

THE HAVEN.

"Miss Collier: If it is still Miss Collier?"

The girl started and turned her head. The voice was familiar. After a moment she was surprised that it should have sounded familiar at once, for when she heard it that May morning at the corner of Grafton street and Bond street she had not heard it for three years.

"Mr. Barlow!" she exclaimed, with frank pleasure, as she held out her hand. "I did not know you were back in England."

For three years they had neither seen each other nor exchanged letters. But they met now as old friends.

"I have been back in England a month," Barlow said, as he shook hands. "but I have been with my mother in Devonshire, and I only came up to town yesterday. How good a May morning in Bond street seems after three years of Ceylon!"

But for Ethel Collier three years' intimacy with Bond street had made enthusiasm impossible. She followed Barlow's gaze towards Piccadilly with grave eyes. It was evident that she would not have felt any regret if she had been told that the scene lay before her for the last time.

"Familiarity breeds contempt," she said, with a little mordant laugh. "But why did you ask if I were still Miss Collier?"

"I met a man in Colombo who knew Lewis Calkin. You may remember I know him slightly. We belong to the same club. You and Calkin were engaged, he told me."

"That was a year ago. It was broken off," she explained. Barlow was not deaf enough to avoid a moment's pause, and it seemed as if that pause contained an unspoken question.

"It's best to admit a mistake before it becomes irretrievable," she added.

"Of course," said Barlow. He was wondering how the mistake had been discovered.

They turned and walked together up Grafton street. Both had a few minutes to spare, Barlow before he went to keep an appointment in the Strand, Ethel before she was due at her tea room. She did not disguise her pleasure at meeting Barlow. She asked him a string of questions. She was honestly anxious to know whether his work in Ceylon had been successful, and she was also eager to turn the conversation from herself. She was conscious that he was seeking to read in her face whether the last three years had been years of happiness for her, and she talked rapidly and gayly, guarding the truth from discovery.

But as they walked slowly up Grafton street he read something of what those three years had been.

He saw that care had eaten beneath her beauty. Her throat had sunk a trifle, her eyes were less bright, her lips were a little compressed, and at the corners of her mouth the lines were beginning to gather. It was not the natural passing of youth, Barlow knew that. Youth does not pass at twenty-five. But he did not betray that he read beneath the surface. When they reached the corner of Bond street again and stood for a moment outside the stream of passers-by before parting both were conscious of pleasure. They were glad, that, after a space of years, they had met again.

As Barlow walked south toward Piccadilly he was thinking of the cynicism which Ethel had shown during the first few moments of that meeting. He remembered her as a light-hearted girl. Being a large-hearted and clean-minded man, it repelled him. To what did it owe its birth?

As Ethel Collier walked northward up Bond street she was recalling the past. She was unfeignedly glad to meet again a man whom she had always known she could trust. The three years had left their mark upon her life, twisting and torturing her trust and belief in what is good. But of what the same three years had done for Barlow she did not inquire. Neither the steadiness of his eyes nor the grip of his hand had altered.

The story of Ethel Collier's life up to the day on which she met John Barlow again, after an interval of three years, was one which, unfortunately, is not uncommon.

The daughter of an army officer who had lost his life in Egypt, she had been left motherless when a schoolgirl, almost at the time when she was leaving her school at Bath. With the criminal folly of which so many parents are capable, she had been educated as the daughter of the rich and educated, without the possibility of her having to earn a living being com-

sidered. When she left school, at eighteen, she possessed many accomplishments, but few definite qualifications, and an aptitude for enjoying the luxuries and refinements of life, coupled with a profound ignorance of the hard facts of existence.

For three years she lived with an aunt, her mother's sister, in a small country town in Hampshire. She grew to be a tall, handsome girl, with the high spirit of her father and an eager and natural desire to feel the throbs of life. She was not slow to discover that life in a little Hampshire town stifled her. She rebelled against it, and, having forced herself to become proficient with a typewriter, she went up to London to do what it had never been thought she would have to do—earn her own bread. By good fortune and the help of some of her father's old friends, she began to do so at once; and, for a while, the cruel forces that were against her were not evident.

After a time they became evident. They pressed upon her and threatened to crush her. Her life became a struggle. It began when her work at the Typewriting Agency which had first employed her ceased. Business became slack at the Agency, and she lost her post. It was soon after Barlow's going out to Ceylon that this happened, and for three years she became acquainted with a variety of ways in which a girl, having her qualifications, can earn a living.

It was not long before she discovered that her life centered round Bond street, and it was in various posts in or near Bond street that for three years she earned a living, gradually gaining more and more knowledge of certain phases of West End life and learning to use her knowledge to good effect. She possessed from the first one great asset; her education and upbringing enabled her to add to her physical beauty an air of distinction which, she was quick to perceive, had a definite market value. To this first and great asset she soon added a second. She became well versed in the ways of Bond street. Thus for three years there was no time when she was not paying her way, and the little flat in Chelsea, which she shared with another girl, who, like herself, lived in the Bond street world, was always secure. She was therefore successful in a life in which many would have failed. She never lacked the physical comforts of life, and not a few of its pleasures fell to her lot. Her life was not monotonous, neither was it starved. But, at the end of three years, as Barlow saw, there was weariness lurking in her eyes, and her lips were more compressed than was natural.

Barlow came back to London life with a new zest. There were friends he had not seen for three years, men he had not seen or heard of since he went out to Ceylon, interests and pleasures which for three years he had perforce abandoned. To all these he came back, and time was not idle upon his hands. But there were many occasions on which he saw Ethel. They took up their old friendship, and did not know that it was changing.

One night, at the Welcome Club, at Earl's Court, he first learned some details of what her life had been. They were sitting in the low wicker chairs, looking out on the crowd which circled round and round the bandstand in a slow moving mass. The chairs near them were all occupied; outside the inclosure the crowd was dense. Yet in the presence of that crowd there was a real solitude of which they took advantage.

"What is a 'manikin'?" Barlow had asked, in the course of common-place, impersonal talk.

"Why do you ask?"

"Ignorance. I was talking with some people last night, and they spoke of a girl as a 'manikin'."

"What did they say?"

"They said it was light work and well paid."

"Nothing else?"

"Some one said the life was demoralizing."

"Well, I'll tell you what a 'manikin' is. A 'manikin' is a girl of more than ordinarily good figure and carriage who walks about a society dressmaker's rooms in one of that dressmaker's latest creations, and so shows it off to the best and fullest advantage. For some months, soon after you went to Ceylon, I was a 'manikin'."

For a moment Barlow said nothing. He blew his cigarette smoke out before him in a long, thin stream. Ethel watched his face. It was expressionless, but his silence told her

he had learned something more definite than that the life was demoralizing.

"You left it because you got something better?"

"No; I left it because—well, because, as you were told, the life is demoralizing. It was after I had left that I got taken on at the manicure place."

"Yes. And that?"

"Well, there was a good deal I didn't like there also. But it was better than Dover street. After all, I had to earn a living. The work was light, and I suppose I was getting hardened. I found some amusement, too, at the Beauty shop. But, of course, at a Beauty shop the priestesses have to be beautiful themselves, and when that is a reason for one's getting taken on there are always drawbacks." For the first time she spoke with deep and undisguised bitterness. Barlow felt the stab of its sting.

"Why didn't you go back to the typewriting?" he asked.

"Typewriting is much harder work than Bond street or Dover street, and I was not good enough to get a really good post in competition with others. You see, for Dover street or Bond street it may be said that I have natural advantages. Perhaps, after a year or so," she added, after a pause, "I found I had made a mistake. But it was too late to go back. I made the best of it."

Barlow was greatly interested. He was beginning to see what the last three years had been.

"And why did you give up manicuring?"

"It became unbearable. And I got the chance of being in the new tearooms, the Ashley House. You know what a success they have proved. Well, I have benefited by that success, and I am there still. I am used to the ways of Bond street now—hardened, if you like. At any rate, I know the rocks, and—I can avoid them."

"And, after all this, you can still stay in Bond street, still live in the midst of a life you hate?"

"The hatred has become tolerable. I have to earn my living. What can I do? After all, even a 'manikin' is an honest livelihood, and there are plenty of manicure girls before whose lives, if I told you them, you might stand uncovered in respect."

"Couldn't you go back to Hampshire?"

She laughed. It amused her that he should suggest as something new what she had argued out with herself time after time.

"To the sleepy life of a little country town! Don't you know what it would be like? Don't you know that it would be a confession of failure to go back. Don't you know what the little provincial nobodies would say? And in my aunt's house you know, there is the atmosphere of a generation that is dead. And I, well, I should be dependent—mildly, affectionately misunderstood."

The life of the little Hampshire town came vividly before her. After all, she was not ready to bury herself. The throb and interest of life still appealed to her, her pulses were still young, the "joie de vivre" of youth still called her.

"Still, it would be a better life than Bond street," Barlow urged.

He had been sitting in dogged restraint. He had said little, but he had read a good deal that had been inferred and not spoken. The hard, cynical note in the girl's voice hurt him. He guessed rightly what the temptations were which had besieged her. Though they had not conquered her, he judged that she had been soiled by contact with them. And in the background of his thoughts an inevitable question arose. Had she yielded even a little? Had she dallied on the edge of the precipice? Had she played with fire? She was beautiful enough, high-spirited enough and, of course, many did, getting amusement and enjoying the sweet incense of flattery without actually getting their fingers burnt.

And her engagement with Calkin—what had been its history? Why had it been broken off? Thoughts formed themselves and Barlow crushed them, but he urged her to return to Hampshire again.

Again Ethel laughed, half in amusement, half in bitterness.

"What a typical John Bull you are! What a typical straight-laced moralist! If I had been toiling away in some city office as a typewriting clerk you would have nodded your head in benevolent approval. But because I have earned my living as I have, you as good as tell me that I have been touching pitch and am defiled."

And yet, even as she laughed, she was telling herself that she was thankful that Barlow was the honest, remorseless John Bull that he was. She had met a good many men who were different. His slowness of speech, his distrust of what he did

not fully understand, his anxiety that she should go back to Hampshire, were all what she would have expected, having once met his steady eyes. And when he said nothing in answer to her rallery she bent forward and laid her hand upon his knee, and the bitterness vanished suddenly from her voice and the laughter from her eyes.

"It is good of you to be anxious that I should go back to Hampshire," she said, with gentle seriousness; "good of you to care so much. But you are wrong. That sort of life wouldn't be possible now. I have chosen my life, and I must keep on with it. After all, it is very easy to exaggerate its drawbacks. Perhaps I have done so."

She was deeply thankful that night for whatever had happened in the last three years they had contained nothing that she need ever conceal. She could face John Barlow's steady eyes.

That night Barlow determined that he would discover what the history of her engagement with Calkin had been, though, in reality, it mattered very little what that history was, so far as the new birth in his life was concerned. Whether for pain or for joy, his love for Ethel Collier had been born. Even though as yet he did not admit her existence, the light of it had for a moment been in his eyes, and in that moment she had seen it.

At the back of a box in a suburban theatre, Barlow and Ethel Collier were sitting alone. The two others who had completed the party had left them to sit out the last act, as the journey home from the outlying theatre was a long one, though to the two who sat now in the back of the box the last act of the play was wholly uninteresting. They were, indeed, quite ignorant of what was going on on the stage. A climax had been reached in their lives.

Barlow had asked that question which for many days had been upon his lips. He had asked it bluntly and simply, without beating about the bush, without any periphrasis or disguise. Although very much depended on what he might learn in answer to his question, he asked it coolly and steadily, without the slightest trace of emotion.

"Why was your engagement with Lewis Calkin broken off?"

And, as if he wished to court a rebuff, but, without doubt, because he wished to penetrate to the heart of the story, he did more than ask the question. He displayed the thoughts that had been in his mind.

"Lewis Calkin is a rich man," he said. "He loved you. Since there was an engagement you must have returned his love in some degree. Why was it broken off? There would have been an escape at once from Bond street life."

For a moment Ethel Collier said nothing. She could have claimed a right to resent Barlow's inquisition. But she was wise enough not to do so. In the secret places of her thoughts she had already yielded him a right to the question.

"You are right," she said. "It would have been an escape! But for the escape I should have paid a price. It was not Calkin who broke off the engagement. The way of escape was there. He wished to marry me. I shut my eyes to it. The price was too heavy."

"Calkin loved you," Barlow persisted, remorselessly.

"Yes—if you employ a euphemism. And, at first, I believed I returned his love—sufficiently. But he cared for nothing beyond my physical beauty. Perhaps I was flattered. As you say, he is a rich man. Not only should I have escaped from the Bond street life, but, as his wife, I should have won a position which many would envy."

"Yet you let it go. Why?"

She hesitated. It was not easy for her to explain. "Can't you guess?" she asked.

Suddenly he understood. "Yes. When you came to see his love closely, you realized what it was."

She turned her head from him, remembering how Calkin had revealed himself. "And I learned that mine was only a mistake," she added.

Barlow remained silent.

"Yet most girls would have married him, placed as I was placed," she urged in self-excuse. "I sacrificed a life of comfort and took up my life again where I had thought to leave it. I sometimes think I was foolish."

For Barlow, however, all doubts were now past. "No," he said, "you were not foolish."

Then, simply and directly, without protestations, he offered her his love and asked her to be his wife. It had come slowly, he told her, the great love he bore her, but it would last as long as he lived. Had she done as she wished she would have yielded then without condition, without

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question, with absolute trust. But she remained silent, and her silence deceived him.

"I cannot offer you much. I cannot lay at your feet all that I would," he admitted. "I have no large share of the world's goods. There are things that Calkin could have given you which I cannot offer. But these things are not happiness, Ethel, and it is happiness, the richest happiness, the joy of life, that perhaps we might know together."

He pleaded now as a true lover pleads. Yet so hard a thing did it seem to her to win joy that she still fought against yielding. She had made a mistake once; she had become intimate with the false, so intimate that she now doubted what was true. She mistrusted her love, her own longing to yield.

"Is it because you pity me," she asked at length, "because you wish to give me a way of escape, because you think that we have been so long good friends?"

"Can you think that it is that?" asked Barlow, mystified.

"Perhaps you are thinking that, in refusing Calkin I made a great sacrifice which many girls wouldn't have made. Don't think I did anything heroic, John. Don't exalt me into anything I am not."

"It is because you refused him that I know you understand what many never understand," he said, plainly. "You understand what the richest joy in life may be—in its fullness—where it is not only a thing of the physical senses. Calkin did not offer you this. It is I who offer it to you—now."

As he said this Barlow conquered. Ethel Collier let her doubts vanish. She turned to him and met his gaze. "And I accept," she said in a whisper.

Suddenly she bent forward, and for one swift instant their lips touched. Then, while the rest of the house was silent, engrossed in the last act of the play, they stole quietly from the box and left the theatre before the exits were filled by the overflowing crowd.—Edward Cecil, in The Sketch.

The Open Door to the Church

An editorial writer on one of the big New York dailies said in conversation recently that "were it not for the Catholic Church in New York, New York would not be livable." He was talking about the influence of the Catholic Church among the masses of the people in our large cities.

The late Senator Hanna shared the same opinion, for he frequently said that the Catholic Church was the most potent influence for law and order in the country. Many public men are beginning to realize this great truth. They realize that in time of public disturbances there is no power to quell the turbulent elements of the people but religion, and the only religious influence among the masses of the people that counts for anything is the Catholic Church.

In view of these significant statements it may be questioned as to whether the Church realizes the tremendous responsibilities that are forced on her. It is quite possible for the Church to be a tower of strength in every community if she will but broaden out the sphere of her influence. If she confines her ministrations in a perfunctory way to the Catholics only, who seek her help she will lose the best opportunity that has ever been given her. There is a vast throng who need her assistance, if they only knew how to get it. There is much talk about the "open door." What is vitally necessary is to establish the "open door" to the church, and make the way thereto so plain that even the blind may find it. In this fact lies the significance of the non-Catholic mission movement. It has for its direct purpose to get beyond the children of the household and out among the vast throng who are reached by no religious influence, and "compel them to enter." The Apostolic Mission House is established with this purpose in view. It trains its priests to meet the non-Catholic and enables them so to present the teachings of the Church that the stranger may find in them the comfort and peace of heart that religion alone can provide.—Rev. A. P. Doyle, in New World.

It is well, and most cheering to us, indeed, if we find the marks of saintly footsteps on the same road by which we ourselves have been led.

TEETH AND THE PHYSIQUE.

Mr. John Tweedy, president of the Royal College of Surgeons, who occupied the chair at the annual meeting of governors of the Royal Dental Hospital, Leicester Square, remarked that exemptions from physical suffering could not be obtained without some risk being incurred, but it was gratifying to find that in this hospital not a single life was jeopardized last year. Indeed, no life had been lost through the administration of anesthetics there for twenty years. Inspecting the institution a few days ago, he was greatly impressed by the special provision that was made for the treatment of the teeth of children. Last year an Inter-Departmental Committee was appointed to inquire into the alleged physical deterioration of the people of these islands. That inquiry had its inception in a memorandum drawn up by the Director-General of the army on the physical unfitness for military service of a large number of those who came forward as recruits. In the year 1903 not less than forty per cent. of those who offered themselves were rejected, mainly on account of the loss or decay of their teeth. This was a very grave social, national, and Imperial question. It had been said that armies fought with their teeth, and soldiers and sailors who had no good teeth could not live on the hard fare which they must necessarily accept under the conditions of war. Possibly no single thing was more inimical to physical well-being, especially in young people, than were the defects and diseases of the teeth. Much of the decay and loss of teeth in recruits could have been prevented by the exercise of intelligent care and forethought.—London Daily Telegraph.

A FAMOUS WAR CORRESPONDENT.

Mr. Joseph Hutton, writing in the Bristol Times and Mirror, says:

If any war correspondent might be expected to lean to the side of Russia in the field of war it is my old and gallant friend Frederic Villiers. He has done a good deal of campaigning with Russia, and was the personal friend of the famous Skobeloff. Indeed, so true a comrade was Villiers that on a stricken field during the Russo-Turkish war he went forth under fire and brought into the Russian lines more than one wounded and helpless soldier. For this he was decorated on the spot by the Russian commander. In the Club Library I have just come upon Villiers's new book—"Port Arthur: Three months with the besiegers." His sympathy for the defenders of the mighty fortress is undisguised, but after all it was little more than the sympathy felt and expressed to him by more than one of the besieging commanders. They formed no mean opinion of the gallantry and self-denial of the Russian officers and men. They were attacking with deadly persistence. It has been said, I believe, by some hygienic authority that "Japan is bound to beat Russia because she is a clean people, and the Russians are among the dirtiest of nations." Villiers does not say this, but he mentions many instances of the healthful exercises and habits of the Japanese. For instance, he says that the tooth-brush is an essential part of the Japanese campaigning kit. "The first thing that a Jap apparently does when he rises in the morning is to stick a tooth-brush in his mouth. You can see hundreds of the men rubbing away at their teeth and gums, walking about and chattering with each other during the operation. The soldiers and sailors of Japan have the finest and whitest teeth, probably, of any human beings on earth. Some say this is owing to the vegetable diet on which they are mostly fed; but I think it is because they use the tooth-brush so frequently and so freely."

HER INCONVENIENT FATHER.

It is said that when Miss Alice Roosevelt was a little girl she uttered a complaint that must surely find an echo in the heart of every wilful lawbreaker whose case has fallen into the hands of our uncompromising President.

Her teacher at school had been inquiring for Mrs. Roosevelt, who was ill, and Alice answered, plaintively: "She isn't much better yet. Yes, it's pretty hard. Papa stays at home most all the time, you see, and that makes it dreadfully inconvenient."

"Why, how is that?"

"Oh, don't you see? He doesn't understand, like mamma. When mamma tells me to be home at 4 o'clock and I get there at half past, she understands; but when papa says four, and I get there at even quarter past—he doesn't understand at all!"

—Ex.