KERSHAM MANOR.

CHAPTE XXXII.

SIR ROLAND'S BEQUEST.

"If my relations had not behaved so badly to me," said Mr. Wyatt, in a querulous tone, "we should be better off now, and my daughter could look down on a beggarly journalist."

He was sitting over a small fire on a chilly October afternoon, in the lodgings with which Phillis had provided him. They were not sumptuous lodgings; indeed, they were far poorer than those which he had occupied when his daughter was employed at the theater; but they were neat and clean. His sojourn in jail had tended to sober him, the grinding poverty in which he had found himself afterward had sobered him still more.

But in that interval his health had suffered. The long, trembling hands which he held out to the warmth of the blaze were thinner and whiter than ever, his gaunt frame was racked by an incessant cough.

Anything like physical weakness was certain to rouse Phil's pity. She could say hard things to her father when he erred from the right way, but she was gentleness itself when he suffered pain. It was only in a hospital that she would ever have had any chance of passing for a saint.

She had not been able to exert her nursing powers on Jack Drummond's behalf, as he made it a point that she should leave Mrs. Bain's kitchen as soon as he had forced from her the acknowledgment of her love.

So she had gone submissively back to her lodgings, and tried to find other work. The flat was too expensive for her now. She found two small rooms in a poorer street, where she received her father when he came out of prison.

On the occasion when Mr. Wyatt uttered his grumbling protest against his family's unkindness, Esther was standing in the little room talking to Phillis. Mr. Drummond had found it necessary to devise a system of communication with Phillis, for he was not yet able to visit her, and she could not visit him. His office friends helped him out of the difficulty. Mr. Haslam and Esther conveyed messages and gifts.

So it came to pass that Esther brought her friend a message from Mr. Drummond, saying that the doctor's report was very favorable, and that he was going out of doors on the morrow, though of course with a shade over his eyes. "And he can see quite well with one eye," said Esther in a congratulatory tone.

"Yes, but the other—"

"He will be blind with that eye all his life, I am afraid."

Phil turned away and clenched her hands.

"Why does not some one beat me?" she said. "Why didn't they send me to prison? I was a fool."

"You should not think of it in that way, Phil. You did it to defend yourself—you did not know that he was there."

"I was not worth defending."

"Mr. Drummond would not agree with you," said Esther.

It was then that Mr. Wyatt made his remark about his relations, and the beggarly journalist. Phillis flamed up at once.

"I owe Mr. Drummond a great deal more than I shall ever be able to pay, father. If I give him all my life, it would be no more than he deserves. And as for being a beggarly journalist, he makes his own living and does good with what he earns, which is more than can be said, perhaps, for your relations."

"They are a good family—a good county family," maundered Wyatt, "They are not upstarts or tradesfolk. Not one of the Malets was ever in trade, and all of them have made their mark—"

"The Malets?" said Esther, suddenly turning round on Phillis.

She nodded. "The Malets. Yes. That is the name of some of my father's relations. Much good they have done him.

"Not the Malets of Kersham Manor," exclaimed Esther, laying a detaining hand on Phil's arm.

"They live at Kersham Manor, I believe," Phil answered indifferently.

"Yes, Kersham Manor," muttered Wyatt. "Where I was brought up. They kicked me out like a dog when I married Alice Neave. Roland promised to do something for me, but he died, and left everything to the lad—Sebastian was his name, I think."

"Do you mean that you are relations—near relations—of the Malets?" asked Esther, with increasing surprise.

"Not near relations at all," said Phillis, with lifted head. "Sir Roland Malet and my father were cousins, that is all. We know nothing of each other. I should be very sorry if they offered to do anything for me. I hate them all."

She went about the room with curled lip and flashing eye, while Esther stood silent, knitting her brows and trying to remember what Sebastian had said concerning some relations to whom Sir Roland had left money. She could not remember that he had told her any name. But—he was in England now.

Nina had been staying with her mother for the summer. Esther heard that they were going to leave England again in the course of a very short time, but she hoped that a letter would find Sebastian before he went.

Some days elapsed, and no answer came. But one evening, on her way to a little railway station on the river bank, she saw a man's figure advancing toward her, and recognized with surprise that it was Sebastian himself. He had come to answer her letter in person.

"I have come to answer your letter," he said, after the first words of greeting had been exchanged. "These Wyatts that you speak of—tell me about them. They are your friends?"

"Phillis is my friend." And then Esther told him Phil's story.

"You need have no more anxiety about your friend. She will be provided for henceforward.

"She and her father are the cousins of whom you once spoke to me?"

"Yes. My uncle left money in trust for them. He would not leave it to Henry Wyatt himself because he knew the man's habits. It will probably be safe enough in Miss Wyatt's hands."

"You must be glad," she said, "that you are able to insure her happiness.

"I am glad that justice will be done," he answered, without enthusiasm.

In his next words he changed the subject.

"You will be surprised to hear that I have given up my consulship.

"How is that?"

"There were several reasons. Nina did not like the place. And little Muriel is delicate; the doctors said that she must come away. Some men send their wives and families to England, and live abroad themselves. I could not do that. You know Nina; you know she is not the woman to take care of herself. And her mother has gone abroad."

"But your own career—"

"Oh, that is not worth talking about," he said, with a slight but bitter smile. "I gave up my career long ago when I left Vienna so soon after St. Petersburg. My uncle was wrong in trying to make a diplomatist of me." Sebastian would have made this confession to nobody but Esther, who had known and loved his uncle too. "Or rather, when I tried it for myself. It was not my line."

"Do you never write anything?" Esther asked with diffidence.

"I used to. Not lately."

"I thought that you were going to bring out your uncle's book," said Esther made timid in speech by his bitter tone.

He was silent a moment, looking away from her as if watching the light upon the distant hills. Then he said:

"What will you think of me when I tell you that I have scarcely touched my uncle's papers since he died, although he left them as a solemn charge to me to complete and publish?"

"You have been prevented; you have been busy with other things."

"With what other things? I have idled—frittered away my time. I have done nothing."

"Then you are going to do it now?"

Sebastian was silent again, but he smiled. "I don't think I shall ever do anything at all," he said presently, in a lighter tone. "You are mistaken in me, as my uncle was. I am a born trifler—a flaneur—a 'frivoler,' as we call it in our modern slang—capable only of the infinitely little—"

"You are not—you are not!" cried Esther passionately. "I will not have you say so of yourself. Who has made you think so? how have you come to say these things? When I remember how you and your uncle used to talk of the great men of the earth—how you used to say that no toil would be too great, no effort too intense, if only you might do something worth doing, something to make the world better and nobler—if only you might add your name to the list of men who are remembered, as some of your ancestors have been, for the work they have done!—when I think of this I can not believe that your bright hopes have faded, and that you have grown content with an ignoble life, in which you care only for trifles, for amusement, for a little measure of comfort and ease and joy—"

Her voice broke suddenly. She caught her breath and sat silent, the echo of her own tones lingering in her ears and making her ashamed.

"I am afraid," said Sebastian, almost below his breath, "that is so, Esther. I have grown—content—with very little."

"But you need not sit down in idleness, and be content to be content," she answered, half-indignantly. "And—at any rate"—her voice sank—"you will not neglect a trust: you will no longer forget what Sir Roland wanted you to do for him."

"I have not forgotten," he said, with an emphasis on the last word; and therein lies my dissatisfaction. I have remembered—and neglected."

"It is not too late."

"Is it not? I can not tell; I think sometimes that I have left the work too long. These years seem to have gone like a dream. And now comes the awakening."

He said the last few words in so low a tone that she caught them with difficulty. The night was closing in upon them, the stars were coming out, and a chill breeze blew from the river. Esther rose to go. He walked with her to the house in which she lived. Before they parted she murmured a few words of something like apology for the freedom with which she had spoken to him of his ambitions.

"I know nobody who has more right to speak," he said. And then he added a few words rather hurriedly, as if afraid of being misunderstood. "You knew my uncle; you were always a good friend to me and mine. I know no one to whom I would sooner turn for help if I were in need."

She thought there had never been a sweeter word.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

JACK DRUMMOND SPEAKS.

"I don't want any of the Malets money!" flashed out Phil, with an angry clenching of her little hand.

Sebastian had been and gone. Mr. Wyatt was mumbling incoherently to himself. Mr. Jack Drummond was sitting on a sofa, while Miss Phillis stood erect in the middle of the room and delivered her soul in words of remarkable energy.

"Why does he come here to patronize and insult us? He never thought of us until Esther Denison talked about our poverty. Why didn't she hold her tongue? We don't want his help."

"I think you misunderstand the matter, Phil," said Jack.

"Oh, no doubt, everything that I do is wrong," cried Phillis defiantly. "I wish people would leave me to myself!"

Jack answered by getting up and feeling about for his hat. He was still very helpless; one eye was completely covered, and the other protected by a shade. When Phillis saw him hunting for something, she came to his side and asked, in a softer tone, what he wanted.

"My hat and stick."

"What for? You came to tea."

"If you wish people to leave you to yourself, hadn't I better go?"

"If you like," said Phillis as proudly as ever; but her movement had brought her to her lover's side, and he suddenly put his arm round her and held her fast.

"I don't 'like.' I was only trying to tease you, my Phil."

"Father is there," Phillis whispered in a warning voice.

"'Father' may be there a hundred times over, but I don't mean to let him control my behavior, my dear. Aren't you going to sit down beside me, and tell me that you are glad that I have come?"

"Presently."

"Why not now? Phil, you are in a bad humor; we must have it out. What's distressing you; Why do you say 'presently' and turn your head away? What is it, dear?"

She was silent.

"Speak to me, Phil. I can't read answers in your face as I used to do," said Jack softly.

"It is only," she said, with a desperate effort at self-command, "that I don't like to see you—and my father—so ready to take the Malets' bounty."

"I don't mean to take a farthing of bounty, or to let you do so either."

"What then Jack?"

"My dear Phills, there is no question of bounty in the matter. The money was bequeathed to your father, or to Mr. Malet in trust for your father, by Sir Roland Malet some years ago. The money does not belong to any one but your father, as far as I can make out."

"I don't understand Mr. Malet's story," said Phillis. "He says that Sir Roland left this money to us. It was not left to us in Sir Roland's will. Father ascertained that when he was stronger and more active than he is now. Father was very anxious about Sir Roland once—hush, don't let him hear—and I did my best to prevent him from writing for money."

"But he did write, did he not?" said Jack, who had been having a conversation with Sebastian relative to the Wyatts.

"Yes, from Manchester. He gave me the letter to post," said Phil, coloring, "and I did not post it for a fortnight afterward. I could not make up my mind to suppress it altogether, so I waited a fortnight. By that time father had made up his mind that they would not notice him again, and I persuaded him easily to let me take a situation with a traveling dramatic company that was just going to Scotland; so—if ever an answer came or not, I do not know. I took care to leave no address.

"Yes," said Jack. "An answer came, with a check, and a promise of further help."

"Then I'm glad we did not get it," cried Phil exultantly, "I never wanted a penny of their money, and I won't take it now."

"Why do you hate the Malets?"

"Because they hated my mother and me. When my father married Alice Neave they would not speak to him again; they cast him off; they refused to have anything to do with him. They knew that he was in poverty; they knew that she actually died of hardship and misery. They knew—or they might have known—that her father and mother had grown poor, and that they wanted help too! But they waited and waited until my mother was dead, and her parents were dead, and my father had sunk—sunk—so low that he will never rise again; and I—I—I—" she cried, covering her face with her hands and bursting into tears. "I am a miserable, uneducated, bad-tempered wretch, whom nobody can bear—"

"Phillis, you know that I love you,' murmured Jack.

"And now—now—when it is all too late, they come and offer us money," she went on vehemently, as if she did not hear "And I hate them; I hate them all, and I will have none of their money."

"Look here, Phil," he said, when the girl was quieter, "I'm going to speak out. It's no use mincing matters, especially with you. You would like me none the better for it in the end."

"I know you're going to say something disagreeable," said Phil. "Go on, get it over."

"Well, to begin with, it is no use for you to talk about the Malets' bounty and patronage, as if they were going to give you what was not your own. Did you not hear Mr. Malet say that his uncle had left him instructions in a letter to pay a certain sum, or portion of it, at his discretion, to his cousin Henry Wyatt, when Henry Wyatt could be found? That letter of instruction is morally, if not legally, binding on Mr. Malet. I dare say that it's legally binding too, but that does not matter; it binds Mr. Malet as a man of honor, to pay your father the money, and you haven't the slightest right to object. And to talk of charity in connection with it is pure folly, Phil, and you know that it is."

He noted the thrill that came in her voice as she said:

"I know at any rate that I can refuse to have anything to do with the Malets' money.

"You make it hard for me, Phil," said Jack; "because you put me into the position of urging you to take money as if it were for my own sake; and you know very well that I don't care whether you have a penny or not. It is chiefly for your father's sake that I want to speak. You pride yourself on having delayed that letter to Sir Roland Malet, and hurrying your father away so that he should not receive an answer. You know very well that you ought not to have done that. You know as well as I do that cheating is a sin; and yet you are proud of—of—a trick, which comes pretty nearly to cheating, if not quite—cheating your father of what was his—"

Phil gasped. Nobody had ever spoken to her in this tone before.

"It's a hard word to say; is it not, Phil? But you know how I love you, and I love you none the less, my dear, because you are human enough to do wrong sometimes, as I do myself, and as we all do. I'm speaking bluntly and plainly, for I can't do anything else; but I want you to know that my love is far too deep to be disturbed, even when I tell you that I think you have been wrong. Your mistakes, Phil dear, are only the mistakes of a very noble, generous nature in hard and cruel straits. I should not be worth having if I shut my eyes and said that your mistakes were noble deeds in themselves, or that you were perfect and could do no wrong."

"You certainly never said that," said Phillis with a hard little laugh.

"I don't intend to," was Jack's calm response. "But see, Phil; you say that the Malets ought not to have let your mother and your grandparents suffer. Why my dear girl, you have let your father suffer all these years, when you knew very well that the Malets would have helped him if they had heard—"

"I did not know," said Phil. "I never heard that Sir Roland had answered the letter till to-day.

"But you had had some idea of what Sir Roland was like? You knew what at any rate your father thought that he would do? Come, be honest, Phil. Didn't you really think that he would answer your father's letter? Why else did you hurry him away from Manchester?"

What I thought does not matter much, said Phillis contemptuously.

"Yes, it does. If you thought so, if you believed that Sir Roland would send your father help, you tricked him knowingly, out of what he ought to have had years ago. If you did not think so, why, you tricked him unknowingly, that is all. And you ought now to make up for what you have done by letting him take the money peaceably, and helping him to use what is lawfully your own."

"He may take it if he likes. I can work for myself."

"You would have been much happier, Phil, if you had waited for Sir Roland's letter at Manchester, six years ago. You would not have had to drudge and toil and starve; you would not have seen your father suffer as he has suffered; he might have been cared for and protected himself from the temptations which assail him. You know yourself whether the last six years have been happy ones—"

"You have lectured me quite enough, Mr. Drummond. I think I've had enough of it."

"So have I, Phil."

"Let me go. Take your ring back."

"Why?"

"You say you have had enough of it; and I—I—hate you."

"I've had enough of lecturing, I meant," said Jack in his usual easy voice; "I don't mean to do any more of it. I have not had enough of you, my darling. There, I have said all I wanted to say. I will not mention the subject to you again. You know what I think you ought to do. Now you must decide for yourself."

Mr. Wyatt, who had sought the seclusion of the next room, came back when he heard the sound of clinking spoons and plates.

Jack had not come to tea—it was his first visit—in order to talk to Mr. Wyatt; but he had no chance of doing anything else. Phillis would not look at him, would not sit by him, or speak to him all the evening. At eight o'clock he rose with a discouraged look and said that he must go. Whereat Mr. Wyatt, suddenly recalled to discretion, slipped off into the next room, and Phillis was left alone with Jack.

She looked at him now. He presented a rather pathetic figure as he stood with one hand on the little center-table, his shoulders were more bowed that they used to be, the shade over his eyes showing that his sight was defective, the lines of his face betraying weakness and pain that might be past, but were not yet forgotten.

As she thought of these things the tears overflowed her eyes. She came up to him quite simply, and put her arms round his neck.

"I was wrong, I dare say," she said, "and you know best."

"No, no, Phillis, I don't my darling."

"Yes, you do. And whether you do or not, it is my business to think as you think, and to do what you tell me. I will never do or say anything that you do not like, Jack; if I can help it. You shall be my conscience, my king, my world. I have tried to manage everything as I pleased: I'll try no longer. I'm yours, Jack, body and soul. It is very little that I can do to make up for what you have lost; but such as it is, you shall have it all.'"

She laid her head on his breast, and sobbed herself into quietness. Her abdication was complete.

"I shall try to make you happy, Phil, God helping me!" said Jack, a little unsteadily. "Forgive me if I was harsh—unkind—unjust!—" Then, as she put up her hand to stop his mouth, he caught it and pressed his lips first to the delicate fingers and then to the girl's soft cheek. "Now," he said, "I begin to feel that you are mine. Why should we wait, Phil? How long will it take you to get ready? The doctors have told me to go to Braemar next week. Why should I not take my wife with me to Braemar?"

He did.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FLYING MACHINES.

The Wonderful Things They Would Accomplish.

Samuel Cabot, a manufacturing chemist of Boston, is interested in flying machines.

At present he is trying to discover the best form of aerial screw—one which will give the greatest push with the least amount of power. In an interview with a reporter of the Boston Traveler he said:

"Two questions have been frequently asked, which perhaps it will be worth while to answer now, and as part of my reply will be in the form of a prophecy, this 'credo' may be worth the trouble of preservation to compare with the developments of the future.

"What important service can flight in air serve? Maxim, Langley and all who have studied the subject thoroughly, agree that the speed of aeriation will greatly exceed that of any terrestrial locomotion.

"From this follows an entire economic change in the direction of rendering immense tracts of comparatively worthless territory at distances of twenty to forty miles from cities much more available. There would also result the relegating of city property in large measure to business and storage purposes. This would to a large extent accomplish what Henry George sighs for, but would do it by means which do not involve any wrong to the land owner by the wage-earner.

"With flying navies, capable of carrying unseen at night large quantities of explosives to the center of a city, war would become so destructive that it would be soon supplanted by arbitration as a matter of common sense and self-preservation.

"Arbitration once established, an international police system, controlling nations as we do individuals, and enforcing the decrees of boards of arbitration, would be enormously assisted by this power of rapid and, if necessary, destructive patrolling.

"Immense areas of country, now well nigh impenetrable, would be opened to usefulness. Large sources of wealth would thus be added to the civilized world, and would result in the amelioration of the condition of the savages of such regions as central Africa.

"We should have to give up selfish legislation and restriction upon the commerce of other nations, and be obliged perforce to 'stand on a broader heritage than that of nation or of zone.'"

The farmers and cowboys of Lamar, Col., gathered together and killed 2,000 jack-rabbits, which they sent to Denver as a gift to the hungry unemployed there.

Lying about the weather will not be so easy hereafter as it has been in the past. Some ingenious person has invented a self-recording thermometer, which makes a mechanical record every day of the extreme heighth and depth of the thermometer in the course of each twenty-four hours.

CANINE AFFECTION.

A Remarkable Alliance Between Dogs and a Cow.

The following from "Rod Random," Winnipeg, appears in Sports Afield:

"A remarkable case of bovine and canine affection has existed in Winnipeg for some time. A litter of Irish setter puppies was raised in a barn in the next stall to that occupied by a cow. When the pups were big enough two of them, much to the alarm of Mr. A., their owner, persisted in paying frequent visits to their big neighbor. The cow, however, was by no means inclined to be hostile, and received the visits of their pupships with pleasure. It always took good care not to step or lie on them, and when about to make a move would look very carefully around the stall. When lying down the pups would play hide-and-seek around her and she joined in the fun by poking them with her nose. Mr. A. became very much interested in the case and when he let the cow out to pasture in the spring he also turned the whole litter loose to run around the premises. The "twa dogs" sought out their big friend and the mutual attraction grew to such a degree that they followed her constantly. When she would lie down in the fields the dogs took up their position beside her and dozed while she dozed.

"At last, however, one of the pups began to tire of this way of spending its time and became less attentive, before long leaving its brother in undisputed possession of its bovine friend's affections. These were now lavished on the remaining setter in an amazing degree, and the cow would never let it out of her sight. When another dog attacked her friend she would give chase and the attacking party, astonished with such reinforcements, would generally withdraw, no doubt wondering at the great advancement made in the science of modern warfare. Nor did she confine her attacks to the vagrant canines. The mischievous small boy who delights in pestering dogs of all sorts and sizes, providing always that the said dogs will run away, came in for a share of the cow's displeasure, and many times have I seen her in full chase after a refractory youngster with her setter friend, now as brave as a lion, having unbounded confidence in the pommeling abilities of her bovine majesty, leading the way, all the while executing a sort of war dance like an Indian chief marshaling his forces on to sure victory. Such a scene would undoubtedly strike terror into the heart of the victim as it did to mine one morning when I wanted to prove the statements made to me by various friends about this strange attachment.

"How I got over that fence I will never be able to tell. For a time, at all events, I did not share the dog's affections for the cow, but she seemed most solicitous to form a close acquaintance with me.

"The cow has been sold and for some time the dog missed and visibly mourned its friend, but soon took up with the horse and transferred its affections to it where they now rest. The oddest of it is that the other dog, who formerly had such a great attraction for the cow, is now at one with its brother on the merits of the horse and the three are seldom separated."

CURIOSITIES OF THE CALENDAR.

Do You Know When the End of the Century Will Come?

The year 1900 will not be a leap year simply because, being a hundredth year, although it is divisible by 4, it is not divisible by 400 without a remainder. This is not the real reason, but a result of it—the real reason being the establishment of the Gregorian rule, made in 1582.

The nineteenth century will not end till midnight of Monday, Dec. 31, 1900, although the old quarrel will probably again be renewed as to what constitutes a century and when it winds up, and thousands will insist on a premature burial of the century at midnight of Dec. 31, 1899. But, as a century means 100 years, and as the first century could not end till a full 100 years has passed, nor the second till 200 years had passed, etc., it is not logically clear why the nineteenth century should be curtailed and broken off before we have had the full 1900 years.

The 1st of April and 1st of July in any year and in leap year the 1st of January fall on the same day of the week.

The 1st of September and 1st of December in any year fall on the same week day.

The 1st of January and the 1st of October in any year fall on the same week day, except it be a leap year.

The 1st of February, of March, and of November of any year fall on the same day of the week unless it be a leap year, when Jan. 1, April 1, and July 1 fall on the same week day. The 1st of May, 1st of June, and 1st of August in any year never fall on the same week day, nor does any one of the three ever fall on the same week day on which any other month in the same year begins, except in leap year, when the 1st of February and the 1st of August fall on the same week day.

To find out what day of the week any date of this century fell: Divide the year by 4 and let the remainder go. Add the quotient and the year together, then add three more. Divide the result by 7, and if the remainder is 0 March 1 of that year was Sunday; if 1, Monday; if 2, Tuesday; and so on.

For the last century do the same thing, but add 4 instead of 3. For the next century add 2 instead. It is needless to go beyond the next century, because its survivors will probably have some shorter method, and find out by simply touching a knob or letting a knob touch them.

Christmas of any year always falls on the same day of the week as the 2d of January of that year unless it be leap year, when it is the same week day as the 3d day of January of that year.

Easter is always the first Sunday after the full moon that happens on or next after March 21. It is not easy to see how it can occur earlier than March 22 or later than April 26 in any year.

New Year (Jan. 1) will happen Sunday but once more during this century; that will be in 1899. In the next century it will occur fourteen times only, as follows: 1905, 1911, 1922, 1928, 1933, 1939, 1950, 1956, 1961, 1967, 1978, 1984, 1989, and 1995. The intervals are regular—6-5-6-11, 6-5-6-11—except the interval which includes the hundredth year that is not a century, when there is a break—as 1893, 1899, 1905, 1911,—when three intervals of six years come together; after that plain sailing till 2001, when the old intervals will occur in regular order.