

MARCIA'S ORDEAL

By Martha McCulloch-Williams

Copyright, 1905, by T. C. McClure

Marcia came up the walk with a sigh of relief so intense it was almost a sob. All afternoon she had been braving it out, forcing herself to smile and chatter dutifully, listen respectfully to Calverley strictures upon the world—her world—and life in general and make the requisite automatic responses.

Aunt Calverley was no blood kin, only her father's stepsister, but all the more punctilious and difficult because of it. Twice a year she came in state to spend the night and day after at Greenways. The visits always left Marcia and her mother uncomfortable, but this was the first whose legacy had been true heartache.

"Don't look so, daughter. I don't believe it," Mrs. Alston said, drawing Marcia down beside her upon the piazza bench. She was small and fair and blue eyed, all unlike her daughter. Even Aunt Calverley admitted grudgingly that Marcia was Alston through and through. That meant she was beautiful.

"As handsome as an Alston" had been a saying of the countryside this hundred years. As a race the Alstons were slim and supple, dark eyed, dark browed, with fine olive skin and clear, healthy scarlet showing richly in lips and cheeks; light stepping too. Marcia in especial had the motion of a flower swaying in gentle breezes. There had been something of natural irritation, but no surprise whatever, when Ivor Morris fell in love with her at first sight.

There could be no doubt of it. He called the very next day and the next and the next, then upon the fourth, planned a picnic in the grounds of High Brook, his ancestral estate. He was but newly come to it. The big house had been shuttered and shrouded almost twenty years. That was his excuse for asking his new friends to make merry with him outdoors. Though he was far too well bred to devote himself conspicuously to Marcia when thus playing host, by a sort of tacit consent she was pushed forward to be the head and front of everything. The next day he vanished unaccountably, but in a week he was back again and evidently more in love than ever. He managed somehow to see Marcia every day for a month; then came another absence and in the midst of it Aunt Calverley.

Aunt Calverley was bursting with news. Mrs. Alston was certain of it the minute she set eyes on her. There was a certain swelling as of pride in her own discerning mixed with ostentatious pity for the blindness of her kinfolk. Still she told nothing out of the common until after the midday dinner, when she had begun veering delicately to the subject of her departure. Although the length of her visit was always as fixed as the laws of the Medes and Persians, she felt sadly slighted if in the last hours of it she was not begged to make it longer. Mrs. Alston had just said, with a commendable show of heartiness, "I'm sure there's nothing to call you home—you had just as well stay with us until Monday," when the revelation came.

"I hope I shan't never be foolish enough to wear out my welcome anywhere," Aunt Calverley returned viciously. "I know you two will be wantin' to go right off and see your new neighbors. Of course you know Ivor Morris is fetchin' home his wife and twins. Don't tell me you hadn't heard? And him here so much! Well, I am astonished. But men air queer—specially the Morris men. How else did the old major have six sons and just this one grandson? And Ivor's father was the wildest of the lot. Maybe that's why I mistrusted his son so from the very first. You won't make me believe he's bringin' the wife of his own good will and pleasure. I believe there's been trouble between 'em, and she's brought the gentleman up with a round turn. How do I know? You know he has got Peggy Henderson to keep house for him. On the way here I stopped at High Brook to ask Peggy if she reckoned I could get her daughter Fanny to come and quilt for me next fall. Peggy was so flustered I couldn't hardly get a sensible word out of her. I've had sent her a telegraph: 'Comin' home Saturday. Prepare adjoining rooms for Mrs. Morris and twin children!'"

"Why didn't you tell us yesterday? I would love to have made a cake for those children. Peggy Henderson's cake is always as heavy as she is," Marcia interrupted so gayly her mother gave her a look of adoring pride. "Now it's too late," Marcia ran on. "Do stay over Sunday, Aunt Calverley. The Morris men will surely come to church."

I'd like to know what you think of her."

But there was no luring Aunt Calverley away from talk of Ivor Morris. His sins, actual and potential, beguiled her into staying until sundown, although she had to drive ten miles.

Marcia endured it all wonderfully—just how she never quite understood. She did not break down even at her mother's wistful comforting—only locked her fingers hard and said, gazing far away into the glowing sunset: "Why shouldn't it be true, mamsie? Ivor Morris has looked love at me and spoken it, but never a word of marriage!"

"He—he—called me 'mother' the very last time I saw him," Mrs. Alston said tremulously. "I tell you he is not wicked!"

"No; perhaps only weak," Marcia said, drawing her mother within her arms. "He worships beauty, and I am truly very pretty, mother. He is impulsive too. I know for the time he loves me with all his heart. Maybe he has loved his—I mean somebody else—with all his heart. Maybe also he will keep on doing it all his life. And I love him, mother. But he has saved and spared me this much—he has never given me the chance to tell him so. Now I know why. Let us both be grateful and show it by helping to make things easy for him. People will gossip wildly over this unheard-of wife. We must pretend to have been in the secret."

"Can you do it? Are you strong enough?" Mrs. Alston said, drawing Marcia's head within the hollow of her arm.

Marcia nestled closer and said clearly: "I must be strong enough, mamsie. You must be strong enough. We will begin by going to church tomorrow. That will be the hardest thing. Oh, how I dread facing all those curious eyes!"

"No more than we do. Therefore all of us must stay away," Ivor Morris said, coming around the corner of the piazza. Madeira vines grew so rank there they hid everything. Ivor's eyes danced a bit, but his mouth was grave and even set. He half led, half dragged, a very pretty woman, whom he seated unceremoniously beside Mrs. Alston. "We walked across the woods, Melaine and I, on purpose to ask your good offices. Melaine is Mrs. Morris, but not my wife. That honor belongs to my cousin Graham, who didn't know he was a Morris until six weeks back. It seems his mother, when very young, married privately my wild Uncle Royal, disagreed with him and ran away from him before Graham was born. The day after she left Uncle Roy broke his neck in the hunt, but it was months before his widow knew it. When she did know she married an old lover, who adopted her son and brought him up as his own. I am, it seems, very like my uncle. When she saw me the first time, just after I came here, she broke down and told me the whole story. She did not know how much of the Morris fortune was entailed or that in proving Graham the eldest heir male I was half begging myself. All that has, however, settled itself. Graham is a trump. He will take over High Brook on account of the twins. Still I'm not so bad a match I don't dare ask Marcia to marry me. I've been on the point of doing it fifty times at least. But who could be brutal enough to ask a princess to exist on nothing a year?"

"Don't scold him, please. I have done that already," Melaine entreated prettily, holding Marcia's hand. Marcia stood very straight and asked severely, trying to frown on Ivor as she spoke: "How long had you been behind those vines? Did you dare eavesdrop?"

"Certainly. I love to confound proverbs," Ivor said audaciously. "Listeners do sometimes hear good of themselves. But I know it was wrong. I'll do any penance you may set me after!"

"After what?" Marcia asked as he stopped tentatively, his eyes entreating.

"After the wedding day, sweet heart," he said. Then, heedless of others present, he took her in his arms.

Wiles of the Medicine Man.

Here is a brief account of the wiles of the southwestern medicine man as described in George Wharton James' story, "The Indians of the Painted Desert Region."

The ways of the Havasupai medicine men are similar to those of fakirs in all lands and ages. I have seen Rock Jones after examining a patient jump up and excitedly exclaim: "I can see into your head and all through your brains, down your throat and into your stomach, through your kidneys, bladder, intestines, and you are sick, very sick, very heap sick. But I am a good medicine man. I can cure you sure; I can cure you quick. But you must promise to give me \$5. Don't forget I must have \$5."

In one case with which I was familiar the medicine man declared that the heart of one sick man had gone away

IN OLD AGE the question of health becomes mainly a question of nutrition. If the stomach and other organs of digestion and nutrition are kept in a healthful condition there will be a well-nourished body, and little liability to disorders of the liver, bowels or such other disorders as may result from in-nutrition and lack of exercise.

Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cures diseases of the stomach and other organs of digestion and nutrition, and also diseases of other organs which are caused by the diseased condition of the stomach. By enabling the perfect nutrition of the body it increases the vital power and promotes a vigorous old age.

"I was a sufferer from chronic diarrhea for five years," writes Mrs. Mary A. Aaron, of Rolla, Phelps Co., Mo. "I tried different remedies, which would give me relief for a short time only. My trouble would return as bad as ever. I consulted you in July, 1900, and by your advice commenced using Dr. Pierce's remedies. I took two bottles of the 'Golden Medical Discovery,' three vials of the 'Pilets,' and some of the 'Extract of Smart-Weed,' as you advised. I have not had any return of my trouble since using your medicines. Am now seventy-one years old and I never had anything to relieve me so quick. I think Dr. Pierce's medicines the greatest on earth. Should I ever have any return of my trouble shall use your medicine. My thanks to you for your advice and thanks to Almighty God for restoring me to health through your hands."

Accept no substitute for "Golden Medical Discovery." There is nothing "just as good" for diseases of the stomach, blood and lungs.

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets, the best laxative for old people. They cure constipation and biliousness.

to the topmost peak of one of the canyon walls. It would cost several dollars to charm it back, but he could do it. Yielding to the pleadings of the man without the heart, he began to exercise his charms and incantations, and the next day he came in and declared he had seen it return during the early morning hours and his patient would recover. His prognostication was correct. The man was soon well and strong and paid his six dollar fee for having his heart returned to him with due gratitude and thankfulness.

An Unusual Suicide.

That it is possible to commit suicide by simply holding one's breath has been clearly proved by a despondent Norwegian, who killed himself in this very unusual manner. When he determined to die he closed his mouth and nostrils and by mere force of will prevented his lungs from doing their proper work.

This case is the more remarkable as there has long been a popular notion that no human being could by mere will power stop the action of the lungs for more than one or two minutes. For this reason it attracted much attention, and a French writer, commenting on it, says:

"To persons of good taste who are weary of life this method of committing suicide will certainly commend itself, one reason being because the body is not disfigured thereby and another because the act can be committed in any place and at any time. It is true that sensitive or nervous persons will never be able to kill themselves in this manner, for, simple as it seems, the act of retaining one's breath until death comes can only be performed by one who is either unusually phlegmatic or endowed with a very strong will."

Unreformed.

"I was really surprised at the dinner last night," said Mrs. Oldecastle. "Your husband is quite a raconteur."

"I know it. The doctor told Josiah years ago that he'd stuff himself to death, but he just eats away as hearty as ever."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Going Halves.

Lady Customer (in bookstore)—Give me a copy of "Romeo and Juliet."
Clerk—Yes, miss. A dollar and a half, please.

Lady Customer—I find I've only got 75 cents. Just give me "Romeo."—St. Paul Pioneer-Press.

One of War's Evils.

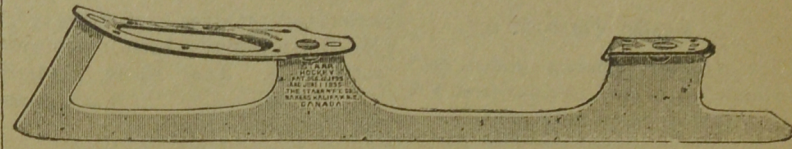
Mrs. Henpeck (visiting her first husband's grave)—Yes, here lies a hero. You would not be my husband today had he not been killed in the war.

Mr. Henpeck (fiercely)—Yes, what a curse war is!

You Take No Chances.

All druggists guarantee every bottle of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy and will refund the money to anyone who is not satisfied after using two-thirds of the contents. This is the best remedy in the world for la grippe, coughs, colds, croup and whooping cough and is pleasant and safe to take. It prevents any tendency of a cold to result in pneumonia.

- SKATES - OF ALL KINDS.



INCLUDING

HOCKEY, ACME,
RACING, BLADES
AND LONGREACH

Ladies', Men's, Boys' and Girls' Skates. Also a fine lot of Hockey Sticks

JAMES S. NEILL,
HARDWAREMAN

James F. VanBuskirk's
- SHOW ROOMS -
Phoenix Square. - - - - Fredericton

Where can be found Ladies' Seal, Ukram Lamb, Astrachan, Greenland Seal and Coon Jackets, Fur Lined Coats, Collars, Ties and Muffs of leading styles and qualities. Gent's Beaver, Coon, Wallaby, Bear, Dog, Wombat and Fur Lined Coats.

Sleigh Robes

In all the most fashionable kinds

Musk Ox, Cape Buffalo, Assinaboine and Goat. Also a full line of Black Robes.

All of the above can be bought at low prices and on easy terms. The biggest stock of Fur Goods ever shown by any one concern in Fredericton, all of which are fully guaranteed.

All orders by mail will receive prompt attention.

Fine Tailoring.

Our Stock is now complete in all the leading makes in

Overcoatings, Suitings and Trouserings.

**IMPERIAL
HALL.**

GEO. S. STANGER,
Merchant Tailor.

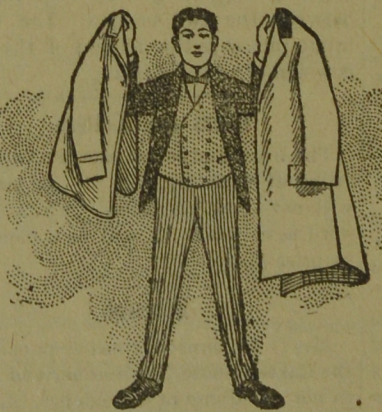
You Want an Overcoat.

A few left to sell at a discount, any style desired.

WANTED 100,000 lbs of Wool wanted in exchange for Hewson's celebrated Tweeds. Look at the fine range in my window.

W. E. SEERY, 226 Queen St.

WINTER OVERCOATS.



I have just opened a repeat order of WINTER OVERCOATINGS, consisting of Meltons, Vicunas, Cheviots, Friezes and Fancy Mixtures and Stripes, and would invite intending purchasers to call and get my prices before buying. Meltons start in price at \$13.00. Cheviots \$15.00. Fancys at \$18.50. I am also prepared to make you a nice Fur Lined Coat for \$65.00, a better one for \$75.00, \$85.00, \$100. These Coats to have Muskrat Linings and Otter or Persian Lamb Collars.

JAS. R. HOWIE, 150 Queen St.

THE CHINAMAN IS NOT IN IT. The best products of India and Ceylon enter into every grade of This famous tea is sold at 25, 30, 35, 40, 50 and 60c. a lb.
HARRY W. deFOREST, Importer and Blender, St. JOHN, N. B.

UNION BLEND TEA