LOVE REASONS NOT.

CHAPTER VI.

AN IMPATIENT LOVER'S PLANS.

There had been no mistake about the wooing of Lord Chandos. He had not thought of loving and riding away; the proud beautiful, gifted girl whom he loved had been wooed and pursued with the ardor and respect that he would have shown to a princess.

There came another day, when something had prevented him from seeing her; and unable to control his impatience, he had ridden over to the farm, this time ostensibly to see the farmer, and ask for another glass of his famous cider; this time under the farmer's eyes even, he stopped to speak to Leone.

"You will be at the mill-stream this evening?" he whispered, and her answer was:

"Yes."

When he had drunk the cider and ridden away, farmer Noel turned to his niece.

"A fine young man, that, Leone; but what did he say to you?"

"Nothing particular; something about the mill-stream," replied the proud lips that disdained a lie.

"Because," said Robert Noel, slowly, "you have a beautiful face of your own, my lady lass, and a young man like that would be sure to admire it."

"What matter if he did, uncle?" she asked.

"Harm would come of it," replied the farmer; "what a man admires he often loves; and no good would come of such a love as that."

"Why not?" she asked again, with flushed face and flashing eyes. "Why not?"

"We reckon in these parts," said the farmer, slowly, "that there is too great a difference between the aristocracy and the working-people. To put it in plain words, my lady lass, when a great lord or a rich man admires a poor lass, as a rule it ends in her disgrace."

"Not always," she answered, proudly.

"No, perhaps not always; but mostly, mostly," repeated Robert Noel. "You have a beautiful face, and, if you are wise, you will keep out of that young gentleman's way. I should not like to offend you, Leone; you will excuse me for speaking plainly."

"It does not offend me," she said simply; "although I do not think that you are right. Why should not a lord, great and rich as this one, marry a girl who has no drawback but poverty? I do not see such a great difference."

"I cannot tell you, my lady lass, either the why or the wherefore," he replied. "I know that rich men do not marry poor and obscure girls; and if they do, there is sure to be something wrong with the marriage. We will not talk about it, only if he seems to admire you at all, do you keep out of that young man's way."

She made him no answer; his care for her touched her, but then there was no need. Lord Chandos was unlike other men; besides which he loved her so well he could not live without her.

So, when the sun was setting in the western sky, she went down to the mill-stream, where her lover awaited her.

The crimson clouds were reflected in the rippling water, the birds were singing in the trees, the flowers were all falling asleep; the fair, fragrant world was getting ready for its time of rest.

"Leone," he cried, seizing her hands and drawing her toward him, "my darling, I thought to-day would never come. How many hours did yesterday hold?"

"Twenty-four," she replied.

"Only twenty-four? Why, it seemed to me it was a day as long as a year, and I asked myself one question, sweet."

"What was it, Lance?"

"This: that if one day seemed so terribly long, what would become of me if I had to pass a week without you?"

"What would become of you?" she said laughingly.

"I should die of my own impatience," he said, his handsome young face flushing. "Fate may try me as it will," he added, "but it must never separate me from you. It is because I have found this out that I have asked you to meet me here to-night. I cannot live without you, Leone; you understand that the hours are long and dark; life seems all ended, I cannot feel interest or energy; I am longing for you all the time, just as thirsty flowers are longing for dew. Leone, I should long until the fever of my own longing killed me—for you."

He drew the beautiful face to his own, and kissed it with a passion words could never tell.

"Why should I not be happy in my own way?" he said. "If I want the one only thing on earth that could bring me my happiness, why should I not have it? Of what use is money, wealth, position, rank, anything else on earth to me, unless I have you. I would rather lose all I have in the world than lose you."

"It is sweet to be loved so well," she said, with a sigh.

"I have had letters from home to-day," he said "and I—I am half afraid to tell you lest you should say no. I am to leave Rashleigh in one month from now, and to go to my father's house—Cawdor, it is called. Leone I cannot go alone."

She looked at him with wondering eyes; the ardent young lover who believed his love to be so great and so generous, yet who, in reality, loved himself best, even in his love.

"Darling, I want you to consent to be my wife before I leave Rashleigh," he continued. "I know it will be the best and easiest plan if I can but win your consent."

Her loving heart seemed almost to stand still; the crimson clouds and the rippling waters seemed to meet; even in her dreams she had never imagined herself his wife.

Lord Chandos continued:

"I know my parents well; my father is inflexible on some points, but easily influenced; my mother is, I believe, the proudest women in the wide world. I know that she expects something wonderful from me in the way of marriage; I hardly think that there is a peeress in England that my mother would deem too good for me, and it would wound her to the heart should I marry a woman beneath me in rank. Indeed I know she would never forgive me."

She uttered a little, low cry.

"Then why have you loved me?" she asked.

Her lover laughed.

"How could I help it, my darling? In you I have found the other half of my own soul. I could no more help loving you than a bird can help singing. But listen, Leone; it is as I say, if I were to go home and pray all day to them it would be useless. I have another plan. Marry me, and I can take you to them and say, 'This is my wife.' They could not help receiving you then, because the marriage could not be undone, and my mother, with her worldly tact will make the best of it then. If I ask permission to marry you, they will never grant it; if I marry you, they will be compelled to forgive it."

She drew herself half proudly from him.

"I do not wish any one to be compelled to receive me, nor do I wish to be the cause of unpleasantness," she said.

"My darling, all lovers have something to suffer. The course of true love cannot run smooth. Surely you would not desert me, or forsake me, or refuse to love me because I cannot change the opinion of my conservative parents. I know no lady, no peeress in England, who is half so beautiful, so clever as you—not one. I shall be more proud to take you home as Lady Chandos than if you were a queen's daughter. You believe me?"

"Yes, I believe you," she replied.

"Never mind any one else, Leone. My father admires beautiful women! he will be sure to love you; my mother will be very disagreeable at first, but in a short time she will learn to love you, and then all will be well."

The little white hand clung to him.

"You are quite sure, Lance?" she said, with a sob—"quite sure?"

"Yes, sweet, I am more than sure. You will be Lady Chandos, of Cawdor, and that is one of the oldest and grandest titles in England."

"But will your mother forgive you and love you again?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes, believe me. And now, Leone, let me tell you my plans. They are all rather underhand, but we cannot help that; everything is fair in love and war. About twenty miles from here there is a sleepy little village called Oheton. I was there yesterday, and it was there that this plan came to me. Oh, my darling, turn your sweet face to me and let me be quite sure that you are listening."

"I am listening, Lance," she said.

"No, not with all your heart. See how well I understand you. Your eyes linger on the water, and the falling of it makes music, and the rhyme of the music is:

"'These vows were all forgotten,
The ring asunder broken.'

When will you trust me more thoroughly Leone?"

She glanced at him with something of wonder, but more of fear.

"How do you know what I am thinking of?" she asked.

I can guess from the tragical expression of your face, and the pathos of your eyes as they linger on the falling water. Now, you shall not look at the mill-stream, look at me."

She raised her dark, lustrous eyes to his face, and he went on:

"Over in this sleepy little village of Oheton, Leone—it is a sleepy village—the houses are all divided from each other by gardens and trees. Unlike most villagers, the people do not seem to know each other, you do not hear any gossip; the people, the houses, the streets, all seemed sleepy together. At one end of the village is a church, one of the most quaint, an old Norman church, that has stood like a monument while the storms of the world raged around it; the vicar is the Reverend Josiah Barnes."

"Why are you telling me all this?" she asked.

"You will soon understand," he replied. "The Reverend Mr. Barnes is over sixty, and he, together with the people, the houses and the streets, seems sleepy; nothing would excite him, or interest him, or startle him.

"Now, Leone, I have taken lodgings for myself for three weeks in this sleepy village; no one will take any notice of me; I shall go and come just as I will; then I shall have the bans of our marriage published. The dear old vicar will read them in his sleepy tones:

"'I publish the bans of marriage for the first time between Lancelot Chandos and Leone Noel.' No one will hear the names plainly, and those who do will not know to whom they belong, and there will be no impediment; will there, Leone?"

The water laughed as it hurried over the stones.

"No impediment," it seemed to say; "no impediment, Leone."

CHAPTER VII.

A FRIEND'S ADVICE.

"But," asked Leone, anxiously, "will that be safe, Lance? Supposing that any one should hear and recognize the names, what then?"

"There is no fear. Nothing can ever be done without risk; but there is no risk there—at least, none that I fear to run. I guarantee that not one person in that church hears those names clearly. Then you will see that I have arranged every detail. Then, when the three weeks have expired, we will meet there some fine morning and be married. I have a friend who will come with me as a witness. After that I propose that we go to London, and there I shall introduce you to my father first; then we will go down to Cawdor to my mother. Do you like the plan Leone?"

"I should like it much better if they could know of it beforehand," she replied gravely.

His face grew grave as her own.

"That cannot be," he replied. "You see, Leone, I am not of age; I shall not be twenty-one until September; and if my parents knew of it, they have power to forbid the marriage, and we could not be married; but done without their knowledge, they are of course powerless."

"I do not like it," she said with a shudder; "I would rather all was open and sincere."

"It cannot be. Why, Leone, where is your reason? If even your uncle knew, he would interfere to prevent it. In his slow, stolid, honest mind he would think such a marriage quite wrong, you may be sure; he would talk about caste, and position, and all kinds of nonsense. We must keep our secret to ourselves, my darling, if we wish to be married at all. Surely, Leone, you love me enough to sacrifice your wishes to me on this point?"

The beautiful face was raised to his.

"I love you well enough to die for you, and far too well to bring trouble on you, Lance."

"My darling, there is only one thing that can bring trouble on me and that would be to lose you; that would kill me. You hear me, Leone, it would not make me grow thin and pale, after the fashion of rejected lovers, but would kill me. Do not ask me to leave you an hour longer than I need. Ah, my love yield; do not grieve me with a hundred obstacles. —not even with one. Yield, and say that you will agree to my plan."

There was no resisting the pleading of the handsome young face, the loving eyes, the tender words, the passionate kisses; she could not resist them; it was so sweet to be loved so well.

"You must keep our secret from that honest, stolid, good uncle of yours," said Lord Chandos, "or he will think himself bound to call and tell Dr. Hervey. You promise me, then Leone, my love, to do what I ask, and to be my own beloved wife, when the three weeks are over?"

"Yes, I promise, Lance," she replied.

Her voice was grave and sweet, her beautiful face had on it the light of a beautiful and noble love.

"Then kiss me, as the children say, of your own accord, and let that kiss be our betrothal."

She raised her lips to his for the first time and kissed him.

"That is our betrothal," he said; "now nothing can part us. Leone, I waited for your promise to give you this."

He opened a small jewel-case, and took from it a diamond ring.

"This is what ladies call an engagement-ring," he said; "let me put it on your finger."

She shrank back.

"Lance," she said, "do you remember the words of the song,

"'A ring in pledge he gave her.
And vows of love he spoke.'

How strange that by this stream you should offer me a ring!"

"You seem to think there is a fatality in the water, Leone," he said, quietly.

"I have an idea that I cannot express, but it seems to me that story is told in the falling water."

"If the water tells of a golden bright life, all happiness with the most devoted and loving of husbands, then it may tell you as much as it likes. Let me put the ring on your finger, Leone."

She held out her hand—such a beautiful hand, with a soft, pink palm and tapering fingers. As he went to place the ring on her finger, it fell from his hand into the water below, and Leone uttered a low cry.

"It is not lost," he said; "it has not fallen into the stream, it is here."

Looking down, she saw the flash of the diamonds in the little pool that lay between two stones. Lord Chandos wiped it and dried it.

"You will prize it all the more because it has been dipped in your favorite stream," he said. "Give me your hand again, Leone; we shall have better fortune this time."

He placed the ring securely on her finger, then kissed the white hand.

"How angry you were with me the first time I kissed your hand," he said; "and now I have all your heart. There will be neither broken vows nor a broken ring for us, Leone, no matter what the water sings or says."

"I hope not," says the girl, brightly.

"I shall take possession of my lodgings at Oheton to-morrow," he said. I shall have to spend some little time there; but you must promise that I shall see you every evening, Leone. Will you find your way to the mill-wheel? When we are married, I shall try to buy the mill, the stream, and the land all round it; it will be a sacred spot to me. In three weeks, Leone, you will be my wife."

"Yes," she replied, "in three weeks."

The wind fell, the ripple of the green leaves ceased, the birds had sung themselves to sleep, only the water ran laughingly on.

"Lance," cried the girl, suddenly, "do you know what the water says—can you hear it?"

"No," he replied, with a laugh; I have not such a vivid fancy as you. What does it say?"

"Nothing but sorrow, nothing but sorrow," she chanted.

"I cannot hear that; if it says anything at all, it is nothing but love, nothing but love."

And then, as the shades of night were coming on, he saw her safely home.

That same evening Lord Chandos and Sir Frank Euston talked long together.

"Of course," said Sir Frank, "if you put me on my honor, I cannot speak, but I beg of you to stop and think."

Lord Chandos laughed; his handsome face was flushed and eager.

"The man who hesitates is lost," he said. "All the thinking in the world cannot alter matters, nor make me love my darling less."

"There is an old proverb I should like to recommend to you," said Sir Frank Euston; "it is this—a young man married is a young man marred."

"I am quite as willing to be marred as to be married," said the young lord, "and married I will be if all the powers on earth conspire against me."

"I know how useless all arguments are," said his friend, "when a man determines to be foolish; but do think for one moment of the terrible disappointment to your parents."

"I do not see it: they have no right to be disappointed; my father married to please himself, why should I not do the same?"

"You are outraging all the laws of your class," said Sir Frank. "However beautiful a farmer's niece may be, we cannot suppose even a miracle could fit her to take the place of the Countess of Lanswell."

A hot flush came over the young lord's face; a stange quiet came into his voice.

"We will discuss what you like, Frank, but you must not touch the young lady's name, we will leave that out of the question."

"You have asked me to be the witness of your marriage," said Frank, and that entitles me to speak my mind. I do speak it, frankly, honestly, plainly, as I should thank God for any friend to speak to a brother of my own if he felt inclined to make a simpleton of himself."

"I call myself a sensible man to marry for love, not a simpleton," said Lord Chandos grandly.

"My dear Lance," said his friend, "you make just this one mistake; you are not a man at all, you are a boy."

He stopped suddenly, for the young lord looked at him with a defiant, fierce face.

"You must not say that again, Frank, or we shall be friends no longer."

"I do not want to offend you, Lance; but you are really too young to think of marriage. Your tastes are not formed yet; that which pleases you now you will dislike in six or ten years' time. I assure you that if you marry this farmer's niece now, in ten years' time you will repent it in sackcloth and ashes. She is not fit, either by manner, education, or anything else, to be your mother's daughter, and you know it; you know that when the glamour of her beauty is over you will wonder at your own madness and folly. Be warned in time."

"You may as well reason with a madman as a man in love," said the young lordling, "and I am in love."

"And you are mad," said Sir Frank, quietly; "one day you will know how mad."

Lord Chandos laughed.

"There is method in my madness. Come, Frank, we have been such friends I would do anything you asked me."

"I should never ask you to do anything so foolish, Lance; I wish that I had not given my word of honor to keep your secret; I am quite sure that I ought to send word to the earl and countess at once; I cannot, as I have promised not to do so, but I regret it."

"My dear Frank, nothing in the world would stop me; if anything were done to prevent my marriage now, I would simply await another and more favorable opportunity; my mind is made up. I love the girl with all my heart, and she, no other, shall be my wife. If you refuse to act for me, well and good; I shall find some one else."

"If you would but be reasonable, Lance, said his friend.

"I am not reasonable. When did you ever see reason and love go hand in hand together?"

"They should do so always, and do when the love is worth having."

"Now, Frank, I have listened patiently; I have heard all that you have had to say; I have weighed every argument, and I remain unconvinced. You have but to say whether you will do this to oblige me or not."

"If I do it, remember, it is under protest, Lance."

"Never mind what it is under, if you only promise."

"I promise, to save you from greater risk, but I do it against my will, my reason, my good sense, my conscience, and everything else."

Lord Chandos laughed aloud.

"You will forget everything of that kind," he said, "when you see Leone."

And the two friends parted, mutually dissatisfied.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Revision of the Lists.

Section three of the electoral franchise act, passed at the recent session of the House of Commons, reads as follows:—"For the purposes of the revision in the present year, section fifteen of the electoral franchise act, as the said section is enacted by section four of chapter eight of the statutes of 1890, as amended by section two of chapter eighteen of the statutes of 1891, shall be read and construed as if the words 'first day of June in each year' in the first and second lines thereof were struck out and the words 'first day of August' substituted therefor, and as if the word 'August' in the fourteenth line of subsection five thereof were struck out and the word 'October' substituted therefor." Section two of chapter eighteen of the statutes of 1891 substituted for the word August the words "up to but not later than the fifteenth day of August." As the act of 1894 applies to the enactment of 1890 as amended by the act of 1891, declarations for the preliminary revision must be received by the revising officer "up to but not later than October fifteenth."

Diphtheria in London.

One of the most baffling of the numerous sanitary problems of London Eng., is the abnormally high mortality from diphtheria. The number of deaths was actually 3,265 last year, which is very greatly in excess of the rate of mortality in the provinces, and is even stated to be a rate three times as high as that of the unsanitary cities of the east. What is the cause of this? Some authorities ascribe it to the evil system of collecting the refuse of the metropolis in baskets and carrying it through houses to the cart on the street, the germs of disease being probably scattered in that way. Medical opinion seems to be divided as to the efficacy of the injections advocated by The British Medical Journal as a new cure for this terrible malady.

Not Toy-Like.

Wheelman (sententiously)—"The bicycle is no longer a toy."

Ordinary Citizen (earnestly)—"No siree, it isn't. I've been run into by one myself."

She—"They thought the world of each other. He reigned in her heart and she reigned in his." He.—"And they didn't know enough to go in when it reigned?"

Ancient St. John's Lodge A.F. and A.M., of Kingston, held its first meeting 100 years ago Tuesday of last week.

THE PRINCE AS A HOST.

How One Dined and Slept Aboard the Royal Yacht Osborne.

A writer in a London weekly, describes a night on the Prince of Wales' yacht, which is of interest at the moment. The unidentified guest says:—"A telegram from Sir Francis Knollys, saying that the Prince of Wales invited me to dine and sleep on board the Osborne, took me to Cowes on a Friday afternoon in the yachting season.

"It was a beautiful day. A fresh breeze was blowing from the west, and the flags of the yachts, the guardship, the Victoria and Albert, and the Osborne, flew stiffly from their respective masts. Reaching Cowes at 5 o'clock, I went to the hotel in the first instance to get a cup of tea and a little rest after my journey from town. I failed to learn what time was the dinner hour on board the Osborne, but I arranged for a boat to take me on board at 7 p.m.

"Assuming that dinner was at 8 or 8.30, this would give me ample time to dress. To dress! Ah! that was the question. The thought suddenly struck me that I had heard that the guests of the Prince of Wales, when afloat, are expected to attire themselves in yachting jackets of a special pattern.

"I think I had been told that the practice dated from the time when the Prince visited India in the Serapis. At all events, I had no such garment, and there was no time to procure it. At 7 o'clock I embarked with my portmanteau in the wherry I had engaged.

"'What ship, sir?' said the boatman.

"I told him. In a few minutes we were alongside. The Osborne is a comfortable paddleboat of about 800 tons. She is painted a dark blue, picked out with gold and white. An electric launch was alongside. I scrambled up the companion and was greeted by Capt. Milne, the commander.

"The prince was not yet on board, and to the popular captain of the royal yacht I confided my difficulty about costume. He confirmed the impression I had gained that on board the Osborne ordinary evening dress is discarded in favor of a marine garment. Just then His Royal Highness came on board, and was saluted by the officer on watch and the captain.

"Entering into conversation with me the Prince was good enough to excuse the deficiency in my toilet, for which I apologized. The Osborne's deck is carpeted and covered with an awning. Comfortable lounges and deck chairs are scattered about, and there is a strange blending of the smartness of a man-o'-war with the luxury of a yacht. In a short time I was shown to my cabin, a most comfortable state-room, hung with a pretty chintz of an exquisite freshness. The P. and O. and the Cunard company have larger cabins, but none so prettily and compactly arranged. The steward brought me all I wanted, and I was soon ready for dinner. Entering the drawing-room below deck, while awaiting the assembly of the company, I had leisure to notice the lovely flowers and exquisite taste of the decorations. Beautiful water-color drawings of fair scenes in southern waters adorned the walls or bulkheads, and but for the sloping heel of the mizzenmast rising through the floor there was nothing to tell that we were afloat.

"In a short time every one was assembled, and the dinner being announced, the Duke of Connaught led the Prince of Wales to the dining saloon on deck. Some twenty guests were present, and a beautiful sight was presented when all were seated at table. Lovely fruits and flowers graced the board. Beautiful ladies and famous men in the highest spirits surrounded it. The glass sides to the saloon were withdrawn, and we sat at dinner in the midst of a fairy scene. Already some of the yachts had begun their illuminations. The town of Cowes and the quay were gay with colored lights. Beautiful music was being discoursed from the upper deck. After dinner and cigars, the electric launches were ordered alongside and we were all conveyed to the Royal Yacht Squadron headquarters, in order to gaze on the fireworks in ease and comfort. The work of transporting the whole company was carried out with the greatest ease and comfort in a few moments, each guest being told off to a boat. On landing at the squadron boatslip, we were conducted to the balcony of the club house, where the fireworks began with the firing of a gun. It was a beautiful night, and the scene could not be matched by any country except England. Those of us who were to sleep on board were conveyed to the Osborne in the same way we had come. We arrived on board after midnight, when some sandwiches and aerated waters, with, perhaps, a slight admixture of good old Scotch whiskey, were acceptable. The Prince staid up to the last, the life and soul of the party.

"In the morning a cup of tea was brought to the cabin by the steward, and at 9.30 breakfast was served in the beautiful dining saloon on deck. The air was fresh, and the little ripple against the side of the royal yacht was a pleasant sound. The scene by daylight was, perhaps, even more entrancing than the fairy fireworks of the night before, and a hundred yachts were tripping their anchors preparatory to a start. The Prince enters. We all rise and remain standing until he is seated, then continue our breakfast. After the meal a few brief words accomplish my courteous dismissal, and I embark for Cowes, en route back to town, not altogether sorry that my visit, pleasant as it was, is over."

Broad Hint.

Sir Andrew Agnew, of Lucknow, a well-known Scotch baronet, was long pestered by an impudent sort of person, who insisted on being constantly "underfoot." Finally, however, he dropped off, and Sir Andrew was asked how he got rid of him.

"Oh," said he, "I gave him a broad hint."

"A broad hint?" repeated the inquirer. "I thought he was one of those who never could be induced to take one."

"By ma saul," said Sir Andrew, "he was obleeged to tak' it! For as the chiel wadna gang oot at the door, I just threw him oot of the window!"