The Gates of Hope

BY ANTHONY CARLYLE

The Beginning of the Story.

Marcia Halstead, secretary to Mrs. Alden, is entrusted with some jewels while her employer goes out to luncheon with Kempton Rosslaer, his stepmother Lady Rosslaer and her son Gordon Ruthven. Marcia puts the jewels in the safe but fails to find the duplicate key. She consults a noted physician who tells her she cannot live longer than six months; then answers the call of a solicitor to find that she is heir to a large fortune on condition that she marries before she is twenty-one. Returning to Mrs. Alden's she finds Kempton Rosslaer (who is secretly married to Araby Trask) replacing the gems which his step-brother had stolen. Believing him to be the thief, Marcia promises silence if he will marry her within two days. To shield his father's name Kempton consents. At a restaurant Marcia faints and is assisted by three strangers, Araby Trask, her father, and a young man, Jasper Waldron. A week after the marriage ceremony Rosslaer visits Araby and, to his consternation, learns that Marcia has decided to remain in London and is improving in health. Meanwhile Marcia and Waldron are dining together at a restaurant.

CHAPTER XX.—(Cont'd.)

"Haven't I as much claim as Araby to your friendship?"

That which was in Jasper Waldron's voice and eyes, rather than the question, dissipated the remnants of Marcia's composure. She felt for the moment like the veriest schoolgirl. No man had ever looked at her quite like this before. No man's voice had warmed as Waldron's warmed now.

She was startled; taken aback. His earnestness brought the breath flutteringly to her lips. It was an earnestness which was quite genuine. She felt that; it was that which robbed her of her usual coolness and poise. She hated herself for blushing, wondered indignantly why she should; and, with an effort caught at her self-control.

With a further effort she forced herself to speak lightly; but there was a flicker of shyness under the thick, dark lashes as she looked at him.

"Of course—at least—I suppose so. Only——"

"Only what? Are you going to tell me that I do not appeal to you as a friend?" Again the half hint of reproach in his voice. She made a quick little gesture.

"You know I am not! But friendship—to my way of thinking—is a big word; not to be lightly used, or lightly thought of. There's—her soft voice sobered—"there is something too sane and comforting about it for misuse. And—I don't know why—but Miss Trask makes me feel like that. Warm somehow, and—and certain of someone who understands to turn to. It is rather strange—in so short a time!"

Her voice wavered on the question. Waldron was still looking at her intently, and, now, with something of her own soberness, he answered quietly:

"True friendship, like love, is born—I believe—in a touch, the clasp of a hand—a glance. I suppose that's why it is so rare. I suppose, too, there are lesser friendships, like lesser loves. I have made many friends, with men and with women—but only one great one. And that is the least demonstrative of all!"

She looked at him curiously. His voice had warmed again; there was a little, passing glow behind his eyes. She spoke before she realized what she was saying:

"With a man?" She was instantly angrily conscious of a certain eagerness in her voice, and of her rising color. She looked down, biting her lip.

Waldron's laugh relieved her, brought her eyes back quickly to his face. It was boyish, amused.

"My dear lady! But, of course! Great friendship between a man and a woman is the rarest thing in the world. It is almost impossible."

Marcia's self-possession had come back to her. She laughed, a little, soft, half scoffing laugh.

"My dear man!" she mocked. "What about those really happily married couples one meets?"

Waldron's lips twitched humorously; not unkindly.

"They are so unique they don't seem real!"

"I didn't know you were a cynic!" Marcia felt that she was steering the conversation into lighter channels; but Waldron's eyes sobered instantly.

"I did not mean to be. Friendship is the only true basis for marriage. Friendship—real friendship—is another, and purer, way of spelling love. When the two merge and exist between man and woman the result is something mystical, wonderful, and—holy!"

Marcia stirred slightly. There was a ringing conviction in the man's voice for all its quiet. She found her interest in him warming, deepening. She did not answer. Quite suddenly she felt how young she was; and how ignorant.

In the humdrum days that lay behind her she had never thought of love. Her mind had been occupied with the daily task, and the discomfort of a weary body. Marriage she had regarded listlessly as a mere form. Its significance had meant nothing to her.

Now, quite suddenly, she found herself looking upon the whole thing with different eyes. Her vitality had burned higher under the influence of this last week's excitement, new comfort and luxurious living. She was no longer half starved in mind and body. The woman in her was quickening, awakening. She felt the change without realizing what it was, and it disturbed her.

Yet it did not distress her. More than ever she hungered to taste all that she had missed in life; all that life might have to offer her. And there was so much. She knew it; knew it more keenly whenever she was with Araby Trask, or this man—more particularly, perhaps, when with him. He was so vigorously full of life; so big. He gave so vivid an impression of great strength of reliability. And something of the freshness of wide spaces clung about him still, even here in the artificial atmosphere of social London.

As she remained silent it was Waldron who spoke at last. He was smiling again, that sunny, kindly smile of his, and now his brown hand lay across the table, palm upward.

"Well?" he asked, lightly enough, but with an underlying gravity in his voice. "Are you going to let me count myself one of your friends?"

Marcia looked up quickly. The wild rose color was in her cheeks; again the man was impressed with her look of new youth; impressed, too, by a certain fragility in her loveliness. The shyness was flickering alluringly under the half veiling lashes.

"But, of course—if you really want to!"

A trifle hesitatingly she slipped her slim hand into the broad brown palm. There was a very odd expression in Waldron's face as he looked down at it. He spoke upon an impulse that surprised himself.

"I want to—very much. More than I have wanted anything for a very long time!"

During the rest of the dinner he did his utmost to amuse her. He pointed out people of interest and importance as they came and went. He made her laugh with little gay anecdotes. He told her stories of those many places which he had visited in his travels. And he was careful that no further hint of seriousness should creep into the conversation.

He felt that already their friendship was progressing very satisfactorily. And he had no wish to scare her, to do or say anything that would change her attitude toward him of frank liking. She was so much younger than he had realized; and so much less learned in the lore of life.

As presently, having wrapped her in the rose-hued loveliness of her cloak, they moved down the room and out through the swing doors, a man came running lightly up the steps. He glanced up as he passed them, and, meeting Waldron's eyes, stopped dead.

"Jasper!" His hand flashed out. Waldron's gripped it eagerly.

"Kemp! Old man! I've scarcely caught more than a glimpse of you since I've been back! Where on earth have you been hiding ouryself? But I forgot——"

He turned toward Marcia. Recognizing Rosslaer she had shrunk back, all the high, sweet color draining out of her cheeks. Her eyes were wide, almost frightened. Waldron gave an exclamation of wonderment.

It was Rosslaer who recovered himself first. He gave Marcia a little smiling easy nod that made her gasp.

"Hallo, Miss Halstead! How are you?"

He exchanged a further airy sentence or two with Waldron, then, trailing off into an excuse about being late for an appointment, disappeared.

Waldron looked concernedly at the girl. "What's the matter?" he asked. "You're quite white."

The girl answered, amazed at her own composure. "I've a bit of a 'heart,' you know! Sometimes it plays me tricks. I'm all right, really, thanks—now."

Still concerned, he piloted her to the waiting car.

"You're doing too much!" he asserted. "You want to go slow. There's plenty of time!"

Marcia's lips twitched suddenly. Involuntarily she shivered. Then she laughed.

"The Bird of Time has but a little way
To fly—and lo! the Bird is on the wing"

she quoted. There was a weariness in her voice that made him look at her quickly, frowningly. But he did not speak immediately. When he did it was completely changing the subject.

"Talk of the devil!" he said. "You remember I was saying I had made a great friendship with one man? It began years ago—when we were boys. It has never wavered, though often there have been years between our meetings. And when we do meet it's as casually as if we were the merest acquaintances. Well—that man is Kempton Rosslaer!"

CHAPTER XXI.

Rosslaer went somewhat blunderingly up the room, picking out a table at random. He had left Araby twenty minutes ago, feeling shaken and on edge. His chance encounter with Marcia just now had shaken him still more.

He realized suddenly, that such meetings could quite possibly be of daily occurrence if she really had changed her mind and meant to stay in town. They would be trying, to say the least of it, for both of them—a constant and painful reminder of the secret bond between them.

He ordered a cocktail almost savagely, and when it came swallowed it at a gulp. As he set the glass down he became aware that a woman at a table just across the room was trying to attract his attention. Recognizing his stepmother, his face hardened, grew grim.

He had scarcely seen her since that unforgettable night over a week ago. He had avoided going home as much as possible; he had been in no mood to talk to her, to meet young Ruthven, or to listen to Lord Rosslaer's querulous questionings and complaints. The sight of Lady Rosslaer now jarred him, brought back with a force that made him wince all that had happened.

For a moment he thought of taking no notice of her. Then, reluctantly, he rose and walked across to her table. She was alone; but there was an empty coffee cup on the table opposite her, a crumpled napkin lay beside it.

She gave him her hand, and he released it almost immediately.

She made a half nervous gesture toward the place opposite to her.

"Gordon is with me," she told him. "He has gone to telephone somebody. I want to have a talk with you before he comes back. Do sit down—tell them to bring your dinner here."

"Thanks!" Rosslaer pushed aside the coffee cup and sat down. "I'll order another cocktail, but I think I'll have my dinner after our talk. Not that I can imagine what you can have to talk to me about."

The woman stirred restlessly. Her vividly beautiful face was pale and looked a little haggard. For the first time Kempton noticed fine lines at the corners of her eyes. There was a feverish brilliance in the eyes themselves. They met his in a momentary flash of resentment.

"Don't be hateful! Kemp"—she leaned a little across the table to him—"there's no use in being bitter against me! What happened wasn't my fault. Gordon was desperate, beyond himself—mad!"

Her lips twitched, she gave a little shiver and reaching for her furs pulled them up over her shoulders. As he did not answer, she went on:

"It was cruel of you to—to keep away as you have done. I'm still utterly in the dark as to how you managed—what happened! I've been wretched—miserable—on edge the whole time. I—I've hardly known what to expect; what might crop up!"

(To be continued.)

Insects as Inventors.

The diving-bell was invented originally by the ordinary water-spider.

Thousands of years before human beings thought of this device for visiting the sea-bottom, the spider was in the habit of using a bell made of silk. It is thimble-shaped, and is anchored to the weeds by silken threads, with the opening downwards.

The water is expelled in a very ingenious manner. The hairs on the spiders body are long, with a hook at the end. By means of these the insect is able to surround itself with a cushion of air. It dives into the water and enters the bell, where it releases the air. This process is repeated until the bell is full of air.

In the bell the female spider lays her eggs twice a year, in the early part of the summer and in the autumn. The first batch of eggs is hatched by the summer heat, and the little spiders are soon building bells for themselves.

After laying the second batch of eggs, the spider seals up the opening in the bell, and waits for them to hatch out when it becomes warm again. While waiting, the spider is in a state of unconsciousness.

Women should Insist

No matter what you buy in kitchen utensils, demand that each article carry the SMP trade-mark shown below. SMP Enameled Ware is safe to use; acids or alkalis will not affect it; it cannot absorb odors; cleans like china; wears for years. Tell the storekeeper you want either

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Women's Sphere

Emergency Bedding.

An old aunt visiting a busy young matron spent her leisure time on a lot of old bedding that the young woman had cast into the rag bag. There were pieces of old cotton and woollen blankets, ragged quilts, discarded pillow ticks, sheets with gaping holes, old comforts, soiled and ragged, and other evidences that the "setting out" the bride had received a half dozen or so years back was showing the effects of childish feet and hands on the materials. Like most brides she had started in life with flimsy silkoline bedding, embroidered pillow slips, spreads bought for style rather than wear, and all other perishable things which young girls delight to put in their hope chests, so everything looked hopeless to her as her aunt went over it.

But the old lady took the best parts of the thin spreads and placed them on a stout piece of unbleached muslin stitching them evenly on the sewing machine back and forth. When done even the young matron owned that they would make crib spreads that would last a number of years. The old pieces of the spreads that could not be used for anything else made neat kitchen towels, while the larger pieces made pads for the baby's bed, filled in with discarded pieces of the old cotton blankets and tacked rather closely with san silk.

The ragged quilts were cut into small squares to be used in illness and were covered with fresh, new outing flannel. When tacked with bright yarn they were good enough for daily wear, particularly in summer when light crib covering is needed. After all the best pieces had been used the scraps were gathered up and laid smoothly on a piece of an old feather bed tick and covered with the same on top. This made an excellent mattress cover and was tacked with stout cord to hold the pieces in place.

The wool blankets were cut into as large squares as possible for the baby's bed and a crochet edge made of yarn held the edges in place. The sheets were torn into large pieces and hemmed, sometimes turned and whipped together, and sometimes left just as big squares or pieces longer than wide. The pillow slips were opened and made into emergency sheets for the small beds and the old pillow ticks opened, hemmed and washed for mattress protectors.

When the work was done the young housekeeper had an old chest of things that later she said she never knew how she had existed without. For the first time in her life she learned the economy of saving good things in illness. She had been brought up to think that when anyone was ill the bed should be decked out with embroidered sheets and pillow cases, the best spread, the daintiest comforts and all the guest articles the household could afford, but at once she saw that patient and nurse could be spared much discomfort by using the clean old things. The little blanket to fold round the patient's shoulders, the small spread, the pad that was not injured if medicine was spilled upon it, the old soft pillow case and the little comforts for extra warmth all saved the good things and were so soft and comforting to the sick person.

If any young housekeeper is offered old bedding by some relative who has kept house a long time she can do nothing better than to renovate and wash and salvage it at the first opportunity. Everything costs so much nowadays that a chest full of old soft bedding for sickness is worth a great deal. Never discard an old quilt or comfort or spread or blanket as useless, or use them for ironing boards or dust rags or floor cloths as so many do, but wash and save and patch them for sickness and you will be glad hundreds of times that in time of health you prepared for just such emergencies by using material that at first sight seemed hopeless.

My Neighbor's Screened Porch.

One improvement that brings comfort and joy to any home is a screened porch.

One of my neighbors had an old porch that had been screened in years ago but it was worked over last spring and immensely improved.

This porch opens off the kitchen and dining room; it has an entrance from the front yard and one from near the concrete-covered cistern.

When the porch was remodeled, glass doors were placed at these entrances; a new floor was laid and painted a shade that does not easily show soil; the side and both ends were boarded up about two and a half feet and ceiled; window sash was set in such a manner that half of them may be slid behind the others for ventilation and coolness; galvanized screen-wired was used. The overhead is painted blue and the walls are white.

With blue-and-white china, blue-bordered table cloth, blue bird curtains and a few flowering plants my neighbor enjoys a very attractive summer dining-porch. At one end is plenty of room for a sink and tables where many tasks may be performed away from the heat and confusion of the kitchen.

There is also room at the other end for the sewing machine. If it is desired, a heater may be installed and a winter "sun-parlor" made for winter enjoyment. The family feel amply repaid for the necessary expenditure.

Minard's Liniment for Dandruff.

Bran Recipes.

Bran Porridge.—1 cup of milk, 1 cup of water, ½ teaspoonful of salt, ¼ cup oatmeal (rolled, or other cereal), ¼ cup of bran. Place in double boiler and boil for a half hour. Serve with sugar and milk, or sugar and butter. All water may be used if desired.

Bran Griddle Cakes.—1 cup bran, 1 cup flour, 1 tablespoon of sugar, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1 egg, ½ teaspoon butter or butter substitute, ½ teaspoon salt, 1 cup milk. Mix dry ingredients, add egg slightly beaten, and milk and butter. Beat thoroughly and bake on a hot griddle. Serve with butter and syrup. This will make twenty cakes.

Bran Doughnuts.—1½ cups bran, 1½ cups flour, 1 tablespoon butter or lard, 1 egg, 2 teaspoons baking powder, ¼ cup sugar, ½ cup milk, 1 teaspoon salt. Cream butter and sugar. Add egg well beaten. Mix and sift dry ingredients and add to the first mixture. Roll on floured board. Cut with doughnut cutter. Fry in very hot deep fat. This will make three dozen doughnuts.

Bran Muffins.—1 cup bran, ½ cup white flour, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, 1½ teaspoons baking powder, 1 tablespoon butter or butter substitute, 1 cup milk, 1 egg. Mix and sift dry ingredients. Add egg slightly beaten, and sugar. Add milk and melted butter. Mix all well together. Bake in well-greased muffin tins in a hot oven for about twenty-five minutes. Will make twelve muffins.

Drawn-in Threads.

Drawn-in threads are more popular than ever. This trimming is used on luncheon cloths, napkins, doilies, table runners, waste baskets, handkerchiefs, desk sets, dresser scrafs, pin cushions and bed-room curtains. An attractive table runner of natural-colored crash is trimmed with blue, red and black drawn-in threads. The edges are ravelled and finished with hand tied fringe.

Venetian Girdles.

Undeniably smart are the new Venetian bead girdles and belts. They are made of red, green, purple, tan and black wooden beads of various shapes and sizes. Some are strung in even rows and finished at the ends with tassels made of the varicolored beads while others are strung on heavy black silk cord. They are worn with the popular straight-line dresses of tricotine and serge.

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Jugo-Slavia or Jugoslavia?

Jugo-Slavia resents the hyphen and insists that the name be written in one word—Jugoslavia and Jugoslav.

The reason given by the "Revue Jougoslave" is that "yug" in the Serbo-Croatain language means "the south." To compound the two words "Yug" and "Slav" the Serbo-Croatian language uses an "o" instead of a hyphen—Jugo-Slav—Jugoslav.

A good remedy for a cut is raw starch. It should be wetted and applied thickly as soon as possible.

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