

# CHRISTABEL

by PEARL BELLAIRS



## CHAPTER XVII YOUTH AND AGE

The cocktails sparkled in their glasses under the crystal lamps, and the haze of cigarette smoke rose to the oak beams of the high ceiling. Mrs. Haye, in severe black with a few real pearls, was not out of place; and Christabel, slender in violet, fitted in perfectly with her surroundings in the Kearne Hall library.

Miss Cavanagh was in town, and Cavanagh was playing host. There were four other guests drinking cocktails before dinner; a recently successful young playwright with a haggard face; an American from the embassy, and his wife; and a Belgian millionaire mine-owner.

The talk was general. Except to make a remark which she had heard her husband make, Mrs. Haye, a trifle overawed by her surroundings had nothing to say; and Christabel found that it was not necessary for her to say anything in particular herself, even if she could have remembered enough about the subject, because the Belgian and the playwright began an argument, sitting one on either side of her; and she had to do as was to make a murmur of encouragement to whichever one appealed to her.

Cavanagh, offering her another cocktail, whispered that he hoped that she would not find the party too much for her; but she shook her head, with smiling reassurance in her eyes. Glancing at her from the other side of the room, as she stood so straight and so dignified, and yet so vital; engaging the interested attention of both the Belgian and the playwright, Cavanagh marvelled a moment at his find. Charming as she had seemed, he had hardly expected her to fit in with this kind of cosmopolitan crowd; but she had about her the air of experience of the world which was exactly necessary.

He looked at the two men who were talking to her with a tinge of anxiety lest they, between them, should capture her interest for the evening. But his duties as a host compelled him to talk to Mrs. Haye and the couple from the American Embassy.

At dinner Mrs. Haye was on his left and the American woman on his right. Christabel, delicate and brilliant as a flower, bloomed at the other end of the table.

He had expected the dinner to go rather stiffly, but instead the conversation was easy and eager, due, he felt, to the stimulation Christabel produced in the men at her end of the room.

After dinner, when he felt that he had done all that was required of him as a host, he was able to get Christabel to himself. He asked her if she would like to see his collection of paintings by Van Gogh.

The picture gallery was on the other side of the main hall, an immense, draughty chamber built in Tudor times. Christabel, who knew very little of painting, was very valuable about the Van Goghs; but Cavanagh, who had only used them to get her away from the others, merely showed them to her with a remark or two as to how he had got them, and led her away into a small smoking room. There he offered her a deep armchair and a cigarette.

He sank down a little stiffly into a chair near to hers, and remarked as he sat back with a sigh of relief.

"A bad business—this getting old!" And then wished immediately that he had not said anything about his age.

"If you feel no worse than you look," said Christabel. "You can't feel very bad!"

For in spite of his whitening hair he looked no more than middle-aged.

They talked for a while about the beauties of Kearne Hall; and then Cavanagh told her that he was going to sell it.

"But wouldn't that be a pity?" said Christabel in surprise.

Cavanagh frowned and walked up and down the room in the way that men will when they are overcome by a desire to tell all that there is to tell about themselves.

"Of what use is a place like this to

me, Miss Collet? For a while it interested me. My collection of pictures, all my Oriental stuff; for a time it meant something. But what it is doing here, who really appreciates it but myself? It ought to be in the public galleries and museums. And this place is primarily a family mansion. The Kearne's who built it have gone, and the house only remains as a memorial. It ought to belong to the nation. In any case I have no family to leave it to, no one!" He paused, and then added with a rueful smile. "Life seems to have defeated all my efforts to take root from the personal point of view; and in the end I have no one!"

Christabel remembered what the matron had told her at the hospital about his life; the death of his wife, and the loss of his son in an aeroplane smash. Her eyes were wistful with sympathy, but she said doubtfully: "Surely, for a man in your position that can't be true. Can you have absolutely no one?"

**CAVANAGH'S CONFIDENCES**  
Cavanagh shook his head, and stubbed out his cigarette; from his expression, the contraction of his eyebrows she could see that he was telling the truth and not making an idle bid for her sympathy.

"I'm wholly alone!" he said. She sat silently watching him while he stood looking towards the window; the last of the summer twilight streaming into the room across the park, showed his hair as whiter, his face more lined; he seemed to have shrunk and grown smaller, as though in his avowed loneliness among so much material grandeur he had really grown old.

"My wife died when my boy was five years old," he said. "And then I lost the boy himself three years ago. Since then I have lost the only person who could have consoled me at all for it. A woman, hardly a woman really, not much more than a girl—but internationally famous as an actress. You would probably have heard of her. My attraction towards youth is fatal, I'm afraid!" He paused, and turned from his pained stare out of the window to smile with an effort at jauntiness: "She preferred youth, too, Miss Collet. So who am I to blame her?"

His grey eyes, set in their good-humoured wrinkles, dwelled on Christabel seriously and searchingly.

"Don't think that it's only my love of youth which draws me to you, Miss Collet," he said, suddenly. "But as you are now, as you must feel since that accident, cut off from your memories of so much that you've known, you also must feel this ghastly loneliness which surrounds us all!"

Christabel was moved. She felt very sorry for him, and there was a common chord, as he said, in their feelings. "I'm not unhappy," she told him. "I'm much better! I'm beginning to remember things."

And when she thought of Hewitson she felt very far from needing anyone's sympathy.

"Happy things, I hope?" said Cavanagh; and went on even more feelingly. "That is another thing that appeals to me about you! You look so extraordinarily sensitive, and yet so innocent. I would like to shield that innocence from damage, to protect that sensitivity from being blunted by this abominable world!"

Christabel gazed at him in astonishment, and he at once looked slightly ashamed of himself.

"Yes," he said. "I'm going too fast. We won't talk about it any more now. Perhaps after you've seen a little more of me—I forgive a stupid fellow who is growing a little old and a little sad, and was carried away by so much life and beauty!"

Christabel smiled and murmured something about; there being no necessity to "ask forgiveness for one's good impulses."

She hardly knew what she said; her state of inner confusion still made it difficult for her to know how to respond to people.

Cavanagh only shook his head and said:

"Come—it's time we joined the others!"

Christabel rose, and when he put his hand on her arm to assist her towards the door she had no instinct to recoil from him. She liked him, and she did not doubt him. All that he said was compatible with his actions, the financing of mental clinics and children's holiday camps.

After more pleasant and enlightening conversation in the library with the playwright and the American from the Embassy, Christabel walked home with her mother through the moonlit park.

It had been the sort of evening to put her in a pleasant frame of mind. But the beauty of the night sky suffused with silver light, and the still pools of shadows under the aged trees of the avenue across the park, would not let Christabel think about Cavanagh's misfortunes for long; soon she was thinking of Hewitson.

"Well, it was very enjoyable—very enjoyable indeed!" said Mrs. Haye, who looked forward to the triumph of being able to tell Mr. Haye that through Christabel she had had an invitation to dine at Kearne Hall with Arthur Cavanagh. Not only that, but Mrs. Haye realized that Christabel had made a very good impression; though it would not be of much use to mention the fact to Mr. Haye, because he wouldn't really believe it.

## CHAPTER XVIII "MISS COLLET HAS PAINTED!"

The week passed quietly away; on Wednesday afternoon Cavanagh called to inquire after Christabel; on Thursday he invited her and her mother to afternoon tea and showed them his Oriental collection. His tone to Christabel was never so personal as it had been when she had dined there, but the same friendliness shone with a growing warmth in his eyes.

Saturday was hot; Christabel was out among the raspberry canes in the Pine Cottage garden picking raspberries in the broiling sun, while her mother preferred the shade and a book in the drawing-room. Mrs. Haye was peacefully reading when the maid came running into the room:

"Oh, please, madam, quick—Miss Collet has fainting in the garden!"

Mrs. Haye hurried out, and found Christabel sitting at the foot of a tree, with her head in her hands, and a basket of raspberries spilled on the lawn beside her. Mrs. Haye and the maid between them, helped her into the house; she was limp and incoherent, and when they laid her on the couch she lapsed into unconsciousness again. The maid fetched some brandy; and five minutes after they had given it to her Christabel was conscious again, though pale and weak.

"There's no need to fetch the doctor," she said, when Mrs. Haye prepared to go and do so. "I feel perfectly well, mother. But the sun was so hot, and I suddenly felt giddy as I was walking back—and that was the last thing I knew!"

Mrs. Haye, however, insisted on sending the maid over to the hall to ring the Kearne Hall village doctor; meanwhile Christabel lay on the couch in the drawing-room. She stayed there until the doctor came, when he advised her to keep very quiet for two days, to go to bed in a darkened room, and lie on the couch in the drawing-room all through the following day.

Christabel was disappointed. She had been looking forward to the morning, when Hewitson was coming. She was annoyed with herself for picking raspberries.

"We'll have to put him off, mother," she said.

So the maid was sent down to the post office with a telegram for Hewitson, saying that Mrs. Haye regretted that Christabel was not quite so well, and had to rest.

Next morning summer had burst into torrents of rain, and the wind swept around the cottage, and the rain clouds hurried over the trees in the park. On her couch in the sitting-room, feeling rather dull, and with an aching head, Christabel felt as though the end of the summer had come though she would not quite admit to herself how much of her disappointment was due to the fact that she would not be seeing Hewitson.

But at half-past two a car drove up to the gate; the bell rang, and Hewitson was announced. Christabel's heart leaped. If she had had any doubt as to her feelings towards him the surge of joy through her veins as he walked into the room left her with very little.

"How good of you to come!" she said, as she stretched out her hand to him from her couch. "And on such a horrible day!"

"Of course, I came! Your mother's telegram said you were not so well—wasn't that every reason why I should come?"

He shook hands with Mrs. Haye also, and seated himself beside Christabel, asked how she felt, and what had happened to her.

"Yes," he said when she told him. "You must certainly rest."

"I don't feel ill," Christabel said. "But my head aches a little, and I have a—how shall I describe it?—a confused feeling!"

"You're not to talk," he said. "I

## TO PROVE IT CAN BE DONE



Two bearded men driving a two dog team and sleigh are travelling through Ontario on the return leg of an across-Canada-and-back trek that started last May and is expected to end a year from now. Eugene Muller, 55, a Belgian war veteran, and companion, Wilfred Ferris, 24, started out from Edmonton with three dogs, a small wagon, half a bag of flour and half a side of bacon. So far the strange pilgrimage has covered nearly 7,000 miles, and before Muller and Ferris land back in Edmonton they will have travelled nearly 10,000 miles.

## Skating Carnival a Delightful Event

(Continued From Page One)

had learned such a great deal in a very short while. At the conclusion of the carnival, two of the junior members carried a large basket of red roses to the centre of the arena, and presented them to Miss Austin.

Mrs. T. A. C. Tyrrell and Mr. Bruce Palmer, who have both had figure skating before they came to the Porcupine, won favour skating as a pair to the music of "Beautiful Lady Waltz," and Mr. Palmer was featured alone in a single, "Live, Love and Laugh," in which he performed the difficult outside eagle, the grapevine, and other special figure skating spins and twirls.

The senior members of the club who showed definite progress in the art of figure skating, took part in two numbers, a waltz, "Merry Widow Waltz," and a ten-step, "Pocketful of Dreams." A notable fact in the skating of the senior pairs, was that each pair seemed to be ideally matched in their skating and this brought forward their best performances.

During the evening, two well known Timmins men kept the crowd in fits of laughter, in apparently not being able to skate. One of these gentlemen, who has won a reputation in the hockey world as not getting "banged up" in the hardest falls and tumbles, was attired in the costume of a pert young lady, and proved that he could tumble around, sometimes frightening the audience which was convinced several times that he had been seriously injured, only to find that he would "pop up and take a bow." The other member of this duo was the perfect picture of a southern negro, and greatly added the antics of his partner.

Other humorous numbers were "First Lesson," and "Bull Fight," in which members of the club presented their idea of each title to the undoubted pleasure of the audience.

In the finale all the members of the skating club danced the "Lambeth Walk" on ice, with a synonymous rhythm of movement, and joined in the "Grand March."

The grand costume parade, in which the general public were invited to take part, followed the finale. Winners of the senior prizes were: Gentlemen, 1st, Andrew MacViech; 2nd, Aleck Fulton; Ladies, 1st, Betty MacMillan; 2nd, Mrs. Walter Smook. Junior prizes were won by Joyce Wilson and J. Duryzon, and a special prize was taken by Mildred Verbik. Winners of comic prizes were Miss Patricia Laforest and Mr. Harold Lafurgli, as "The Yokums" of comic strip fame, and a couple as "Minnie and Mickie Mouse."

Winners in the races which were sponsored by the Lions Club of Schumacher, were as follows:

Girls up to 9 years: 1st, Velma Popovich; 2nd, Estelle Hannigan.  
Boys up to 9 years: 1st, Eddie Ladich; 2nd, Percy Parker.

Girls 9-10 years: 1st, Marie Landreville; 2nd, Joyce Taylor.  
Boys 9-10 years: 1st, Robert Bragnolo; 2nd, Elwood Small.

Wheelbarrow Race—1st, Bill Patterson and Don McWhitter; 2nd, June Sutherland and Eileen Fox.

Barrel Jumping—1st, Stanley Lang; 2nd, Stanley Brathy.

Girls 11-12 years—1st, Eileen Fox; 2nd, June Sutherland.  
Boys 11-12 years—1st, Bronko Vicevich; 2nd, Steve Getler.

Girls 13-14 years—1st, Ruby Prendee; 2nd, Jeanne Hume.  
Boys 13-14 years—1st, Miraco Narduzzi; 2nd, Bobby Wallace.

Obstacle Race—1st, Steve Getler; 2nd, John Izatti.

shell only stay for half-an-hour. Mrs. Haye, you must see to it that she keeps absolutely quiet."

He stayed for three-quarters of an hour, talking mainly to Mrs. Haye, carrying on the sort of conversation that kept Christabel amused but did not need any response from her; but all the time, his attention was on her, his eyes came back to her, and his gaze held hers, Christabel listening to his voice, smiling at his words, and watching the changing expressions of his face, felt radiantly happy.

Finally he rose to go.

"I shall be back at the clinic at the end of the week," said Christabel.

He stood looking down, at her.

"What do you think, Mrs. Haye? Isn't she talking nonsense? I can't understand these idle, pampered people, who won't even take the trouble to take care of themselves!"

(To be Continued)

## Protest Export of Raw Materials to Japanese

Might Be Used to Make War Supplies Is Argument of the Council. Town to Have Ambulance. Prospectors' Association to Hold Celebration Here at End of June to Commemorate Discovery of Gold Here.

A protest against the export of any raw materials to Japan which might be used for the manufacture of munitions or Japanese war equipment was made by the Timmins town council on Monday night at the regular meeting of council.

The resolution ordered that a copy be sent to the Prime Minister and that he be requested to do all in his power to make its suggestion a reality.

"No comment is necessary on that resolution," said Councillor McCabe. "Surely, it speaks for itself."

Councillor McCabe said that he had visited the officers of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade and that they had offered to collect a sum of money to provide the town with an ambulance. The town would have to operate it.

The fire chief and the fire department were enthusiastic about the idea, said Councillor McCabe. Every fireman was an expert first aid man and the Chief was sure that he could handle the ambulance without adding to his staff. It would be a great benefit to the town.

Matter was referred to the fire chief and the town engineer. They will report on a suitable place to keep the ambulance.

A letter from the Porcupine Prospectors' Association notified the council that that organization planned to hold a big celebration in South Porcupine on June 30, July 1 and July 2 to commemorate the discovery of gold in the Porcupine thirty years ago.

The reunion, held in South Porcupine, would bring old timers together, would commemorate those who were dead and would provide valuable data on the camp's history. The proceeds of such a celebration would be used to help to found a home for old and feeble prospectors.

## Kirkland Lake Police After the "Splashes"

Kirkland Lake, March 29—Kirkland police are making a specialty these days of watching and checking up on the "splashes." There have been a number of complaints about cars speeding across intersections and close to the sidewalks, throwing up the muddy water of which there is too much on Kirkland streets these days. Arrests are being made of any Kirkland Lake motorists driving along the wet streets at too fast a rate.

## Salt Lake City Man Now Having Cellar Trouble

After months of suspicion, Val S. Snow of Salt Lake City, knows that he has skunks in his basement. While firing the furnace he came upon two of them at too close range. He laid his problem before the Biological Survey and received the comforting information skunks are excellent mousers and harmless, except when annoyed.

Snow's immediate concern is how to keep the furnace in coal until the animals get the spring wanderlust—if they do.

## Bird Sanctuary for Hannah Bay District

Dominion and Provincial Governments Co-operate to Establish Area Ten Miles Square.

Ottawa, March 29—By joint co-operation of the Dominion and provincial governments a new bird sanctuary, covering an area approximately 10 miles square, has been established in Ontario at Hannah Bay, the southernmost extension of James Bay.

The Ontario government established the mainland portion of the sanctuary and the Dominion government included a broad strip of adjacent tidal waters into the sanctuary.

On this site, selected by the Ontario department of game and fisheries and the Dominion department of mines and resources last autumn, many of the famous blue geese assemble during their migratory flights between the Gulf of Mexico and the Canadian Arctic.

Hamilton Spectator—We often wonder if those people who talk about our three thousand miles of unprotected frontier have ever tried to argue with a customs officer.

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