

happiness as I dreamed of was never meant for me." Harding spoke bitterly in spite of his will to show only a brave face.

"Was Marlborough, then, a place where men are sure to be happy?" Carol asked, smiling a little.

"It was a place," he burst out hotly, "where a man could live and work and stand for something, and make a home and seek the love of the woman he worships!"

"And all these things are impossible in Carthage?" she asked, looking steadfastly in his face.

"All."
"Do you think, Mr. Harding," Carol began with a little tremor in her voice, "that a woman who truly cared for a man would care less for him because of the place in which he lived?"

"I only think," he said sadly, "of the man's side of it. No man could ask a woman to go with him to such a place as mine, not"—he added, with all the ardor of his love for her bursting the bonds he had laid upon it, "under the light of her eyes—not if he loved a woman like you."

"Why?" she asked, leaning forward and playing with a flower she had taken from the table, the color which had left her face coming back. "Am I so weak, so vain, so slight a woman that I could not bear my part in whatever was hard to bear?"

He rose and walked up and down the room hastily. "What do you think of me?" he cried, as he tortured beyond his self-control. "Do you think me weak enough to declare that I love you when I have no right and no hope in doing such a thing?"

"If I gave you the right and the hope because I loved you very much, then what would you do?" and the beautiful head was bent like the flower on its stem.

He wheeled from where he stood and came swiftly and stood before her.

"Then," he said, in a tone in which joy and sorrow seemed to break together, "then I should die of joy."

CHAPTER XIV—MR. HARDING DISCOVERS HIS CALLING

THEY were married in September. If he had gone to Marlborough, Harding was told, he would have been obliged to wait a year, but he was not to mope alone in Carthage a moment longer than was necessary.

Even Carthage was glorified to the young pastor that summer in the rapture of his enjoyment of preparing a home for Carol. It was not such a home, however, as he had wished to make for her, not even such a one as Carthage could have afforded. He had wanted to take a house on the hill, newly built and attractive, but to this Carol would not agree.

"I want to live close to the church," she said, "and among our people; not as far above them as we can get." And being in earnest she had her way.

Accordingly, the old-fashioned house in which Harding had his study was taken and fitted over to suit the expected bride. Carol, with Kenneth and her mother, made frequent expeditions from Hampton to see and direct the changes in the house—a duty which the girl discharged in a manner most charmingly compounded of blushing consciousness and businesslike dignity. The house was low and old-fashioned, but rambling and roomy, rich in deep freplaces and window-seats, and had a quaint old hall and staircase.

Wonderful was the transformation of the place under the new order, but again and again Carol would exclaim: "But, Morris, it must not be too fine! I want it just good enough, but not too good. Nobody is to be over-awed by any show of wealth and luxury in our house. I want it to be such a home as they can all have if they set about it. I have my opinion of your study! I have always been afraid it was too sumptuous."

And so it fell out that Mrs. Bigelow, when first she beheld the new abode in its fresh order, went home and told "Sam" that it was "real nice, but awful plain, and they hadn't a moquette carpet in the house."

There was a wedding journey, and then a blithe homeward to the hospitable house, and Mrs. Bigelow received them with open arms and illimitable supper, prepared in their own kitchen by their own maid under her direction. When Ratley brought up their trunks in his express wagon he came into the library with some state and made a little speech to Mrs. Harding, saying that she "was welcome in our midst, and would always find Carthage hearts and Carthage hands ready to serve her."

After all outsiders had gone and left them, Morris Harding sat at his wife's feet, and looking up at her with adoring eyes he said:

"When I see you, Carol, talking to Jim Ratley and his kind, I almost cry to think that this is the society to which I have brought you. But we will keep up courage, dear. We have our home all to ourselves, and who knows? with you to reinforce me I may not have to stay here more than a year longer. Do you think you can endure it for a year?"

"Yes; a lifetime, Morris," said Carol quite soberly. "I want to stay here, anyway, until we have won the secret of the situation. You have been dear and brave, but I don't think you have quite done that yet."

"How have I not, Carol?"

"Have you loved the people, dear? Hasn't it rather been a kind of toleration?"

"Perhaps it has."

"You have preached with the tongues of men and of angels, Morris, and have bestowed all your goods to feed the poor, but if you have not loved them, if you have lived apart from them in spirit, we have still a great work to do here."

"We have so much love on hand just now, Carol, that I will spare some even to Carthage," Harding made laughing answer, but her words sank deep into his heart.

It was in the following May, and Carol was gathering lilies-of-the-valley in her bit of garden close beside the dull Carthage street, when a distinguished-looking man stopped at her gate, and removing his hat with courtly courtesy, bade her good-morning.

It was Mr. Broke Hollister.

Carol conducted him to her husband's study, where he received a hearty welcome, and here both gentlemen constrained her to remain with them—Mr. Hollister declaring that he wanted her for an advocate to plead the cause he had come to present with her husband.

"Our church in Marlborough, as you know, is still vacant, my young and radiant friends," he began in his whimsical fashion, "and I have had several interviews

lately with our Brother Goodwin, our Emeritus, who so undid us a year ago.

"Well, the old man is breaking down, is confined to the house now, probably will never be out much more. He is greatly softened in his mind, and evidently suffers a keen compunction for the action he took in preventing you from becoming our pastor. It is really pathetic to see the old man in his weakness, and hear him say that he doesn't know but perhaps there may have been two Isaiahs after all. To come to the point, Mr. Harding, and also Mrs. Harding"—and Mr. Hollister bowed profoundly as he sat—"our church is of the same mind as a year ago. You are our first love and remain our last. Can you forgive us and consider our desires?"

There was a long and thoughtful silence, and then Harding, looking up with his frank smile, said:

"We can forgive you, surely, if we have anything to forgive; there is no question about that. The rest is not quite so easy. Do you remember, Mr. Hollister, our long talk in this room about the ministry, the restlessness and discontent in it, and the rush for vacant pulpits?"

Mr. Hollister remembered it.

"At that time I asked you, I think, in honest perplexity, what was the matter with us men in the ministry, and you declined to give me your opinion. I have thought much over the matter since, and while I am sure there is much of unreasonable demand to lay at the door of the churches, I am satisfied that the laity of the Sons of Thunder is working still among the disciples of Christ—they still seek place, reputation and power, being, after all, but men. I can say this because I sought them myself, and eagerly. After the first two or three years in Carthage I hardly more than endured my life here, and was convinced—to be perfectly frank—that it was totally inadequate to my ability."

"And to continue this perfect frankness," said Mr. Hollister, "do you not think to still the pulpit?"

"No," replied Morris Harding; "I have learned, having a very wonderful wife, Mr. Hollister, to see things from a different angle. If a man has been blessed with any exceptional privileges of natural endowment or acquired power, let me ask you where does he belong? Where all is select and strong and favored already, or among those whose lives are cheerless and toil-worn? The valleys were to be exalted and the hills to be brought low to make ready for the coming of righteousness, you remember. But you will think I have mounted the pulpit!"

"I like your pulpit work, you know," Hollister made answer; "but tell me, then, are all the clever preachers to stay in the weak churches? It's all very well for the 'worthy poor,' but what becomes of the 'worthy rich'?"

"I don't imagine they will find it impossible to secure good preaching yet a while," replied Harding with a smile.

"But this is the point, Mr. Hollister. If I left Carthage now for Marlborough it would not be because my work was done here, for my real work is only just begun; nor because there was dissatisfaction in my church, which, thank God, there is not; nor even for the sake of my wife's health," whereupon Carol laughed, and looking upon her blooming face Hollister laughed too.

"It would be," continued Harding, "simply because I wanted a pleasanter place to live, more intellectual and social advantages, more salary, more name."



WHERE THE YOUNG LOOK FORWARD TO OLD AGE

By Onoto Watanna



PERHAPS one of the sweetest characteristics of the Japanese is their innate love, obedience and respect for their parents. The Japanese character in this respect has not its parallel the world over. To a Japanese the word "duty" might be said to be the most significant word in the language. But the Japanese interpretation of the word has a far different meaning to the generally accepted one. Duty, to a Japanese, means not merely obedience and discipline, but strong, sweet, cultivated, parental devotion. I use the word cultivated because this feeling has been and is cultivated in Japan. Nevertheless it does not lose its naturalness. On the contrary, this devotion of the young for the old—the adoration of the parent by the child—becomes a natural cultivation. It is exemplified not only in the larger and formal acts of Japanese life, but in the minutest and smallest detail. The little Japanese child obeys without question, and generally in a lovable, willing manner, the gentle "demand" of its parents, and even in cases where the parents are harsh the natural love of authority is still there and the child is obedient.

The parents' word is always law in Japan, and perhaps this accounts for the sweetness and gentleness of the Japanese character. The Japanese are inherently obedient people. The old always take precedence of the young in all things. An eager, impetuous young man, be he ever so brilliant and clever, is not expected in Japan to have the reason, the wisdom and the foresight of an old man. Therefore the old man comes first always. As a result, there is, perhaps, more general happiness in Japan than anywhere else in the world.

One might imagine that where duty is carried to the extent it is in Japan the natural love is not so much in evidence—I mean the actual affection, rather than the mere duty, of a child to its parent. On the contrary, the natural bond of affection between parents and children is nowhere so wonderful as in Japan. No matter how unkind, unjust or even wicked a parent may be, or how depraved, the child invariably clings to that parent, even though, as is often the case, its own nature be finer.

There exists in Japan a certain custom of adopting "from the cradle." A childless couple will very often adopt a child, taking it generally as soon as it is born. The child's real parents may have been people in every way inferior to its adopted parents. The little one may be reared by the foster-parents as if it were their own child,

"All reasonable desires, if I may venture to say so," said Hollister.

"Yes; but you will notice, purely selfish, and being such I have no right to act upon them. There are other men with a perfectly clear title to leave their present fields who are quite as well equipped to do your work as I, but not every man can do just the work that is needed now in Carthage. I am vain enough to think I can. I have—very slowly, I admit—learned to love my people and my work among them. Their lives are sad-colored and depressed, and only a genuine love and sympathy can suffice to reach their hearts and lift them up. I am beginning now to see a new influence working among them. It is a clear case of the 'ewig weibliche.' Mrs. Harding keeps the house always open to every one in the church, and she has a strong hold on the women and children. There are certain changes already in their houses and their habits. They are getting a new point of view. We are opening classes and clubs and lectures for them, not expecting to make them over, but to make their lives endurable. You have no idea how interesting the work is, Mr. Hollister, and it is by no means hopeless, as I used to fancy when I first met you."

"I remember that you had a large congregation then," said Mr. Hollister thoughtfully.

"Yes, but it has grown wonderfully since then. I have a church full—really full—of mechanics and their families to preach to every Sunday, and I can tell you, Mr. Hollister, they are not the least responsive class to a preacher. There is many a man, sick of the impervious selfishness of the so-called 'upper classes,' who would envy me my opportunity," and Harding's face was full of an enthusiasm the sincerity of which Hollister could not mistake.

"I suppose you have made the second Isaiah your patron saint?" he remained smiling ruefully. "Do you mean to spend your lifetime in Carthage?"

"Perhaps not," returned Harding; "but I believe in the cumulative effect of a long pastorate where there is undivided sympathy between pastor and people. When I leave it must not be for my own personal advancement. I have not so learned Christ," he added reverently.

When Bruen Hollister walked beside Harding down the dull Carthage street that afternoon, to take the train which should carry him back from his unsuccessful errand, he groaned in spirit as he saw its colorless grimness, and thought of the two young creatures in their bright bloom who had chosen this soil for their first years of growth together. But as he walked on, meeting now and then a man or woman known to Harding, he fancied an unexpected light in the eyes, a quick smile on the lips, in place of the sullen apathy he had noticed on his previous visit. Step by step the place took on a different coloring to his eye; even the crash and rattle of the factories seemed to cry "Opportunity!" and when he parted from Harding at the station he clasped his hand more warmly than ever before and left him saying:

"I congratulate you, Morris Harding, on three things: the wife you have won, the field you have discovered, and the man you are, by the grace of God."

(THE END)

and not allowed to know, when it is possible to conceal it, who its real parents are. By exercising their influence over it, and treating it with affection, the little one, believing them to be its real parents, gives them, in return, all the love that their own child would. Unfortunately, these adoptions cannot always be kept secret, and sooner or later the child, generally when it is just stepping from childhood into youth, is apprised of the truth. The consequence is remarkable. The child, to all appearance, will be as respectful, obedient and devoted to its adopted parents, but there is something lacking, something is gone that was there when it had believed the foster-parents were indeed its own. The child, in such a case, will endeavor in every way to conceal its feelings in order that the parents may not regret their bargain.

Still more surprising is the zeal with which the child will set about to discover its real parents. Be they low or high, they are nevertheless its blood kin, and in Japan the blood tie is strong almost to exaggeration. In some cases these adopted children will find that their true parents are much inferior to the ones they have always loved, and while they will respect and obey the latter there is a strange, indescribable affection for the real parents, even though they be comparative strangers to them. This is a peculiar, I might say inherent, characteristic of the Japanese—this cleaving to kinship with a tenacity that is full of heroism, and, indeed, not infrequently with pathos.

A very pretty custom in Japan is the praying and speaking to the dead parents. Long after the death of good parents their children will talk and pray to them, and a peculiarity is that they do not pray for blessings on themselves, but they themselves bless the departed ones, for it is said that the prayers and blessings of the living affect the new life of the dead to this world. One can, therefore, see how desirable it is to have the love of one's children, so that for peace in the hereafter they may have their blessings.

The Japanese religion exacts that no man may be very wealthy and his relatives poor, and teaches that it is more blessed to be old than young—two very beautiful things. Is it not refreshing to find one spot on earth where age has no terror to the young; where the young gladly look forward to even extreme old age? There is no such thing as dread of old age in Japan. And I wonder if in America we might not rob age, old age, of its horror if we honored it more? Is it not better to ever believe, as do the people of Japan, that the old are ever the best?