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The Gift Of The Gods

BY PEARL FOLEY.
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CHAPTER VII.—(Cont'd.)

As David looked into the eager eyes and listened to the pent-up thoughts rolling out from one who a few moments before had all the *savoir-faire* of a woman of the world, he again experienced the pleasurable thrill of meeting at last an antidote for his hitherto ennu, his world-weariness. But their *foete-a-tote* was over all too soon. As footsteps came along the hall David was surprised at the lighting change in his companion. The animation died from her face and in an instant she was the calm hostess with duties to perform. He decided it wasn't deceit. Indeed, it puzzled him to fathom the reason. Dual natures he had heard and read of, but this was his nearest personal approach to anything of the kind, and he wondered if it were a mere fancy that the East and West were fighting for supremacy in this winsome and fascinating find of his!

After Weng Toy had made ample apologies for his delay, the three proceeded to the dining-room, where the arts of the mandarin's cooks had provided a feast fit for kings. This was David's first experience of dining in a Chinese home. He had heard, however, that it was customary in China, and a sign of good breeding, to "extol the food to the highest point, while the host did the reverse. The delicious first course of fruit and nuts, followed by gelatinous birds, nest soup, worked his enthusiasm up to a fine pitch, nor did it require any effort to eulogize on the shark's fins which followed. Indeed, David had had no idea food could be raised so far above the commonplace of life, but then never before had he had such a charming hostess, who considered it an unavoidable courtesy to taste from his dish at intervals, a custom he thought quite charming. Weng Toy, however, although his dinner and manner of serving it were truly Chinese, did not follow the denunciatory custom of his country. Instead, he guided skillfully a friendly and delightful conversation.

Although David decided that that evening was the real-bend in the turning point in his life, he couldn't determine which was the more captivating—the girl whose confidences had bubbled up so spontaneously in the drawing room, or the young hostess, demure yet dignified, whose laugh had shimmered into a smile and whose long lashes were lifted at but rare intervals to let him glimpse the glowing sapphires they concealed.

After dinner, Tu Hee slipped away. David discussed with his host absent-mindedly, but at least intelligently, the world topics of the day. He soon discovered here was another rare curio of friendship with which fate had favored him. He was enchanted with the mandarin's wide views, his respect and tolerance of the opinions of others, the diffidence but, when urged, the firmness, with which he voiced his own convictions, letting it be seen, however, they were leashed and not allowed to run wild.

When eleven-thirty came and still Tu Hee had not reappeared, David successfully hiding his disappointment, rose to take his departure.

The mandarin looked at him in surprise. "Is it necessary that you cut short your visit, Captain Marsden?" he enquired. Upon learning that his

guest had no paramount reason for departing at so early an hour as eleven-thirty, Weng Toy settled back in his chair and motioned David to do the same.

David discovered his host had done some extensive travelling, and as he himself had covered not an insignificant part of the world's territory, they compared some very interesting notes. From the arts of Rome they wandered to the antiquities of Egypt, thence to the jungles of Africa.

"You undoubtedly have a valuable assortment of souvenirs of your travels, Mr. Weng Toy?"

"Yes, not a mean collection at all. They are a little step from here in a back compartment of the compound. If you would care to see them, however—"

Interrupting him, David assured the mandarin that while it would give him no small pleasure to have old memories revived, he would much prefer, if his host would so humor him, to see the treasures of China, of which he had heard his palace was a veritable storehouse.

Weng Toy's manner showed he was not a little pleased at the request, and while deprecating in true Chinese fashion his limited possessions, at once proceeded to gratify his guest's curiosity.

The scent of flowers filled the summer night air as David crossed the compound with his host. A full moon sailed in the sky, bathing the courtyard in a silver radiance. Tiny stone bridges glistened white over the falls that splashed and cooled the atmosphere. Dotted here and there were rock gardens from which the flowers glowed softly and drowsily in the night breeze. Mountains of peonies rose like eager, flaming heralds, beckoning the world-weary to pause and rest. After all the tumult of the past three years, no wonder David named it the Garden of Peace.

"What a wonderful, perfect setting!" he exclaimed, and then stopped. For a moment he had fancied himself walking here, a small hand resting in his and blue eyes returning shyly his adoring glances. He sighed. His life had been, and would continue to be, too incongruous for such happiness. The cold hand of Fate would forever bar the way, for love as madly as he would, he could never marry a Chinese maiden. Such an act on his part would be like taking one of the glowing peonies before him and bruising its life out. No, he would behave sanely and rationally, accompany his host, admire the treasures of China, and say good-bye to the place forever. In all fairness he must turn back at the first stop.

"They had come to a dividing wall, Weng Toy pushed open a moon gate and they entered another courtyard equally as beautiful. The mandarin led the way into one of the many small buildings comprising his estate. Inside David stood bewildered. The oriental splendor of the place dazzled him. Draperies and hangings, and wonderful carved furniture, appearing too exquisite for human use, surrounded him. Ebony couches, made luxuriant with brocade cushions, were strewn about the apartment invitingly. Teakwood chairs and tables, with covers on which the emblems of China were embroidered in pure gold, made the place luxuriant enough for the abode of princes.

The mandarin watched the expressive face of his guest, well pleased. "This room thousands of years old," he explained. "Everything before you belonged to my famous ancestor, the Emperor Woo Wang."

"I have travelled a great deal, Mr. Weng Toy, but you have here a room that surpasses in beauty and luxury anything I have ever seen. You keep it closed up, of course? You do not make use of it?"

"My niece is the only one privileged to come here. This is one of her own private rooms. Nothing in all China too good for my child."

The note of earnest solemnity in the last statement forged a true link of esteem in David's mind for this high-bred Easterner.

yards, each vying with the other in beauty. The air seemed to grow more and more fragrant. Fountains fell in cool, rhythmic splashes, and temple bells chimed softly in the night breeze. Truly it was a world-by-itself—a world loaded with years and enchantment. After following a winding path bordered with flowering bushes they came upon a temple rising serenely like a saintly sentinel guarding the past, the pagoda roof shimmering in the moonlight.

At their approach two servants, standing on guard at the door, prostrated themselves to the ground. Weng Toy passed between them, and David followed. It was all rather weird. What did it mean, he wondered, guards at this time of night in front of a temple? Surely they did not fear for the safety of their gods. David smiled at the incongruity of the thought, the necessity for humans to protect the symbols of their deities. Inside the entrance two more guards bowed themselves to the ground.

The temple was but dimly lighted as they entered, but almost immediately a soft glow permeated the place and David became aware of a circular formation of servants around a huge idol in the centre of the temple. He watched them curiously, wondering what there was about this pagan religion to call forth such devoutness, and evidently midnight worship was quite customary. At least, the mandarin showed no surprise. But were they worshipping, after all? he asked himself. Their attitude was by no means prayerful. Solemn it was but not reverent. Besides, the group were facing the door and had been when their master entered, for no move-

NURSES

The Forest Hospital for Incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women having the required education and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and travelling expenses to and from New York. For further information apply to the Superintendent.

ment had they made except to prostrate themselves at the mandarin's approach. Rising en masse they now formed a single file on each side of the idol, and Weng Toy fell into step with his guest and together they approached the image.

A sense of the mystic crept over David as he stood before the statue. The soft light from the candles, the aroma of burning incense, and the mellow chimes of the temple bells as the night breeze swayed them, all tended to envelop him with a sense of the unreal, the supernatural. In the shadowy temple, the image might have been a reincarnated spirit, so lifelike did it appear. The delicate colorings showed the features up in startling relief. This was no dull, stolid-faced idol. The tranquil expression led David's thoughts to the Nazarene, and it indeed seemed that the Christ was in that Chinese temple, tolerant and patient with a blindfolded world. A feeling, almost a conviction, swept over David that if he but knelt there for a brief moment, some wonderful blessing would fall on him from the slender, unpraised hand.

(To be continued.)



THE ANNUAL RENOVATION.

I have always maintained that housecleaning is a task that may be done, if enough planning is given to the matter, without upsetting the whole house from attic to cellar.

Of course, when it is done piecemeal, as it were, with nothing attempted that cannot be finished the same day, the housekeeper does not acquire as much merit as when she is found at close of day a total wreck among all her piled-up possessions.

When a man returns to his home at night and finds it looking to his masculine eyes much the same as when he left it in the morning, he is not likely to offer the sympathy his wife expects and craves after going through a hard day of house cleaning; but, if he finds everything topsy-turvy, he may more readily visualize the battle that has been raging all the day, and then he is quite willing to believe that the work was hard and that his wife is "half dead."

It often happens, however, when repairs or renovations are going on, that the work cannot be done in quick order. Days and weeks of confusion must be put up with, and the family kept cheerful by the thought of how satisfactory everything is going to be after the work is all done. One has to repeat those words as often and with as much fervor as any disciple of Coue uttered his creed, in order to carry on through the dark days when it looks as if home would never be home again.

Men, it seems to me, do not object to the confusion that results from house building as much as women do. Perhaps, because a man is of a more constructive disposition. I know that I have often accompanied an enthusiastic man through unfinished houses and been unable to see them with his eyes. Where he could visualize the finished product, paying little attention to the cluttered condition of the place, I could see only the disorder, and would be unable to cover laths with the plaster of imagination and finish rooms and stairways with paper and paint in the same way.

Still, there are some women who do enjoy watching a house grow and who are as happy over its development as a mother is over her child's growth. They have that bump of construction which, I fancy, was left out of my own make-up. Perhaps it is not so much laziness on my part as a desire for peace and quiet that makes the upheaval accompanying the redecoration of a house appear to me to be such a trying matter.

I have often thought that it was a wise dispensation of Providence, that led to the creation of the first woman only after everything else was finished. She was spared that long watching which would have been her fate had she come into existence earlier. Waiting to see order come out of that first chaos would have needed a high degree of patience, and the confusion would have "got on the nerves" of nine women out of ten.

Perhaps there was still higher wisdom shown in the plan of her coming into being the last thing of all, as her opinion as to just how things should be done was avoided, for her views certainly would have been given, whether asked for or not. She, as well as many other women since her time, would have protested, I am sure, had the chance been given against the creation of various animals, reptiles and insects for which a woman sees no earthly use.

If, however, a woman was spared the first great confusion, it is the only one with which she has not had experience. Without her advice or help but few changes and chances are taken in this mortal life, and upon her shoulders usually falls a big part of the burden.

shelling peas too lazy work for me, and wanted to get them done, so's I could start scrubbing again," was the explanation. "The servant was really hurt. If she had said this at the time things could have been put right."



SIMPLE FROCK FOR PLAY OR SCHOOL.

Pattern 3613 is here shown. It is cut in 4 Sizes: 4, 6, 8 and 10 years. A 6 year size requires 1 1/2 yards of 36-inch material.

Pongee, taffeta, repp, poplin, gingham, kindergarten cloth, percale, lawn and crash are attractive for this model. Stitching, embroidery or braid forms a suitable decoration.

Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 15c in silver or stamps, by the Wilson Publishing Company, 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto.

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"Lawks a mercy!" she remarked to her nephew, "I've heard of Smiths all my life, but I never knew where they made 'em before."



A Case in Point.

"Can inanimate objects think?"

"Well, I've hugged a girl and found that cigars in my pocket were much broken up over it."

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Whole wheat bread is delicious if a cup of finely-chopped dates and nuts is added to the dough.

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