

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 paint 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. Lady Gladys a rival for Guy's affections takes steps to uncover Maida's past. Maida dismisses Wilton, and becomes engaged to Guy at her enfeebled father's request.

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Mildred set out for her walk, after Guy's sudden departure, she loitered sadly on through the gathering darkness until she came to the Hartleigh church. The moon was shining brightly now, and she was tempted to go into the edifice and look at it by moonlight.

A grave-digger, at work in the yard, told her where she could find the key, and she went in. She had never been there before, but there was more than mere curiosity in her glance as she looked around.

Presently her eye fell on the memorial tablet, and with an eager sadness she hastened to it, and with swimming eyes read its simple lines. "Mother, mother!" she cried, "why did you leave me alone with this mystery? Who is it that has come here to fill the place you taught me was mine. Who is it that has had this stone placed here to your memory? And, oh, my mother! who is it that has taken the man whose love is mine, and whom I love? I know he loves me, mother—I know it."

She rested her head against the tablet, and with her face in her hands, wept silently, wondering at herself for daring to say even to the dead, what she had not yet ventured to whisper to herself.

Then she walked up the aisle and sought the Hartleigh pew, where she sat down and wondered at herself and at the mystery of which she was a part. She took one of the prayer books out of the rack in front of her and by the light of the moon could see that Guy's name was on it. She sadly placed it to her lips and replaced it, taking out the one next it. The name on that was newer and easily deciphered. It was Constance Hartleigh.

Constance Hartleigh! Then there were two Constance Hartleighs. One of them lived at the hall, honored and beloved by all, while the other was the organist at the little village church, living under a false name, because she feared to use her own, and utterly without friends. One of them had the love of a true man, but must give it up to the other because it was so decreed by her father. Whose father?

She laid her head upon her arms as she leaned against the railing in front of the pew, and, wearied of the sad conflict of emotions, must have fallen asleep. It was while she was sitting thus that the other and false Constance Hartleigh entered.

The result to Maida we have seen; she looked upon the appearance of Mildred, or the real Constance, as a product of her disordered fancy; but Mildred made no such mistake as to her.

When she saw Maida fall senseless, she seemed to realize, as by an inspiration, what had taken place from the time of her own supposed death up to the present moment, though there were some things for which she could not account. Her first impulse was to run to the fallen girl and revive her, but a hasty second thought drove her from the church, and she hastened home unseen by either Caryl Wilton or Miles Barton, who had been lurking about the place.

In her own room she feverishly tried to work out the tangle into which the mystery had become involved. It was clear to her that Maida was an impostor; and when she remembered that the little memorandum book which was one of her own proofs of identity, was in Maida's hands, she recognized how easy it would be for her to establish herself as the rightful Constance. But how had she learned the secret of her identity as Constance Hartleigh, since she had never once mentioned that name in the book? Then she recollected that Guy had gone to America in search of her, and she could seem to see how the story might have been discovered by the false Constance. It will be remembered that Mildred did not know Maida's name.

Guy! She started up from the chair and pressed her hands to her throbbing temples. Should she let this stranger, this impostor, rob her of Guy. How easy it would be for her to present herself at the Hall as the rightful Constance, and step by

right into the place held by the other.

Yes, it would be easy; but could she do it? Would she do it. All her life long she had been taught to fear her father as the cause of all her own and her mother's misery. And then the girl who had usurped her place—did she not think the real Constance was dead? Had she not striven bravely and nobly to save her life? And should she now expose her to the world, which would never see the extenuating circumstances, which she in her own nobility of soul could put forward for the other?

She had known sorrow and misery enough in her own life to be able to realize how another might take such an opportunity as this which must have come to the other in order to find a haven of rest after the sore weariness of a lonely life. No, she would not betray the other; but, oh, she would have liked to have the right to love Guy.

Hers was a noble, self-sacrificing nature, and she wearily told herself that perhaps the other woman had learned to love Guy even as she did, and believing her dead, had taken her place with a determination to fill it fairly and honestly. And, so far as she had ever heard, she had filled it better even than she in her humility believed she could have filled it.

No, she would go out of the world, where she had a right to be, and she would give trouble and sorrow to no one. She would leave Lougham, with all its happy associations, and would seek London or the far away land she had come from. She would try to see Guy once more, unseen by him, and then she would go away. She would like, too, to see the woman who had taken her place at the Hall. She would like to convince herself if she was one likely to make Guy happy.

And so it came about that the next morning, after a short and troubled sleep, she arose with the determination to go to the neighborhood of the Hall and watch for a sight of the two.

It was the morning of the picnic to the Titan's Shield, and Sir Richard, though still weak from the effect of his attack, had insisted upon the party starting, just as had been arranged.

The story of the betrothal had somewhat leaked out, and, without any connivance of either, Maida and Guy had the little phaeton to themselves. Mildred saw him help the beautiful creature into the carriage with a dull pain in her heart, for she could not see that neither was happy. She could only see that by common consent the two were left together, as lovers usually are.

She saw Maida take the reins and drive away, and she saw Guy leaning over her with a solicitude which to her was only lover-like, but which in fact was necessary in order to disentangle the fringe of Maida's sash from the buckle of the reins.

She could not know that both of them were as miserable as herself. And not knowing it, she let herself wander sadly along in an aimless fashion. She did not care where she went. She could not return and listen to the good old dame's talk of the commonplace things which interested her.

The day was a perfect one, and she wandered on until she came to a pretty patch of wood where she threw herself down to brood on her sorrows until such time as she could command herself sufficiently to prevent the dame discovering her woe. Then she would return and go at once to the vicar and resign her post as organist. Then she would carry out her determination to efface herself. She was sure now that there was no room for her there. She could not even think, now, that Guy loved her. And if he did not then it did not greatly matter what became of her.

Not that she was desperate—that was not her way. She was sadly resigned. She knew how to suffer. It had been the lesson of her life. While she reclined there under the shelter of some hawthorns, and thinking herself alone, she suddenly heard heavy footsteps crashing along through the trees, and looking out from her leafy covert, saw a man in a light tweed suit approach and sit down near her. For a moment she was inclined to get up and hasten away, but the fear of attracting observation, and a sense of security where she was, restrained her, and she remained, hoping the man would not stay long.

But in this she was doomed to be disappointed, for he not only sat there, but kept looking up as if in expectation of seeing somebody. And presently, to Mildred's astonishment, he was joined by a young lady. She might have thought it a simple lover's meeting, but for the fact that the man was not only much older than the lady, but that he was evidently in a different station in life.

Moreover, there was nothing lover-like in their greeting of each other. The man sprang to his feet with an exclamation of satisfaction at sight of the young lady, and the latter, with no attempt to hide her repugnance, came forward, holding something in her outstretched hand.

Mildred gave a little gasp at sight of this object, and, without a moment's hesitation, abandoned her design of getting up and softly stealing away in order that she might not be guilty of eavesdropping. She fastened her eyes eagerly to an opening in the leaves and watched and listened with a terrible interest.

The man was Miles Barton; the woman, Lady Gladys.

"Here is the book you asked for," she said, with a mingling of shame and anger.

"How did you get it?" he demanded, as he eagerly took it.

"I followed your directions and stole it." She angrily emphasized the word "stole." "I refused to go on the picnic, on the plea of neuralgia; and then I went over to the Hall, and, on pretext of searching in Constance Hartleigh's room for a neuralgia cure, used the skeleton keys you gave me, and opened the casket and found this book. Never, never ask me to do such a thing again. How dared you do it—how dared you?" and she burst into passionate tears.

"I told you it was your only chance of preventing Guy Hartleigh from marrying her."

"How can it? I have read it over and over, and I cannot find a word that will compromise her."

"Did you bring her letters—the letters that you have received?"

"Here they are."

She handed him several notes of invitation which Maida had written to her.

He took them with a greedy hand and opened one. Then he opened the little book, which Mildred recognized as her memorandum book, which she had given Maida when she thought she was dying. He glanced quickly over first one and then the other, and then, with a grimace of triumph turned them so that Lady Gladys could see them.

"Well," she demanded, sullenly, "what is there to see?"

"Look at the hand writing."

"Well?"

"Don't you see that the hand-writing in the book is entirely different from that in the letters?"

"Yes, but what of it?"

"This, my lady. Mr. Hartleigh will never marry that young woman, and you will have the field to yourself. Don't ask any more questions. It will be a great deal better for you to be surprised when the time comes. Only mind! You don't need to do anything but wait—wait two weeks from to-day—and you will have your revenge. I will do all the acting, and I will see if I am going to chase two women all over America, and find out all about them, only to have the reward snatched out of my hands by a pair of lawyers. Won't there be a rumpus when the young lady gets her walking-papers. And won't I get my reward?"

With a few more words the pair separated and went away, leaving Mildred staring after them with a look of horror.

"She will be disgraced; driven from the Hall like a criminal, and Guy will be free!"

She buried her hands in her face and thought.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

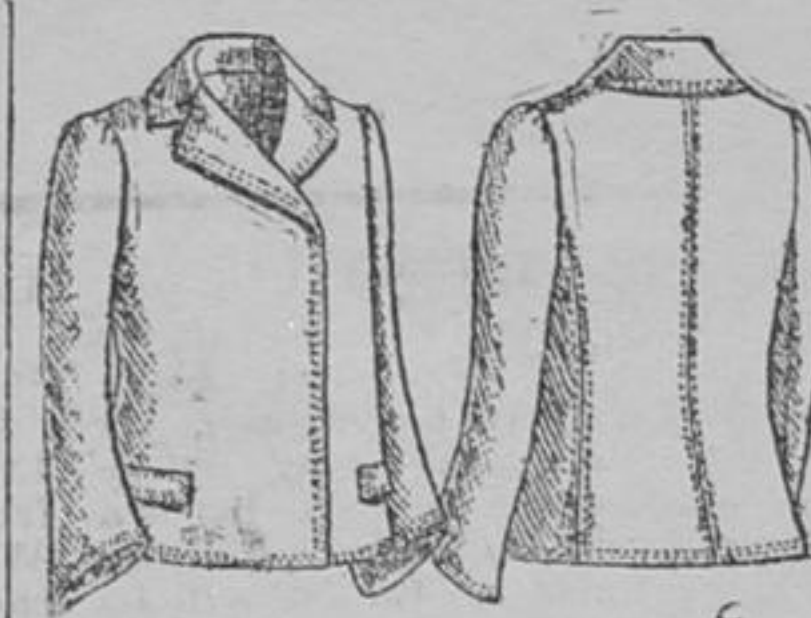
In the meantime the picnickers had reached the Titan's Shield, and most of them had begun to make the descent. As there was no way of avoiding doing so without exciting comment, Guy had taken Maida's arm under his.

She was more apathetic than he now. She had expected to meet the reproachful eyes of Caryl Wilton, but true to his promise, he had gone. Lord Algy assured Maida he had done all he could to keep him, but without avail, and Maida had said to herself that thus the last link that bound her to the old self was broken. And yet it was with no sense of relief that she comprehended that he had gone out of her life. Hers was rather the apathy, the resignation of the condemned criminal. She had sent him away because she loved him too well to run the risk of having him some day discover her shame, and turn from her with scorn.

The path, narrow and winding, allowed of but two abreast, and many of the party went in Indian file. It was a wild and beautiful scene, every turn of the serpentine way revealing fresh beauties of cliff scenery, and a more extensive view of the great gray rocks lying beneath them.

Several smaller and still narrower paths branched off from that which they were following, but Guy called out to the party in front to keep the beaten track.

"These narrow paths are made by



GIRL'S JACKET.
4 to 12 Years.

No wise mother permits her children to be without general utility jackets that can be worn over any gown. The attractive little garment shown is entirely practical, at the same time that it is essentially smart, yet it is not difficult to make. The original is made of castor-colored smooth-faced cloth, but mixtures are admirable, and tan is always in style, while dark blue is always good, and chevots as well as cloths are worn.

To cut this jacket for a girl of 4 years of age 1 1/2 yards of material 44 inches wide, or 1 1/4 yards 50 inches wide will be required.

The men who go after gulls' eggs," he explained, "and to the inexperienced scarcely afford a footing. They are very tempting, but many a traveller has paid the penalty for his rashness in the shape of a broken leg or worse. Kept to the path below there," he shouted.

An answering shout came up to them from the bottom of a well as it seemed.

Maida looked around with a shudder, and pressed close to the strong arm.

"Are you afraid?" asked Guy, kindly—a lover would have put his arm around her for far less provocation.

"No," she said, and shrank away from him, "but it seems so grand and solemn. Let us go faster."

They made their way to the bottom almost in silence. None of the party was in sight, and Guy said:

"I wonder where they are? They seem rather wild this morning. I hope none of them will forget the tide and go too far."

"Go after them," said Maida. "I will rest here until you come back."

"I do not like to leave you."

"But please go," she gently urged, "there may be some accident otherwise."

He hesitated a moment, and then, making her comfortable on a ledge of smooth rock, he ran along the beach in search of the others.

She remained seated for some minutes, looking dreamily over the sea, and wondering where the only man she could love was at that moment. Her life seemed to be a succession of pasts and futures, all far away from a present which she seemed unable to realize. She arose and sauntered idly along the bottom of the cliff, glad to be alone with her thoughts for even a few moments.

She wandered along, her thoughts flitting at random through her strange past, and a sad sort of mechanical wonder filling her mind of what was to come next. Was the end to be when she took the name of Hartleigh by law? Or was there something else in store for her? And as she gave reign to her thoughts she seemed to hear a moan of distress. She roused herself, thinking her imagination was playing her a trick, but the sound was repeated, and she knew this time that it was the faint inarticulate cry of some human being in distress.

It proceeded from a narrow ledge of rock above her. Most women would have screamed for help and scrambled back to their companions, but Maida possessed true courage and presence of mind, and, instantly reflecting that if she left this spot, she might not be able to find it again, she ran up a narrow path, which led to the place whence the cry had proceeded, and commenced to look for the cause.

She had not far to look. Just above her a man's foot projected from the narrow ledge. Some one was lying there helpless, perhaps dying. Holding on by the jutting rock she made her way to the ledge, and, clinging to the smooth side of the chalk cliff, came round a bend full upon the figure of a man lying across the narrow path.

He was lying with his head resting on his arm, his face turned away from her; but Maida did not need to see it. Her heart gave a bound, and then seemed to stand still—as she recognized Caryl Wilton.

To be Continued.

Consumptive People.

CAN SECURE RENEWED HEALTH AND STRENGTH

The Rich, Red Blood Made by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Gives New Strength to Every Nerve, Fibre and Organ of the Body.

From the Budget, Shelburne, N. S.

Among the young ladies of Shelburne, there is none, to-day who more fully bears the impress of perfect health than Miss Lillian Durfee. Unfortunately this was not always the case, as a few years ago Miss Durfee became ill, and her friends feared that she was going into decline. A doctor was called in and prescribed, but his medicines did not have the desired effect. Her strength gradually left her, her appetite failed, she had frequent headaches, was very pale, and finally grew so weak that a walk of a few rods would completely fatigue her. The young lady's family sorrowfully observed that she was steadily failing, and feared that consumption would claim her as a victim. One day a friend urged that she should give Dr. Williams' Pink Pills a trial, but the idea at first was not favorably entertained; it seemed hopeless to expect that any medicine would help her after the doctor's treatment had failed. However, this good friend still urged, and finally prevailed. By the time the third box was used, there was an unmistakable improvement in Miss Durfee's condition. Cheered by this, the pills were continued, and in the course of a few weeks the former invalid, whose strength was taxed by the slightest exertion, was almost restored to health. The use of the pills was still continued and a few weeks more found Miss Durfee again enjoying perfect health.

To a reporter who interviewed her, she said:—"I believe that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills saved my life, and I earnestly recommend them to all who fear that consumption has laid its grasp upon them."

That the facts related above are not in any way exaggerated, is born out by the following statement from Robt. G. Irwin, Esq., the well known stipendiary magistrate for the municipality, who says:—"I distinctly remember the pale face of Miss Lillian Durfee and the regrets of friends as they expressed their conviction that she would soon be compelled to say farewell to earth. Miss Durfee, however, carries the unmistakable credentials of good health, and frequently expresses her indebtedness to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

Pale and anaemic girls, or young people with consumptive tendencies, will find renewed health and bodily vigor through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. These Pills are an unfailing cure for all diseases due to a watery condition of the blood, or shattered nerves. Sold by all dealers in medicine or sent postpaid on receipt of 50c a box, or \$2.50 for six boxes, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

A CHILD'S SOCIAL LIFE.

It is of primary importance to understand that a child's social life does not depend upon parties, public entertainments, or any of the formal gatherings that we are apt to associate with the term. These only furnish extra occasions for social life; the life itself is in the gratification of the social instinct leading one to seek companionship. The neighborhood games, the walks to and from school with a boon companion, the ecstatic delight of a big attic or a barn loft with a few chosen friends, the boy's jaunt with another boy after nuts or frogs—all these are truly social life to the child as if they resulted from a formal invitation—and are much more attractive. The mother who leaves all such associations to chance and thinks because she carefully revises the list for a child's party once a year, cutting out all undesirable acquaintances, that she is controlling her child's social life, deludes herself. It is the everyday associations that will tell.

Children's early companionships are largely dependent upon neighborhood and school life, particularly that of the neighborhood. So evident is this that with many parents it is made the turning point in the choice of a location—and wisely. It is hard to make children's associations good if their surroundings are bad.

FLOOR AND FURNITURE STAINS

A durable and inexpensive dark stain for floors is a mixture of one-quarter ounce of permanganate of potash and a quart of water. Apply with a brush immediately and do not touch the liquid with hands or clothing. In drying the color turns to a rich dark brown, but for a very dark shade two applications are necessary. When dry, apply boiled linseed oil. To stain wood to look like ebony, take a solution of sulphate of iron and wash the wood over twice, applying when dry, two or three coats of strong decoction of logwood. Wipe the wood dry and polish with a flannel wet in linseed oil.

Woodwork and floors are now stained with a color called forest green, which harmonizes with draperies and floor coverings of almost any color. This is but a fad of the moment; however, and the standard stain will always be the natural wood color.



Sammy—"Hello! There's a sea mouse!"
Aunt Julie—"Oh! oh! oh! Don't let 'im in the boat!"