

Her Great Love;

Or, A Struggle For a Heart

CHAPTER XII.—(Cont'd.)

"Oh, do you think so?" said Decima; and she gazed before her with a disappointed look in her eyes.

She was very quiet for the rest of the dinner, and when it was over, and she had listened to her father's usual monologue—a monologue which had lately grown more extravagant and sanguine—she stole out into the garden, and leaning on the gate, thought of Bobby's speech. Would he not come, after all? Had he been deceiving them?

She opened the gate and walked down the fire-escaped road until she came to the great house. The sight of it, she thought that its owner was, probably, many hundreds of miles away, and would not see all that—yes, she—had done, saddened her.

She was roused from her reverie by the sound of a horse's hoofs. Though at some distance, it rang pleasantly on the smooth road; and as she listened, it came nearer.

Instinctively she drew back under the shadow of the trees. The rhythmic beat came nearer and nearer, and presently in the moonlight she saw a man riding a big black horse. It was coming along at a swinging pace, and it was almost abreast of her before she saw that the rider was Lord Gaunt.

She did not recognize him for a moment, for Gaunt was one of those men who look younger in the saddle than on foot. He sat his horse perfectly; man and horse indeed seemed one.

A sudden gladness shot up like a tiny flame in her breast, but she drew further back. She saw that he looked pale, and that he was lost in thought; and she half-hoped—though why she did not know—that he would pass by without seeing her.

But the man who watches for big game in Africa, with a keenness upon which life depends, acquires abnormal quickness and sharpness of sight; and as he came up to the slim figure in its soft gray dress, Gaunt glanced at her.

"Miss Deane!" he said, raising his hat. Decima held out her hand, and he took it and looked at her, not absent-mindedly now, but with a strange directness. "You have come back!" he said. "I am glad."

His eyes fixed themselves on her. "Yes; I have come back. And you are glad?" he said, with some surprise in his tone.

"Yes; for Mr. Bright's sake—and the people's," she said, with the innocent frankness of a child.

"He nodded. "Ah, yes," he said, "for Bright's sake—yes, yes."

"He would have been so disappointed," said Decima. "He has been so dreadfully anxious about you! If you had seen him this morning!" she laughed softly, and he smiled gravely.

"I have just seen him," he said. "I came back this afternoon. I should have been here before; but I have been detained in London."

"I knew you would come," she said, forgetting all her recent doubts and fears. "You promised."

"Yes; I promised. Otherwise—" the horse flinched, and he drew the bridle over his arm more tightly.

"What a beautiful horse!" said Decima. Her heart was beating with a sharp sense of pleasure, her lovely face was softly radiant. He looked at her with the intent regard of his grave eyes.

"Do you admire horses? He is an old friend. He has carried me for many a year, and in strange places; in places where he and I have been sole companions."

The horse stretched out his arched neck and smelled at her, and Decima stroked his nose with her soft, warm hand. "You are not afraid of him?" Gaunt asked.

"Oh, no!" said Decima. "I love animals—horses especially. What is his name?"

"Nero," he said. "Rather like a dog's name, isn't it? He will not hurt you."

For the horse, encouraged by the caress, thrust his nose against her, and breathed heavily and quickly, as a horse will do when it takes a sudden fancy; and horses are like women in this respect.

"I am not afraid," she said; and she put her arm round the sleek neck and pressed the handsome head against her bosom.

Gaunt watched the pair in silence for a moment; then he said:

"I am glad I have seen you so soon, Miss Deane. I want to thank you."

"To thank me?" said Decima, absorbed in the horse.

"Yes," he went on, "for all you have done for me. When I got home to the house, which I expected to find grim and deserted, I found that it had been made a House Beautiful. And every one—not only Bright, but the workmen themselves—told me that it was you who had so transformed it."

"Oh, no—no!" said Decima. "Not I! It was Mr. Bright and the men from London."

"Not at all!" he said, quickly. "Yours has been the guiding hand, your taste the guiding spirit. They told me. But even if they had not done so, I should have guessed it. It was evident that some woman's hand, some woman's eye, had been at work."

Decima looked up at him with a frank smile of pleasure, for his praise was sweeter than she knew.

"I am so glad you are pleased!" she said. "You can't tell how nervous, and—yes, frightened I was. Oh, very often! It might have been all wrong, you see!"

"It is all right," he said, his eyes resting on hers. "It is all beautiful—too good for such a girl. And I am filled with shame when I think of all you have done for me."

His voice vibrated with a suppressed emotion.

"Oh; but it was nothing. Indeed, I enjoyed it. Bobby said it was because I was spending some one else's money; but it wasn't that only. I was thinking of the house—the poor, neglected, deserted house—and the people here."

"Ah, yes—yes," he said, rather grimly. "And, she went on, frankly, "I wanted to make it nice and comfortable, so that you should be tempted to stay."

"I see," he said. "Well, you have succeeded. It is so nice and comfortable that I shall never want to leave it."

Decima looked up at him with a glad smile as she patted and caressed Nero. "I am so glad," she said. "And Mr. Bright will be very glad. And Bobby! Will you not come in and see him? He is reading—gramming, as he calls it—for his exam. Will you not come in? Our house, as I dare say you know, is only just up the road."

He hesitated a moment, a moment only; then he said, simply: "Thank you—yes; I will come in for a moment."

He walked beside her with the bridle over his arm, and when they reached the gate, slung it over the post.

"Will he stay quiet?" asked Decima. He spoke a word in the horse's ear.

"Till morning, if necessary," he said. She led the way through the dimly lighted hall into the faded drawing-room. Bobby was seated at the table in his favorite attitude; his head in his hands, his eyes glued to his books, a cigarette between his teeth.

At sight of Lord Gaunt, he sprang to his feet with an exclamation of welcome. Gaunt just glanced round the room, and then at the slim, girlish figure. It was like a flower, the one solitary flower in a gray, sober garden.

"Ah, Deane!" he said in a tone which wins a young man's heart. "Back again, you see! Gramming, eh? Lucky fellow! They wanted me to go into the army, but I hadn't the capacity or the industry."

"Glad to see you, Lord Gaunt," said Bobby, heartily. "My father's in his workshop, laboratory. I'll bring him."

He hurried out, and Lord Gaunt and Decima were left alone.

"Have you had your dinner?" she said. He did not tell her that his dinner had been waiting for him for the last hour.

"Thanks, yes. At least—for even the conventional fib was difficult under the direct gaze of those truthful, trusting eyes—it doesn't matter. I am not wedded to dinner. I have gone without any too often."

Mr. Deane came in, his grotesque clothes powdered with dust, his gray hair thrust hastily out of his eyes.

Lord Gaunt shook hands with him, and scanned him with a quick glance.

"How do you do?" said Mr. Deane. "How do you do, Mr.—"

He looked at Bobby inquiringly. "Lord Gaunt, sir. Lord Gaunt of Leafmore," said Bobby in an undertone.

"Of course, of course," said Mr. Deane. "I am glad to see you, Lord Gaunt. Are you going to make a long stay at—"

"Leafmore," whispered Bobby. "Of course! Leafmore! You will remain and dine with us?"

"We've had our dinner hours ago," said Bobby, laughing.

"Leafmore," said Mr. Deane, abstractedly. Then with a sudden brightening up of his faculties, he went on eagerly: "You have some wonderful trees at your place, Lord Gaunt. Wonderful! I don't know that, out of Scotland, I have ever seen more magnificent firs. Now, did it ever occur to you that great things might be done with the extraction of terebene from the fir? At any rate, it has occurred to me. Terebene is the active ingredient—"

Bobby touched him on the arm, and Mr. Deane turned to him with a kind of bewildered impatience.

"What is it, Robert? I am endeavoring to explain to Lord Gaunt that he has an enormous fortune—enormous fortune—within his reach. Terebene is one of the most valuable products—"

Bobby glanced at Gaunt apologetically and appealingly, and Gaunt, with admirable tact, said:

"Thank you, Mr. Deane. Perhaps you will come up to Leafmore and tell me more about it? I'm afraid I must be going now."

"Yes, yes. Good-night," said Mr. Deane; and shaking Gaunt's hand absently, he shuffled out of the room.

Gaunt moved toward the door; but as he reached it he looked around, and his eyes rested on the lovely face so dimly seen by the light of the one shaded lamp.

"At any rate, you will come up to Leafmore, Deane?" he said. Then he looked at Decima again. "And you too, Miss Deane? I want to show you how comfortable you have made me."

"Oh, well, come right enough!" said Bobby, heartily. "Thank you."

She did not answer. They both went to the gate, and Gaunt got on his horse. Then he bent down and held out his hand to Decima.

"Good-night, and—thank you," he said. His voice had a deep ring in it, which Decima had not heard until now.

"Good-night!" she said, smiling up at him.

Gaunt rode on at a bound, and let the impatient Nero go his own pace—always a fast one; but presently he brought him into a walk by a slight pressure of the rein; and then letting it lie loose, rode on silently and with an abstracted look.

The beautiful face haunted him, her words, "I am glad you have come," rang in his ears softly; and her eyes—were they gray, or blue, or violet?

He roused himself as Nero bore him into the courtyard, and with an impatient start and shake, he handed the horse over to the groom, and went into the house.

His valet was waiting for him, and he looked curiously at his master as Lord Gaunt entered the dressing-room. The man—Hobson by name—had been with him for years, and was deeply attached to him. They had undergone perils and privations together, had looked death in the face side by side, but Hobson had never stepped out of his place, and had remained that wonderful being, a devoted and respectful servant, who sticketh closer than a brother. There was an expression in his master's face which Hobson had not seen for years. It was almost cheerful.

"I'm late, Hobson," he said; "a bad beginning. But I suppose you told them in the servants' hall that I was never to be relied upon?"

"Yes, my lord," said Hobson, simply. Lord Gaunt smiled, and, as he took off his coat, said:

"Thanks! I thought you would. But, Hobson, we must reform—reform. Now be quick."

Be quick. Hobson glanced at him swiftly. He had not heard that tone for years.

The next morning Gaunt went down the village, and the village stared at and watched him from its front door, or from behind its windows, with the deepest interest and a lively curiosity, which promptly developed into admiration. For Lord Gaunt, in a riding-suit, with his whip in his hand, and half a dozen dogs bounding round him or trotting demurely at his heels, looked a very different person to what they had expected.

"Why, he's a young man!" exclaimed Mrs. Topper; "and a Gaunt every inch of him! There's no mistaking your real gentry, Mrs. Murphy. Well, I'm going to drop him a courtesy, and give him a 'good-day,' if I'm to be shot for it!" And she made her bob as Gaunt passed the door.

He remembered her, and stopped at once and returned the salutation. He spoke to Mrs. Murphy, and touched his hat in res-



Ramsay MacDonald,
The British Labor Leader.

ponse to the respectful, almost awed greetings of the men outside the inn, and he looked round him with an evident interest, which flattered those who were so closely watching him.

Presently Mr. Bright came trotting after him, and he turned to him with a smile. "Ah, Bright, I'm taking my first visit of inspection," he said. He glanced at the tumble-down cottage. "It is not altogether a satisfactory one. Now, then, fire away! I see you are charged to the brim."

Bright looked at him with a mixture of eagerness and apology. "I don't like to begin to worry you right away, Lord Gaunt," he said.

Gaunt smiled. "Oh, I'm in the humor this morning, and you'd better seize the opportunity. You want me to rebuild these, I suppose?"

"That's it, Lord Gaunt," said Bright, rather nervously. "Well, they want it," said Gaunt, curtly. "If you'd just step inside one of them—"

Gaunt nodded, and laid his hand on the rickety gate of one of the cottages. As he did so, a girlish figure emerged from the door-way like a gleam of sunlight. It was Decima. She was looking over her shoulder and saying something, in her sweet, clear voice, to the woman inside; then she turned her head and saw the two men, and stopped.

"Oh, what luck!" said Bright. "Here's Miss Deane. Now, she knows exactly what's wanted. She has been making friends of the people ever since she came, you know, and— Ah, Miss Deane, if you would be so kind as to come with us for a little while, but perhaps you are busy."

"No," said Decima; "I am only going to meet my brother later on. What is it?"

"What isn't it, rather?" said Gaunt, with an affectation of dismay.

"Mr. Bright has got me in his clutches already, Miss Deane; and as if he were no more than a match for me, he has called in an auxiliary force. Well, so be it. But, as you are strong, be merciful."

Gaunt looked into one room of the cottage. It was about ten feet square, and was occupied by a woman and five children. It was badly lighted, close, and unhealthy.

Decima looked at him appealingly. "Is it not fit, is it?" she said.

"It's bad, yes," he assented. "It certainly is not fit for you to go into."

"If why, they live here!" said Decima, rebukingly.

"They're used to it; you're not," he retorted, rather curtly. "Do you visit all the cottages? How if there should be some infectious disease—scarlet fever?"

He looked at her almost sternly. "Miss Deane goes everywhere," said Mr. Bright, quickly and admiringly. "I've told her that she's running great risks, but my warning has had no effect upon her. She is our village angel, Lord Gaunt."

Gaunt said his brow. "I'll pull them all down and rebuild them—all of them. Will that satisfy you, Miss Deane?"

Decima was walking between the two men, and she glanced triumphantly at Mr. Bright, and then gratefully up at Lord Gaunt.

"I knew you would," she said in a low voice. "Oh, I am so glad. But then there are the schools. Ah, you must see them! They are almost as bad as the cottages. The children are starved for want of air and ventilation in the summer, and must be frozen in the winter. If you will come—"

"Let us go to the schools by all means," he said.

They entered the crowded, stuffy room, and Gaunt looked round amidst the dense silence of excitement.

"All right," he said. "I see the thing has to be done on a big scale. We'd better get an architect from London, Bright. You and Miss Deane can worry through the plans with him. Have what you like, Miss Deane."

Decima was too moved to thank him again. They passed out and came to the church; and Gaunt, glancing at Decima, caught the appealing expression in her lovely eyes. He smiled.

"Oh, forgive me!" he said, penitently. "It isn't, I said, Decima, eagerly. "We heard the men say that they are almost afraid to ring the bells. Is—that to be done, too?"

"Why not?" he said, quietly. "In for a penny in for several thousand pounds."

"Oh, forgive me!" he said, penitently. "I'm almost forgetting that it will cost so much money. What must you think of me?"

"Nothing but good," he returned. "Don't think about the money. I haven't any better use for it than I know of. You had better send for—the named a famous ecclesiastical architect—Bright, and let him work his sweet will on the old place. It's pretty enough to deserve restoring. And now, thank Heaven, here's your brother!" he broke off, as Bobby vaulted over the church-yard stile. "You'll never guess how glad I am to see you, Deane. Come and rescue me from the hands of these Goths and Vandals!"

There was a lightness in his tone which almost startled Bobby.

"They've got at you already, have they, Lord Gaunt?" he said. "I meant to tip you a warning against them. Bright's bad enough, but my sister is far worse. If you let her have her way, she'll pull the place about your ears. You take my advice, and make a stand at once. Decima, my child, just you let things you don't understand alone, run away home, little girl, and play with your dolls; better still, get your tolling brother's lunch ready while he shows Lord Gaunt a new fly he has made."

(To be continued.)

"My wife," said Mr. Clarke, "sent \$2 in answer to an advertisement of a sure method of getting rid of superfluous fat." "And what did she get for the money? Was the information what she wanted?" asked Mr. Simmons. "Well, she got a reply telling her to sell it to the soap man."

On the Farm

Proper Storage.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the proper storage of potatoes. Not alone should this emphasis be placed because proper storage controls the Fusarium or dry-rot and other diseases, but because the vitality of the seed is such an important factor in potato production that it should never be overlooked. There is, in the opinion of the writer, no other single factor so important to the potato industry. Proper storage prevents the progress of the disease as a dry-rot. Spraying will not control the disease.

Storage litter and sick seed should not be allowed to reach the manure pile, as this will be a sure method of distributing the disease and infecting the fields.

A seed plot on non-infected soil planted with carefully selected, healthy seed will offer a means of getting a sound seed supply.

Whenever potatoes are placed in a warm, damp storage they go to pieces; the fungus often showing on the surface as patches of a white, moldy growth. In damp storage, bacteria early becomes associated with the Fusarium disease, causing wet, soft rots. Storage cellars should be kept cool, dry and well drained. Burying (pitting) in the field is more satisfactory than most cellar storage for seed purposes.

Dairy Hints.

The cow that is always bawling is seldom best at filling the pail.

There is no danger of having an over-supply of good country butter. In the metropolitan centers it has become almost an unknown quantity.

If you have only a small quantity of cream shake it in a fruit jar or beat in a bowl with a fork or spoon. Be sure it is pure cream with no milk, otherwise, it may prove a long and tedious process.

Those who scoff at the value of pedigree have but to look at the human family to see a repetition of the same traits from generation to generation. Is it not just as plausible to believe that the well-bred animal will in all likelihood inherit some of these traits? Certainly, it is hopeless to expect anything but scrub stock from scrubs. Individuality counts for much, but the power of pedigree should not be overlooked.

Study the peculiar traits of the various members of your herd and strive to adapt yourself to them. One cow prefers corn to oats or bran. Humor her in her tastes and she will reward you. The good humor of even a cow is worth striving for.

The Road Drag.

The earth road will doubtless be commonly used in rural communities for many years because of its low first cost. The ever-recurring problem of upkeep on such a road can be solved very largely by the use of the so-called split-log drag.

Anyone who can use tools reasonably well can build one of these drags at a cost of \$4 or \$5 for labor and material. Very few tools are required in making the drag, and its use is as simple and cheap as its construction. If desired, metal drags can be bought at a somewhat great cost from manufacturers of road machinery.

Careful use of the drag on a road that is already in reasonably good condition will almost entirely prevent trouble from ruts, mud holes or dust, and give good service at a low cost.

Notes of the Hog Lot.

Tankage makes healthy hogs and gives them bone and muscle.

Do not keep too many pigs together and compel them to sleep in one nest.

The most economical gains in pig feeding are obtained by a judicious blending of nitrogeous and carbonaceous foods.

Crossing may improve the hogs for the f-ed lot alone, but not for the purpose of perpetuating their kind.

Notes of the Sheepfold.

Sheep must play an important part in the restoration of fertility to the worn-out grain-raising areas of the country.

A common error of the inexperienced breeder is failure to provide good shelter. Lambs cannot make good gains with wet feet or soggy fleeces.

One man can feed 400 lambs to a finish between fall and spring more

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easily than he can feed, milk and clean up after ten dairy cows.

Avoid crowding the lambs in the feeding quarters. They need a lot of room on account of their natural habit of crowding.

The ram should be in perfect condition, but not fat, at mating.

The true breeder is always wanting to improve his flock and aside from the love of sheep the profits have stimulated his efforts to have better ones.

NEW SPECIES OF WILD DUCK.

Carries Its Young on Its Back—Male Bird Feeds Ducklings.

A brand new species of wild duck, brilliantly colored, which carries its young on its back, and the young of which is regularly fed by the male bird while the female bird is sitting on a second setting of eggs, has been found near Lacombe, Alberta.

The birds were first discovered by Senator Peter Talbot. When the birds have reared their young ones an effort will be made to trap them for further study.

"The birds were found on a slough adjoining the road allowance near my farm," said Senator Talbot recently, in discussing his find, "and they have attracted a great deal of attention. The male bird at the present time takes care of the young, while the female bird is sitting on more eggs, and although many people have been near the nest and the younger ones, the birds do not appear to be the least bit frightened. The male bird is apparently able to form its body and wings into a kind of boat, and the young always ride around on the back of the parents in this fashion. Even when the parent bird goes under a wire fence across the slough and the younger ones are scurried off, they always managed to scramble back on to the backs of their parents, and as far as we have been able to see make no effort to shift for themselves, the male bird feeding them constantly."

The color of the new species of duck is also remarkable, according to those who have been watching them. Except for a dark streak running from the bill back across the head, the head is pure white, while the eye is big and of a bright red color. The neck and breasts of the birds are bronze in color, while the back is a light grey.

"No one in the vicinity has ever seen ducks of that kind before," said Senator Talbot, "and although we have made enquiries all over this Province, we cannot find that this particular species has even invaded the Province before."

The best a man can do is to guess at the age of women and canned goods.

SUGAR AS YOU LIKE IT

FINE Grain Sugar

To have every grain alike size of dots at left, each one choice extra Crystallized White pure cane sugar, got the St. Lawrence in bags, with red tag—20 lbs., 25 lbs., 30 lbs.

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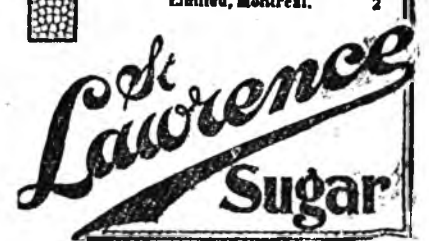
In the bags of St. Lawrence "Medium Grain"—blue tags—every grain is choicest granulated sugar, about size of a seed pearl, every one pure cane sugar.

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Many people prefer the coarse grain. The St. Lawrence Green Tag assures every grain a distinct crystal, each about the size of a small diamond, and almost as bright, but quickly melted into pure sweetness.

Your grocer's wholesaler has the exact style you want—grain, quality and quantity all guaranteed.

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