

THE Grand Alliance; OR Love That Knew No Bounds.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Thus a juncture was reached at Wynstone whereat standing still was impossible, for besides the garrulous little brook of Miss Jean's fluctuating fortunes, other currents were sweeping along, gathering silent force, that presently breaking loose was to stir two hearts to their inmost depths.

Those fair spring months were to Gilbert Hurst a storehouse of unuttered pains; of pleasures more unutterable. To Sydney they brought labor over which, abandoning all thought of self, she laid out her every endowment, from highest to lowest, on behalf of those whom unworried honor called her creditors. Beyond the present she took no thought. That this present should ever turn and wound her sorely she never suspected.

So if Mr. Hurst, now absent-minded, now fussy, wanted her assistance over a dozen immaterial trifles daily, it was always ready. She could not give what was wanted. And if on Gilbert Hurst shone out the rarest, tenderest traits of her nature, why, that was neither her fault nor design; only the outcome of his need and her desire to pay him his due in some coin or other.

So, as April smiled over the earth, Sydney pictured to him who could not watch the season's gracious footsteps, the lovely miracle of fresh-clothed woods, from red-brown buds and peeping crinkled leaflets, through May's coy bravery of outspread green to the superb youth of queenly June, or the exquisite growth of pink-tipped fr-cones, swaying, clustering, growing on dark-limbed parent boughs; or that the frolics of a field full of bleating lambs in the river meadows whose sunset sports began with craziest vagaries in the jumping line and mostly ended with a wild stampede round their safe huddled quarters, and an impetuous hurry-scurry to their mothers' sides. Earth's reawaking had never had such tales to tell Sydney as now when she courted all its signs to pleasure some one else. And to Gilbert Hurst never had it seemed fuller of happy human suggestiveness than when its charms reached his senses mainly through a voice that was dearer to him than the singing of the south wind to the flowers!

But in that fatal knowledge lay much unintelligible to Sydney. Their book sped onward toward conclusion, but it was the amanuensis, not the author, who triumphed most in its completion.

"Only two chapters more!" she cried, at the end of a steady morning's work at which her own quick intelligence had been no mean help. "Only two; then finished and folded, and away into the world it goes! Are you not glad, Mr. Hurst?"

"Why, yes," he answered; "how can I be otherwise?" But he was not glad enough to satisfy his questioner. There was a ring of sadness in his response, and against sadness, where Mr. Hurst was concerned, Sydney waged war.

Likely as not he regretted ending that fixed design which had occupied him so long. Well, it need not be the last of such attempts.

"We must set to work on some more of your manuscripts," she said, cheerily, "or time will seem interminable till an answer comes back about this. What may we begin next?"

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The "we" had become natural through recent months. But now it seemed to grate on Mr. Hurst. Sydney colored as he answered, with reserve.

"I have nothing else in a finishable stage, even by your help, Miss Grey. My first venture with your assistance must be my only one."

"Then all your other notes are quite beyond me!" (Could he have seen her face his coldness must have melted.) "There seemed so many of the time you were abroad, I thought. I hoped you could have made volumes from them!"

"Those notes are crude and ineffectual," he returned. "Not all your kindness and industry—could shape them into readable form. Nothing short of another visit to the scenes they treat of could do that. And such a visit I can never make now."

Except over his own grateful sentence Mr. Hurst spoke with extreme steadiness, bending himself to his beseechment with the unassuming pathos that always moved Sydney strangely. But pitying words she never harassed him with. All she could say was,

"Oh, how I wish I had read or seen more—or were cleverer, so as to help you more!"

He moved from the table uneasily. "I felt the sun upon my shoulder just now. Has it clouded over? You must get out for your walk, Miss Grey." Obediently, she began to go. "Stay, though. Will you lay our papers aside before my sister comes in?"

Now she had it! Miss Jean was at the root of his disclaiming fresh effort. From the first she had treated his book as a mere whim, hoping, with faint smiles, it might repay him, but with shakes of the head implying dismal disbelief in any such success. A little jealous to begin with, other more absorbing objects had made her indifferent to its progress. Marking this, Sydney had done her utmost to atone for the lack of sisterly sympathy in the literary babe by an abundance of her own. Now again she must to the fore, and fill the

vold.

"Ah, she said, arranging the loose sheets, 'Miss Hurst is prudently saving her praise till she sees this in print. Then she will be elated enough! And as for me—'

Mr. Hurst had taken himself to the window, where, with his back to the room, he repeated, "And as for you—"

"Why, I am afraid there will be no bearing me! Your copying clerk will become—oh, such an epitome of conceit you will repent—"

He stopped her almost roughly.

"Don't lose your time. Go for your walk, Miss Grey." And jerking open the long window himself, went out as though (so she read his action), he were in no mood to discount success, as yet uncertain.

That June morning's work practically broke up the spring's congenial task. The final chapters were put together, but fitfully; Mr. Hurst sometimes pressing forward, sometimes delaying them. With spirits so varying, it needed all Sydney's knowledge of his hampered position to account for his changing humors. But there was enough for them in the attitude Miss Jean was assuming.

"I did very, very wrong," this sister would often deplore to Sydney, who easily discerned some foreign prompting in the complaint, "to let my poor brother drop into a life of ease, or really one might say laziness. But it is impossible to look forward in all things. Now here he is, without means of getting a living, on my hands, as it were, poor, dear fellow. And of course he naturally by now regards his maintenance as secure."

Resentment was settling in Sydney's bosom. But for recollection of how the Hursts grew poor it must be overbubbled.

"I thought," she said, slowly, "you told me once Mr. Hurst so wanted to keep off burdening you—"

"Oh, don't use that word, Miss Grey," cried Miss Jean, conscience-pricked when she heard her grievance from another's tongue.

"Well, wanted not to use your money, then. Wanted to struggle on for himself ever so humbly. Is that not exactly what you said? And you would not allow it? So, should he be blamed now?"

"Who wants to blame him, Miss Grey? Not I, I'm sure. If any one is to blame it is myself for being so short-sighted and so soft-hearted. I meant to be kind; I really was unjust. To Gilbert and—to myself."

And this last aspect of the situation seemed continually ranking in Miss Jean's mind, crying out in captious grumblings, constant carpings at things as they were, plaintive repinings at things as they could not be alternating with fits of affection for her brother, displayed in hovering about him with melancholy caresses, desponding voice, and little sniffs suggestive of repressed tears.

"Ah, Gilbert," she said to him one evening—it was Thursday, and the curate had just taken an excellent dinner at her right hand—"Mr. Babbington has been telling me of a friend of his who has done so well as a tutor near Cambridge. I wonder if you would have been so fortunate?"

"Too heavily handicapped, I fear," returned Mr. Hurst.

"Still, it might have been well to try it."

"Too late to wish it had been done now, Jean."

"Ah," said Mr. Babbington, with a complacent patronage of all his physical powers that set Sydney beating a fractious tattoo upon the floor. "I'm afraid, my dear Hurst, you let that trial overwhelm you. Frail man is easily overwhelmed. I know that. Your calamity, of course, is of a nature to absolve you from ordinary criticism; but it is deeply regrettable that you did not rise above it for once and for all. Deeply regrettable."

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"Jean," said Gilbert Hurst, in a low voice, "you have not forgotten how ready I was to do anything on earth to help myself. You remember the plan I had formed. You know why I gave it up. Does Mr. Babbington imply that I am indolent by choice?"

"Oh, no, Gilbert," his sister answered in a tremor. "He, Mr. Babbington, only means, as I mean, that if anything could have been done, perhaps it ought to. Nothing else. And—to her guest—Gilbert did want to make the effort, really. But it could only have been near Oxford, where Mr. Vaughan, you know, might have recommended him. But that signified outlay, and leaving Wynstone, and speculation, as it were. And as—the little property was my all, I didn't feel justified in the risk. But perhaps—appealing with mournful, moist eyes—'perhaps I was wrong?'"

"I am quite sure you meant to be right!" returned the clergyman, with emphasis very nearly tender, and Gilbert Hurst, a spasm of overtaxed endurance passing swiftly over his features, rose from the table with, "I would give half my useless years to come if I had had my way, though, Jean!"

"Hasty, hasty, to say that," rebuked Mr. Babbington. "It sounds, my dear fellow, like one of your rash boyish speeches. Do you remember how I used to check you jokingly for 'hat-ing' so readily?" (Sydney felt as though rapidly getting into condition to be checked for the same fault!)

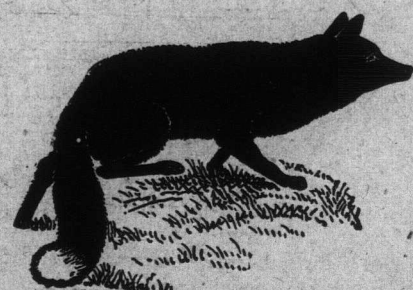
"That unfortunate Mr. Alwyn, for instance—forgive me for naming him, Miss Hurst—the lady put up her handkerchief. 'I have never forgotten how you poured your wrath out on his name. He is dead, I hear, you 'hated' him less, I trust, for Christianity's sake, before he left this world?'"

"Because I was passionate and headstrong then, does it follow I must never alter?" said Gilbert Hurst; and pushing aside his chair with "Jean, you have finished!" opened the door for the dinner party to disperse.

"Shrinks from even friendly searchings!" said Mr. Babbington, joining Miss Hurst on the still sunny garden-path. "More openness would assuredly do him good, poor fellow!"

Where it would he had neither folly nor churlishness to refuse it? Sydney, suddenly blanched at mention of her father, was impelled beyond request to know whether Gilbert Hurst counted him yet his enemy. Following to the orchard gate, "Davis has fastened this very awkwardly," she said, stooping over the withebound latch. "There, I have undone it, Mr. Hurst. That some one—Mr. Babbington spoke of—did he injure you—past pardon?"

(To Be Continued.)



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Adams, Mrs., Long Pond Road
Adams, Jack, Long Pond Road
- B**
Baddock, Miss Addie, retd.
Barrett, E. E.
Bailey, Miss Florence
Barnes, Martin, Alexander St.
Bennett, P., Williams Lane
Benson, Thomas, Flower Hill
Bell, A. F., slip
Bishop, Wm., retd., Gower St.
Bishop, Frederick, care Wm. Crocker, Barter's Hill
Briggs, Isaac B.
Bidwell, Mrs. P. G.
Brown, Almon, Circular Road
Brown, Eli, Prescott St.
Brown, Miss Durella, card
Butt, Miss L., Water St.
Butley, Joseph
Butler, Mr. E., Surveyor
Buckler, Mrs. B.
Bush, Mrs. Mary Ann, care General Delivery
Butt, Miss Minnie, Gower St.
Bullen, C. H.
Bulleigh, C. R.
Blackadar, Miss Cordelia, in care Garret Byrne
Bowden, Miss Bertha
Brace, Albert, late Trepassay
Barner, F. C., LeMarchant Road
Bell, Miss, retd., Casey St.
- C**
Curtis, Miss Genevieve, King's Road
Collins, J. J., care Gen. Post Office
Clarke, John
Callahan, Mrs. Wm., Casey St.
Calkin, Wm., Gower St.
Coke, Joseph, care Gen. Delivery
Chandler, J. C., care Gen. Delivery
Chafe, Mrs. Joseph, Hayward's Ave.
Cole, Wm. H., care Gen. Post Office
Cotter, R., Mt. Scio
Connors, Annie, care Gen. Post Office
Cockburn, H. N., Gen. Delivery
Coffin, Frank S.
Connors & Mitchell
Cunningham, Mrs. Ellen, Banerman Street
Curran, Miss Agnes, late Springfield
Cameron, Miss Iola, Duckworth St.
Costello, Miss Annie B.
Carnell, A., Merrymeeting Road
Clarke, H. B.
- D**
Dawson, Mrs. John, Gear St.
Dwyer, Michel, Nagle's Hill
Duff, Mrs. Rebecca
Duff, Mrs. Wm. Monroe, Forest Rd.
Dyke, Miss Mary, Duckworth St.
Dixon, W. E.
Dinn, Mrs. Patrick
Drover, Wm.
Dunn, Miss Ida, Long's Hill
Davison, G., Water Street
Doyle, Miss Katie, Queen's Road
- E**
Edward, Thomas
Evans, George
Escoff, Mrs. M., 37 ——— St.
Erond, Mrs., King's Rd. & Gower St.
- F**
Flanagan
Finn, Michael, Water St. West
Fitzgerald, Wm., care Gen. Post Office
Foward, Miss Jessie Cabot St.
Fulford, C. E.
Fogarty, F. P.
Furlong, Michael
Fowler, Miss Katie
- G**
Grandy, Geo. S.
Greenland, Wm., care Gen. Post Office
- H**
Gillett, Arthur, Pennywell Road
Goss, John
Goss, Walter
Groves, Gordon, retd.
Groves, Mrs. John, Monroe St.
Guy, Charlie, Gower St.
Guild, James care Gen. Delivery
- I**
Harvey, J.
Hayward, Amos, Larkin's St.
Harold, Miss C., 11 ——— St.
Hally, George, card, Cabot St.
Hickey, W. J., care Mrs. Jno. Fogarty
Hiscock, Peter of Wm.
Hickey, Thos. F.
Hibbs, Mrs., 108 ——— St.
Hodder, George H.
Hope, Mrs. Sarah
Holmes, Chesley, card
Hutchings, Mr., Gower St.
Hull, Const. J.
Hall, Bertha, retd.
Hafey, John, Freshwater Road
Hauman, Wm.
Hellyer, Wm.
- J**
Jackson, Mrs. Bridget
Joseph, Abraham, care Gen. Post Office
Jones, Samuel
Jackson, Mrs. Archibald
Jones, David, Gower St.
- K**
King, Margaret, card
King, Mrs. Elizabeth, card, Mullock Street
Kennedy, M. Jean, retd.
Kennedy, Mrs. Wm., Murray St.
Kelly, Richard
Kent, Michael, Freshwater Road
King, J., Springdale Street
Kitchen, C. A., Plymouth Road
- L**
Laney, Miss Ellen, Pleasant Street
Lynch, J. P.
Lynch, Lillian, care P. J. Taylor
Lock, Master A., care G. P. O.
Logan, John P.
Lock, Henry, Pleasant St.
Lundrigan, Theresa, retd.
Lynham, Miss Sarah, LeMarchant Rd.
Lewis, W. J., Pennywell Road
Lewis, Miss Isabella, card
- M**
Martin, May J., Merrymeeting Road
Maldment, Edmund, Gower St.
Marshall, Mrs. Albert M., care General Delivery
Maybow, W., Tessier Place
Maynard, F. J., care Gen. Delivery
Moore, Mrs. Laurence, Flower Hill
Morgan, Miss Mary
Moore, Mrs., Mullock Street
Moore, Herbert, card
Moulton, Miss Mabel E., Gower St.
Mouland, Miss L., card, Pennywell Rd.
Monroe, F. H.
Moore, C., care Mr. Cummins, New Gower Street
- N**
Mullett, Mrs. Rosella, Pennywell Rd.
Murphy, G. W.
Mouland, Mrs. Carrie
- Mc**
McKillop, Miss Annie
McGrath, Margaret
McGillvary
McCulloch, J. W., Water St. West
McDonald, Miss Lizzie, Maxse St.
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Nash, Miss Annie, Catherine St.
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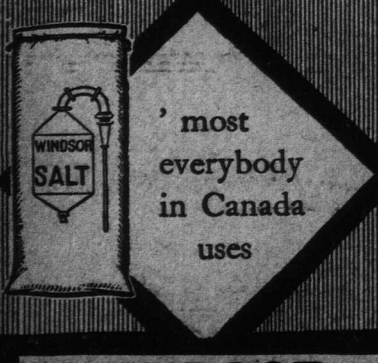
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