

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.—Maida Carrington the illegitimate child of Sir Richard Hartleigh, meets her half-sister Constance on a stage-coach in America. The stage is attacked and Constance is wounded. Maida leaves her for dead and goes to impersonate her in England. Caryl Wilton, who knew Maida as a famous actress, meets her at some amateur theatricals in her new home and visits the portrait gallery at Hartleigh Hall. He is passionately fond of her and to be often in her presence asks leave to point her portrait. Guy, a nephew of Sir Richard, to avoid seeing Wilton's admiration for the girl he thinks he loves, rides off and calls on his old nurse. He meets Mildred Thorpe.

CHAPTER XXI.

A week passed in a continuous stream of entertainments—dinner-parties, concerts, picnics. In the meantime, the picture, though it grew, grew but slowly, and was still unfinished. It provided a sufficient excuse for the daily visit of Caryl Wilton to the Hall. Every day, half an hour or so after breakfast, he was in the gallery, working quietly and steadily. Sometimes he would ask for Maida to sit to him, but not always. She scarcely knew whether it was with pleasure or pain that she looked forward to meet him. Sometimes she felt that he exercised a certain and positive fascination over her. Never a word, never a hint of the past dropped from his lips, but, sometimes, when she raised her eyes under the spell of his, she would see a passionate gleam of patient longing and desire of love shining in their depths; and then her heart beat, and a warm mist seemed to fall on her and enwrap her, and the figure in its velvet coat and the handsome face, would fade and go like a vision in a dream. Was it pleasure or pain? She could not say; but whereas she had formerly met him or thought of him only with dread, she now was conscious of a sense of protection in connection with him. For was he not her slave? ready to do her bidding, to serve and protect her to the death? And she could not be unhappy. Sometimes, at night, a sense of her position, of the fearful life of deception she was leading, smote her and made her white and sick, with a strange mixture of dread and desperation. Oftentimes it would come to her with such a feeling of relief that she could at any time go to him and say: "Save me from myself. Take me away from here!" And why did she not do it? Alas! it was not so easy as it seemed. Even she had loved him, which she was sure she did not, she could not but feel that she was bound now to do nothing to hurt the kind old man whom she had come so to love. And, then, she was more than ever safe. Nobody but Caryl Wilton could recognize her. Why should she ever think of the imposition she was practicing? She was in truth a Hartleigh, and she was Sir Richard's daughter. She was doing no one an injury by personating her sister, and she was making her father supremely happy. On the whole, she had never been quite as happy as now. The puller, which had increased during the few terrible hours of the first meeting with Caryl, had left her cheeks. Between Guy and herself the same reserve remained unbroken; though all the country linked their names together, no word of love, or anything approaching it, was exchanged between them. Since that first night, when Guy offered her all that surely would be his, the title and the estate, and she had turned coldly from him, she had kept him at arm's length. For some reason, best known to himself, and yet unconfessed even to himself, Guy was able to bear her coldness with much more equanimity than formerly, though he was still sure that he devotedly loved her. And he still watched her as eagerly as before, but no longer with the same jealous fury of the one man who seemed able to move her out of herself. But there was another to whom time brought no peace. This was little Lady Gladys. One morning—there had been a dinner-party at her house the night before—she arose, tired, and in anything but a pleasant humor, as she looked at her pale face, pinched with the effects of the previous night's excitement and disappointment; for she who had been the belle until the coming of Constance Hartleigh, had been thrown completely in the shade. Guy had sat beside her and talked with her, but even as he talked, his frank, candid eyes had wandered to his cousin's lovely face, and his thoughts seemed anywhere but with the girl who had fondly dreamed of winning him altogether. But if his thoughts were not with her, neither were they with his cousin. They were, in fact, in an humble little cottage at Lougham, or perchance in the

pretty church there. And yet it was a week since he had seen either. But Lady Gladys did not know whether his thoughts had gone, and she blamed Maida for his desertion of her, as she was pleased to term it in her own heart. That night she had cried with jealousy and vexation, had cried herself to sleep, and this morning was paying the penalty. There were visitors at the house before whom she would not present herself in her lack-luster condition; and having taken that grand solace of her sex, a cup of tea, she put on her hat and stole out into the grounds. They were extensive and pretty, with a little wood attached, and a bend of the river babbling through them. She wandered down to the stream, brooding over the disappointment of the preceding night, and fanning her jealousy of Maida into a positive hatred. "If she had never come," she murmured through her white teeth, "if she had never come, I hate her—yes, I hate her! Why should she take him from me, as a matter of course? She never throws him a kind word or a smile, and yet he cannot take his eyes off her, even while he is talking to me—to me, who love him." And poor little Lady Gladys covered her pale face with her hands, to force back the bitter, passionate tears. It was as well that she did so, for as her hands fell into her lap again, she saw a young man, in a light-gray loose suit, standing at the side of the stream, fishing. He was not of her class, and she drew herself up with instinctiveness, as she saw him watching her with an offensively cunning pair of eyes. He noticed the movement, and spoke quickly, and with respectful humility: "I beg pardon, my lady, but I came here on purpose to see if I couldn't have a word with you. That is, supposing I am not mistaken in thinking you would like to know something in the past of Miss Hartleigh." She faced about sharply. "What do you mean?" "Just what I said, my lady. If you don't care anything about her history, then there is no use of our wasting any more words, and I will go away." "Why should I care?" demanded Lady Gladys, with a little tremor of apprehension. "I don't know, if you don't; but I suppose if you loved a certain young man, and that young man loved some other girl—begging your pardon—and that young woman had something shady-like in her past—why—well, I suppose I was wrong, and so I will say good-morning." "What do you mean by saying such things to me?" He would not give up his advantage, however, and answered, easily: "I mean just this: You don't love Miss Hartleigh and I know it. I have been done out of a little pile of money on account of her, and I want it. Now, I need somebody to help me, and you need somebody to help you. You help me to get my money and I'll help you to get my money man. What do you say?" "How dare you?" "Oh, well, if you don't care to talk reasonably, I'll go straight to the young lady herself, and I'll bet she'll take me up before I can say it twice. Good-morning." "Stop! How am I to know you are not an impostor?" "An impostor wouldn't talk as I do, and you know it. However, I don't mind telling you enough to prove to you that I am able to help you. Miss Hartleigh came home all of a sudden, didn't she?" "Yes." "And Mr. Guy went after her, didn't he?" "Yes." "Well, you don't suppose that Sir Richard knew all the time just where his daughter was, do you? I guess not. Why, he has been hunting for her goodness knows how many years. All I know is that I was on the track of her for over five years, and others were on it before me. I'm an agent, and I was hired by the lawyers of Sir Richard to find his wife and daughter. And I was paid so much a month and expenses for doing it, and when I found them I was to have five hundred pounds. Well, I did find them—at least. I found the daughter, for the mother had just died—and I told the lawyers in the innocence of my heart; and what did they do? They up and told Sir Richard, and he sent his nephew—the young man we know of—with all the points I had been working to get, and behold! he finds the young woman and brings her home! Then, what do the smarty lawyers do? Why they say I did not find her, and they gave me only half the five hundred pounds. Now, do you believe that I know something?" Lady Gladys had listened to him with an eagerness which told the story of her self-respect fast going down before the temptation to use the opportunity offered her. She realized all the shamefulness of enter-

ing into a partnership with this man; but by the time he had ceased to speak her mind was made up to accept any proposal he might make, providing only there was no possibility of being found out by her friends. "Perhaps," she said slowly, "there is nothing to know that will be of any use to me." "Ah!" he answered with a cunning smile, and what was suspiciously near a wink, "now we are coming to business. Of course, if there was nothing in it that would be of service to you, then all this talk would be useless; but, my lady, there is a lot that will be of service to you if you will do as I say. Look here, now—do you suppose I would have come to you unless there was some reason why I needed you? No. Well, do you suppose that I would have dared to come unless I could do as much for you as you for me? No, miss, and you believe it." "Perhaps I do. Why don't you complain to Sir Richard about the money?" "Complain to him? Why, he put the thing into the hands of his lawyers, and he would refer me to them. No, no. Besides, I have discovered a thing or two that will make my five hundred small in comparison to what I can get." "Then Sir Richard doesn't know you?" "Nobody knows me but you—not a soul!" "But I don't understand yet. If you know so much, how am I going to be able to help you? What is it you want to find out?" "Just say you are in for it"—Lady Gladys shrank into herself at the expression which implied so much—"and I will let you know at the proper time. I have not got the thing in shape yet. You'll know what I'm after all in good time. Is it a go, miss?" She hesitated a moment between the good and the evil, and then looked at him with a flush on her pretty face which showed the defeat of the last remnant of self-respect, and said, in a husky voice: "How can I communicate with you?" "Leave that to me. Hush! Here comes some one. Order me off the place. It is our young lady with her two lovers." And by that remark the man proved to Lady Gladys that he had studied others than herself in the carrying out of his scheme. But she had no time to dwell on that thought, though it gave her a momentary sense of uneasiness, for she saw the forms of several persons coming through the woods. She immediately raised her voice, and with a coolness which showed her fitness for the part she had undertaken to play, she said: "I must ask you to go at once, please." "Of course, of course, miss. Very sorry, I'm sure," and the fellow, with a fine assumption of humility, took up his tackle and basket, and was making off as if he was very much abashed. "Hello!" said a voice from the midst of the approaching party. "Farmer Jones' Yankee friend seems to have been caught in the very act." It was Guy's voice, and at the sound of it Lady Gladys turned quickly around, as if in relief. And as she did so she saw that her rival was one of the party, and she ran to her with such a pretty air of glad welcome that the agent muttered under his breath: "The little serpent. Take a woman to cut a throat and smile in the doing of it." And then he touched his hat to Guy with an air of great simplicity. "I say, Mr.—" began Guy. "Miles Barton, at your service." "Mr. Barton," went on Guy, "I think you will be wise if you will confine your poaching tendencies to the grounds of Sir Richard, who is not as particular as some of the other gentry hereabout." "Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Good-morning, sir. Sorry to have disturbed the young lady. Won't do it again. Good-morning, ladies. Good-morning, gentlemen." Maida, as well as Lady Gladys, acknowledged his salute, and he went off looking as harmless as a man very well could. Only Caryl Wilton noticed that the man gave a little start of surprise as he looked at Maida, and only Caryl Wilton noticed that under the man's simplicity was hidden a cunning which might be dangerous if there were any danger to apprehend. He glanced from Lady Gladys to the man and shrugged his shoulders ever so little. There was something more than an interrupted poaching trip in the matter, he felt quite satisfied; but he gave no outward sign of his suspicion, and was never more cordial with Lady Gladys. "Don't let us forget our errand, Constance," said Guy, suddenly. "There is a picnic in the wind, Lady Gladys." "A picnic! Where to?" "To the Titan's Shield." "How delightful! And when is it to be?" "The day after to-morrow, weather permitting," answered Maida. "Ah," said Lady Gladys, "it is a dreadful climate, is it not, dear? You must feel it terribly, you who have been in America." No one could have detected any discontent in Maida; but, as she looked up, Caryl Wilton stepped forward, and said, coolly: "Don't imagine that America is a paradise. Lady Gladys. It has a very trying climate."

"Oh, yes," said Lady Gladys, "you have been there too." Caryl smiled inwardly at the attempted thrust at him, but he only answered indifferently, though he watched her narrowly: "If you had had time to talk with your poacher, he could have told you a great deal about America, I don't doubt." Lady Gladys flushed, and wished she had not undertaken a tilt with the self-possessed Caryl Wilton. To be continued.

A GREAT FUTURE.

Northwest in a Splendid Financial Condition.

F. W. Thompson, general manager of the W. W. Ogilvie Milling Company, says the result of the crop, which will average about 23 bushels to the acre for Manitoba and the Northwest, will leave that country in a splendid condition financially, and he added that the eastern provinces will of course benefit accordingly. He estimates that the farmers this year will realize a total of from \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000 cash as a result of their labors this season.

Mr. Thompson looks for a large increase in the population for the next ten years, and in greater proportions than has occurred in the past. Winnipeg, he adds, was bound to prosper, and would become in the near future one of the most important cities of the Dominion.

He believed that the total wheat yield would be 50,000,000 bushels, while all the other grains were most satisfactory. There will be, the general manager declares, a steady increase in the business of cattle raising, and the shipments promise this fall to largely exceed those of last year. Speaking further, Mr. Thompson says: "When we realize that only ten per cent. of the fertile land in the small province of Manitoba is under cultivation we can easily gauge the future. The total area of land in the province of Manitoba is over 40,000,000 acres, so if we deduct one-half there are 20,000,000 acres left, and this is the finest land in existence on the globe to-day, and capable of producing as much wheat or in fact more than the entire spring wheat crop of the United States. To-day in Manitoba there are 3,500,000 acres under cultivation, and all grains, so you will easily see that we are still in need of farmers in the west. There are some 35,000 farmers in Manitoba, and there is plenty of room for 100,000 more, and if these were there that little province alone could raise sufficient wheat to supply the United Kingdom, making Great Britain completely independent of the foreign powers as regards her consumption of breadstuffs."

GREAT SPEAKERS.

Time of Life When Orators Are at Their Best.

Amongst orators there can be no doubt that it is between the ages of forty-five and fifty-five that their special endowments have secured for them their highest triumphs. Demosthenes, whose ambition was early kindled, did not deliver his greatest speech—De Corona—which has been described as the most magnificent vindication in the annals of oratory until he was fifty-two.

Burke, whose training was desultory, astonished the House of Commons by his speech on American affairs, when he was thirty-six, but only achieved his masterpiece, his impeachment of Warren Hastings—an effort of eloquence unparalleled in its energy and effect, and which must have exhausted his speech centres, for it left him at one point deprived of the power of articulation for a little—when he was in his fifty-eighth year.

Curran, of whom Byron said, "He has spoken more poetry than I have ever written," made his most brilliant speeches in the State trials in which he appeared between his forty-fourth and forty-seventh years. And John Bright, whose fiery declamation on behalf of the Anti-Corn Law League began in his twenty-eighth year, may be said to have exhibited his control over language in its finest perfection in speeches delivered subsequent to his election for Birmingham, when he was forty-six.

On this subject Mr. Barnett Smith says: "I have heard all the greatest speeches of the greatest orators of my time—Parliamentary, pulpit, and platform speakers—Butt, Lowe, Disraeli, Bulwer Lytton, Derby, Punsion, Gough, and all had their most splendid period from forty-five to fifty-five years of age. In the case of Gladstone, some of his greatest orations were delivered when he was between fifty-five and sixty."

PRICES FOR LONDON LAND.

Fabulous prices are obtained for land in the City of London. That a freehold on Cornhill should have sold for a little over £53 3s. per square foot is surprising, but not so much so as the sale of the St. Peter-upon-Cornhill land which, a few months ago, brought over £60 a foot. Land within a furlong radius of the Bank of England is worth about 7s. an inch. Five hundred feet of land in Cheapside was sold recently for £13,000, or £26 a square foot.

Shopkeeper—It is about time you paid that bill. Debtor—It is not a question of time, but money.

GROWING GIRLS.

OCCASIONALLY REQUIRE TONIC MEDICINE.

It Will Keep the Blood Rich, Red and Pure, Strengthen the Nerves and Prevent Decline

Mrs. Hiram Rinkler, the wife of a respected farmer in South Pelham township, Welland county, Ontario, says:—"It is with great pleasure that I give this tribute to the health restoring virtues of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. When my daughter Lena, (now thirteen years of age), began the use of your medicine, a little over a year ago, she was in a most wretched condition. In fact we were seriously alarmed lest she might not recover. The first symptoms were a feeling of languor and weakness, gradually growing worse. She became pale, lost flesh, had little or no appetite and was apparently going into a decline. Finally the trouble became complicated with a persistent sore throat, which gave her great difficulty in swallowing. I gave her several advertised medicines, but they did not benefit her. Then she was placed under the care of a doctor, who said her blood was poor and watery, and her whole system badly run down. The doctor's treatment did not help her any, and then acting on the advice of a neighbor, I began to give her Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. The confidence with which this medicine was urged upon us was not misplaced, as I soon noticed a distinct improvement in my daughter's condition. The use of the pills for a few weeks longer seemed to completely restore her, and from that time she has been a cheerful, light-hearted girl, the very picture of health. I will always recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to other sufferers, feeling sure they will prove quite as efficacious as they did in my daughter's case."

Mothers with growing daughters will make no mistake if they insist upon the occasional use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills; they will help them to develop properly; will make their blood rich and pure, and thus ward off disease and decline. The genuine pills are sold only in boxes bearing the full name, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People" on the wrapper around each box. None other is genuine, no matter what some self-interested dealer may say. If in doubt, send direct to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., and the pills will be mailed post paid at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50.

DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY.

The attempt of the small boy to be polite ended rather disastrously, although not through any intentional omission on his part. He had been in the habit of supplying the evening paper to a politician, a man of correct business habits, who discovered one evening that he had not the penny for payment. "That's all right," said the boy; you can give it to me to-morrow night.

But, my boy, interposed the gentleman, impressively, I may not be alive to-morrow night.

Never mind, answered the boy, cheerfully; it'll be no great loss.

A shadow fell across the statesman's face, and he is still wondering whether the boy, despite his look of innocence, was thinking solely of the penny.

DIDN'T REACH TO H.

The young English tenor had been asked to favor the company with a song, and responded with an interpretation of "Happy Be Thy Dreams," in which the singer's antipathy to the letter H was painfully manifest.

I say, young man, said a blunt old chap, after the singer had finished, "you didn't sound a single H, and the song is full of 'em."

I beg your pardon, sir, replied the young man, with freezing dignity, you are mistaken; it doesn't go any higher than G.

CURIOUS MEDICAL FACT.

It has been left to a French physician to enunciate as a curious medical fact that cancer rarely attacks persons who lead a dissolute life or those who have given way to drink. The majority of the women attacked by the disease are active and energetic workers, and in a vast number of cases it has been shown without question that not one single person who has succumbed to it has been of dissolute habits.

What time is it? asked his wife, suspiciously, as he came in. About one. Just then the clock struck three. Gracious! When did the clock commence to stutter? he said, with a feeble attempt at justification and a joke.

Mamma—Johnny, I want you to be good to-day. Johnny—I will be good if you give me a penny. Mamma—Johnny, I want you to remember that you cannot be a child of mine unless you are good for nothing.

Artist (grotesque looking)—Can I set up my canvas in your field, mister? Rural landlord—Yes, but yer won't make much. Circus set up there only las' week 'n' didn't do any business.

The total length of hair on an average woman's head is 55 miles.