

The ISLAND of REGENERATION

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SYNOPSIS.

A young woman cast ashore on a lonely island, finds a solitary inhabitant, a young white man, dressed like a savage, and not able to speak in any known language. She decides to educate him. She finds him in an attitude of prayer, babbling an incoherent jargon. She finds a human skeleton and the skeleton of a dog. She finds a Bible and a silver box bearing the name of John Revell Charnock, with a date 25 years before her landing. She concludes that her companion is an American and that he was cast ashore on the island when a child.

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

The first impulse of the woman was to laugh. The next impulse was to take off the palm leaf hat and stand with bowed head and clasped hands. What marvelous miracle was this that throughout the years which she could no longer doubt this man had been alone on the island, there had survived the one childish habit of prayer and that the one vestige of language which had remained to him was the language of petition. She did not believe in it, of course. It was absurd to her, but it was none the less wonderful. It filled her with a certain awe. It was as if some power had maintained a hold upon the consciousness of this man in this way.

"Now I lay me down to sleep!" How long it had been since she had said that? She believed nothing, she cared for nothing, but the woman hid her face in her hands for a moment. She clenched her teeth and forced out of her mind that which at that moment was striving for birth. She was to teach this man everything. She was to make him know life and history. She was to bring him in touch with all the glories of to-day and she recognized in that hour, although she did not and could not admit it, that perhaps he might teach her something as well, something that she had not known or something that she had forgotten, without the knowledge of which all her science was a vain, a foolish, a futile thing.

The little prayer was ended. The man rose to his feet. She took her spade and went back to the place where the bodies had lain and there began carefully to scrape away the earth, examining scrupulously every shovelful ere she threw it aside. In one place where the hand had lain, she remembered, her labors were rewarded. She came across two rings, a diamond and a plain circlet of gold. These she placed in her tunic with the collar and continued her digging. It was growing late and growing dark, but she left no square inch of ground unexplored. She found nothing else. The rings belonged to a woman evidently. Her surmise in that particular was right. There were no other metal parts of her apparel left. The nails in her shoes, the steel of her corset had rusted away and left no sign. There was nothing remaining but the two little baubles pressing against her own warm flesh.

So intent had she been that the sun had gone down before she ceased and upon the island there descended that quick and sudden night of the tropics. The wind had risen, the old ocean was thundering on the barrier reef and a heavy sea breeze was shrieking through the trees. The sky on the horizon was overclouded and the clouds were rising rapidly. There would be a storm, which was developing with tropic rapidity. Quickly she retraced her steps along the sand toward the cave on the other side, the man following.

They had progressed not more than half way when the storm burst upon them. Peals of thunder and flashes of lightning filled the air. It was such a display of the Titanic forces of nature as might have appalled the stoutest heart. It filled the woman with a vague terror. She noticed with satisfaction that the man was entirely unmoved by the terrific demonstrations of nature. By the flashes of lightning as they stumbled along in the otherwise total blackness she could see his face serene. In a moment of apprehension she caught his hand with her own and clung to it tightly. It was the unconscious appeal of the physical weaker to the physical stronger. Her hand had clasped the hands of her fellow creatures many times. Never before had his palm met the palm of human being, much less a woman's. She could feel that tremor run through him, but by instinct, as it were, he met her hand clasp with his own, and together they made their way to the cave.

They had scarcely reached it when the rain burst upon them. The heavens were opened, the floods descended, they beat upon the sands in fury. She could not drive him out there in that flood for the night. She motioned him to come within the entrance of the cave which was sheltered from the wind and which was dry and still. She made him lie down near the entrance and then, withdrawing herself into a recess at the side, she disposed of the bars, which she had carried home on her shoulders, in front of her from wall to wall and lashing them with the rope to her person made another feeble barrier, but which would yet give the alarm to her and waken her

if it were moved. And presently she went to sleep. She was too tired even to speculate on her discoveries or to piece them together; that would be occupation for the morning.

CHAPTER V.

The Voices of the Past.

It rained hard during most of the night. The woman slept lightly and whenever she woke she could hear outside of her sanctuary the roar of the storm. The man, as usual, slept the long hours through as undisturbed by the commotion as a child. It was apparent to her that he had absolutely no fear. Whether this was due to ignorance or temperament she could not say. Was fear, after all, under the conditions in which his life had been lived, a purely artificial quality, or was it natural and inherent? He had avoidances, abhorrences, antipathies, as the skeletons in the coppice which she had buried. Was that avoidance fear or was it something else? Was it instinct or did it arise from recollection? She rather fancied the last. If so, it was evident that the man had been on the island a long time. It would have taken years for the metal that must have been about that woman's person to rust away, for the steel clasps of the dog's collar entirely to disappear.

Upon that faint memory that he cherished, upon that prayer that he prayed, she could build the foundation of his education. She had been so successful in training him and in restraining him, in influencing him and swaying him so far that she had abundant confidence in her ability to do so to the end. It was quite evident that life would be easily supported under the conditions in which it must be lived on that island. She need have no physical concern as to her material well being or comfort, and here was mental education and stimulus which made her for the time being forget the rest of the world.

Indeed, she thought bitterly, as she lay awake during the long watches of the night, that the rest of the world was nothing to her and that she hated it. She, therefore, not only was becoming resigned to her situation, but was rejoicing in it. She would teach this man all she knew. She would teach him to think, to reflect, to reason. She would teach him to talk. Since she had a book, albeit a sorry one, she would teach him to read. The rain fell more softly now. Her eyes drooped. She slept again only to wake and muse once more. She could have slept better had he been outside. How could he lie there in the complete and steeping insensibility of slumber? Her hand fell against her breast. There was the treasure trove of her existence the day before. What would they tell her? She could scarcely wait until morning to look. So she woke and slept and woke and slept until the day broke.

It was bright and sunshiny out, although there were ominous clouds all about the western horizon. It was probable that the rainy season was at hand, if not upon them. She regretted that she had not given more time to the study of nature, to the fauna and flora of the South seas, to the conditions of wind and weather under which life was lived there. Much philosophy would she gladly have parted with for such practical information. She had to piece her ideas of affairs out from scraps and tags of knowledge, unclassified, incoherent; from vague recollections of childhood stories and romances; from carelessly scanned collections of voyages, books of travel and adventure. The result was unsatisfactory. In some particulars the instinctive man before her was her master. At the things which went to make up physical comfort and well being in a state of absolute nature he certainly surpassed her.

She was thankful when she walked abroad that she had the shelter of the cave, for everything was drenched from the terrific downpour. If it was the beginning of the wet season she knew that the rains would soon come again. Still she luxuriated in what freedom she had. Without removing her single garment she plunged into the lagoon for a refreshing bath. The man followed her and swam about her moving slowly, with less skill than she, but as easily as a porpoise plunges about the bow of a progressing ship.

Refreshed, she came back to the mouth of the cave and brought thence for a careful inspection all her worldly possessions, save the little heap of clothing which she had carefully piled upon the jutting shelf in the shadow of the cave for time of need. She ranged them on the sands before her. There was the Bible and the little silver box which she had found in the cave. She examined more critically its contents, wondering what they might be, and finally there came into her mind recognition that they were flint and steel. When she wished, she could make a fire. She was happy for the moment in the knowledge and then the uselessness of the power came across her curiously. What did she want of fire? There was nothing to cook. Its warmth was unnecessary. Still she was glad to have the ancient flame kindlers and she laid them aside carefully in the box, not knowing when they might be useful, under what circumstances invaluable. At least she might regard them as apparatus which would be helpful



The Man Followed Her and Swam About Her, Moving Slowly.

in the curriculum through which she meant her savage pupil should pass.

Then there was her watch which she guarded as the apple of her eye. It was an American watch of the very best make, and although it had gone with her through the waters such was the workmanship of the case that it had taken no harm. It was ticking away bravely, marking time. She thought that for her time had stopped, and yet she was glad, indeed, for the almost human sound it made when she laid it lovingly against her cheek.

There were the hairpins, also, for which she was most grateful. They enabled her to keep her hair in order. She had a wealth of glorious hair, black as the midnight sky. With the aid of the mirror and of the comb, which also was a priceless treasure, she arranged it carefully according to the mode which best became her. Sometimes when she had finished her toilet, she shot a glance at the watchful man, a human, natural instinctive glance, but she was able to detect no change in his mental attitude, which was that of such complete and entire adoration, mingled with timidity and hesitation, that no transient change apparently was able to modify it. He looked upon her as he might have looked upon a god, she thought, had he known what a god was and had there been such a thing to look at.

There was also the pair of scissors, together with the little housewife with needles and thread. Mirror, hairpins, scissors, sewing materials, comb—woman's gear and the Bible, a woman's book, she reflected with a certain bitterness, unconscious of the truth of her thought—a book for children, old women, and women-led men! Well, that philosophy upon which she prided herself must come to her assistance now and she could not afford to disdain the volume which was all that the world of many books offered to her for her purpose, because she did not believe in it. The truth was in her and she could tell him what it was despite the assertion of the printed pages.

In the leather bag there was absolutely nothing except broken glass and scratched bottle tops of silver and the bag itself was ruined. She separated the pieces of metal and the metal fittings of the bag, which were also of silver, and filling the rotting leather with sand she presently sank it in the lagoon.

Last of all she examined what she had brought from the other shore of the island the night before. The silver was tarnished, but by rubbing it in the sand she soon brightened it. It was heavily engraved and she had no difficulty in making out the words: "John Revell Charnock—His Dog." After that was a date "July 22, 1875." John Revell Charnock then would be 21 years old, assuming that this was he and that the dog had been given him when he was born. It was more probable, however, that he was from three to five years old before he became the owner of a dog, which would make him about 25.

The man before her looked younger to her scrutiny than that. Care and trouble had passed him by. With nothing to vex him he might have been any age. He would probably look just as he was for 20 years or more. Still fancifully adjusting external relations to internal relations, which, after all, she realized was the secret of life according to her favorite

philosopher, she concluded that the man was 25, three years older than she at that moment, a proper difference in their ages for . . . Her face flamed. She scarcely knew why, and she turned to an inspection of the rings.

The first was a diamond, a solitaire, of rare beauty, she judged. Although she was not especially expert in such matters, she deemed it must be of great value. There was no inscription of any sort within the narrow hoop of gold, although she searched keenly the inner surface. The diamond was curiously set. There was an exquisite tracery of a little coat of arms on either side of the setting, done in miniature but with a skill to marvel at, too small even for her brilliant vision to decipher in detail.

The other she recognized with a sneer as one of those fetters of convention, a wedding ring. It was a heavier hoop of gold much engraved within. She washed it in the stream and rubbed it in the sand until she could make it out. "J. R. C.," she read, "to M. P. T." There was a date after, September 10, 1869, and then these cabalistic words, "II Cor. 12:15," which she presently divined to be a reference to some text in the Bible, fit source from which to select the "posy of a ring," agreeable to those who submit to such ancient follies as the well-named bonds of matrimony.

She reached for the Bible and with unfamiliar fingers searched through it until she found the place: "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." The beauty of the phrase caught her fancy. She read with a strange new interest the chapter in which these words were shrined. The touch of human passion came to her across the long years and with the ring sparkling in her own white hand she embodied its tradition in personality and the woman who had been so loved stood before her. Her eyes fell again upon the man and the dream was broken.

She pieced together now all that she had of him, smiling as she did so at the thought of certain strange stories she had read wherein men of marvelous deductive powers had brought to solution problems which appeared as impossible of detection as this presented to her.

John Revell Charnock, evidently the father of the man of the island, had married one M. P. T. on the 10th of September, 1869. Perhaps within a year afterward this John Revell Charnock, assuming him, as was likely, to have borne his father's name, was born. The best English stock in the colony were Massachusetts and Virginia. The stern piece of the boat borne the name of a Virginia river and of a Virginia town. The man before her was a Virginian, therefore. Say he was born in 1871, it would make him 25 years old, in accordance with her first guess. The father and mother, possibly ruined by the results of the civil war, had embarked on some vessel to seek a fortune in a new land. Something had happened to the ship and the woman, the little boy and the dog had landed in some way upon these shores alone after some horrible voyage, perhaps like that she had passed through. The boy must have been five or six years old, else he would have died being deserted. The woman had, indeed, died, and the

dog, with her, and left the lad alone. Alone he had been for a score of years on that island. What watchful Providence? . . . Stop! She believed in no Providence. What strange mysterious fate kept him from the fate of the other two, had preserved him alone . . . for her?

So she wove a history out of her treasure trove for this man, a history which at least satisfied her and which the more she reasoned about it and the more she tested it, seemed absolutely adequate and entirely correct. Well, she had opportunity now and she was glad. She faced the future calmly, recognizing her chance and her work and set about with systematic method, order and persistence to teach this man what it was to be a human being, to give him, as rapidly as she might communicate it and as he might receive it, all the learning she possessed, to compensate him with no further delay for those 25 years of silence.

Was it for this she had been trained and educated at great cost of time and money and effort? That she being a woman should give it all to this one man without money and without price?

CHAPTER VI.

The Baseless Fabric.

True philosophy is ascetic. It may best be practiced under conditions in which the material is in abeyance. It exalts the spiritual. It is distinguished by indifference to environment. There is nothing so fatal to its profession as extravagance. Frugality is to the philosopher what modesty is to the woman—the essential thing without which it and she cease to be.

The atmosphere into which Katherine Brenton was suddenly plunged by her bold step was the very antithesis of these requirements. It was unhealthy, and like unhealthy airs it bred disaster. She had been trained to independence of conditions, to disregard of circumstances, as well as to disdain of restraint; but there was that within her surroundings which, from her first experience of them, she felt instinctively to be vitiating, which tended to deprave, which precluded the exercise of clear, uninflected mentality. Especially in her case was this true since the luxury with which she had been surrounded appealed so subtly to the preponderant, and it must be admitted, immortal feminine in her composition. Sex distinction, sex difference was the one thing against which she fought. Sex equality was the supreme good to be desired in her scheme of right relationships between the individual and the universe. While she rebelled against her sex, yet she rejoiced in it. Glad was she sometimes on that very account that to her was given the opportunity to prove her superiority to the limitations, disabilities and man-made trammels of womankind.

Born of two fanatics on the same subject, whose insanity was modified and mollified by brilliancy of intellect in every other field of investigation and experiment, Katherine Brenton had been trained to the hour for her profession, for the exploitation of her principles. The greatest of universities pointed to her with peculiar pride as one of the children of the free; free from everything in thought and determined to be free from everything in action. Much was expected from her and the world was not disappointed at the first result of her mental labor. There were certain old-fashioned people who deplored the perversion of so much talent and even genius to the defense of error, but these did not count. The world bought her book in thousands, read it avidly and regarded it as the last word of the last woman of the end of the age on the sex problem. Cleverly disguising her philosophy in the form of fiction, with one bound she had leaped to the fore front of all the writers struggling for recognition. Publishers sought her. Magazines pursued her. Another book took shape in her mind.

Singularly enough her education and the erratic bent of her mind had left her primarily quite unspoiled. She was the product not merely of her age, her environment, her parents, but of a long generation of people to whom her thoughts would have been as abhorrent as her person was agreeable. The unconscious Christianity which surrounds the world and especially the world of woman kept her pure and sweet and lovable—these in spite of, not because of, her perverse and perverted philosophy. Though she defied convention in its spirit, she was naturally subject to it in its exercise. For instance, to her the marriage bond was, indeed, a bond, the marriage vow a confession of weakness—on the part of the woman, at least—and the marriage relation an acknowledgement of inferiority—again on the part of the woman. She would have none of these things in her life. Yet, as she thought, she had given her heart to a man—alas, the submission to the eternal law!—and although their relationship was sanctioned by nothing but their affection, it was to her as pure and as holy a thing as if the contract had been witnessed and blessed by a thousand priests. What was it to him? She counted without the other sex. Many other women unfortunately have done the same.

Not content with the writing of books, her intense devotion to her cause, coupled with her unflagging energy, had found vent upon the lecture platform. The curious crowded



to her feet at once, so bold, so radical, so beautiful and so innocent. One of her first converts had been the only son of a multi-millionaire, bygone bonanza king of the Pacific slope. His conversion was not so much an effort of pure reason as of primal passion, although that fact was in no wise apparent to her. She would find that out later. This modern Hypatia, skilled in the learning of the schools, burning with exhaustless zeal, permeated with fiery energy, was yet as innocent in some ways as any of her humbler sisters. As that good Book which she disdained in the newer illuminations which had come to her, might have said of her, she was in the world but not of it.

Unconsciously she fulfilled many injunctions of him who had she but known it was the greatest of philosophers. Naturally she kept herself unspotted from the world. Yet when the young man who had engaged her affections proposed to her that they should put her theories in practice, after some hesitation she had acceded to his proposition. It was a species of self-immolation not far from heroism that made her consent. Indeed, she did not realize how heroic it was. With no other ceremony than a clasp of the hand and an unspoken, wordless promise of trust, devotion, single-hearted alliance, publicly and before God and man, without a thought for the one and with no full realization of the thoughts of the other—at least on her part—they had gone away together, hand in hand; he and she together, in love like any other pair since Eve mated with Adam in the dawn of the world's first morning.

Yet there has never been an Eder of which man has known without its serpent. In the cabin of that gorgeous yacht, Satan had reared his head. The first week or so of the adventure had been filled with idyllic happiness, happiness so great that it was strong enough to quiet certain low, still, small voices of conscience which the woman rightly ascribed to a strange atavism of ancient prejudice to which her philosophy was as yet unequal.

However, such conditions did not long persist. Her disciple was inclined, presently she found to her sorrow, to take a somewhat lower view of the situation than suited her own high-souled views. The ardor of her devotee cooled as his passion increased. Shut up in the narrow confines of a ship—great and splendid though this yacht was beyond imagination—little characteristics heretofore unsuspected developed in the mere man. The course of true love was not so smooth as the summer seas over which they sailed. The air in which they lived was ruffled by flurries in which experience would have found presage for coming deeper storm. The image that had feet of clay sought for similar earthly alloy in the companion image which was made of pure gold all through, and finding it not, resented it desperately. The convert having gained his desire, weakened in his principles. There was no relaxation in his devotion, in his tenderness, in anything outward and visible, but the high philosophy which had made the joint effort almost a self-sacrifice of demonstration was slowly vanishing from one heart while the other clung the more tenaciously to it.

It was the old, old story. In a little the catspaw developed into the tempest. When it appeared it came with surprising swiftness. The woman found that in neither abstract thought nor mental speculation was there any protection for her. There might be no God in heaven, but there was a conscience in her breast. Finally she broke away from the man so far as she could do so when they were both in the same ship of which he was lord and master. She would have nothing more to do with him, save that which common decency and the bare civilities of life demanded of her. Denied the privileges upon which he had counted, the man grew savage and showed the cloven foot. The disagreement became a quarrel. The quarrel ran through several phases. Ashamed of himself he had recanted at first. Then he had sworn again allegiance to the specious philosophy which she now realized he had only professed, consciously or unconsciously, that he might possess her. But she was not deceived. There was no truth in his words; his asseverations carried no conviction to her soul. Again he stormed and raged; once more he apologized and appealed, but the periods of calm grew shorter and the periods of storm grew longer and more vehement. The woman alone was steadfast. She was overwhelmed with shame, the horror of the situation was rising upon her.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Reliable Plan.

"Whenever I don't like a man very well," remarked the cynical person, "I give him a tip on the races. I don't care how much it loses for him."

"But suppose he wins?"

"Then he's unhappy because he didn't bet more."

"And if he doesn't bet at all?"

"I keep on giving tips until one does win and then he feels as if he had missed the chance of his life."