

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. Maida Carrington, an actress in that city, is pestered by genteel loafers amongst whom is Caryl Wilton.

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

It was half an hour, perhaps, after Caryl Wilton had left the theatre, that a carriage drew up in front of a humble cottage, strangely out of keeping with the beautiful creature who alighted from the carriage, opened the front gate, and walked up the narrow wooden walk with the air of one who is accustomed to the place.

As she reached the house she heard the gate open and shut, and turning quickly, she saw the form of a man rapidly approaching. She waited, more in wonder than in fear. He drew near, and said, in a low tone:

"Miss Carrington, may I speak a word with you?"

For a moment she was at a loss to recognize him, although the voice was familiar; but in an instant she realized that the man she had been forced to play Juliet with had followed her to this lonely spot. Her indignation overmastered every other feeling, and drawing herself up to her full, queenly height, she pointed to the gate, and said, with scornful emphasis:

"This is a cowardly insult!"

"I beg you to hear me, Miss Carrington."

She abated nothing of her haughty manner, but dropped her hand by her side with an air so full of contempt that the proud man before her was stung by it to exclaim:

"You have no right to be unjust. I could have annoyed you at the theatre had I been so minded. I followed you here to give you the advantage, which I hoped you would be generous enough not to use."

"Generous!" she exclaimed with sudden passion. "You do well to talk to me of generosity. You have insulted me with notes, gifts and impertinence. Generous! Is a thief generous who refrains from stealing at one time in order to do it at another? How is an insult lessened by a change of time or place? You have the manner of a gentleman—does none of the spirit of one intimate you? I say to you, I will have nothing to do with such as you. Go!"

Caryl's face became white as he listened to this scathing arraignment of himself, but he obstinately refused to move.

"What you say," he said in a low voice, "has every semblance of truth but you do me an injustice. You shall listen to me."

She turned to go, but he put his hand out and touched her on the arm restrainingly. She threw it off with the exclamation:

"Do not dare to touch me!"

He bowed deprecatingly, and went on:

"You are partly right; I did write to you, I did send you jewels, and I did force you to play Juliet to my Romeo. I was wrong. But even you must in your heart acknowledge that I have never failed in respect to you."

"Was it respect when—"

"I know what you would say. I grant freely that the act was lacking in respect, but the spirit never was. But you do not know the worst yet. You see, I would plead my cause."

"Consistently generous," she said bitterly.

"I acted as I did because I had made a bet that before this week was out I would drive you to the Cliff house."

"And you dare to tell me! In-lamorous! Unhand me; I will listen to no more."

"One word."

"Not a syllable."

"You must."

"Must?"

"Yes; must. By the right which every man has to tell his respectful love to the woman who has inspired it. If I have offended you by any word or act it has been because I misjudged you. I know you now, and I do not only respect you, but I love you. Will you be my wife?"

"No."

"You cannot mean it!"

"Cannot mean it!" she repeated with cutting scorn. "And is the honor you offer me so great, then, that it is incredible that I should refuse it?"

"If you became my wife I should be the honored one. Will you not tell me why you refuse?"

"It is enough that I refuse. If you are the gentleman that you pretend to be, you will detain me no longer."

She had never spoken in a loud tone, and a sudden suspicion seemed to flash through Caryl's mind as he noticed the lonely position of the house. He glanced from it to her and said:

"Another has the happiness which I have, too late, craved for myself. I will go; but remember, Maida Carrington, the time may come when you will need a true friend. I have a feeling that it will. If it should, do not forget that Caryl Wilton will

go to the ends of the earth to serve you."

He turned sadly away and went toward the gate. For a moment she stood still watching him. Then a deep flush dyed her face, and with a proud gesture she sprang after him, and, placing her hand on his shoulder, said, coldly:

"Come with me."

"But—"

"Come with me."

She led the way into the house, the door of which she opened with a latch-key.

CHAPTER III.

Caryl could not repress a feeling of shame as he followed Maida Carrington into the house, but it did not deter him from seeing the adventure to the end. He loved Maida Carrington, not with the inconstant love born of baffled desire, but with the strength of a man who for a long time has loved unconsciously, and has just learned the real nature of his feelings. He followed her because he hoped to discover something of her inner life, and perhaps to have an opportunity to speak with her, to again urge his love.

She silently led the way to what seemed to be a sort of sitting-room. A lamp stood on a round, draped table, shedding a soft, low light about the room; and for a moment Caryl saw nothing but the general, home-like aspect of the place. Miss Carrington, however, abruptly took his attention from the room by silently but imperiously pointing to a high-backed rocking chair in the shadow. He turned his eyes that way, and started, as he noticed for the first time an old-looking woman with her eyes closed in sleep. From her he turned to Miss Carrington, and, holding out his hands, said, in a low, pleading tone:

"Maida, will you listen to me?"

"No," she answered proudly. "I have brought you here to repel your last and grossest insult. I have let you come here that you might see my mother, the only being on earth I care for. Now, go, and if you have a touch of manhood you will not offend my ears by uttering another word."

He returned her haughty glance by one almost as stern, as he answered:

"I shall speak once more, and then I will leave you. I have offered you my honorable love, and you have seen fit to reject it with harsh and scornful words. I love you none the less; not with the hasty love of today, but with a love that has been growing since the day I first saw you. I did not recognize the feeling until this night when I was thrilled by the touch of your hand, when I looked down into the depths of your eyes and saw your soul, when I felt your warm breath on my cheek, and realized your purity and womanliness; but now that I do know my feeling toward you, do you fancy I will give you up for a harsh word or a scornful look? Some day you will perchance hear of Caryl Wilton, and know of him that he never yields but to success or fate. And now, I say again, that come what may, success or failure, joy or sorrow, whether you have a thousand friends or none, Caryl Wilton will always be ready to serve you, and that too, without reward of word, look, or act. I will even dare to save you from yourself, if the need should be. Farewell."

He left her, and she watched him go without a word. She heard the door close behind him, and then she sank upon a chair, and the reaction came. She was but a girl, and she had had a hard part to play, and she played it as her best judgment dictated. She could not but acknowledge to herself the manliness, the strength of purpose, and the sincerity of the man who had just left her, and she quailed as she realized that he was in deadly earnest when he said he would not give her up for a harsh word or a scornful look. And then she grew indignant as she felt he had no right to say the things he had. And at last she became frightened at the thought of the trials that lay before her if she continued on the stage—the stage she at once loved and loathed; loved for the happiness it gave her, and loathed for the sorrow and shame it daily threatened her with. And at last she laid her head in her hands, and wept tears of anger and despair.

But she did not weep long, for she heard a querulous voice calling her, and she sprang up, drying her tears and hiding the traces of them under a smile of love, which transformed the indignant woman into a lovely girl.

"Mother dear," she said as she ran to where the old woman sat.

"I thought I heard you, Maida. You have been crying. Why do you cry?"

"I suppose I am tired, mother."

"It is not that. Was there a good house tonight?"

"Yes, dear."

"Did it applaud?"

"Never more. I had four recalls."

"Then why do you cry?"

"Girls often cry, mother. Don't mind me. How do you feel?"

"Better."

"Oh, then, I shall laugh, dear!" and a truly happy smile transformed her face.

"You love me, Maida?"

"How can you ask, mother dear? What is the matter tonight? You do not seem like yourself."

"I am not always so cross and fault-finding am I?"

"You never are; but sick people have a right to be humored."

"Until I grew sick I was never cross, never anything but fond and loving—was I Maida?"

There was a touching eagerness in her tone that drew the tears to Maida's eyes again, and she answered, with tender solicitude:

"Never, other; nor since you have been sick have you been unkind or unloving. I have not seemed to complain, have I?"

"No; you have been a good daughter, Maida; a better daughter than I deserved. But I have tried to be kind to you. I have ruined your young life," she said, more as if to herself than to her daughter; "but what has an outcast to look to but a ruined life. You hate the stage, Maida; that is why you cried!" she exclaimed abruptly.

"No, no, mother!"

"You do, Maida; and I hate it, too. I hate it! He saw me there first and took me from it; took me from it because I was sought after by the whole of his gay world, and he had sworn to have me. He would not be balked, and I yielded to his importunity. You would not yield. I have, at least, done more for you than my mother did for me. Curse him for it—curse him! curse him!"

She sank back in her chair, from which she had half risen in her excitement; and Maida, with a creeping horror to see her mother so, cried out:

"Mother, darling, what are you saying?"

"You think I am raving. Would to heaven I were! Maida—she grasped her daughter by the wrist—

"I will tell you now what I have reserved for this moment. I was never as great as you, never had the genius; but I was much talked of and more sought after. I was the talk of London. Your father found me a gay, light-hearted child, ready to listen to the flattering words of all who cared to give them to me, but as guiltless of wrong as yourself. He was a great nobleman, with what they call an unstained name. He was handsome, dashing, reckless and rich. I was flattered by his attentions, and believed him when he said he loved me. I did love him, and I gave him all I had to give—my honor—in return for his protestations of love. Do you understand, Maida? I have never worn a wedding ring, because I never had the right. You hang your head. Is it for shame of me?"

"No, mother."

"You do not hate me?"

"No, mother."

"But your father?"

"He has gone where he will receive his judgment," was the broken answer.

"He has not!" screamed the old woman. "He lives now!"

"You told me he was dead."

"But I spoke not the truth. I was not ready for you to know. He lives, and I hate him even as I once loved him. Listen to me, Maida, and if your soft heart cries out for forgiveness to him, steel it against him. Do you think he had even the poor excuse of love for betraying me? For blighting my young life and making me an outcast? For making my innocent child an outcast? Not for an instant. He made a bet—mark this Maida—he had made a bet that he would succeed where others had failed, and he succeeded. For a while I was happy—oh, for such a brief while! And even before you were born, at a time when my condition should have evoked only love and tenderness, he left me. Maida, he gave me a purse of gold and left me."

"My poor mother!" whispered Maida.

"And then he married a girl to whom he gave the love he had sworn was mine."

"Why talk more of it, mother? It is past and gone now."

"Past and gone for me, but not for you, Maida. Do you think I have lived my wretched life with no thought of him? Do you think I have forgiven any more than I have forgotten? Do you think I could daily and hourly see myself what he has made me, and think nothing of paying him back in coin of the same sort. Do you think I would have made you go on that stage, which I have hated from the hour he saw me on it, unless I had some object in view? Maida, I am dying—"

"No, no, mother!"

"I am dying and I know it. I shall not live to see the morning, otherwise I would not have told you this story of my shame. It is with my dying breath that I speak to you."

"Let me seek a doctor."

She endeavored to loose the hand upon her wrist.

"A doctor? No. I would not have him help me if he could; but I know he could not. I am dying, and the aid of man is useless. I want you to realize that, Maida, for I would ask a last promise of you."

"Yes, mother," with an involuntary shudder, for her mother's manner was full of a vindictive fierceness, the more awful that it was in the presence of death.

"Have I your promise?"

"Yes, mother."

"Whom do you most pity, me or your father?"

"Oh, my mother, can you ask?" was the mournful response.

"You pity me, then. And do you not hate the man who could so betray a fond and loving woman? Remember, I was as pure and innocent as yourself, with no such safeguard

of instruction as I have thrown around you. Do you not hate him?"

"I hate the act. I do not know the man."

"Do not know the man! Have I not told you how he treated me? Would you now, if you could, go to him and be a daughter to him?"

"Never! If I were to see him, father though he be, I should despise him."

"Hate him, Maida—hate him!" cried the old woman with a fierce light in her dimming eye. "And promise me this, that you will pursue him with a vengeance to which I have devoted my own life and yours. Promise me!"

"But, mother—"

"Would you hesitate after I have told you of my wrongs? Is he not worthy of your hate?"

"Alas, yes. Worthy of all women's hate."

"Then why do you hesitate?"

"What can I do? I am but a woman, as you were, and I may err, as—"

"As I did? Never! Maida Carrington can never make the mistake her mother did. Will you take up the work of vengeance where I have laid it down? Remember, I am asking you with my dying breath."

"It shall be as you say, mother. I will do what you ask of me. You have but to show me how."

"You will not falter?"

"No. I will pursue your betrayer to the bitter end. Until death relieves him of your curse, I will do what in me lies to carry out your will."

"You say it sadly, my daughter; but I know you will keep your promise. And if ever you should feel inclined to turn from your work, think of me and how I have lived because he had no pity. Think of my ruined life. Think of your own life. For do you not know that the sin of the mother is visited on the daughter. Can you ever hope to be anything but the outcast I have been? My sin is the taint of your pure, sinless life. Think of that."

To be Continued.

CHINESE DENTISTRY.

They Have Been Slow in Recognizing Western Superiority.

If the Chinese can boast that nothing is new to them, and that all the arts and sciences are old stories in the Celestial Kingdom, it is still true that for operations in dentistry an American or European would hardly care to go to a Chinaman.

The work is ludicrously primitive. The operator extracts all teeth with his fingers, and it must be admitted that his success is astonishing. His dexterity is due to years of practice. From youth to manhood he is trained to pull pegs from a wooden board. This training changes the aspect of the hand, and gives the student a finger grip amazing in strength, equivalent in fact to a lifting power of three or four hundred pounds.

For toothache he employs opium, peppermint oil, cinnamon oil and clove oil. Sometimes he fills teeth, but he does it so bunglingly that the fillings stay in only a few months.

An element of superstition runs through all the work. According to the system, all dental woes are brought on by tooth worms. The nerve pulp is such a worm, and is always shown to the patient. For humbugging purposes, also, the dentist carries about in his pocket some white grubs, and after he has extracted a tooth he shows a grub to the sufferer as the cause of all the trouble.

The position of the dentist of this class is not very lofty among his countrymen, and he is regarded as half-way in social importance between a barber and a laborer, which is certainly a great injustice to the honest laborer.

A MONTH IN A BATH.

One Old Man Stays In During a Whole Winter.

At Kawanaka, a tiny spring near Ikaio, in the province of Joshu, Japan, the bathers stay in the water for a month on end, with a stone in their laps to prevent them from floating in their sleep; and the caretaker of this establishment, who is a hale old man of eighty, is in the habit of remaining in the bath during the whole winter.

Elsewhere, also, indulgence in this natural luxury is carried to almost incredible extremes. Some of the people at one of the spas, excusing themselves to visitors for being dirty, on the score of only having leisure to bathe twice a day, informed them that it was their custom to bathe four or five times a day in the winter, adding: "The children get into the bath whenever they feel cold."

Ordinary hot-water bathing is a national institution. In 1890 there were over 800 public baths in the city of Tokyo, in which it was calculated 300,000 persons bathed daily at a cost of about a halfpenny, with a reduction for children.

Other cities and villages throughout Japan are similarly provided with public baths. Every respectable house, too, has its bath-room. The water is heated to about 110 deg. Fahrenheit. Some of the springs reach 130 deg.

The town of Nasso, in Sweden, has a female contingent in its fire brigade.

"We Can Do No More"

SO SAID THREE DOCTORS IN CONSULTATION.

Yet the Patient Has Been Restored to Health and Strength Through the Agency of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills.

Among the many persons throughout Canada who owe good health—perhaps even life itself—to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is Mrs. Alex. Fair, a well known and highly esteemed resident of West Williams township, Middlesex County, Ont. For nearly two years Mrs. Fair was a great sufferer from troubles brought on by a severe attack of lagrippe. A reporter who called was cordially received by both Mr. and Mrs. Fair and was given the following facts of the case: "In the spring of 1896 I was attacked by lagrippe for which I was treated by our family doctor but instead of getting better I gradually grew worse, until my whole body became racked with pains. I consulted one of the best doctors in Ontario and for nearly eighteen months followed his treatment but without any material benefit. I had a terrible cough which caused intense pains in my head and lungs; I became very weak; could not sleep, and for over a year I could only talk in a whisper and sometimes my voice left me entirely. I came to regard my condition as hopeless, but my husband urged further treatment and on his advice our family doctor, with two others, held a consultation the result of which was that they pronounced my case incurable. Neighbors advised me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, but after having already spent over \$500 in doctor's bills I did not have much faith left in any medicine but as a last resort I finally decided to give them a trial. I had not taken many boxes of the pills before I noticed an improvement in my condition and this encouraged me to continue their use. After taking the pills for several months I was completely restored to health. The cough disappeared; I no longer suffered from the terrible pains I once endured; my voice became strong again; my appetite improved, and I was able to obtain restful sleep once more. While taking the pills I gained 37 pounds in weight. All this I owe to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and I feel that I cannot say enough in their favor for I know that they have certainly saved my life."

In cases of this kind Dr. Williams' Pink Pills will give more certain and speedy results than any other medicine. They act directly on the blood thus reaching the root of the trouble and driving every vestige of disease from the system. Sold by all dealers in medicine or sent post paid at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50 by addressing the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

PRECIOUS STONES.

You Should Hammer Diamonds to Test Them.

You can test diamonds by merely hitting them with a hammer. If the stone resists, it is certain to be genuine; if it does not, the damage is insignificant, as only an imitation has been destroyed. This test, however, is doubtful with rubies. If a ruby can be affected by a steel file or by quartz it is surely not genuine; but such a test with a topaz is liable to injure a valuable stone.

The test for hardness is of no avail with emeralds, as this stone is not much harder than quartz, and in addition, possesses the quality of cracking easily.

For examining rubies and emeralds, the optical test is best. Every expert knows that almost all precious stones have little flaws. Nearly every ruby and all emeralds have many defects, which are so characteristic that the genuineness of the stones is readily established. Such a test is very necessary with rubies, because the imitations are very deceiving. Their colour is absolutely durable, and often much finer than that of the genuine, although it may be stated that a somewhat yellowish tint is always suspicious.

The only reliable way in which genuine rubies can be told from imitations is by the minute air-bubbles of the latter, which become clearly visible under the magnifying-glass. These are not to be found in the natural gem; on the other hand the imitations lack certain defects characteristic of the genuine rubies—certain vacuums, whose outlines are much more indistinct than those of the air-bubbles in imitations.

A CHINESE COLLEGE FOR LONDON.

In future if you want to learn Chinese there will be no need to travel to China to do it. A Chinese college is to be established in London; and, though the college is not yet built, some of the professors have already arrived and have started work. The professors wear their ordinary Oriental garments when taking classes, and many pupils have joined—Army men, engineers, city clerks, and budding diplomats. Of course, there have long been Chinese professors at Oxford and Cambridge, but this is the first venture of the kind where the teachers are all natives of the Celestial Empire.