## THE, TRUE, WITNESS AND CATHOLIC , CHRONICLE.

# UNCLE MAX.

2

### CHAPTER XXXIL-Continued.

Of course it was Jill, smiling and waving OI course it was Jill, smiting and waving towards the balcony; she could not see Mr. Tudor under the awning, but she had caught sight of my silk dress. Jill looked very well on hor the back: people always turned round to watch her. She had a good seat, and rode gracefully. the dark habit spited here the gracefully; the dark habit suited her; she braided her unmanageable locks into an invisible net that kept them tidy.

"Is that Miss Jocelyn ?" asked Lawrence, almost in a voice of awe. The young curate grew very red as Jill rode under the balcony and nodded to him in a friendly manner.

"There is Mr. Tudor," we heard her say. "B; quick and lift me off my horse, Clarence." But she had slipped to the ground before her cousin could touch her, and had run in-doors.

Mr. Tudor went into the room at once, but I sat still for a moment. Why had I asked him? Of course it was Lean. I could see her strange light-colored eyes glancing up in my direction. What was she doing in Londoa ? I wondered. She was dressed well, evidently in her mistress's cast-off clothes, for she wore a handsome silk dress and mantle. Had they quarrelled and parted ? I felt instinctively that it would be a good day for Gladwyn if Leah ever shook off its dust from her feet. Gladys regarded her as a spy and informer, and she had evidently an unwholesome influence over her mistress.

We separated soon after this to dress for dinner, and Mr. Tudor went to his hotel. I was rather sorry when I came down-stairs to find that Jill had made rather a careless toilet. She wore the flimsy Indian muslin gown that I thought so unbecoming to her style, with a string of gold beads of curious Florentine work round her neck. She looked so different from the graceful young Amazon who had ridden up an hour ago that I felt said that? Why had he forgotten his posiprovoked, and was not surprised to hear the tion and her youth? Why had he hinted old sharp tone in Aunt Philppa's voice :

"My dear Jocelyn, why have you put on that old gown? Surely your new creamcolored dress with coffee lace would have been more suitable. What was Draper thinking about ?"

"I was in too great a hurry; I did not wait for Draper," returned Jill, caudidly. "Draper was dreadfully cross about it, but I ran away from her. What does it matter, mamma? they have all seen my cream-colored dress, except-" But here Jill laughed : Jill, showed more affection for her that the paughty child m: aut Mr. Tudor.

"I am atraid k.ere is not time to change it now; but I am very much vexed about it," returned Aunt Philippa, in a loud whisper. "You are really looking your worst to night." But Jill on'y langhed again, and asked her cousin Clarence when he took her down to dinner if it were not a very pretty gown.

"I don't know much about gowns," drawled the young man,-Mr. Tudor and I were following them : "it looks rather flimsy and washed out. If I were you I would wear something more substantial. You see, you are so big, Jocelyn; your habit suits you bet-

ter." We heard Jill laughing in a shrill fashion at this dubious compliment, and presently she and Mr. Tudor, who sat next to her, were talking as happily as possible. I do was very quiet, and hardly said a word as I not believe he noticed her unbecoming gown : helped her to undress, but as I sat down by vis falle had lighted up, and the was full of the bedside she drew my head down beside mimation. Poor Lawrence ! he was five-and- hers on the pillow. twenty, and yet the presence of this girl of "Don't think I am not grateful because I sixteen was more to him than all the young do not talk about it, Ursie dear," she whis

she made no answer to this, and, seeing her, bent on her own way, I brought her a brooch, and would have smoothed her hair, but she pashed me away.

"It does not matter how I look. I am only going down for a few minutes. He is going away, and I want to say good night to him, and thank him." And Jill walked down-stairs rather unsteadily. Mr. Tudor was just crossing the hall.

"Miss Jocelyn, -this is very imprudent. You, ought to have gone to bed - you are not fit to be up after such a shook," looking at her rale face and swollen eyes with evident emotion.

Jill looked at him gently and seriously, and held out her hands to him quite simply.

"I could not go to bed without thanking I am not quite so selfish and thoughtvou. less. You have saved my life : do you think I shall ever forget that ?"

Poor Lawrence ! the excitement, the terror, and the relief were too much for him; and there was Jill holding his hands and looking up in his face, with her eyes full of tears.

'I could not help doing it," he returned "What would have become of me if you had died ! I could not have borne it."

Jill drew her hands away, and her face looked a little paler in the moonlight. The young man's excited voice, his strange words, must have told her the truth. No, she was not too young to understand; her head drooped, and she turned away as she anwered him,-

"I shall always be grateful. Good night, Mr. Tudor: I must go to my mother. Come, Ursula."

She did not look back as we walked across the hall, though poor Lawrence stood quite still watching us. Why had the foolish boy that her life was necessary to his happiness? Would Jill ever torget those words, or the look that accompanied them? I felt almost angry with Lawrence as I followed Jill into the room.

Jill need never have doubted her mother's love. Aunt Philippa had been too faint and ill to follow her daughter to her room, but her face was quite beautiful with maternal tenderness as she folded the girl in her arms. Not even her father, who especially petted night.

"Ob, Jocelyn, my darling, are you quite sure that you are unburt? Miss Gillespie says you were only frightened and a little truised; but I wanted to see for myself. Mr. Tudor will not let us thank him, but we shall be grateful to him all our lives, my pet. What would your poor father and I have done without you?"

Jill hid her face like a baby on her mother's bosom: she was crying quietly. Her interview with Mr. Tudor had certainly upset her. Uncle Brian put his hand in her rough locks. Never mind, my little girl : it is now over ; you must go to bed and forget it,"-which was certainly very good advice. I coaxed Aunt Philippa to let her go, and promised to remain with her until she was asleep. She was very quiet, and hardly said a word as I

"Don't think I am not grateful because I ladyhord of Heathfield. Even charming pered. "I hope to be better all my life for little Lady Betty was beaten out of the field what has happened to night." But as Jill by Jill's dark eyes and sprightly tongue. It was a very pleasant evening, and we light, I wondered what thoughts were coura-were all enjoying ourselves: no one imagined ing through her mind. Was she looking upon anything could or would happen ; life is just her life preserved as a life dedicated, regardlike that : we should just take up our candle-sticks, we thought, and march off to bed nobler uses? or was her gratitude to her when Aust Philippa gave the signal. No young preserver mixed with deeper and more one could have imagined that there would be mysterious feelings? I could not tell, but a moment's deadly peril for one of the party, - from that night I noticed a regular change in an additional thanksgiving for a life pre-served that night. Jill : she became less girlish and fanciful, a new sort of womanliness developed itself, her

ged out her ruby velveteen and was trying to fasten it with her trembling fingers. "Oh, you are obstinate, Jill: you ought to fasten it with her trembling fingers. "Oh, you are obstinate, Jill: you ought to be good on this night of all nights.">But were over she had forgotten Henry Brabazon's were over she had forgotten Henry Brabazon's existence. It was just a girlish sentimen-tality, pothing more. When we got back to town we made Mr. Brabazon understand that his attentions were displeasing to your uncle, and before the next season he was engaged to a rich young widow. I do not believe Sara over missed him."

When he saw Jill, he hurried up to her at not infatuation. She told me that she to do him a service." was not the least afraid of his influence, and was not the transmit of the foldence, and it suppose you know something of his be-should not discourage his visits. Jocelyn longings," returned the man, with a shrewd would never see him alone, and it was not glades. "Now, that is what me and my likely that she would be staying at Heathfield againing thought it useless to say any more. I had satisfied my conscience, and folk belonging to him. He has not quite our might now safely wash my baads of all re-ways. He is a cut above us, and clips his sponsibility. If the thought crossed my mind words like the gentlefolk do. But he is an that Jill was very different from Sars, that industrious young fellow, and does not give her will was stronger and her affections more tenaoious, --- there was no need to give it uttersnce. Sixteen was hardly the age for a seri-

ous love affair, and I might well be content to leave Jill in her mother's care. Now and then a doubt of Aunt Philippa's

wisdom came to me, -on the last evening, for instance, when 1 was speaking to Jill about Heathfield, and when 1 rather incautiously mentioned Lawrence Tudor's name,

I recollected then that Jill had never once poken of him since the night of the accident. It had dropped completely out of our conversation. I lorget what I said then, but it was something about my seeing him at Heathfield.

We were standing together on the balcony, and as I spoke Jill stooped suddenly to look at a little flower-girl who was offering her wares on the pavament below. For a moment she did not answer. But I could see her cheek and even her little ear was flushed. "Ob, yes, you will see him," she returned, presently. "What a little mite of a child 1 presently. Look, Ursula. Please remember us to him, and-and we hope he is quite well." And Jill walked away from me rather abruptly, saying she must ask her mother for some pence. It was then that a doubt of Aunt Philippa's policy crossed my mind; Jill was so different from other girls; and Lawrence

Tudor had saved her life. I had other things to occupy my mind just then,—a fresh anxiety that I could share with no one, and which effectually spoiled the last lew days of my London visit.

The sight of Leah had somewhat disturbed me. It had brought back memories of the perplexities and mysteries of Gladwyn. Strange to say, I saw her again the very next day.

Mr. Tudor was calling at the door to in-quire after Jill : he had his bag in his hand, and was on his way to the station. I was just going out to call on Lesbia, and we walked a few yards together. Just as I was from him. I dared not run the risk of bringbidding him good-by, two women passed ns: as I looked at them casually, I saw Leah's *dante* of Aunt Philippa or Uncle Brian. flickering light-colored eyes; she was looking They had old-fashioned views, and would in my direction, but, though I nodded to her, she did not appear to recognize me. The fellow. Circumstantial evidence was so strong other woman was a stranger.

I was sitting alone on the balcony that his innocence. Even Uncle Max condemned afternoon. Aunt Philippa and Jill and Miss him, and in my own heart there lurked a Gillespie were driving. I took advantage of secret doubt whether Gladys had not de their absence and the unusual quiet of the ceived herself. honse to finish a book in which I was much . No. my only course would be to speak to

interested. I was very fond of this balcony seat: the him myself, to implore him for Gladys's sake awning protected me from the hot June sun, and the flower-boxes at my feet were sweet in the same searly as possible the next morning, and the flower-boxes at my feet were sweet with mignonsite. 1 could see without being should see the men come in to their work, seen, and the cool glimpses of the green Park were pleasant on this hot afternoon. The adjoining house was unoccupied : it was therefore with feelings of discomfort that I heard the sound of workmen moving about the premises, and by and by the smell of

fresh paint made me put down my book with suppressed annoyance. A house-painter was standing very near

me, painting the outside sashes of the winde torn പ് കണ് whistling to himself in the careless way peculiar to his class. It was a clear, sweet whistling, and I listened to it with pleasure. A sud on noise in the street caused him to me. look round, and then he saw me, and stopped whistling, Where had I seen that face? It seemed familiar to me.' Of whom did that young house-painter remind me? Could I have seen him at St. Thomas's Hospital? Was it some patient whose name I had forgo:ten during my year's nursing? I had had more than one house-painter on my list. I was tormented by the idea that I ought to recognize the face before me, and yet recognition eluded me. I felt bafiled and per-plexed by some subtile fancied resemblance. As for the young painter himself, he looked at me quietly for a moment, as though I were a stranger; touched bis cap, and went on painting. When he had finished his job, he went inside, and I heard him whistling again as he moved about the empty room. It was a beautiful face the features were very clearly cut and defined, like Good heavens !. I had it now : it reminded me of Gladys Hamilton's. The next moment I was holding the balcony railing as though I were giddy; it was like Gladys, but it was still more like the closed picture in Gladys's rcom. I pressed my hands on my eyelids as with a strong effort I recalled her brother Eric's face, and the next moment the young painter had come to the window again, and I was ery. looking at him between my fingers. The resemblance could not be my fancy ; those were Eric's eyes looking at me. It was the same face, only older and less boyishlooking, The fair moustache was fully grown; the face was altogether more manly and full of character. It must be he; I must go and speak to him; but as I rose, my limbs trembling with excitement, he moved away, and his whistle seemed to die in the distance. It was nearly six o'clock, and there was no time to be lost. I ran up-stairs and put on my bonnet and mantle. I thought that Clayton looked at me in some surprise,-I was leaving the house without gloves; but I did not wait for any explanation : the men would be leaving off work. The door was open, and I quickly found my way to the drawingroom, but, to my chagrin, it was empty, and an elderly man with gray hair came out of a back room with a basket of carpenter's tools and looked at me inquiringly. "There is a workman here that I want to find," I said, breathlessly, -- "the one that was painting the window-frames just now, -astali, fair young man." "Ob, you'll be meaning Jack Poynter," he returned, civilly; "he and his mate have just gone."."It is a state in a state of the second state of the s young, not more than three or four and-twenty, good looking, with a fair moustache, and the was whistling while he worked." If Ay, that's Jack Poynter," returned the man, taking off his paper cap and rubbing up his bristly gray hair. "We call Jack 'The Blackbird' among us; he is a famous whistler, is Tack.' "Oh, but that is not his name," I persisted, in, a distressed voice. "Why do you call him Jack Poynfer ?" "That is what he calls himself," returned quick. Urste dear, for I feel so queer and tot-tery." And nothing I could say would pre-vail on her to remain quietly in her room, While I was arguing with her, she had drag.

themselves by their own names : among his hand. The next moment a fierce, angry light belief, and Ned's too, that he has got into mates be is known as "The Whistler," or 'The Backbird, or 'Gentleman Jack '" 'What do you mean ? who are you ?' he with a sight 'No, I am sure you are wrong," I returned,

give me his address?"

"You would be welcome to it if I knew it, but 'Gentleman Jack' keeps himself dark. None of us know where he lives. I believe it used to be down Holloway; but he has moved lately."

"I suppose you know something of his be-

mates say. We would none of us be sur-prised if 'Gentleman Jack' has respectable himselt airs.

dives "

ask him yourself, miss; he will be here again to-morrow morning, and I am off to Watford on a job. Jack is not at work regularly in here to morrow morning."

"You are sure of that ?"

"Oh, yes. Tom Handley won't be fit for work for a spell yet. He will be here sharp enough, and then you can question him yourself." And, bidding me a civil good-evening, the man took up his tools and went heavily down-stairs, evidently expecting me to follow him. I went back and stole up quietly to my room. Aunt Philippa and Jill had returned from their drive. I could hear their voices as I passed the drawing room ; but I wanted to be alone to think over this strange occur. rence.

My pulses were beating high with excitement. Not for one moment did I doubt that I had really seen Eric in the flesh, Gladys's intuition was right: her brother was not dead. Idelt that this assurance alone would make her happy.

If she were only at Heathfield, or even at Bournemouth, I would telegraph for her to come ; I could word the message so that she would have hastened to me at once; but Paris was too far; too much time would be lost,

Uncle Max, too, had been called to Norwich to attend a cousin's death-bed : I had had a note from him that very morning : so I could not have the benefit of his advice and assistance. I knew that I dared not summon Mr. Hamilton: the brothers had parted in ill-blood, with bitter words and looks. Eric looked on his step-brother as his worst enemy. All these years he had been hiding himself have at once stigmatized Eric as a worthless against him that few would have believed in

No, my only course would be to speak to and should have no difficulty in making my way to them. The household was not an

early one, especially in the season. I should have the house to myself for an hour or so. Of course my fature movements were uncertain. I must speak to Eric first, and induce him to reopen communications with his family. I would tell him how his brother grieved over his supposed dea'h, how changed

"The B ackbird, or 'Gentleman Jack '" ""Well, never mind about bis name," I re-plied, impatiently. "I want to speak to him. Where does he live? Will you kindly

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"I know nothing of what you say: you must take me for another man. I am Jack | Poynter.' "Oh, Mr. Hamilton," I implored, stretch-

ing out my hands across the balcony, "do not treat me as an enemy. I am a friend,

a lady, but you take me for another man." do before taking counsel with Gladys, and

moment when his paleness and terror had proved it tome without doubt. "You take possibly hear of something to his me for another map," he had said; and yet I advantage." And 1 gave the address could have sworn in a court of justice that of an old lawyer who managed my he was E ic Hamilton ; not only his face, but business, writing a note to Mr. Berkeley his voice, his manner, told me he was Gladys's at the same time, being him to forward any brother:

But he should not elude me like this, and I hurried down-stairs, determined to find my way into the empty house and confront him these parts. He is doing a turn for a mate of again. The fast-nings of the hall door gave his who is down with a touch of colic. He is me a little difficulty. I was a fraid Clayton working at Bayswater mostly, and he will be would hear me, but I found myself outside at last, and in another minute I was in the deserted drawing-room.

Alas! Eric was not there: only his paint-pot and brush lay on the balcony outside. Surely he could not have escaped me in these few minutes; he must be in one of the other rooms. At the top of the stairs I encountered a young workman, and began question-

ing him at once. "Well, this is a queer start," he observed, in some perplexity. "I saw Jack only this moment : he wanted his jacket, for he said he had a summons somewhere. I noticed he was palish, and seemed all of a shake, but he

did not an over when I called out to him." "Do you mean he has gone?" I asked, feeling ready to cry with disappointment.

"Yes, he has gone right enough; but he'll be back presently, by the time the govern or comes round. I wonder what's up with Jack; he looked mighty queer, as though the peelers were after him : in an awfal funk. I should 88 Y.

"Will you do mea favor, my man ?" and as I spoke a shining half-crown changed hands Gladys set her face homeward; she would not rather quietly. "I want to speak to your rest until she asked me my meaning. As I friend Jack Poynter very particula ly, but I ] gave Clayton the letter I felt convinced that am quite sure that he wishes to avoid me. If | before a week was over Gladys would find he comes back, will you write a word on a her way to Heathfield. slip of paper and throw it on to the balcony do, or any direction that will find him. I old affectionate way, I felt that I should leave am very much in earnest over this."

The mag looked at me and then at the half-crown. He had a good-humored, stupidlooking face, but was young enough to like an unusual job.

"It will be worth more than that to you to bring me face to face with Jack Poynter, or to give me any news of him," I continued. "You do not know where he lives, for example?

"No : we are none of us his mates, except Fowler and Dung, and they don't know where he lodges : 'Gentleman Jack' keeps himself close. But he'll be here sure enough by and by, and then I will let you know." And with this I was obliged to be content. I was terribly vexed with myself. I felt I had managed badly. I ought to have confronted him in the empty house, where he could not have escaped me so (asily. Would he come back again? As I revalled his terrified expression, his agitated words, I doubted whether he would put himself within my reach. I was so worried and miserable that I was obliged to own myself ill and to beg that I might be left in quiet. 1 had to endure a good deal of petting from Jill, who would keep coming into my room to see how my grieved over his supposed dea'h, how changed poor head was. Happily, one of my windows he was; and he should hear, too, of Gladys's commanded an uncovered corner of the bal-

or can find out where he lives, will you com-municate with me at this address ?" And I And T handed Joe my card and a half-sovereign.

"Yes, I'll do it, sure and certain," he re-plied with alacrity. "Some of us will come across him again, one of these days, and we will follos him tor a bit. You may trust me for that, miss. We will find him, sure enough." And then I thanked him and bade him good night.

There was only one thing now that I could And before I could say at other word he had stepped through the open window. I could have rung my hands in despair. I wrote out some of those adver. Be bal denied his own identify at the very.

"Jack Poynter is earnestly requested to communicate with Ursula G. He may answer to Ursula G.

Another advertisement was of a different character :

" For Glady's sake, please write to me, or give me a chance of speaking to you. An un-known but most sincere friend, U. G." The third advertisement was still more

pressing :

" Jack Poynter's friends believe him dead. and are in great trouble : he is entreated to undeceive them. One word to the old address will be a comfort to his poor sister."

As soon as I had despatched these adver tisements to the paper offices I sat down and wrote to Gladys. It was not my intention to tell her about Eric, but I must say some word to her that would induce her to come home. I told her that I was going back to Heathfield the following afternoon, and that I was beginning to feel impatient for her return.

"I cannot do without you any longer, my dear Gladys," I wrote. "There is so much that I want to talk to you about, and that I cannot write. I have heard something that has greatly excited me, and that makes me think that your view of the case is right, and that your brother Eric is alive. Of course we must not be too sanguine, but I begin to have hopes that you may see him shain."

More than this I did not venture to say, but I knew that these few words would make

I had to give all my attention to Jill after her far happier than she had ever been before, and she did not deny this, only begged me to come and see them sometimes.

"You know I can't do without you, you darling bear," she finished, with one of her old huge.

I was still more touched by Aunt Philipps's regret at parting with me; she said so many kind things ; and, . . . ny surprise, Uncle Brian relaxed from his usual coldness, and quite warmed into demonstration.

"Come to us as often as you can, Ursula," he said. "Your sunt and I will only be too pleased to see you." And then he asked me, a little anxiously, if I found my small income sufficient for my needs.

I assured him that my wants were so few. and Mrs. Barton was so economical, that but for my poorer neighbors I could hardly use it

all. "Well, well, ze returned, putting a haudsome check in my hands, "you can always draw on me when you feel disposed. I suppose you like pretty things as much as other girle." And he would not let me even thank him for his generosity.

Aunt Philippa anly smiled when E showed her the check.

"My dear, your uncle likes to do it, and you must not be to proud to accept his gifts : you may need it some day. We have only two daught rs : as it is, Jocelyn will be far too rich. I do not like the idea that Har-ley's child should want anything. And she kissed me with tears in her eyes. Dear Aunt Philippa ! she had grown quite motherly during those three weeks. It was a lovely June afternoon : when l started from Victoria there was a scent of hay in the air. Jill had brought with her to the station a great bask etful of roses and nar-"Jack has not been here all day," was ciseusand heliotrope, and had put it on the scrawled on it, "and the governor is precious seat beside methat its fragrance might retreat me. I felt a strange sort of excitement and plea sure at the thought of returning home. Mrs. Barton would be glad to get me back, I knew. Uncle Max would not be at the station to meet me, for he had written to say that he was still detained at Norwich. His coasin was dead, and had left him her escaped me; but I could not help feeling little property, -some six or seven hundred a year. There were some valuable books and ant:quities, and some old silver besides. He was the only near relation, and business connected with the property would oblige him to remain for another week or ten days. I was rather sorry to hear this, for Heathfield was not the same without Uncle Max. But not even Uncle Max's absence could damp me, I felt so light-hearted. "I hope I am not fey," I said to myself, with a little thrill of excitement and expectation as the familiar station came in view. Never since Charlie's death had I felt so cheerful and full of life. Nathaniel was on the platform to look after my luggage, so I walked up the hill quietly, with my basket of flowers. As I passed th vicarage, Mr. Tudor came out and walked with me to the gate of the White Cottage. I had a dim suspicion that he had been watching for me. Of course he asked after the family at Hyde Park Gate, and was most particular in his inquiries after Aunt Philippa. Just at the last, he mentioned Jill.

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served that night.

the violoncello. There was a little group round the piano. Jill was beating time, standing with her back to a small inlaid table with a lamp on it. Mr. Tudor was beside her, Jill made a backward movement in her forgetfulness and enthusiasm. The next moment the music stopped with a crash. There was a cry of horror, the lamp seemed ing intimacy between the young people. She falling, glass smashed, liquid fire was pouring and Uncle Brian ought to know that Mr. down Jill's unfertunate dress. If Mr. Todor had not caught it, they said afterwards, with | locked. all that lace drapery, the room must have been in flames; but he had jerked it back in its place, and, snatching up a bear-skin rug under the piano, had wrapped it that lay round Jill. He was so strong and prompt, there was not a moment lost.

We had all crowded round in a moment, but no one dared to interfere with Mr. Tudor. We could hear Aunt Philippa sobbing with terror. Clarence Chudleigh extinguished the lamp, some one else flung an Indian blanket and a striped rug at Jill's feet. For one instant I could see the girl's face, white and you. I am quite aware you are poor,-that rigid as a statue, as the young man's powerful arms enveloped her. Then the danger was year ; but you are well connected and a over, and Jill was standing among us unhurt, with her muslin gown hanging in blackened shreds, and with bruises on her round white arms from the rough grip that had saved her life.

One instant's delay, and the fiery fluid must have covered her from head to foot : if Lawrence had not caught the falling lamp, ij he had lost one moment in smothering the lighted gown, she must have perished in agony before our eyes; but he was strong as the next morning and asked Aunt Philippa if a Hercules, and, half sufficiented and bruised I might have a few minutes' conversation as she was, Jill knew from what he had saved her.

up to your room, Miss Jocelyn," he whis-pered: "you are all right now." And she obeyed without a word. Miss Gillespie and I followed. I think Aant Philippa was faint or had palpitations, for I heard Uncle Brian calling loudly to some one to open the windows. Jill was hysterical as soon as she reached her room. She was quite unnerved, and clung to me, shaking with sobs, while

Miss Gillespie mixed some sal-volatile. I could not help crying a little with her from joy and thankfulaess; but we got ner quiet after a time, and took off the poor gown, and Jill showed us her bruises, and cheered up when we told her how brave and quiet she had been ; and then she sat for some minutes had been; and then she are for solar while I bezen butterfly tancies beiges at a second at mile i grantich stroked her hair sileptly and thanked God in seriously: d'il ... had at mile i grantich stroked her hair sileptly and thanked God in "I remember," she i continued, diff that "I remember," she i continued, diff that

feverishly. "I have never thanked. Mr. that she was in love wave him, or, Tudor for saving my life. Help me to be of all I could say to her by way of warning, Tudor for saving my life. Help me to be of all I could say to her by way of warning, in fact, quick, Ursie dear, for I feel so queer and tot she would promise him dances, and, in fact,

There was music going on. Agatha Chud-leigh—the Chudleighs were Aunt Philippa's belongings—was playing the piano, and her brothor Clarence was accompanying the

#### JACK POYNTER.

My conscience felt decidedly uneasy that night : in spite of all argument to the con-trary, I could not shake off the conviction that it was my duty to speak to Aunt Philippa, I ought to warn her of the grow-Tudor was not quite so harmless as he

It made me very unhappy to act the traitor to this honest, simple young fellow. I would rather have taken his hand and bidden him God-speed with his wooing. If I had been Uncle Brian I would have welcomed him heartily as a suitor for Jill. True, she was absurdly young, --only sixteen, --but I would have said to him, "If you are in earnest, if you really love this girl, and are willing to wait for her, go about your business for threeyears, and then come and try your chance with her. If she likes you she shall have you are a curate on a hundred and fitty a gentleman, and as guileless as a young Nathaniei. I could not desire a better husband for my daughter.'

But it was not likly that Uncle Brian would be so quixotic. And I knew that Aunt Philippa was rather ambitious for her children, and it had been a great disappointment to her that Sara had refused a young baronet. So it was with the guilty feelings of a culprit that I entered the morning-room I might have a few minutes' conversation with her.

To my relief, she treated the whole matter As the scorched bear-skin dropped to the very coolly, and with a mixture of shrewdness floor, Lewrence picked up the Indian blanket and common sense that quite surprised me. She assured me that it was not of the least very coolly, and with a mixture of ahrewdness She assured me that it was not of the least consequence. Young creatures like Jocelyn must pass through this sort of experiences. She was certainly rather young for such an experiment, but it would do her no harm. On the contrary, a little stimulus of gratified vanity might be extremely beneficial in its after-effects. She was somewhat backward and childish for her age. She would have more self-respect at finding herself the object of masculine admiration. "Depend upon it, it will do her a great

deal of good," went on Aunt Philippa, placidly. "She will try now in earnest to placidly. "She will try now in earnest to break herself of her little gaucheries. As for Mr. Indor, do not distrass yoursall about him. He is young enough to have half a

stroked her hair sileptly and tuanked God in my heart for sparing our Jill. Miss Gillespie had gone down stairs to carry a good report to Aunt Philippa. Directly she had gone, Jill jumped up, still shaking a little, and went to her wardrobe. "I must go down stairs," she said, a little faverishly. "I have never thanked Mr.

COBY. failing health and spirits. I should not be wanting in eloquence on that subject. If he loved Gladys he would not refuse to listen to

After a time I tried to set aside these thoughts, and to occupy myself with dressing tor the evening. We had a dinner-party that night. Mrs. Fullerton and Leabia were to he of the party. They were going down to Rutherford the next day: so I should have to bid them good by.

The evening was very tedious and wearisome to me: my head ached, and the glitter of lights and the sound of many voices seemed to hewilder me. Lesbis came up after dinner Joe Muggins." to ask if I were not well. I was to cale and quiet. We sat out on the balcony together in the starlight for a little while, until Mrs. Fullerton called Lesbia in. I would gladly have remained there alone, drinking in the freshness of the night dews, but Jill came out

and began chattering to me, until I went back with her into the room. There was very little sleep for me that night. When at last I fell into a doze, I was tormented by a succession of miserable dreams, I was following a supposed Eric down long country roads in the darkness. Something

seemed always to retard me : my feet were weighted with lead, invisible hands were pulling me back. I heard him whistling in the distance, then I stumbled, and a black bog engulfed me, and I woke with a stifled

I woke to the knowledge that the sun was streaming in at my windows, and that some sound like a falling plank had roused me from my uneasy slumbers.' It must be past six o'clock, I thought; surely the men must be at work. Yes, I could hear their voices and the next moment I had jumped ont o bed, and was dressing myself with all possible haste.

It was nearly soven when I crept down into the drawing-room to reconnoitre the adjoining house. As I unfastened the window I heard the same sweet whistling that had arrested my attention yesterday.

Without a moment's hesitation I walked out on the balcony. The young painter looked round in some surprise at the sound of my footsteps, and touched his cap with a half-smile.

"It is a beautiful morning," I began, nervously, for I wanted to make him speak, 'Have you been at work long ?"

'Ever since six o'clock," he returned, and think, he was a little surprised at hearing imself addressed. "We work early these light mornings." And then he took up his brush and went on painting.

I watched him for a minute or two without word. How, was I to proceed ? My presence seemed to puzzle him; Perhaps he wondered why a lady should take such inter-est in his work. / I saw him glance at me un-

easily. "Will you let me speak 'to you?" I said, in a very low voice, and as he came towards me, rather unwillingly, I continued: "I know the men call you Jack Poynter, but that is not your name. You are Eric Hamil-ton: no, do not be frightened: I am Gladys's

friend, and I will not injure you." I had broken off abruptly, for I was alarmed at the effect of my words. The

I could see without going down if any scrap of paper lay there. It was not until evening that I caught eight of an envelope sing on one of the seats.

I rang my bell and begged Draper to bring it to me at once. She thought it had fluttered out of my wiedow, and went down smilingly to fulfil my behest.

It was a blank envelope, closely fast ned, and I waited until Draper was out of the room to open it : the slip of paper was inside. angry. I doubt Jack has got into some trouble or other. Your obedient servant,

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

#### I COMMUNICATE WITH JDE MUGGINS.

Of course I know it would be so ; Eric had very down-hearted over the disappointment of all my hopes.

I longed so much to comfort Gladys, to bring block peace and unity to that iroubled household. I had nourished the secret hope, too, that I might benefit Mr. Hamilton without his kcowledge, and so return some of his many kindnesses to me. I knew-rone better-how sincerely he had mourned over the supposed fate of his young brother, how truly he lamented his past harshness. If I could have brought lack their young wanderer, if I could have said to them, "If he has done wrong he is serily for his fault; take him back to your hearts," would not Mr. Hamil-ton have been the first to hold out his hand to the prodigal? Here there was no father ; it must be the elder brother who would order the fatted calf to be killed.

I had forgotten Miss Darrell. The sudden thought of her was like a dash of cold water to me. Would she have welcomed Eric? There again was the miserable complication : All the next day I watched and fretted. The following evening Clayton told me, with rather a supercilious air, that a workman calling himself Joe Muggins wanted to speak to me. "He did not know your name, ma'am, but he described the lady he wanted, so I knew it was you. He said you had asked him a question about a man pamed Jack Poynter.'

"Oh, it is all right, thank you, Clayton," I returned, quickly, and I went out into the hall.

Joe Muggins looked decidedly nervous, He was in his working dress, having, as he said, "come straight to me, without waiting to clean himself."

"I made so bold, miss," went on Joe, "because you seemed auxious about Jack, and I would not lose time. Well, Jack has been and given the governor the sack,--says he has colic too; but we know that is a sham. My mate saw him in Lisson Grove last night. He was walking along, his hands in his pockets, when Ned pounces on him. 'What are you up to Jack ?' he says. 'Why haven't you turned up at your place? The gover-nor's in a precious wax, I can tell you. They wan't him to put on more men, as there's a press for time. Well, I am not coming there any more,' says Jack, looking as black as possible. 'The work doen't suit my complaint, and I have written to tell Page so.' And he stuck to that, and Ned could

"I hope your cousin Jocelyn is well,-I mean, none the worse for her accident," said, turning very red.

"Oh, no," I returned, carelessly; "no thing hurts Jill. She was riding in the Park the next morning as though nothing had happened."

"I remember you told meso, when I called to inquire," was his answer. "It was a nasty ocident, and might have upset her nerves; but she is very strong and courageous."

"She has great reason to be grateful to you," I returned, for I felt very sorry for him. He was hoping that she had sent him, some message; she would surely desire to be remembered to him. When I repeated Jill's abrupt little speech his face cleared, and he 

you : I must not keep you at the gate talk, ing," he said, cheerfully. "Besides, I see Leah Bates coming down from Gladwyn, and I want to speak to her." And he ran off in his bovish fashion.

I was glad to escape Leah, so I went quickly up the gerden-path. The little widow was waiting for me in the porch, her face beaming with welcome. Tinker rushed out of the kitchen as soon as he heard my