

# A BARTERED LIFE.

BY MARION HARLAND.

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### CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

Opposition was futile, but Constance's countenance was so downcast at the prospect of the excursion, that Edward made a pretext, before going out, to call her into the adjoining sitting-room. "How have I forfeited my place in your good graces?" he began, in playful manner, that was lost in earnestness before he finished his speech. "I have tried to persuade myself that your cold avoidance of me for weeks past, and your rejection of my services whenever it is possible for you to dispense with them, was in part, an unfounded fancy of my own, and partly the result of your absorption in the dear duty that has demanded your time and thoughts. I have begun lately to have other fears—dreads lest I had unwittingly wounded or displeased you. Do me the justice to believe that, if this be so, the offense was unconscious."

"You have offered none—none whatever!" interposed Constance, with cold emphasis. "I am sorry my manner has given rise to such apprehensions."

"That is not spoken like the frank sister of a month ago," said Edward, retaining the hand she would have withdrawn. "I will not release you until you tell me what is the shadow upon the affection that was to me more dear than any other friendship, and which I dared hope was much to you. Be, for one instant, yourself, and tell me all."

"She was very pale, but, in desperation, she tried to laugh. 'You must not call me to account for my looks and actions nowadays, Edward. I think sometimes that I am not quite sane. I have gone through much suffering; been the prey of imaginations that almost deprived me of reason, besides enduring the real and present trial. And heaven knows how unready I was for it!'"

"One word, my dear girl, and my inquisition is over. Assure me honestly and without fear of wounding me, have you ever, in your most secret thought, blamed me for the casualty which so nearly widowed you? I did try, as you can bear me witness, to dissuade him whom we both love from the experiment that cost him so dear. The idea that you may have doubted this has pained me inexpressibly."

"Dismiss the suspicion at once and forever!" Constance looked steadily into his face and spoke calmly. "The thought has never entered my mind. I blame no one for my trouble—excepting myself."

"Before she could divine his purpose, Edward had put his arm over her shoulder and pressed his lips to hers. 'Let bygones be bygones!' he said, brightly and fondly. 'We have too much to live and to hope for to waste time in nursing unhealthy surmises and fears.'"

"Oh!" the sharp little interjection came from the threshold of the door leading into the hall, where Miss Field was discovered in a fine attitude of bashful apology, faintly flavored with prudish consternation. "I did not dream you were here. I was on my way to my cousin's room!" she continued, in a prodigious flutter of rinks and shoulders. "I beg a million pardons, I am sure."

"You need not beg one!" said the undaunted Edward, without releasing Constance. "Constance and I have been settling a trivial misunderstanding in good boy-and-girl style—have just 'kissed and made up,' and we now mean to be better friends than ever."

"He! he! you are excessively candid, to be sure!" uttered Harriet. "But—shaking her black curls—"Mrs. Withers knows men and human nature too well to believe quite all you say. We must not forget, my dear madam, that men were deceivers ever."

"You speak feelingly," said Edward, carefully following Constance with his eye, as she moved silently toward her husband's chamber. "I shall caution the lady of my love—should the gods ever bestow one upon me—not to sip of the bitter waters of your wisdom."

"Had he seen the glitter of the round, black orbs that pursued his retiring figure, he might have made a more thoughtful exit, his run down the stairs been less swift, the air he hummed, as he went, less gay."

"He had a pleasant drive; Constance an hour of mingled sweet and bitterness. It was difficult to bear her part in the apparent renewal of the familiar intercourse of other days, without relaxing the severe guard she had set upon herself from the moment she discovered the true nature of the sentiment she entertained for her husband's brother. She could not help delighting in his society, in the manifold proofs of loving concern for her comfort and happiness of which she was the recipient. Yet, underlying this secret and fleeting joy, was the ever-present shame that marked her remembrance of her guilty weakness, and the despairing knowledge that remorse, duty and resolve had thus far availed nothing to conquer it."

"She looked jaded rather than refreshed upon her return, although she had curtailed the ride in opposition to Edward's advice. Wild, rebellious thoughts fought for mastery within her all the while she was with him, the promptings of an insane familiarity she could not cast out. 'If I had met him two years ago instead of his brother, and he had wooed me, the love which is now my disgrace would have been my glory,' she was tempted to repeat, again and again. 'Yet my fitness to receive his affection and my need of him are the same to-day as they were then. Is he the less my companion

soul, the mate God meant for me, because, led by other's counsels, I blundered into a loveless connection with another? Which is the criminal bond—that ordained by my Maker, or the compact which has had no blessing save the approval of cold-hearted and mercenary mortals? Outwardly we must remain as we are; but who is defrauded if I dream of what might have been? If I love him for what he is in himself, not for what he is to me?"

Then, shaking off the spell, she would loathe herself for the vile suggestions, and pray, in a blind, heathenish way, to Him who had sent her pain, to sustain her under it, to keep her from falling into the fouler mire of open defiance of her husband's claims upon her reality in word and act, to hold her fast to the semblance of right and honor."

Parting from Edward at the outer entrance with a brief phrase of thanks for his kindness in accompanying her, she ran up to her husband's room and opened the door without knocking. A gentleman, whom she recognized as a prominent city lawyer, stood by the lounge with a paper in his hand. Two young men, apparently clerks, were withdrawn a little into the background and a table bearing writing materials was between them and the others.

"You acknowledge this instrument to be your latest will and testament, and in token thereof, have set hereto your signature and seal?" the lawyer was saying as the door swung noiselessly ajar, and Constance stopped, unable to advance or retreat.

Mr. Withers glanced around when he had given his assent. "Come in, my dear," he said, quietly. "We shall soon be through this little matter."

### CHAPTER X.



HE dropped into a chair near the door, her heart palpitating with force that beat every drop of blood from her cheeks. Some sudden and awful change must have taken place while she was out to call for the presence of these men. Her frame was chill as with the shadow of death, but the one overpowering thought that smote her was that her husband's approaching decease was the direct answer of an angry Judge to her wicked outcry against her fate and longings to escape it. In this grisly shape was the freedom to appear for which she had panted. But she knew that when the cage was torn down she would feel like a murderer. She never forgot the short-lived horror of that moment.

Mr. Withers dismissed his visitors when the witnesses had affixed their names to the will, and they bowed themselves out, each noting, more or less furtively, as he passed, the dilated eyes and colorless face of the wife, and drawing his own conclusions therefrom.

She got up and walked tottering forward at her husband's gesture. He was no paler than when she left him, and smiled more easily than was his habit, when he noticed the signs of her extreme alarm. "I was afraid you would be frightened if I talked in your hearing of making my will," he said, encouragingly. "To avoid this, I arranged that Mr. Hall should wait upon me while you were driving. He was behind his time, and your are back earlier than I anticipated. I regret the meeting only for your sake. Perhaps it is as well, however, that I should acquaint you with some of the provisions of the instrument you saw in Mr. Hall's hand."

"Please do not! I cannot bear to hear or speak of it!" protested Constance, the tears starting to her eyes. "It all seems so dreadful!"

"It will not hasten my death one hour," Mr. Withers was not quite ready to pass over without rebuke an absurd superstition he considered unworthy a rational being, even though the offender was his wife. "You shall know this. I made another will two years since, but circumstances have led me to regard it as injudicious, if not unfair. We business men are superior to the dread of looking forward to the one certain event of mortality. We calculate the probable effect of our demise, as we do other changes in the mercantile and social world. By the terms of this will, as I was about to remark, my property, with the exception of a legacy to Harriet Field, is divided equally between yourself and Edward. And he is appointed sole executor. In the event of my death he will be your nearest correction and safest adviser. I wish you to remember this. It is hardly to be expected that you, although a fair judge of character, should be as conversant with the qualities that fit him to assume these responsibilities as I am, who have been his business partner ever since he was twenty-one."

He was astonished that his wife, instead of rendering a submissive verbal acquiescence to his spoken and written decree, began to weep so violently as to hinder herself from listening or replying to his speech. She had never conducted herself in this irrational fashion before in his sight, and he was naturally exceedingly perplexed. Aware that any attempt to soothe her would be awkward work to him, he lay quiet for a minute, hoping the emotion would expend itself without his interference. Finally, he adjudged it to be but reasonable that she should set the bounds of her grief at a point somewhat short

of hysterics or convulsions, and addressed her with the most stringent appeal he could think of.

"Really, Constance, your agitation is exciting me most unpleasantly. I fear I shall be feverish when the doctor calls, if this sort of thing is kept up."

He did not mean to be unkind or selfish. He believed his health to be of supreme importance in her esteem, and that the recollection of this would set her to rights. The experiment succeeded to a charm. The sobbing flow of briny drops was stanch on the instant.

"I beg your pardon," stammered Constance, straightening herself up. "I will control myself better hereafter. It is time for your cordial. May I pour it out for you?"

It was inevitable that the confession she had meditated, while he told her of his arrangements for her future, betraying with a child's artlessness the perfectness of his trust in his brother and in herself, the full outflow of penitence, and deprecation, and entreaty for pardon, of which the tears were but the type and premonition, should be checked by the querulous reference to his personal discomfort. But the sudden and disagreeable reaction induced by it was hardly an excuse for the hardening of her heart and dulling of the sensibilities, just now so tender, which filled her mind with sullen resentment against him who had repelled her confidence. "He will never understand me. We are as antagonistic as oil and water," she excused this by thinking. "The more closely I imitate his icy propriety the better matched we shall be. I was a fool to imagine anything else."

And thus slipped by the fairest chance of reconciliation and real union that was ever offered the ill-assorted pair.

With Mr. Withers' returning strength everything seemed to fall back into the old train. Except that invitations were less frequent as the season waned, and that Edward and Constance passed fewer evenings abroad and more at home, that Mr. Withers rode to his office every morning and returned at noon, to spend the rest of the day upon the sofa in the library exchanging his after-dinner for an easy chair in the parlor, the mode of life in the household varied in no important respect from what it had been prior to his accident.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### IT WAS A WOMAN'S PRIVILEGE.

Eves is a Snak Official She Would Not Tell Her Age.

It was a busy scene at a great bank, says the New York Herald. Long rows of women, some anxious and depressed looking, all of them with an unmistakable air of weariness, were waiting their turn with books to be presented for the semi-annual interest. A pompous and many buttoned official paced back and forth with a look of determination to keep order or die on his grim visage. The woman at the window was a new depositor and there was a longer wait than usual, while she answered all the questions relative to her genealogy and that of her sisters and her cousins and her aunts—information which one must always give to a great bank before it will condescend to receive and sometimes lose one's money.

"What's your age?"

A faint blush stole over the faded cheeks, the antiquated and corked curls quivered with agitation as she murmured: "I'd rather not tell, please."

The bank clerk meant business. He had no sympathy with the maiden modesty of the trembling aspirant to financial dignity. "Oh, but you must tell," he replied, somewhat brusquely.

The blushes grew painful but there was still a loophole of escape. At least all the world should not know her age and raising herself on tiptoe so as to bring her face close to the window—for she was short of stature—she said: "May I whisper it, please?" and the woman behind her will never know how old she was.

### Most Remarkable Canal.

The most remarkable canal in the world is the one between Worsley and St. Helena, in the North of England. It is sixteen miles long and underground from end to end. In Lancashire the coal mines are very extensive, half the country being undermined. Many years ago the managers of the Duke of Bridgewater's estates thought they could save money by transporting the coal underground instead of on the surface; therefore the canal was constructed and the mines connected and drained at the same time. Ordinary canal boats are used, the power being furnished by men. The tunnel arch over the canal is provided with cross pieces, and the men who do the work of propulsion lie on their backs on the loads of coal, and push with their feet against the cross bars of the roof.

### Ireland's Big Caverns.

It has remained for a Frenchman to make the first complete exploration of the largest cavern in the British Islands, that at Mitchelstown, Ireland. The explorer is Monsieur Martel, who has recently become famous for his discoveries in the caverns of France. The Mitchelstown cavern is formed in limestone, and is remarkable for the number and extent of its connected passages which, when plotted upon a chart, resemble the streets of a city. The length of the cave is about a mile and a quarter, and it contains some animal inhabitants, including a species of spider, which are peculiar to it and which have their entire existence within its recesses.

A Frenchman estimates that in a life of fifty years a man sleeps away 8,000 days, walks 800 days, and the rest of the time feeds and fusses.

### PAYMENTS AT HAYDEN

#### INDIANS GET BIG MONEY FROM UNCLE SAM.

In Many Cases the "Indian" Hasn't Got Much of the Genuine American Blood to Brag Of—White "Trash" for Valois.



(Special Letter.)

HE most interesting town in Indian Territory and one of the wonders of the year in Hayden, where the government has been paying off the Cherokee freedmen. A few weeks ago it was only a postoffice, with one store and a blacksmith shop. In a few days it became a busy town of 4,000 people, mainly colored. The one intent of the population was to receive checks from the government of which they are beneficiaries.

When the Cherokee nation liberated its slaves during the civil war a treaty was arranged between them and the government that the freedmen should be received into that nation as citizens and hold land in common with the Cherokees. When the Cherokee strip was sold the Indians forgot the provisions of the treaty and wanted all the money, but the court of claims gave \$800,000 to the freedmen, and it is the distribution of this large sum that has brought the people together.

Hayden is 12 miles from the railroad and the gathering was all housed in tents. The Indians and freedmen were accompanied by a large number of fakirs, who had the most enticing devices for the winning of the money to be paid out. They put up a "Midway Pleasance," where all sorts of games were in progress then to swell the crowd there were hundreds of business men who have been selling goods to the freedmen for months on credit, trusting in the coming of this auspicious time for their pay. The total number of freedmen on the rolls

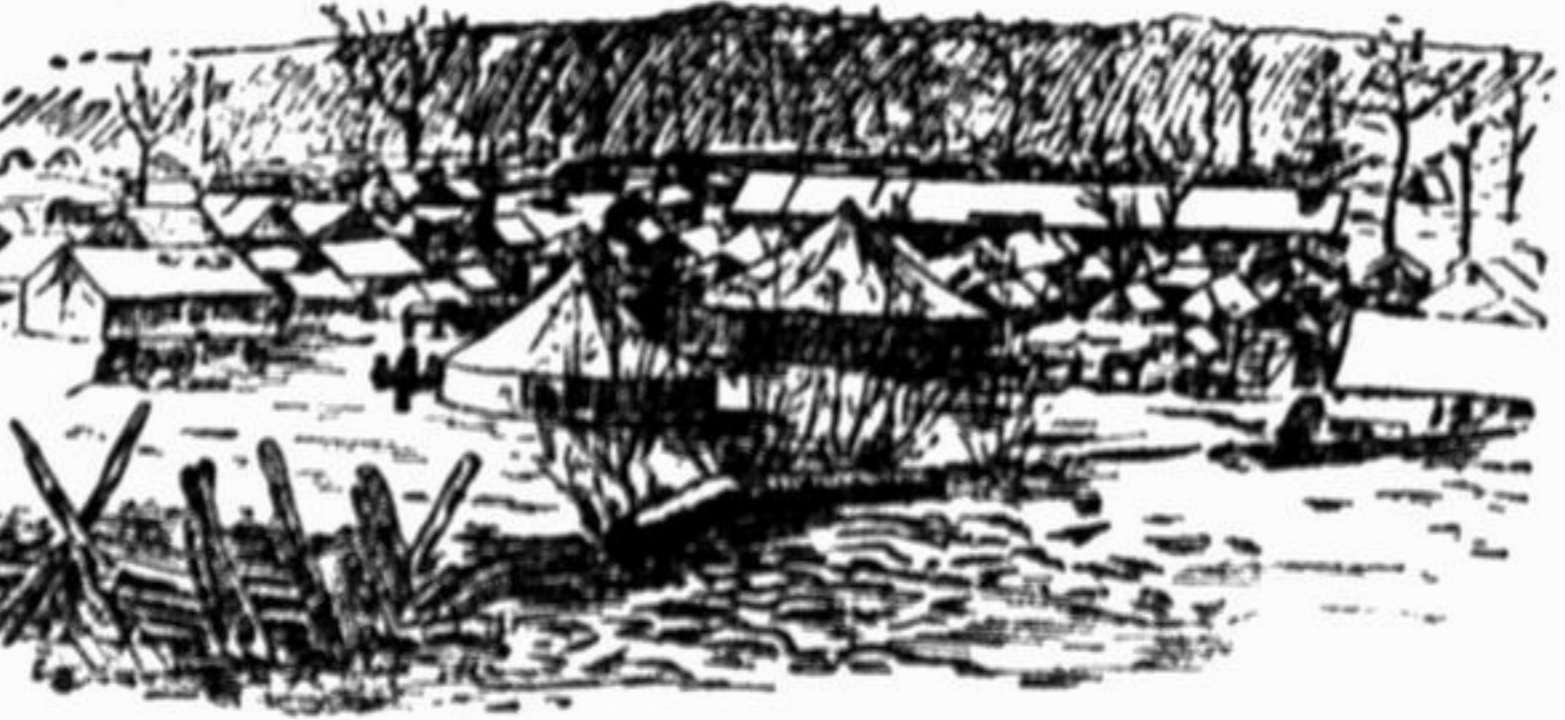
take their families to Europe and have for their servants white men and women who are tempted by the princely wages to forget that they are the superior race. While full bloods wear in the council chamber, and sometimes on the street, the full robes of the Indian warrior, for the most part the rare dressed in the ordinary fashion of the whites. One of the wealthiest men, who, by the way, has twelve children, lives in a house that is the equal to any city residence, having cost \$10,000. It has all the improvements of plumbing and heating, and is as comfortable as could be desired.

### RUIN IN ST. BERNARD PASS.

An Avalanche Wrecks a Part of the Ancient and Famous Hospice.

(Special Letter.)

The left wing of the great monastery of St. Bernard in Switzerland has been demolished by an avalanche. No lives were lost nor was anybody seriously injured, but the monks occupying the monastery were in serious danger for some time. The hospice of St. Bernard is at the highest elevation of the great St. Bernard pass, between Mont Velan and its western extremity, called Pointe de Dronaze, in the Pennine chain of the Alps. It is the highest habitation in the Alps, if not in all Europe. The monastery consisted of a large regular mass of stone buildings, stern and gloomy enough when viewed from the exterior, but inviting and cheerful within. Despite its rough appearance, the hospice has welcomed Alpine travelers for nine centuries. It is more than 8,000 feet above the level of the sea. It was founded in 963 by Count Bernard of Menthon, who afterward was canonized. He devoted forty years of his life to helping and protecting the numerous travelers who annually pass between Switzerland and Italy. The inmates are monks of the Augustinian order, assisted by a number of lay brethren. There are forty monks in the monastery, some of whom, however, are in the Simplon Hospice on the top of little St. Bernard mountain. The St. Bernard hospice has been known to accommodate 600 to 800 travelers at a time. The ground floor of the building is devoted to stabling and storerooms, and the up-



HAYDEN DURING THE PAYMENT.

was over 4,500, and each share was worth \$188.74. The payment was made by family, and on account of the tangled relationship of a race that was so lately slaves, the making of the rolls proved to be a tremendous task. The identification of the members of the families was no less onerous, for they all look alike to the stranger. The public school is one of the unknown factors of Indian life in this section, and there are few who can read and write.

The camp has been the most orderly in the history of the Indian Territory payments. In former cases there has been always a larger attendance of the tough element which has made the night hideous. Here the nights became wild about the midnight hour and then the "coons" who want to cut a dash are in their element. Then it is that the Alkali licks are ready to go out and shoot a few holes in the atmosphere without warning. Girls with red ribbons in their hair are here, and they do the town of tents in the most approved fashion, while the old folks are having a shouting prayer meeting, after the manner of the colored folks of the south. The brethren from Oklahoma are numerous, and they are usually of the sort that has the money craze well developed. There is an attempt made to keep gambling off the grounds, but with small success. The freedmen are eager to get more money and they will bite at any kind of a game. It is, perhaps, a good thing, that in so many instances they have pledged their money in advance, and that it is taken by the debtors at the moment they receive it. At the best it will not last long, for they are unused to having so much, and they know that Uncle Sam will pay them more regularly in the future, as he does the Cherokees.

Over in the Osage portion of the territory every member of the tribe is wealthy. The men are handsome and the squaws are not bad looking. They are few in number and are decreasing every year. Now there are only 245 voters in the tribe and they are the recipients of a bounty that might well make a prince happy. The tribe has 1,000,000 acres of land and about \$9,000,000 in the United States treasury, on which the interest is \$400,000 a year. This is paid every three months, and it amounts then to \$54 for each man, woman and child in the tribe. Of the \$400,000 one-tenth is set aside for education and the children are all sent to school. They go to Catholic boarding schools and are not allowed to get the appointment if they are not in school. The Indians, too, have a large amount of rent from their lands, which they lease to the cattlemen for cash.

Frequently the leading men go east on a visit and travel in Pullman cars as do other luxurious westerners. They

per floors to a drawing room, refectory, offices and dormitories. The work of the monks in giving shelter to travelers and rescuing wayfarers lost in the mountains has been the subject of many tales of heroism. The monks care for nearly 20,000 travelers every year without exacting the smallest payment, as the monastery is rich enough to support itself out of its own funds. Those that can afford to do so are expected, however, to contribute a sum equal to the amount they would be charged in a hotel in the village.

The St. Bernard dogs, which are as famous as the monastery itself, are bred at the hospice. They are subject to the same rheumatism affliction after seven or eight years as are the monks, and are then killed. The monks always keep eight or twelve dogs on

hand. These dogs travel around in storms with little casks containing bread, meat and wine hanging from their collars, and hundreds of sufferers have been rescued by them.



THE HOSPICE OF ST. BERNARD.

The People of New York City.

It is said that more than 76 per cent of those who people New York city to-day were born of foreign mothers, while more than 40 per cent were themselves born on foreign soil. Peter Stuyvesant ruled in his day over 1,400 New Yorkers, who conversed in eight-een different tongues.

He Saw.

"See here!" howled the manager; "does it take you four hours to carry a message three streets away and return?"

"Why," said the new office boy, "you told me to see how long it would take me to get there and back, and I done it."—TK-Bits.

Favored by Nature.

Jacobs, Jr.—"Fadder, why aren't der Hebrews as tall as oder boobies?"

Jacobs, Sr.—"Peenese foresight, mein son! Think wot we can safe in der price of cloading."—New York Tribune.

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Forget Sound's Meteoric Statesman.

From the Washington Post: James Hamilton Lewis is the new meteor who has flashed across the house. He is an interesting and picturesque figure. Mr. Lewis looks like a fashion plate. He wears a long frock coat that reaches to his ankles, brown trousers, patent leather shoes, a high collar, a flowing necktie, and yellow gloves. His hair falls over his forehead like a hayrick that has been tossed by cattle, and discloses an incipient bald spot on the summit of his cranium. His yellow whiskers are fearful and wonderful things. They spread out on both sides of his face in reckless profusion, and are parted in the middle with evident care. Mr. Lewis has another claim to glory besides his clothes. He is without doubt the fastest talker in the house. Hitherto the spare and sinewy Johnson of Indiana has held the palm, but Lewis can talk him to a standstill. At the rate of 300 words a minute the words poured from his lips yesterday. It would not be a proper simile to say that they were like a torrent, for that implies a steady, sonorous downfall. Mr. Lewis talks like a railroad train when the engineer has thrown open the throttle. They are a clatter, clatter, clatter, and a patter, patter, patter, that actually tire the ear that listens to it. It is almost impossible to keep pace with his words, yet his sentences are well formed and his ideas are good.

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A Martyr to the Cause.—What a silly young man that pretty Miss Camington married? "Yes; how did it happen?" "It wasn't her fault. He was one of her mother's bargains."—Chicago Record.

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