

Maida's Secret.....

By the Author of.....
"A Gipsy's Daughter,"
"Another Man's Wife,"
"A Heart's Bitterness,"
Etc., Etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS—Guy Hartleigh leaves England to find his long lost cousin in San Francisco.

CHAPTER II.

Sometime after the night Guy was promising his uncle to go in search of his cousin, a party of young men, in a ripe stage of gayety, sat in one of the private rooms of a famous San Francisco restaurant, discussing the Burgundy of mine host, after having done justice to his cuisine.

"I say, Wilton," said one, "only two days more in which to save your bet."

"More than I need. One day would be enough," was the nonchalant answer.

"What bet is that?" asked another.

"What bet?" they all cried with one voice. "Haven't you heard?"

"Well, if you all shout at me like that there will be no excuse for not hearing. What is the bet, Wilton?"

"A thousand dollars, even, that I won't drive Maida Carrington to the Cliff House before the end of the week."

"She had refused to see anybody or accept any gifts," explained the one who had first spoken, "but Wilton declared it was only because she had not been approached the right way. He said he did not believe in any kind of virtue in an actress, and least of all in such an impregnable sort as she assumed; so he bet a thousand dollars he would drive her to the Cliff House. I took him up."

"I will double the bet," said Wilton, quietly.

"Pshaw! you're joking," said one of the men.

Put me to the test, if you think so. Take up my bet."

But the speaker did not do it. It was plain to everybody that Caryl Wilton was certain to lose, but there was something in his languid indifference that inspired caution, as the confidence he had in himself must arise from the knowledge of something unknown to them.

And yet the manner was habitual to him. Always self-possessed, always calm and indifferent, whether he was losing thousands or winning them. No one could feel triumphant in winning from him, and no one was ever guilty of displaying to him any chagrin in losing. He was admired and somewhat feared by the men, even in that city so full of the recklessly brave, and he was courted by the softer sex not only because he was handsomer than most men, nor because he was seemingly rich beyond the need of care, but that he had in his face and manner that consciousness of power which but few men ever have.

Who he was nobody knew further than that he had plenty of money, for which he occasionally drew on London, that in some way he had gained the entree into the most exclusive of San Francisco society, and that he was faultlessly dressed, with the manner of a man who could not be anything else from the very force of habit, and that he was an Englishman. Whether Lord or Commoner, no one knew, and no one had the hardihood to inquire of him; for he had a singular air of conveying, before a question was asked, the idea that it was impertinent. He was, to sum up, a masterful man, but withal one who was uniformly courteous and good-tempered.

After the last remark he looked inquiringly around the table, and then, as if satisfied that nobody would accept his offer, pushed his chair back and leisurely arose.

"Not going yet?" was the general cry. "The play won't begin for half an hour yet."

"Yes, I must go. I have an engagement."

"But you'll be at the theatre?"

"Perhaps."

"You know it is 'Romeo and Juliet' tonight. It is one of her best parts."

"Is she so very good, then?" inquired the one who had been ignorant of the bet. "I have been away at the mines for a month, you know."

"Ask Wilton."

The questioner turned his eyes on Wilton, who was putting on his coat, and the latter answered, in his indolent way:

"She's the best Juliet I ever saw, and I have seen all the good living representatives of that part. She has genius. Good-night."

He left them and went out into the damp-driving fog, muttering, with a shrug of his broad shoulders:

"A nice business for you, Caryl Wilton, to be engaged in; but, pshaw! she interests me. I wonder if it is real virtue, or is she only doing a little skillful angling for a husband? I shall know before this night is over."

He walked leisurely to the California theatre, where Maida Carrington was playing, and went around to the stage door, where he knocked. The door was instantly opened, and he would have walked in without a word, had not the Cerebus there stopped him and demanded, surlily:

"Who d'ye want t' see?"

"Mr. Baker."

"Come in here an' wait. Jimmy,

tell Mr. Baker a gent wants to see him. What name?"

"No name. And, Jimmy, tell Mr. Baker a man wants to see him. A man or a gentleman; not a gent. Anything but a gent, Jimmy. Hurry up, now."

Jimmy grinned and ran off, while the door-keeper scowled and muttered under his breath, half inclined to give the visitor a piece of his mind, and yet yielding to the influence of the easy manner and refraining, a wonder to himself that he did. In a very few minutes Mr. Baker came into the little room, and looked at Caryl Wilton with the manner of a man who has had to deal with such characters before, and knows just how to do it. In fact, the pressure for admittance behind the scenes had never been so great as now, when Maida Carrington was acting in the theatre.

"You wished to see me," he said inquiringly.

"On the part of Mr. Dusante, yes."

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Baker.

Mr. Dusante was the Romeo, and as Mr. Baker took a more careful look at his visitor he seemed to feel that he was not one of the gay young bloods about town who would be likely to be there for the purpose of troubling his famous star. Mr. Wilton smiled quietly, as if comprehending the thoughts of the manager and said:

"Shall we talk here?"

"No, no; come to my office."

He led the way back to the stage and off to a little room in the left wing.

"Now, sir, if you please; what can I do for you?"

"Mr. Dusante wished me to say to you that he could not be here this evening."

"Not be here?" exclaimed the astounded manager. "Why, he must be here!"

"Nevertheless, he will not," said Caryl, with an amused smile.

The manager threw himself back in his chair and stared at his visitor. Then he bounced up and cried out:

"What does this mean? Is he ill?"

"He is ill, there is no doubt about that, for I saw him in bed, and here is the physician's certificate, to bear out my opinion."

He handed the distracted manager a document which left no manner of doubt in his mind.

"What am I to do?" cried the poor man, running his hands through his hair, as if dragging for an idea.

"He has an under-study, has he not?"

"Yes, but I never suspected such a thing as this and I gave him leave to go to San Jose."

"Which he asked for at my suggestion," was Caryl's mental comment. Aloud he said, with an appearance of solicitude, "I am very sorry. Mr. Dusante was afraid you might be placed in an awkward position. I think he said you had nobody else but his under-study who could take his place."

"Yes," groaned the manager, "and I can't even change the play now. Why didn't he let me know before? If I had known three hours ago I could have made some change."

"Which was exactly what I wished to prevent," was the second mental comment. While he said aloud, "Mr. Dusante hoped until the last moment he could come. He did think of you, however, as this letter from him will prove."

He handed the manager a letter, which the latter took with an appearance of grasping at the straw which he hoped would save him from metaphorical drowning. He tore it open and read it, and then turned to Caryl.

"He says you will take his place."

"As a great favor to him, and out of compassion to the dear public."

"He says you are a better Romeo than he can ever hope to be."

"He flatters me, no doubt."

"You have played the part, then?"

"Certainly."

"May I ask where?"

"In London; but I will save you the trouble of asking any more questions by saying that I will tell you nothing about myself. If you do not choose to take the word and judgment of Mr. Dusante, you will have to dispense with my services. Mr. Dusante thought he was doing you a great favor when he persuaded me to take his place. What is your decision? I am not so enamored of the part that I care to return to the stage unless it is in the cause of friendship."

The indifferent manner and dilatory work; and, with anxiety and humility mingled, the poor manager begged Caryl to take no offense, but to assume the part, with the assurances of his gratitude for doing so.

"Very well; but I must make a condition. You will make no fuss over the matter, and only tell those who must be told that I am a friend of Dusante."

"Yes, sir. It shall be as you say. How about dress?"

"Dusante said I would find a costume that would fit me in his room. It is one he had from London, and was too large for him."

It was in fact, one which Dusante had placed in his room for this very

purpose, after he had received no less a sum than one thousand dollars from Caryl in consideration of falling ill this night. It had been well planned, and was the last card in his hand and his highest trump. He could play the part well enough; he had done it often in London, and so well, that he had been offered almost what he would play for the loss of the money, but he had an aversion to being beaten in an affair of this sort. He always had been successful with women, and he had never been at so much trouble before.

Young, handsome as Apollo, graceful of manner, and with a rich baritone voice, Caryl made an ideal Romeo. The peculiar dress of the time suited him rarely, and when he came out of his room—dressed and made up for the part, he was greeted by even the calloused habitues of the stage with a murmur of admiration.

The manager, who had awaited his appearance with a sort of anguish, exclaimed at first sight of him:

"If he acts as he looks, the audience will have a treat tonight."

Caryl saw him, and gave a careless nod, saying indifferently:

"I suppose you told Miss Carrington I was to perform Romeo for this one time?"

"Yes, sir."

"And did she take it kindly?"

"She only said she hoped you were equal to it."

"Had you not better introduce me to her before we go on?"

"I was waiting here for that purpose."

"Then let us go, for it must be time for the curtain. I hear the orchestra going it for dear life. Have I kept you waiting?"

"A few seconds sir. Tim, ring up as soon as the first set is ready. This way, Mr. Wilton. Ah, here is Miss Carrington. Miss Carrington, Mr. Wilton. Takes Mr. Dusante's place tonight."

At the name of Wilton the peerlessly beautiful creature gave a sudden start of proud indignation, flashed a scornful glance at the new Romeo, and then said coldly:

"It will not be necessary to discuss the business of the part with Mr. Wilton. If he has played it before he will know the usual business. We can get along with that for one night. The balcony scene is the most important, and it would be impossible to instruct a novice in the business in a few minutes."

"But," expostulated the manager, "Mr. Wilton is not a novice. He has played in London for—"

He turned to Caryl for confirmation, and for dates and figures.

"I did not say for how many nights, or when," said he, coolly. "I hope, however, to play my part to Miss Carrington's satisfaction. I would like to discuss the balcony scene with her, but if she prefers not why, let it go. Would you prefer not to be troubled, Miss Carrington?" he asked in a most courteous manner.

She did not look at him, but at the manager, as she coldly answered: "We must do the best we can for tonight. If Mr. Dusante is not well enough to fill the role tomorrow night, you must change the bill."

"Certainly, certainly," cried the distraught manager.

Maida Carrington, with the slightest possible inclination of her queenly head, drew away and left them. There was something like a flush on the handsome face of Caryl Wilton, but he turned languidly to the manager saying:

"When she is a little older she will make a good Lady Macbeth."

"A good anything," answered the disturbed manager. "Only I wish these stars wouldn't be so high and mighty. How can she expect you to know the business she has put into the part?"

"Don't disturb yourself about that. I have seen her in it twice, and, besides, I got Dusante to tell me all he could think of. Don't fear for me."

"Well, you don't fear for yourself. If you had played it with her a hundred times you couldn't be easier over it," muttered the distracted man, as he hastened away to see that the first act was going right.

Most of the audience there knew as soon as Caryl entered on the stage that he was not the same Romeo they had been accustomed to, but as he bore himself with ease, and delivered his lines well and with point there was no disposition to cavil at him, though he displayed no especial warmth. That he was reserving for the meeting with Juliet in her father's house. He knew the business called for a kiss, and it was part of his scheme to discover, by the actions of the actress at this time, what her resistance to his suit would be likely to be.

He knew from her greeting of him that she suspected him of being the same Wilton who had sent her the costly jewels she had so scornfully returned; and he was prepared to find her the more coy on that account. She had evidently too much pride or too much confidence in herself to permit anybody to notice the comedy which was being played within the legitimate drama, and comforted herself so artfully as to keep him at a distance without betraying the fact to the audience. She made no attempt to evade the kiss with which Romeo betrays his passion, but received it on the cheek with a sort of dignity, which was not without its effect upon Caryl, who was, after all, a gentleman, and who, at this, felt for the first time the unworthiness of his action in so following a woman, who now that

he saw her so near him, he knew could hardly be out of her teens, notwithstanding her wonderful genius.

After the first act was done, he half expected some remonstrance from her, but none was made, and he prepared himself for the famous balcony scene with feelings strangely different from those which had animated him when he undertook what he now characterized as his unworthy enterprise. His short contact with her, even on that mimic stage, had wrought a revolution in his sentiments, and it was with a seriousness he did not half realize himself, that he took his place under her window.

What feelings animated Maida Carrington when she became certain that the man who so audaciously presented himself as the Romeo, was, in fact, the same who had been persecuting her with his unwelcome attentions, it would be difficult to determine. She had had no difficulty in holding him at a proper distance in the first interview, but she knew full well that in the balcony scene either she must be a passive victim or spoil the whole effect of the beautiful scene. Which should she do—let the actress or the woman control the situation? She was still undecided when she stepped out on the balcony. She listened to his impassioned words of love, delivered, certainly, with the force of genius, and, with no further deliberation, she put Maida Carrington out of sight and became Juliet.

Nor did Caryl take advantage of her to betray any other than the respectful devotion of the true Romeo. The scene went with a fervor that carried away the house, and urged it to such a pitch of enthusiasm that when it was concluded a recall was insisted on with so much persistence that Caryl was obliged to lead Miss Carrington out to the footlights.

Throughout the whole proceeding he comforted himself so respectfully as to free her of all uneasiness as to his treatment of her. But she could not let him know this. She bore herself with freezing coldness off the stage, though she played her part on it with all her wonted fire and passion.

Caryl had abandoned his intention of speaking to her on the stage, but he had, by no means, given up his intention of having an interview with her. He had simply postponed it to a time and place which would give the advantage to her instead of to him. He played his part to the end, amid the plaudits of the audience and the delighted praise of the manager, whose busy brain was full of the scheme of inducing this wonderful Romeo to take the part permanently. But Caryl, having no part or interest in such a scheme, hurried off the stage after the fall of the curtain, and changed his garments as speedily as he could. The manager, who had been anxiously waiting outside his door, would have detained him to broach his famous plan, but Caryl coolly pushed him aside, and with the remark that he was in a hurry, left the theatre.

To be continued.

MERELY AN EYE WASH

The Chemical View of Tears Differs From the Poetical View.

Tears have their functional duty to accomplish like every other fluid of the body and the lachrymal gland is not placed behind the eye simply to fill the space or to give expression to emotion.

The chemical properties of tears consist of phosphate of lime and soda, making them very salty, but never bitter. Their action on the eye is very beneficial and here consists their prescribed duty of the body, washing thoroughly that sensitive organ which allows no foreign fluid to do the same work. Nothing cleanses the eye like a good salty shower bath, and medical art has followed nature's laws in this respect advocating the invigorating solution for any distressed condition of the optics. Tears do not weaken the sight, but improve it. They act as a tonic on the muscular vision, keeping the eye soft and limpid; and it will be noticed that women in whose eyes sympathetic tears gather quickly have brighter, tenderer orbs than others. When the pupils are hard and cold, the world attributes it to one's disposition, which is a mere figure of speech implying the lack of balmy tears that are to the cornea what salve is to the skin or nourishment to the blood.

The reason some weep more easily than others and all more readily than the sterner sex has not its difference in the strength of the tear gland but in the possession of a more delicate system. The nerve fibres about the glands vibrate more easily, causing a downpour from the watery sac. Men are not nearly so sensitive to emotion; their sympathetic nature—that term is used in a medical sense—is less developed, and the eye gland is therefore protected from shocks. Consequently, a man should thank the formation of his nerve nature when he contemptuously scorns tears as a woman's practise. Between man and monkey there is this essential difference of tears. An ape cannot weep, not so much because its emotional powers are undeveloped as the fact that the lachrymal gland was omitted in his optical make-up.

Queensland does not enforce the compulsory clause in its education laws, because of the difficulty in enforcing its provisions in the scattered, sparsely-populated districts of the interior.

Weak from Infancy

THE UNFORTUNATE CONDITION OF MISS ERNESTINE CLOUTIER.

As She Grew Older Her Troubles Became More Pronounced—Doctors Said Her Case Was One of General Debility, and Held Out Small Hope of Recovery—She is Now Well and Strong—A Lesson for Parents.

From the Telegraph, Quebec.

No discovery in medicine in modern times has done so much to bring back the rich glow of health and the natural activity of healthy young womanhood to weak and ailing girls as has Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Girls' delicate from childhood have used these pills with remarkably beneficial effects, and the cherished daughter of many a household has been transformed from a pale and sickly girl into a happy and robust condition by their use.

Among the many who have regained health and strength through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is Miss Ernestine Cloutier, the fifteen year old daughter of Mr. G. A. Cloutier, residing at No. 8 Lallemand street, Quebec city. Mr. Cloutier in an interview with a representative of the Telegraph gave the following account of his daughter's illness and recovery: "Almost from infancy my daughter had not enjoyed good health, her constitution being of a frail character. We did not pay much attention to her weakness as we thought that she would outgrow it. Unfortunately this was not the case, and as she grew older she became so weak that I got alarmed at her condition. For days at a time she was unable to take out of doors exercise; she became listless, her appetite failed her, and as time went on she could not stand without supporting herself against something, and at times she would fall in a faint. I called in a doctor, but his medicine did not help her and she was growing weaker than ever. Another physician was then consulted who pronounced her case one of general debility, and gave me very little hope for her recovery. Some months ago while reading one of the daily papers I came across the case of a young woman cured by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, so I determined to give them a trial. After she had used about three boxes the color began to come back to her cheeks and she began to grow stronger. Greatly encouraged by this, she continued to use the pills for several months and now she is as well as any girl of her age. Her appetite is good and she has gained twenty-five pounds in weight. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have built up her system and have made her healthy and active after doctors failed to benefit her. I believe that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are the greatest known medicine for growing girls and I would advise their use in all cases similar to that of my daughter's."

Miss Cloutier's story should bring hope to many thousands of other young girls who suffer as she did. Those who are pale, lack appetite, suffer from headache and palpitation of the heart, dizziness, or a feeling of constant weariness, will find renewed health and strength in the use of a few boxes of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Sold by all dealers or sent by mail, post paid, at 50 cents box or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

A CAGE FULL OF PRISONERS.

A very sensational murder trial is now being heard at Palermo, Italy. The accused are fifty-one in number, and they are arraigned for a whole series of murders and other crimes. Many known participators have not yet been captured. One of the alleged crimes is the wholesale suppression of entire families in order to avoid discovery. Among the crimes, a wealthy young English lady was seized and held to ransom of 80,000 francs, which was paid by her relatives. Disputes over the division of the booty led to many murders among the criminals. The Assize Court presents an extraordinary spectacle. It is filled with soldiers, in order to resist any attempt at rescue, and the accused, who are too numerous to be placed in the dock, are enclosed in a huge iron cage. The trial is expected to last some days.

HOW THE CZAR IS GUARDED.

"A St. Petersburg correspondent says: 'The police who have to look after the safety of the Czar do not quite trust even all the members of his Majesty's household. The mechanism attached to the doors of the Imperial bed-chamber and study has lately been so altered that only two or three persons know how the doors can be opened from the outside, when the Czar is within. In the study five writing tables have been placed, which the Czar is to use by turns, so that nobody knows exactly at what table he is working. For some time past the walls of the study and bedroom have been provided with a steel lining, and they have also several secret doors.'"

Western Australia has in York a well-known pastoral district which bears a peculiarly appropriate name in association with the visit to Australia of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York. It was first peopled by immigrants mostly from Yorkshire.