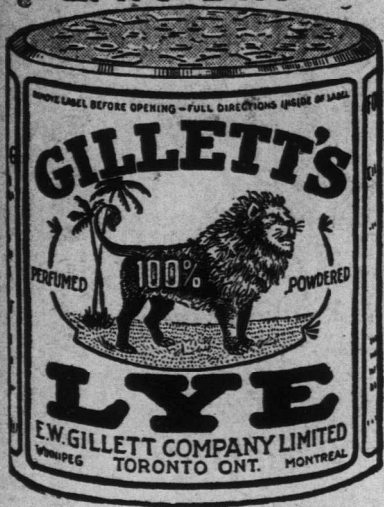


GILLETT'S LYE EATS DIRT



Grand Alliance;

Love That Knew No Bounds;

CHAPTER IX.

"Sydney, while I see this person, will you write out the list for the library? The catalogue is on my dressing-table." And as her daughter disappeared by one door the stranger-servant entered at another. If Mrs. Alwyn had calculated on the graceful picture exciting the admiration of her aristocratic friend's messenger she was not disappointed. The woman, despite the stolidity of aspect good training is supposed to impart to her class, fairly stared open-mouthed at the dainty elegancies of the tiny room. Her gaze first falling on the piles of all but price-less finery, next on Mrs. Alwyn, next on Leonora, she uttered an all but audible "Oh!" before she so far remembered herself as to make the regulation greetings of respect. "This was delightful. Mrs. Alwyn will know the influence of the back stairs, and felt assured such a report of her surroundings would return to Lady Avena as would satisfy her that her reverend brother would take a wife nurtured to delicacies equal to any his circle could afford if he chose Miss Villiers. With most dignified condescension the young lady's mother stretched forth her hand for Lady Avena Massey's note, and prolonged its reading that the bearer might have more time to satisfy her evidently capacious curiosity. "Peel so greatly indebted," murmured Mrs. Alwyn, scanning her missive half aloud for Leonora's benefit. "So ashamed to trespass on your kindness. Trust you will, on no consideration, rob yourself. Very best thanks. Remembrances of our united circle. Yours most truly, Avena Massey." Sweet name, Avena! Now, laying aside the note, and motioning the servant to the table, "if you have the pattern, I think we can match it here. Your mistress is afraid I should rob myself, but I do not think there is much risk of my doing so. "I don't think there is, indeed, ma'am," said the maid, with emphasis.

is. Then she brought forth the torn fichu, and with some nervousness—for certainly her fingers trembled—began to compare it with piece after piece, scarcely able to stifle an exclamation when now and then something especially rare was shaken out. Mrs. Alwyn was supremely gratified. "You are a judge of these things, no doubt. Of course, your mistress has much superior to this, though?" "Oh, no, ma'am. Nothing to compare with it. Her ladyship mostly dresses very plain." "Exactly my own taste," agreed Mrs. Alwyn, better pleased than ever "Buried here in the country, I rarely use any of this," tossing a heap of Brussels carelessly aside, "they lie away useless and half forgotten; but perhaps," with a visibly suppressed smile and glance toward her daughter, "others may care for them. They may be wanted and worn again someday." "If your young lady has to have a wedding-gown soon," said the woman, taking the hint instantly, "you can give her as good as a princess' without going far to fetch it, ma'am." ("She has certainly heard some gossip in the servants' hall," thought Mrs. Alwyn, elated "family affairs are always known there sooner than anywhere.") "Well, whenever it may be required," she said aloud, very graciously, "one important item of Miss Villiers' trousseau will be ready." "And leave plenty for Miss Sydney too, ma'am," said the woman. A whose mention Mrs. Alwyn bethought herself of rather a clever stroke. Things looked so promising for the secondary scheme, she might advantageously send forth a hint of it then any incipient fancy of the Honorable and Reverend Edward's would be nipped in the bud. So—"Miss Alwyn can easily be spared sufficient," she said; "and, indeed, significantly, "I don't know that I shall do amiss by selecting some today, as it is likely to be wanted before very long." The woman looked up from her search, interested, but Mrs. Alwyn was not going to commit herself to particulars, so she adroitly quitted the subject. "Leonora, love, will you look at the Mechlin I laid out by you? Has no the longest strip a double thread around the edge, with little loops and sort of treflois in the scallop?" "Yes," Leonora, dropping her hood to examine, thought it had, and holding it languidly up, "would this length be sufficient?" Her mother and Lady Avena's maid drew near, to pronounce the match on close inspection perfect, and the servant, despite an intimacy with the jewel-case of an earl's daughter, bestowed what Mrs. Alwyn took so keenly appreciative glances on the four splendid hoops—pearl, diamond sapphire, ruby—which adorned the young lady's white hands. The quest ended, nothing remained but to fold up the parcel, but ever this last minute Mrs. Alwyn utilized to her own purpose. "Lie down again, dear Leonora. My daughter felt the heat so much

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Yesterday. You will tell Lady Avena we are all well with this exception. "Then some one must call to inquire for her," she meditated, rapidly; "Mr Duvesne, most likely." "Take some eau-de-Cologne, darling," pouring it freely on hands and handkerchiefs from an immense gold-stoppered bottle. "If Miss Villiers should depart with all these," sweeping up the fescoons of lace from the satin-backed chair, and referring, with motherly benignity, to the maid's former speech, "I must see that she goes where she will be well taken care of. Anything less than what she leaves would be quite impossible for her." "I haven't a doubt of it, ma'am," was the reply, the speaker bending to tie her parcel. "You are ready now? Assure Lady Avena I shall not even miss what I send her. And—oh! mind—mind—my Chelsea boy!" as an abrupt turn jeopardized a piece of eighteenth century ware—"I couldn't replace it for fifty guineas! It's safe now. You will go down into the hall, please Phillips will show you out. Good morning." Sydney was just coming from her own room as this early visitor quitted her boudoir. Not particularly wanting to meet the stranger, she drew back, and herself unseemly, was witness of a most inexplicable pantomime. For the stereotyped respectful aspect of the woman changed as she closed the door behind her. With fierce scowl of bitterest anger, she clinched her hand, and, her teeth hard set, seemed furiously to menace the room she had just left. Catching her breath, she seemed barely able to restrain vituperation or sob. One foot raised, as if she could have stamped for very passion, was only brought silently down by an effort that set her trembling from head to foot. But a sound in the hall below seemed to recall her senses. With one great quivering breath she steadied herself, swept the back of her gloved hand quickly over her eyes and, rapidly descending, left the house. "I wonder, mamma," Leonora was saying, as her step-sister entered "how that servant knew Sydney's name. Did you notice it?" "Picked it up from fellow-servants of course," was the quick rejoinder. "Now, rest quietly, my dear, while I make haste to Hemynford; Leonora had best not be disturbed, Sydney, till I come back." So Sydney was left with only her own counsel to consult over that curious interlude on the landing, and, since she could not possibly either fathom or amend the woman's singular excitement, she did her best to put it from her mind. It might have been illness, she thought. It could have nothing to do with any of them at the Dale. "But it had."

Alwyn's adaptability is most amazing; give her anything to do for any one she likes, and she draws to the task like a needle to a magnet. And the other is an invaluable girl—well, not girl exactly, for she is ten years Sydney's senior—" "And how old may she be?" interposed Mr. Drayton. "Twenty or thereabouts. So I'm rarely fortunate to have such assistants." (The last thing to enter the rector's head would have been any explanation of how his own deeds had earned him these willing services. That Mr. Drayton might find out! "But mind you, every honest man hasn't such luck, and recollect when you map out your home, Drayton, you're not so fond of letter-lore as your old tutor, so furnish yourself with something that will brighten all your evening tides." "Meaning a wife?" "Right. And when you're determined to take one, come here—" "To find her?" Mr. Drayton's brown face reddened. "No!"—laughing—"but to hear the rest of a bachelor's homily on married life! Who's there?"—a soft tap sounding on the study door—"Come in. What, you!" as Sydney Alwyn, leaving a basket of strawberries outside, entered, her sun-shade in one hand, and a bunch of honeysuckle in the other. "Surely, now, you are not come up in this heat just to bring me home?" "Not that alone," Sydney answered, setting down her freight to shake hands with Mr. Drayton, "for I promised Harry and Ben to come and help them with their Euclid. At least," blushing, "to do it with them. They expected to be at lessons again today." "Instead of which I've stopped their industry," said Mr. Drayton—"a drone in the hive, I ought to be off." "Nonsense!" cried the rector, "they are a pair of lazy little rascals. I set them their work hours ago. They ought to have stuck to it without me. But I suppose—"to Sydney—"they haven't?" In honesty she had to shake her head. "Playing!" with a groan, "as if here were no examination coming on in September." Scholarships for these two orphan lads lay heavy on the rector's mind just then, and he looked vexed. Sydney as little liked to see him troubled as to see the lads get very good comrades of four years. In disgrace, so she hastened to bespeak their pardon with a lurking smile. "Harry has been the soul of industry," she said, "in—drawing cats! He's sketched the tortoise-shell in fifty attitudes; Ben has written a poetical pendant to the picture, praising pussy's extraordinary mouse-catching powers!" "Hereat her hearers broke out laughing, and Sydney went bravely on. "So they are to be forgiven, please. They are to make up for lost time next week. And as Mr. Drayton will be here, and of course you must be with him, may I come down and be with the boys each morning? They say they want me." (To be Continued.)

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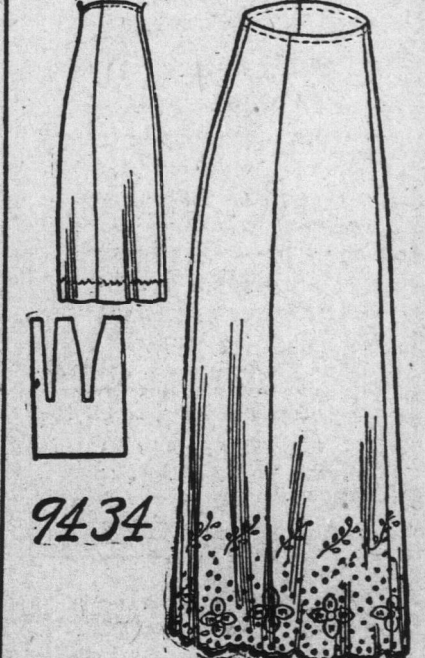
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Notice!

Information has been received from the General Post Office, London, England, to the effect that many Newspaper packets are being received in the mails from Newfoundland for England prepaid at the rate of 2 cents per pound. This is contrary to the proper rate of postage on Newspapers sent from Newfoundland to Great Britain, which is the same as that payable on ordinary printed matter, viz.: One Cent per every two ounces or fraction thereof. The public will please take notice that in future all such insufficiently prepaid Newspaper packets will be marked for taxation before despatch in accordance with Article 11 of the detailed Regulation for the Execution of the Postal Union Convention of Rome. **H. J. B. WOODS,** Postmaster General. General Post Office, March 27th, 1914. mar30,m.th.1m

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