of Finland. The body, or rather mummy, thus tardily buried, was that of the Belgian soldier of fortune, the Duc Charles de Croix, who had been commander-in-chief of the Russian army at the historical battle of Narva, in 1700. Made prisoner by the Swedes during the fight, De Croix took up his residence at Revel, where he died in the course of nature, his creditors, however, demurring to his burial until his debts had been paid in full. So the soldier was mummified, and his re- mains have stayed ever since then in a Lutheran church, where they have been exhibited to sightseers as a curi- osity. Now, at last, amid such pomp as that afforded by the presence of the local authorities, the Duke Charles De Croix has been placed in a new coffin and properly interred in the vaults of this church, and thus ends as strange a chapter as the records of sepulture have ever contained.

Officer George F. Osborne is the tallest member of Philadelphia's police force. He is six feet nine and one-half inches in height.

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 oc- casioned by the fact that thousands of pennies are lost annually, and the gov- ernment has some difficulty in main- taining 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 in to 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.

Retrospect. Lord Nocourt (proudly)—"I can trace my descent from William the Conquer- or." 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.

The Ideal Line.

The members of the Baptist Young Peo- ple's Union who contemplate attending a national meeting of that body in July, should bear in mind that there is no better equipped line from the East, North or Northwest, than the popular Big Four Route, via Cincinnati or Louisville. All through passenger trains on this line are vestibuled, equipped with Buffet Sleepers, with Hotel Dining Cars on day trains. At Cincinnati, direct connection is made in the same depot with the Queen & Crescent Route, the Short Line to Chattanooga, via the famous High Bridge. At Louisville, with the Southern Railway and the Louis- ville & Nashville, via Mammoth Cave and Nashville, allowing stop-over at both these points.

The fare from Chicago will be extremely low. For rates, time card, etc., address J. T. Tucker, G. N. A., or H. W. Sparks, T. P. O., 224 Clark St., Chicago.

A Cork Cathedral.

There is at Redcar, a small village in England, a wonderful cork model of Lincoln Cathedral. The model contains about one million old corks. It was made by a plowman, who worked at it, off and on, for ten years and seven months. The model is said to be a per- fect miniature of the great cathedral, inside and out.

Opportunity for Homeseekers.

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

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