LOVE REASONS NOT.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PROPHECY.

"A very impatient young man," said the good old vicar. "No man in his senses would want to be married before ten in the morning. I call it unchristian."

Good old Mr. Barnes had been roused from his early slumbers by the announcement that the young man had come to be married.

Married, while the early morning sun was shining, and the birds singing their morning hymn.

He was almost blind, this good old vicar, who had lived so long at Oheton. He was very deaf, and could hardly hear, but then he did not require very keen sight or hearing at Oheton; there was never more than one marriage in a year, and funerals were very rare; but to be called before nine in the morning to perform the marriage ceremony was something unheard of. He had duly announced the bans, and no one had taken the least notice of them; but to come so early, it was positively cruel.

Others had risen early that morning. Leone had not slept well, for this July morning, which was to bring such mingled joy and sorrow to others, was a day of deepest emotion to her.

Her love-dream was to be realized. She was to marry the ardent young lover who swore that he would not live without her.

She had thought more of her love than of the wordly advantages it would bring her. She had not thought much of those until they stood, on the evening before their wedding-day, once more by the mill-stream. It was bright moonlight, for the smiling summer day was dead. It was their farewell to the beautiful spot they both loved.

"I am so glad," said Lord Chandos, "that we can say good-bye to it by the light of the moon. I wonder, Leone, when we shall see the mill-stream again? I have a fancy that the pretty water has helped me in my wooing."

As they sat there the wind rose and stirred the branches of the alder-trees. In some way the great wavy masses of dark hair became unfastened, and fell like a thick soft veil over Leone's shoulders. Lord Chandos touched it caressingly with his hand.

"What beautiful hair, Leone—how thick and soft; how beautiful those wavy lines are—what makes them?"

"A turn of Dame Nature's fingers," she replied, laughingly.

"I should like to see diamonds shining in these coils of hair," he said. "Leone one of the first things we must do to-morrow when we reach London, is to buy a very handsome traveling-dress. I have written to-day to my father to ask him to meet us at Dunmore House."

She repeated the words.

"Where is Dunmore House?" she asked.

"I forgot," he said, "that all places so familiar to me are strange to you. One of my father's titles is Baron Dunmore, and his London residence is called Dunmore House. We shall meet him there to-morrow, and then you will be my wife."

For the first time she realized what an immense difference there was in their positions. She glanced at him in sudden fear.

"Lance," she said, "shall I seem very much out of place in your home, and among your friends?"

"My darling, you would grace any home," he replied; "mine has had no fairer mistress in all the generations it has stood."

"I am half frightened," she said gently.

"You need not be, sweet. Before this time next year all London will know and admire the beautiful Lady Chandos."

"It seems a long leap to take in life," she said, "from being Farmer Noel's niece to bear the name of Lady Chandos."

"You will grace the name, Leone," he replied. "I shall be the proudest man in England—I shall have the most beautiful wife in England. This is our last separation, our last parting; after this, we need never part."

He stooped down and caught some of the running water in his hand.

"A libation," he said, as he poured it back again. "I feel as though I were losing a friend when I leave the mill-stream."

Loving and loved, no thought came to them there of how they should see the mill-stream again.

"Leone, Lady Chandos." More than once that evening she said those words to herself. It was after eight when she came in, and the farmer had long finished his supper; he sat thinking over his pipe.

"You are late, my lady lass," he said; "sit down and talk to me before I go to rest."

Obediently enough, she sat down while he told her the history of his visits to the different markets. She heard, but did not take in the sense of one single word he uttered. She was saying to herself over and over again, that by this time to-morrow she should be Lady Chandos. Her happiness would have been complete if she could have told her uncle. He had been so kind to her. They were opposite as light and darkness, they had not one idea in common, yet he had been good to her and she loved him. She longed to tell him of her coming happiness and grandeur, but she did not dare to break her word.

Robert Noel looked up in wonder. There was his beautiful niece kneeling at his feet, her eyes dim with tears.

"Uncle," she was saying, "look at me, listen to me, I want to thank you. I want you always to remember that on this night I knelt at your feet and thanked you with a grateful heart for all you have ever done for me."

"Why, my lady lass," he replied, "you have always been to me as a child of my own," he replied.

"A tiresome child she said half laughing, half crying. "See, I take this dear, brown, hand, so hard with work, and I kiss it, uncle, and thank you from my heart."

He could not recover himself so to speak. He looked at her in blank, wordless amazement.

"In the years to come," she continued, "when you think of me, you must say to yourself, that, no matter what I did, I loved you."

"No matter what you did you loved me," he repeated. "Yes, I shall remember that."

She kissed the toil-worn face, leaving him so entirely bewildered that the only fear was lest he should sit up all night trying to forget it.

Then she went to her room, but not to sleep—her heart beat, every pulse thrilled. This was to be the last night in her old home—the last of her girlish life; to-morrow she would be Lady Chandos—wife of the young lover whom she loved with all her heart and soul.

The birds woke her with their song, it was their wedding-day. She would not see Robert Noel again; he took his breakfast before six and went off to the fields again. She had but to dress herself and go to the station. Oheton was some three miles from the station, but on a summer's morning that was a trifle.

They were all three there at last—Sir Frank looking decidedly vexed and cross, Lord Chandos happy as the day was long, and Leone beautiful as a picture.

"Look," said the young lordling to his friend, "have I no excuse?"

Sir Frank looked long and earnestly at the beautiful southern face.

"Yes," he replied; so far as beauty and grace can form an excuse, you have one; but, Lance, if I loved that girl a thousand times better than my life, I should not marry her."

"Why?" asked Lord Chandos, with a laugh.

"Because she has a tragedy in her life. She could not be happy. She will neither have a happy life nor a happy death."

"My dear Frank, do not prophesy such evil on our wedding-day."

"I do not mean to prophesy, I say what I think; it is a beautiful face, full of poetry and passion, but it is also full of power and unrest."

"You shall not look at her again if you say such things," cried Lord Chandos.

And then the good vicar, still distressed at being aroused so early, came to the church. Had it been less pitiful and pathetic, it would have been most comical, the number of times the old vicar dropped his book, forgot the names, the appalling mistakes he made, the nervous hesitation of his manner. Sometimes Lord Chandos felt inclined to say hard, hot words; again he could not repress a smile. But at length, after trembling and hesitating, the vicar gave the final benediction and pronounced them man and wife.

In the vestry, when the names were signed, some ray of light seemed to dawn on the old vicar.

"Chandos," he said, "that is not a common name about here."

"Is it not?" said the young lord; "it seems common enough to me."

"Chandos," repeated the minister, "where have I heard that name!"

"I have heard it so often that I am tired of it," said the young husband.

And then it was all over.

"Thank God to be out in the sunlight," he cried, as he stood, with his beautiful wife, in the churchyard. "Thank God it is all over, and I can call my love my wife. I thought that service would never end. Frank, have you no good wishes for my wife?"

Sir Frank went to Leone.

"I wish you joy," he said; "I wish you all happiness—but——"

And then he played nervously with the hat he held in his hand.

"But," she said with a bright smile, "you do not think I shall get it?"

Sir Frank made no answer; he did not think she would be happy, but she had chosen her own way; he had said all he could. Perhaps his eyes were clearer than others, for he could read a tragedy in her face. Then Sir Frank left them, having performed his part with a very ill grace.

"Leone, have you said good-bye to your uncle?" asked Lord Chandos.

"I left a little note to be given him when he returns home this evening. How he will miss me."

"And how fortunate I am to have you, my darling; there is no one in the wide world so happy. We will drive over to Rashleigh Station. I do not care who sees me now, no one can part us. Dr. Hervey thinks I went home to London this morning, but I won a wife before starting, did I not, Leone, my beautiful love? You are Lady Chandos now. What are you thinking of, my darling?"

"I was wondering, Lance, if there was anything in our marriage that could possibly invalidate it and make it illegal?"

"No," he replied, "I have been too careful of you, Leone, for that. You are my wife before God and man. Nothing shall take you from me but death."

"But death," she repeated slowly.

And in after years they both remembered the words.

CHAPTER IX.

A MYSTERIOUS TELEGRAM.

Cawdor took rank among the most stately homes of England; it had been originally one of the grand Saxon strongholds, one, too, which the Normans had found hard to conquer.

As time wore on the round towers and the keep fell into ruins—picturesque and beautiful ruins, round which the green ivy hung in luxuriant profusion; then the ruins were left standing.

Little by little the new place was built, not by any particular design; wing after wing, story after story, until it became one of the most picturesque and most magnificent homes in England. Cawdor it was called; neither court, hall nor park, simply Cawdor; and there were very few people in England who did not know Cawdor. There was no book of engravings that had not a view of Cawdor for its first and greatest attraction; there was no exhibition of pictures in which one did not see ruins of Cawdor. It had in itself every attribute of beauty, the ivy-mantled ruins, the keep, from which one could see into five different counties, the moat, now overgrown with trees; the old-fashioned drawbridge which contrasted so beautifully with the grand modern entrance, worthy of a Venetian palace; the winding river, the grand chain of hills, and in the far distance the blue waters of the Channel.

There could not have been a more beautiful or picturesque spot on earth than Cawdor. It had belonged to the Lanswell family for many generations. The Lanswells were a wealthy race—they owned not only all the land surrounding the fair domain of Cawdor, but nearly the whole of the town of Dunmore. The Earl of Lanswell was also Baron of Raleigh, and Raleigh Hall, in Staffordshire, was a very grand estate. In one part of it an immense coal mine had been discovered, which made Lord Lanswell one of the wealthiest men of the day.

Cawdor, Raleigh Hall, and Dunmore House, three of the finest residences in England, together with a rent-roll counted by hundreds of thousands, should have made the earl a happy man. He married a wealthy heiress in accordance with the old proverb that "Like seeks like." His wife, Lucia, Countess of Lanswell, was one of the proudest peeresses in England; she was unimpeachable in every relation of life, and had little pity for those who were not; she had never known sorrow, temptation, doubt, or anything else; she had lived in an atmosphere of perfect content and golden ease; she had the grandest mansion, the finest diamonds, the finest horses in London; she had the most indulgent husband, the handsomest son and the prettiest daughter; she did not know the word want in any shape, she had not even suffered from the crumpled rose-leaf. The nearest approach to trouble of any kind that she had known was that her son, Lord Chandos, had failed in one of his examinations. He asked that he might go into the country for some months to read, and permission was most cheerfully given to him. With her daughter, Lady Imogene Chandos, the countess had never had and never expected to have any trouble; she was one of the fairest, sweetest, and most gentle of girls; she was docile and obedient; she had never in her life given the least trouble to any one.

Lord Lanswell was walking up and down one of the broad terraces at Cawdor one fine morning in July, when one of the servants brought to him a telegram. He opened it hastily, it was from his son, Lord Chandos:

"DEAREST FATHER,—Will you run up to town, and meet me at Dunmore House this evening? I have something very important to tell you. Not one word to mother yet."

Lord Lanswell stood still to think with the telegram in his hand.

"What can be the matter now!" he said to himself; "that boy will give me trouble He has done something now that he will not let my lady know."

He had a dull, heavy presentiment that the boy who should have been the pride and delight of his life would be a drawback and a torment.

"I must go," said the earl to himself, "I must make some excuse to satisfy my lady."

It was typical of Lady Lanswell that her husband seldom spoke of her as my wife, the children more seldom still as "my mother;" every one alike called her "my lady." She might have been the only peeress in England, so entirely did every one agree in giving her that title. "My lady" was pleased meant sunshine at Cawdor; "my lady" was angry, meant gloom. She regulated the moral and mental atmosphere of the house with a smile or a frown.

Lord Lanswell knew that he dare not show the telegram to Lady Lanswell; she would have started off at once for Dunmore House, and there would have been war. He must deceive her. He carefully destroyed the telegram; in some queer fashion which he did not own even to himself he had a kind of sympathy with his son.

He had been wild in his youth and made allowances for the same in others. His worst thought now was that his handsome young heir, with the frank blue eyes and sunny hair had been gambling or betting.

"A few thousand pounds would set him straight," he thought, "and after all one must not be too hard on the follies of youth."

No need to tell my lady; she looked on these exploits with a keen, cold eye. He went to the drawing-room, where my lady sat looking regally beautiful in black velvet and point lace.

The Countess of Lanswell was considered one of the handsomest women in England. She had married very young, and her beauty was still so well preserved that she took her place with the beauties of the day. Husband and children both felt in awe of the beautiful woman with her queenly grace and bearing.

"Lucia," said the earl, "I thought of running up to town this afternoon. I shall return to-morrow."

"Indeed," said my lady, slowly. "Why this sudden resolution, Ross?"

"There is some little business that no one can attend to but myself," he said. "I shall not be long absent."

"Business of what nature?" asked my lady, her fine eyes fixed on his face.

"Why, dear, it is surely not needful for me to explain my business to you? I have none of which you would not approve. I want to call on my bankers—I want to sell some shares—I have several little reasons for running up to town."

"You remember, of course, that the Beauvoirs dine here to-day?" said my lady.

"Yes, I have not forgotten, but with your usual tact you can apologize for me, Lucia."

The compliment pleased her.

"Certainly, I can, if your absence is really needful, Ross," said my lady.

"It is needful, I assure you. I can tell all I have done when I return; just now I must hurry off, or I shall not catch the train."

As the earl quitted Cawdor, he regretted deeply that his son should have complicated the situation by enforcing his silence as regarded his mother.

He pondered a great deal on what he should say when he returned—above all, if the boy's trouble was, as he imagined, the loss of money.

"I must not let his mother know," thought the earl. "Boys are boys; she would think he was lost altogether if she knew that he had betting and gambling debts. Whatever he owes, no matter what it is, I will give him a check for it, and make him promise me that it shall be the last time.

He never thought of any other danger; that his son had fallen in love or wanted to marry never occurred to him. He was glad when they reached Dunmore House; the old housekeeper met him in the hall.

"I have dinner ready, my lord," she said. "Lord Chandos told me you were coming."

He looked round expectantly.

"Is not Lord Chandos here?" he asked.

It occurred to him that the housekeeper looked troubled and distressed.

"No," she replied, "he is not staying here—they are staying in the Queen's Hotel, in Piccadilly."

"They," he cried, "whom do you mean by they? Has Lord Chandos friends with him?"

The woman's face grew pale. She shrunk perceptibly from the keen, gray eyes.

"I understood his lordship that he was not alone," she replied. "I may have made a mistake. I understood him also that he should be with you by eight this evening, when you had finished dinner."

"Why could he not dine with me?" he thought. "Sends a telegram for me, and then leaves me to dine alone. It is not like Lance."

But thinking over it would not solve the mystery; the earl went to his room and dressed for dinner. He had ordered a bottle of his favorite Madeira, of which wonderful tales were told.

Then he sat thinking about his son, and his heart softened toward him. He thought of the handsome, curly-headed young boy whose grand spirit no one but my lady could subdue. He laughed aloud as he remembered the struggles between himself and his heir—they had always ended in his defeat; but when my lady came on the scene it was quite another thing, the defeat was on the other side then, and my Lord Chandos was usually carried off defeated and conquered.

He thought of the handsome stripling who used to wander about the grounds at Cawdor, trying to conceal from my lady the fact that he smoked cigars. He did not fear his father and smoked boldly before him, but at the first sound of my lady's rustling silks he flew rather than ran. Lord Lanswell laughed aloud as he thought of it all.

"He is just as frightened at my lady now," he said to himself. "I cannot help feeling touched and flattered that he has sent for me in his trouble. I will help him and my lady shall never know."

His heart warmed to his son and heir—no one knew how dearly he loved him, nor how completely his life was wrapped up in him. Then he heard a cab drive up to the door. Surely that must be Lance.

He listened in impatient suspense—he heard whispering in the outer hall, as though some consultation were being held.

"What in the world is the boy making a mystery over?" he asked himself.

Then he started from his chair in unutterable amazement.

Before him stood Lance, Lord Chandos, holding the hands of the most beautiful girl he had ever seen in his life.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE ONLY SOLUTION.

A Family Can Live and Make Money on Ten Acres of Land.

The St. Paul Pioneer Press is just now discussing the idea of sending the unemployed back to the land for their sustenance. "It is the only rational solution of the problem," says The Press. "It contains at the same time the solution of half he other problems, moral, social and political, that perplex us. We must get rid of the insane idea that the man who is willing to do a particular kind of work has a right to have that particular kind of work provided for him; that the man who is willing to work in a particular place must have work given to him there; in a word, that the unemployed has a right to make any sort of conditions, except that the work which is offered to him shall be wholesome and honorable labor." Continuing, the subject, The Pioneer Press shows in detail how "a family may live and make money on 10 acres of land; live not in the wretchedness and privation that surround the unemployed of the great cities, but in comfort and plenty. If each man of the unemployed can be placed on a 10-acre tract his future is secure. If he will not go to meet it, then he ought to bear the stripes that wait upon every one of us, wherever placed, who will not accept the work that offers. We shall consider this subject more in detail upon future occasions. What we wish to enforce here, with all the emphasis at command, is that the problem of the unemployed can be solved completely in a country like this, where land is plentiful and cheap, at far less cost than in any other way, by making such arrangements that each individual can become a farm laborer and a future proprietor if he will. It is the best thing for him. It is God's rescue for his children, if he have any, from the contamination of the city's streets. Ten acres means support and independence. Twenty are still better, and we can easily spare them in the North-West. Here lies the solution of the problem of the unemployed. The sooner it is acted upon the better for rich and poor, for country and town."

PRINCESS ALIX OF HESSE.

Who Will Be the Next Empress of Russia.

The gentle Princess Alix of Hesse, whose charming portrait graces the Crafton Gallery collection of "Fair Woman" in London this season, and who is soon to be the bride of the Czarewitch of Russia, is the sister of the reigning Duke of Hesse, and daughter of that Princess Alice who died at Darmstadt, and whom Queen Victoria so tenderly mourned.

The future Empress of Russia is of yielding and amiable disposition, and is going patiently through all the ceremonies necessary to fit her for her exalted post—one of which is the learning of all the formulas of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Not all German Princesses have been so accommodating as to fit themselves to the official religion when marrying into the Russian nobility. The Dukes of Mecklemburg would not allow their daughters who made Russian marriages to abjure the faith of their childhood.

The Princess Alix is greatly beloved by Queen Victoria, who has also taken an immense liking to the Czarewitch, because he is to be Alix's husband.

CAUSE OF EXTRAVAGANCE.

Thousands of People Spend More Than Their Income.

The chief cause of extravagance is vanity—the desire to keep up appearances, to gain what is regarded as social position. Unfortunately, social rank has with us become largely a matter of expenditure. It must be purchased like anything else. The price differs with the social caste, but it always involves the maintenance of the style of living of the class one seeks to enter. The result is an almost irresistible desire on the part of thousands to make their prosperity visible, to live as well as those with whom they wish to associate, and in order to do so they spend to the extent of, or exceed, their incomes. They will not alter their mode of life with declining means, lest they should lose the respect of their fellows, though singularly enough, they permit others to dictate their standard of living without apparently losing their own self-respect. There is, of course, something lacking in these men which prevents them from fully realizing the danger in which they are involving their families, and an absence of the courage and independence essential to a really strong character. Nevertheless, while the motive is mainly vanity, it is quite compatable with the possession of manly virtues.

There are other causes contributing to the same end, notably the increasing love of comfort which has taken possession of the people, the gratification of which, within reasonable bounds, is to be commended as advancing civilization. But a still stronger one is carelessness and laziness; for while our people are energetic and industrious, they will not take the trouble necessary to save money; that is, the men will not. They will not take the time to find out where they can buy most cheaply, but buy at the most convenient shop, and will not haggle over prices in order to save small sums of money. Of two articles of the same class they generally purchase the most expensive, and will not give the energy necessary to keep what they buy in good repair. The women, fortunately, do give the time and energy, rather delighting in details, and, indeed, if they did not do so in expenditures for the house, matters would be far worse than they are. But men as a rule constantly pay a fourth more for what they buy than they should, simply because they will not take the trouble to avoid doing so. No doubt they gain something in longevity in thus refusing, for economy involves care and care exhausts vitality, but they do not neglect opportunities of earning money for this reason. There is, of course, another cause of extravagance, that is, pride, the disliking to be thought "near," though the quality is quite distinct from meanness, and involves no suspicion of dishonesty. Indeed, in continental countries nearness is deemed a virtue, as necessary to a strong character, and standing for the sturdy independence which refuses to pay more for anything than is right.

A GLIMPSE AT KOREA.

If the People Work the Money They Earn is Taken From Them.

"'What is the use of working and making money,' said once a Korean to me, writes A. H. Savage Lander; 'if when the work is done and the money made, this is taken away from you by the officials, and you are worn out for having done the work, and as poor as before, if, mind you, you are fortunate enough not to be exiled to a distant province by the angry magistrate who has enriched himself at your expense? Now,' added the Korean, looking earnestly into my face, 'would you work under those circumstances?'

"'I am hanged if I would,' were the words which, to the best of my ability, I struggled hard to translate in the Korean language, to show my approval of his philosophic way of thinking.

"There is no doubt that what the Korean said to me was perfectly true, and that the system of 'squeezing' is carried on, on a very large scale, by the magistrates, just the same as in China, and it naturally has a very depressing effect on the people 'squeezed.'

"It is really painful, when you first land in Korea, to notice the careworn, sad expression on everybody's face; there they lie about idle and pensive, doubtful as to what will happen to them to-morrow, all anxious for generations, that a reform might take place in the mode of government, yet all for centuries, too lazy to attempt to better their position. Such is human nature! It is hard indeed to suffer, but it is nothing as compared with the trouble and worry of improving one's own standing; and no one better than the Koreans know this.

"They are born philosophers, and they make the best of what they have, or rather of what they have not. When you hear Koreans talk, the topic of the conversation is invariably 'money;' if it is not 'money,' it is 'food.' If they have quarrels among themselves, what can the cause be but 'cash'? and if you see a deadly fight in the streets, what could it be about if not for probably the equivalent of a farthing?"

Result of a Crime.

Pathetic results have followed the arrest at Denver, Col., of E. K. Kidd, a young Englishman, for embezzling $335 from S. K. Barrets, which occurred several days ago. Last Wednesday Mr. Kidd's wife, feeling deeply the disgrace of her husband's acts, went to the Victoria Hotel and attempted suicide by means of poisoning, but was prevented by prompt medical attendance. Mr. Kidd was unaware of his wife's predicament, but his crime so preyed upon his mind that he is now hopelessly insane.

Cocoanuts Save Heads.

A curious artifice was adopted by a Chinese slave ship when attacked by a man-of-war. The crew threw cocoanuts overboard into the sea, and then jumped in among them. Nearly all escaped, for it was impossible to tell which were heads and which were nuts.