

SIR WILLIAM'S WILL

CHAPTER X.

Hesketh looked as if he were quite surprised to see the girls, though, of course, he had heard from Morton that they were staying at Withycombe.

"This is an unexpected pleasure!" he said, as he rode up beside Clytie and raised his hat. "I came out to see one of my—our—workmen who met with an accident a short time ago. We sent him here to convalesce."

"That was very good of you, Mr. Carton," said Clytie, with her ready recognition of a kindness.

"Oh, I'm afraid the fineness of the weather prompted the ride," he said, with an apologetic laugh. "How do you do, Miss Mollie?" he asked, as Mollie, looking none too well pleased, joined them. "A charming day for a ride. Perhaps"—he hesitated, in his best manner—"you will let me accompany you, my visit will wait."

Even Mollie, with all her readiness, could not have it upon an excuse for a refusal, and Clytie gave a pleasant consent. Hesketh could talk much better than he could ride, and he confined his conversation to Clytie; a conversation rendered rather difficult, by the way, by the behavior of Mollie's horse, which seemed to be more than usually difficult to manage that morning, and which, by jostling Mr. Carton's, and by frequent starts and rearings, upset the equanimity of his steady "safe-going" steed; and though Mollie was continually apologizing, there was a wicked look in her eyes, demurely hidden under their long lashes.

However, notwithstanding these frequent interruptions, Mr. Carton strove to be agreeable, and proved himself a pleasant and entertaining companion—to Clytie. They made their way up the valley, edged by woods of beech and fir, to the highroad, and went through scenery so diversified that at one moment it was like a bit of Scottish wide heather-clad moor; at the next resembled a leafy lane in Kent, and at another a sylvan pasture-land in Surrey. And nearly all the way there lay within sight of them the sea shining placidly in the September sunlight. Mollie would have enjoyed it—but for Mr. Carton's presence.

"I think we've gone far enough, Clytie," she said, after a while. "I'm beginning to crave for tea."



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Clytie, as usual, turned at once, and they returned toward Withycombe. As they came to the narrow lane leading to Mrs. Fry's farm, Hesketh said: "I will say good-by here; my man is staying in a cottage near the beach. I'll ride on."

"Oh, I want to tell that man—what's his name?—Douglas to bring a sail to-morrow, in case we want it," said Mollie.

"We'll all ride on," said Clytie. As they went down the road, Mollie's horse, annoyed at being turned away from the farm, shied, and rearing blundered up against Hesketh's horse with such force that the hack shied also, and started off at a sharp pace.

Hesketh was almost unseated, but, though he managed to keep in the saddle, he lost his stirrup and was unable to check the animal, which, with even a quiet horse's contempt of his rider, quickened its pace.

Suddenly a child—it was Polly—ran out of a cottage into the road and almost under the hoofs of Hesketh's horse. He tugged at it, and swore under his breath, but he would certainly have run over Polly if Jack, who had been lighting his after-tea pipe at the gate, had not sprung forward, and, after a scurry of hoofs and general confusion, snatched the child out of harm's way. As he did so, he half-unconsciously caught the bridle, and the horse, brought to a sudden stop by Jack's phenomenally strong hand, deposited Hesketh in the road.

The two girls had, of course, stopped, and looked on aghast. Mollie was the first to recover herself, and, pushing her horse to Jack's side, said: "Oh! is she hurt?"

"I—I don't think so," said Jack, with anxiety in his face, as he felt over the now screaming Polly. "No, I think not. Hold on, Mary Mavourneen, there's no damage done. You're all right."

"No thanks to you, my man," said Hesketh, his face white, his lips set, and with his dark eyes glowering angrily. "Why don't you take better care of your brat?"

Jack eyed him calmly, almost critically; and at that moment Hesketh, covered with dust, which he was attempting to brush off with a shaking hand, did not appear to advantage.

"Why don't you take better care of your horse?" retorted Jack quietly enough, but with the good rider's unconscious scorn for the bad one showing plainly in his eyes.

"What!" Hesketh crimsoned and stared at him in fierce amazement and resentment. "You are insolent, my man. You don't appear to realize that if I had not succeeded in checking my horse the child would have been run over."

Clytie had dropped from her saddle and gone up to Jack.

"Give her to me," she said very quietly, but in a tone that did not admit of a refusal. Jack surrendered Polly, whose screams had subsided into whimpers, and Clytie carried her into the cottage.

The two men stood confronting each other, Hesketh with an angry and haughty scowl, Jack with the eloquent contempt which hits harder and is worse to bear than anger; and Mollie sat looking from one to the other, all her sympathies with Jack, of course.

"Who are you?" demanded Hesketh, fighting with his rage and striving to emulate the coolness of his opponent.

"What has that to do with it?" replied Jack, who would have replied politely enough, if the question had not been put so offensively. "Who are you?"

Hesketh glared at him speechlessly for a moment, then he said: "I am Mr. Hesketh Carton, of Bramley." He bit his lip, for he saw how banal the reply had been, how pompous it sounded.

Jack naturally jumped at the retort.

"Well, Mr. Hesketh Carton—of Bramley—let me advise you to give up riding, or get a quiet horse. Not that there's much the matter with that one," he added, nodding toward the animal, which stood as still as a mouse beside Mollie's horse.

Hesketh bit his lip; he could find no retort; and suddenly he turned to Mollie.

"I hope you have not been alarmed, Miss Mollie," he said, with the usually effective ignoring of the other party.

"No," said Mollie. "The child's all right, I think, but you were nearly over it, would have been quite, if he hadn't caught it up in time."

"Yes, I fear so," said Hesketh, and I am glad the accident was averted. He thrust his hand into his pocket, took out a coin—it was half a sovereign—and held it out to Jack.

"Here," he said, contemptuously. "Take this. You'd better get a doctor to see the child. And try to keep a civil tongue in your head for the future."

Jack took the coin, then suddenly flung it at the donor. It caught Hesketh on the cheek, and stung him, and losing all control of himself—his calmness had been only apparent—he rushed at Jack with the riding-whip he



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had picked up raised above his head as if to strike.

Jack caught it, swung it up as if he were going to strike his assailant, then, with an effort at restraint, tossed the thing over his shoulder. For a moment he was as white as Hesketh, and his eyes blazed; and there reigned an ominous silence, during which Mollie, feeling as if she were paralyzed, kept her eyes fixed on Jack's passion-distorted face. It was a terrible sight.

The hot, fierce temper, so quick to resent an injustice, which had made it so easy to meet his father half-way in a quarrel, was all aflame in the young man's eyes, and quivering on his lips; and, though it was evident to her that he was fighting for calm, Mollie felt that any moment he might leap on Hesketh; and, if he did not succeed in keeping himself in hand, the result would not be doubtful. Hesketh would go down like a bundle of straw before a devastating fire. But Jack seemed suddenly to master himself, and, turning, said grimly:

"Take my advice, Mr. Hesketh Carton, and—He made a significant gesture toward Hesketh's horse. Hesketh seemed himself to be aware of the unfavorable position in which he had placed himself, and with a scornful, contemptuous shrug of the shoulders, he turned to Mollie.

"I am very sorry this—this fearful scene should have taken place in your presence, Miss Mollie."

"Oh, that's all right," she said, with a quick breath, as if she were recovering from a hypnotic spell. "Do go! There is no good in staying. Please go!"

He raised his hat. "I take that as a command, and I obey," he responded, with a furtive air of gallantry. "But, indeed, you are quite right. I am no match for a man of this class."

With another lift of his hat, and without a glance at the man standing upright as an arrow, sternly watching him, Hesketh mounted and rode up the street.

CHAPTER XI.

Jack looked after Hesketh fixedly for a moment, then, as if he were ashamed to have forgotten her for a second, he said:

"The child!"

He hurried into the cottage, and Mollie, dismounting and hitching the bridle to the gate, followed him. Polly, partly undressed, and wrapped in a shawl, was lying in Clytie's lap. She had ceased crying, and though still rather pale and frightened, was smiling.

Clytie looked up as Jack and Mollie entered, and Jack, even at that mo-

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ment, thought he had never seen anything more beautiful than the expression of her face; she seemed to him a living representation of Charity, of womanly tenderness; a ministering angel, was what he mentally called her.

"There is nothing the matter; she is not hurt," she said, answering his look of inquiry. "I don't think the horse can have touched her, ever so lightly; but, of course, she was very much frightened, weren't you, Polly?"

Polly nodded with solemn satisfaction. She was beginning to enjoy the important part she was playing in the scene.

"That's all right," said Jack, with a sigh of relief.

"Her mother is out," said Clytie. "We'll stay till she comes in; and I hope she won't return till Polly's quite herself again, or she will think all sorts of dreadful things have happened, won't she, Polly?"

"Yes," assented Polly. "Muvver will be very angry with that black man."

Mollie laughed. "Mr. Carton would feel flattered, wouldn't he?" she said. "But he was rather white. By the way, Douglas, I'm afraid you are a very bad-tempered man," she added, sweeping round on Jack, who was standing looking on with the awkwardness a man exhibits on such occasions.

"I am afraid I am," he said quietly. "But it was the money that riled. No matter!" He broke off suddenly, as an idea occurred to him. "The kettle's still boiling; I'll make you some tea."

"Please don't trouble," said Clytie; but Mollie sank into a chair and nodded her head.

"Yes, I should like some," she said. "I wanted it very badly before; I'm simply dying for it now. It's the excitement that does it."

"Mr. Carton must be very much distressed," murmured Clytie, as she put on Polly's frock.

"He was, indeed," said Mollie, dryly. "Rather lost his head—as well as his nerve. I should have thought that a child, Polly, here, could have held that placid steed of his." She got up as she spoke and went to the dresser where Jack was getting the tea-things and, seizing the cloth, laid it over the table.

"Take care that kettle really boils, Douglas."

"Of course," he responded absently. "I've made tea too often not to know the importance of really boiling water."

"Ah, yes, in Australia," she said, casually. "They almost live on tea there, don't they?"

"They do," said Jack.

"It must be very bad for the nerves—and temper; it evidently is," she commented.

Jack laughed. "That's one for me, I suppose, miss," he said. Then, as he put the tea on the table, he added, glancing sideways at Clytie. "I behaved disgracefully—before ladies, too. I'm very sorry, and I—hope you will forgive me."

Clytie was talking to Polly, and showed no signs of having heard the apology; but Mollie said:

"Yes, you were very foolish; you ought to have taken the half-sovereign—it was half a sovereign, wasn't it?"

"I don't know," muttered Jack.

"And bought something for Polly, eh, Polly? But we'll forgive you, though I doubt whether Mr. Carton will."

"I don't care if he—Will you pour out the tea, or shall I?"

He looked at Clytie, but Mollie seated herself at the table and filled a cup. He stood in waiting, and handed the cup and some bread and butter, which Mollie had cut, to Clytie, just as if he were the ordinary gentleman attending on ladies at afternoon tea in an ordinary drawing-room; and Mollie glanced at him under her long lashes and then at Clytie. But Clytie took the cup and the slice of bread and butter from him as if she did not observe anything worth noticing.

"You'd better have a cup yourself," said Mollie.

"Thanks," said Jack. "And some milk and water wouldn't do Polly any harm."

"I've already poured it out," she said; "and there are three lumps of sugar in it. Nothing like sugar for the kind of thing Polly's suffering from."

Jack took his cup and leaned against the mantel with his arm on the shelf and his foot on the fender; and he appeared to be perfectly self-possessed and at his ease; there was nothing of the shyness, the awkwardness which a man of his class should have displayed under such circumstances in the presence of the two young ladies from Bramley. Indeed, he seemed lost in thought, and his eyes rested absently on Clytie's face as she bent over Polly.

So that was his cousin, Hesketh Carton, he was thinking; the man who would succeed him as baronet, the man who had taken his place at the Hall during his father's lifetime. His cousin, a strange and unpleasant meeting for cousins! He had not liked the look of cousin Hesketh at first sight, and liked him less after the squabble between them. And Hesketh Carton was free to know, to be friends with the two Miss Bramleys, to visit them, accompany them on their walks and rides, while he, Jack, was masquerading as their boatman!

For the first time a flood of resentment—was it also of jealousy? assailed him, and he moved suddenly with a sense of impatience and irritation. As he did so, he was conscious of a peculiar sensation, something warm was trickling down his arm, which felt stiff and uncomfortable up to the shoulder. He remembered now that Hesketh's horse, as it plunged about and reared, had struck him with its hoof; in the excitement of the moment he had not noticed it; and it annoyed and irked him that the hurt should disclose itself now. Healthily he got out his handkerchief and held

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it in his left hand, so that it hid his wrist, and he also put the hand behind him, and he took Clytie's sup for some more tea.

With the cup, Mollie handed the bread and butter, and he was obliged to bring forward his left hand. Her sharp eyes noticed the handkerchief, but she said nothing. Polly's eyes were as sharp as hers, however, and the child cried out:

"Oh, Mr. Jack is hurt! Look at his arm!"

Jack walked quickly to the door. "I must go down and see after the boat," he said. "Mrs. Westaway will be back presently."

But Mollie's sharp, clear voice arrested his intended flight.

"Stop!" she said, imperiously. "Come back, please."

Jack stopped at the threshold and looked over his shoulder, not too amiably.

"What is the matter?" he asked, shortly.

"That is just what I was going to ask you," he said. "Polly says you are hurt; and so you are. I can see the blood on the handkerchief. Clytie, tell him to come here."

Clytie raised her head and colored slightly.

"My dear Mollie! But are you hurt?" she asked, quickly, sympathetically. "We none of us thought of asking if the horse had struck you; we were all so absorbed in the child."

"Hurt! Not a bit of it!" he said, with a laugh that would have been one of annoyance if he had been replying to Mollie; but was quite another kind of laugh for Clytie. "It's nothing to speak of, I assure you. I suppose the horse just caught me; anyhow, it's nothing whatever."

(To Be Continued.)

Japan Larger Than Germany.

In the World's Work there is a chart which shows a comparison of Germany and the Japanese empire. Japan is the greater of the two both in territory and population. Germany's area (exclusive of colonies) is 208,780 square miles, while that of the Japanese empire is 260,738 square miles. This includes the Peninsula of Korea, which is a part of the Japanese nation, but it does not include Manchuria and other Asiatic territory in which Japan has secured ninety-nine-year leases of ports and railroads as well as business advantages of all sorts and mining rights. Germany's population at the beginning of the great war was about 67,000,000. There are now 71,000,000 people living under the Japanese flag, and there are also great numbers of them scattered over the islands of the Pacific and in foreign countries.

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