CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE.

The picture of these two dear women adding their wit and charm and dainty way of living to his days grew suddenly very vivid to him; he realized that it was an unconscious counting on their continued interest and hospitality that had made the future so comfortable for so long.

With characteristic directness he began.

'Will your Ladyship allow me a half-hour of business with the Queen-mother?'

She rose easily and stepped out through the long window to the little side porch, then to the lawn. They watched her as she paced slowly away from them, a tall violet figure vivid against all the green.

'She is a dear girl, isn't she?' said her mother softly.

A sudden flood of delighted pride surged through the Colonel's heart; if only he might keep them happy and contented and—and his! He never thought of them apart; no rose and bud on one stem were more essentially together than they.

'She is too dear for one to be satisfied forever with even our charming neighborliness,' he answered gravely. 'How long have we lived 'across the street from each otheri, as they say here, Mrs. Leroy?'

She did not raise her eyes from her white ruffles.

'It is just a year this month,' she said.

'We are such good friends,' he continued in his gentle reserved voice, 'that I hesitate to break into such pleasant relations, even with the chance of making us all happier, perhaps. But I cannot resist the temptation. Could we not make one family, we three?'

A quick, warm color flooded her cheeks and forehead. She caught her breath; her startled eyes met his with a lightning-swift flash of something that moved him strangely.

'What do you mean, Colonel Driscoll?' she asked, low and quickly.

'I mean, could you give me your daughter—if she—at any—time—could think it possible?'

She drew a deep breath; the color seemed blown from her transparent skin like a flame from a lamp. For a moment her head seemed to droop; then she sat straight and moistened her lips, her eyes fixed level ahead.

'Lady?' she whispered, and he was sure that she thought the word was spoken in her ordinary tone, 'Lady?'

'I know—I realize perfectly that it is a presumption in me—at my age—when I think of what she deserves—Oh, we won't speak of it again, if you feel that it would be wrong!'

'No, no, it is not that,' she murmured. 'I—I have always known that I must lose her—but she—one is so selfish—she is all I have, you know!'

'But you would not lose her!' he cried eagerly, 'you would only share her with me, dear Mrs. Leroy! Do you think—could she—is it possible?'

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indicated her daughter, who had risen and stood beside her.

'Colonel Driscoll,' she said in a low, uneven voice, 'my daughter wishes me to say to you that she appreciates deeply the honor you do her and that if you wish it, she will be your wife. She—she is sure she will be happy.'

The Colouel felt his heart leap up and hit heavily against his chest. Was it possible! A great gratitude and pride glowed softly through him. He walked nearly up the steps and stood just below her, lifting her hand to his lips.

'My dear, dear child,' he said slowly, 'you give me too much, but you must not measure my thankfulness for the gift by my deserts. Whatever a man can do to make you and your mother happy shall be done, so long as I live.'

She smiled gravely into his eyes and bowed her head lightly; like all her little motions it had the effect of a graceful ceremony. Then slipping loose her hands she seated herself on a low stool beside her mother's chair, leaning against her knee. Her sweet silence charmed him.

He took his accustomed seat and they sat quietly, while the breeze puffed little gusts of honeysuckle across thir faces. Occasional neighbors greeted them, strolling past; the newly watered lawns all along the street sent up a fresh, turfy odor; now and then a bird chirped drowsily. He felt deliciously intimate, peacefully at home. A fine, subtle sense of *bien etre* penetrated his whole soul.

When he rose to go they had hardly exchanged a dozen words. As he held her hands closely, half-doubting his right, she raised her face to him simply and he kissed her white forehead. When he bent over her mother's hand it was cold as a stone.

Through the long pleasant weeks of the summer they talked and laughed and drove and sailed together, a happy trio. Mrs. Leroy's listless quiet of the first few days gave way to a brilliant, fitful gaiety thai enchanted the more silent two, and the turned indifferently. 'I don't care very much for the new novels.'

Involuntarily, he turned as if to catch her mother's criticism of the book; light, perhaps, but witty, and with a little twang of harmless satire that always took his fancy. But she was not there. He sighed impatiently; was it possible he was a little bored?

A quick step sounded on the gravel walk, a swish of skirts.

'It is Louise Morris,' she said; 'I'll meet her at the gate.'

After a short conference she returned.

'Will you excuse me, please?' she said, quite eagerly for her. 'Mother will be down soon, anyway, I am sure. Louise's brother is back; he has been away in the West, for six years. Mother will be delighted—she was always so fond of Jack. Louise is making a little surprise for him. He must be quite grown up now. I'll go and tell mother.'

A moment later and she was gone. Mrs. Leroy took her place in the window, and imperceptibly under her gentle influence the cloud faded from his horizon; he forgot the doubt of an hour ago. At her suggestion he dined there, and found himself as always when with his hostess, at his best. He felt that there was no hypocrisy in her interest in his ideas, and the ease with which he expressed them astonished him even while he delighted in it. Why could he not talk so with Jane? It occurred to him suddenly that it was because Jane herself talked rarely. She was, like him, a listener for the most part. His mind, unusually alert and sensitive to-night, looked ahead to the happy winter evenings he had grown to count on so, and when with an effort he detached his third figure from the group to be so closely allied after Christmastide—the date fixed for the wedding—he perceived that there was a great gap in the picture, that the warmth and sparkle had suddenly gone. All the tenderness in the world could not disguise that flash of foresight.

He grew quiet, lost in reverie. She, for the first time that she had never called him by his name before. He leaned over her, and as in one of her rare concessions she lifted her face up to him he bent lower than her forehead—what compelled him to kiss her soft cheek rather than her lips he did not know.

Unexpected business summoned him to New York for a fortnight, the next day, and the great city drew him irresistibly into its noisy maelstrom; the current of his thoughts changed absolutely. Old friend and new took up his leisure; his affairs as they grew more pressing awoke in him a keen delight in the struggle with his opponents; as he shook hands triumphantly with his lawyer after a well earned victory, he felt years younger. He decided that he had moped too long in the country: 'We must move into town this season,' he said to himself.

He fairly ran up the cottage steps in the gathering dusk. He longed to see them, full of plans fort he winter. Hannah met him at the door; the ladies had all gone to a dance at the Morrises'; there had been an invitation for him, so he would not intrude if he followed.

Hastily changing his clothes, he walked up the street. Lights and music poured out of the open windows of the large house; the full moon made the grounds about it almost as bright as the rooms. He stepped up on the piazza and looked in at the swaying couples. Lady Jane, beautiful in pale-blue mull, drifted by in her young host's arms; she was flushed with dancing, her hair had escaped from its usual calm. He hardly recognized her. As he looked out toward the old garden, he caught a glimpse of a flowing white gown, a lace scarf thrown over a head whose fine poise he could not mistake.

A young man passed him with a filmy crepe shawl he knew well. The colonel stepped along with him.

'You are taking this to Mrs. Leroy?'

'Yes, Colonel, she feels the air a little.'

'Let me relieve you of it,' and he walked alone into the garden with the softly scented cobweb over his arm.

She was standing in an old, neglected Summer-house, her back to the door. As he stopped behind her and laid the soft wrap over her firm, white shoulders, she turned her head with a startled prescience of his personality and met his eyes full. He looked straight into those soft, gray depths, and as he looked, searching for something there, he knew not what, troubled strangely by her nearness and the helpless surrender of her fastened gaze, a great light burst upon him.

'It is you! it is you!' he said hoarsely, and crushing her in his arms he kissed her heavily on her yielding mouth.

For a moment she rested against him. The music, piercingly sweet, drove away thought. Then she drew herself back, pushing him blindly from her.

'No, no, no!' she gasped, 'it is before!'

Could this be Lady, this shy, faltering girl? Moved by an overmastering impulse the man behind the Summer house turned his head and looked through the broken wall.

Lady Jane was blushing and paling in quick succession; the waves of red flooded over her moved face and receded like the tide at turn. Her eyes were piteous, her hair fell low over her forehead; she looked incredibly young.

'Of course,' said the young man bitterly, 'it is a good match—a fine match. You will have a beautiful home and everything you want.'

She put out her hands appealingly. 'Oh, Jack, how can you hurt me so? You know I would live with you in a garrett—on the plains——'

'Then do it.'

'I shall never hurt a person so terribly to whom I have freely given my word,' she said, with a touch of her old-time decision.

Colonel Driscoll felt his blood sweeping through his veins like wine. He was far too excited for fineeses, too eager—and he had been so willing to wait, once!—for the next sweet moment when this almost-tragedy should be resolved into its elements. He strode out into the open space in front of the little house.

'My dear young people,' he said, as they stared at him in absolute silence, 'I am, I am—' he had intended to carry the matter off jocularly, but the sight of the girl's tearstained face and the emotion of the minutes before had softened and awed him. His eyes seemed yet to hold those gray ones; he felt strangely the pressure of that soft body against his.

'Ah, my dear,' he said gently, 'could you not believe me when I told you that my one wish was to make you happy as long as I lived? Happiness is not built on mistakes, and you must forgive us if we do not always allow youth to monopolize them.

'She has always been like a dear child to me, Mr. Morris,' he turned to the other man, 'and you would never wish me to change my regard for her, could you know it!

'Go with him, Lady dear, and forgive me if I have ever pained you—believe me, I am very happy tonight.'

He raised her softly as she knelt before him, weeping, and kissed her hair.

'But there is nothing to forgive,' he assured her.

They went away hand in hand, happy like two dazed children for whom the sky has suddenly but not—because they are young—too miraculously opened, and the shrubbery swallowed them.

He turned and strode back into the shadow. Mrs. Leroy sat crouching on the fallen timber, her head still bent. Stooping behind her, he drew her toward him.

'They have forgotten us by now,' he whispered; 'can I make you forget them?'

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WALL PAPER

Orphans' Court.

Monday, November 26th, 1906.—J. Grant Mathias, executor of Jeremiah Mathias, deceased, returned report of sale of personal property and inventories of money and debts.

Westminster Deposit and Trust Company, guardian of Martha C. Myers, settled their first and final account.

J. Franklin Raver and Carroll G. Raver, executors of J. Franklin Raver, deceased, received order of court to pay to Alexander Bond Raver and Beulah P. Raver, the funds held for them, they having arrived at legal age.

Singleton A. Aldridge, executor of Lewis A. Aldridge, deceased, settled his second and final account.

Mary Mills Vanderford, executrix of Charles H. Vanderford, deceased, returned report of sale of personal property, received order to transfer stocks, and settled her first and final account.

Tuesday, November 27th.—The sale of real estate of Joseph Miller, deceased, finally ratified and confirmed by the court.

The sale of leasehold property of Grove A. Shipley, deceased, finally ratified and confirmed by the court.

Christianna R. Mitten, administratrix, d. b. n. c. t. a. of Nelson Mitten, deceased, received order to sell certain real estate, and reported sale of same to this court, on which was granted order ni si.

Ancillary letters of administration on the estate of James A. Diller, deceased, granted unto Charles O. Clemson.

CASTORIA.

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Rev. Dr. John F. Goucher, president of the Woman's College, Baltimore, who is taking a trip around the world, has made a gift of his home on St. Paul street, to that institution. The property is said to be worth $140,000 and is deeded to the trustees of the the college without reservation, though Dr. Goucher makes some suggestions in relation to the uses to which it will be devoted. They are suggestions only and are not to bind the trustees if they shall consider some other course preferable.

Andrew Carnegie has given $500,000 conditionally to the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, to establish twenty branch libraries. The city must guarantee 10 per cent of the cost of the building for the purchase of books and for maintenance, and must also provide the sites.

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If any particle of dust has become lodged in the eye, do not rub the eyelid, as it will more firmly imbed the intruder in the eyeball. A smooth flaxseed slipped under the eyelid and allowed to move over the eyeball will usually dislodge any offending particle.

Persons wearing eyeglasses should visit an occulist periodically and have the glasses readjusted. Pain in the eyes is frequently caused by wearing glasses that have been slightly bent or become unfitted to the eye.

A well-known dentist recommends chewing beeswax during the morning toilet as a dental exercise. It resists them teeth gently and its use will aid the to become white and clean and strong and the gums firm.

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Strain strong sage tea, add a teaspoonful of alcohol to a pint of the tea, and apply it to the eyelashes with a soft brush once a day, to darken them and stimulate their growth.

In cases of illness accompanied by heat and fever, no solid food should be given, but juicy fruits will prove beneficial.