

# THE WEDDING BELLS.

## OR, TELLING HER FORTUNE.

By the Author of "PROVED, OR NOT PROVED."

### CHAPTER XXIII.—(CONTINUED.)

"It pleases you to be merry," he says, quietly, as, coming forward, he bends over the little jeweled head she gives him and touches it with his lips.

"Is it you, my dear Frank?" she says languidly, when her laughter had ceased. "It has pleased you to be late, I think."

"I must apologize for the delay," he answers, seating himself opposite to her, and lifting the tiny, fluffy dog on his knee.

"But just as I was starting, I had a visit from my brother Henry and Grant Ellison, and—"

He paused in some astonishment, for Miss Chester, lying back on her cushions, has burst into another long peal of laughter.

"Excuse me," she says gayly; "I am in the wildest spirits this morning. So you have had a visit from Lord Henry Gale and Sir Grant Ellison. Is the latter a friend of yours?"

"Hardly. I have met him two or three times lately," he answers, carelessly. "He is rather a lion, you know."

"A lion. Why?"

"Because he was supposed to be dead, and, after a very long absence, has turned up. He appeared first under an assumed name. Altogether the story is rather a romantic one."

"Is it—tell it to me. I adore romantic stories."

Thus urged, Lord Roseton, who is the Earl of Ashurst's eldest son, and who was traveling in the East at the time of his brother's wedding, tells the beautiful actress the details of Grant Ellison's story, and when he concludes, she gives another little silvery peal of laughter.

"S) he would never have returned to England if his first wife had lived?" she says, presently. "So it was fortunate she died. Is he quite sure she is dead?"

"Oh, yes; he actually went to this outlandish place in Cornwall where she was wrecked, and saw the place where she was buried, the clergyman who read the service, etc.," said Lord Roseton, carelessly, caressing the little dog, and not glancing at his companion's face, on which he might have seen some strange mingled expressions.

"That was conclusive of course," she rejoins, laughing. "Is Sir Grant wealthy?"

"Charnock is a superb estate, and the rent-roll a long one; but as is not entailed, and Sir Douglas was so enraged at his son's marriage that he left them all away from him to Miss Frith, Lady Ellison's adopted daughter."

"The girl he is going to marry?"

"How do you know?"

"The marriage is announced here as taking place at Charnock on the 29th," she answers handing him the paper. "Sir Grant shows his wisdom in choosing the heiress of Charnock for a wife."

"She is a very charming girl."

"Indeed! Have you seen her?" she says, a gleam of eagerness lighting up the velvety dark eyes.

"Several times."

"She is pretty, then?"

"Very. You must have seen her in the park; she was in London last season with Lady Mary Featherstone."

"Do you think I have not something else to do when I am in the park than to be on the look out for debutantes?" she says, with a slight sneer. "What is she like?"

Lord Roseton considers a moment.

"She is fair, and slender, and graceful," he says, slowly, "with a thoroughbred way about her; she has brown eyes I think, and I know she dances to perfection. However, if you are intensely curious about her, *mon helle*, you will see her in the Row this morning, for she is going to ride with Sir Grant at twelve."

"Is she? Well I shall look for her," she said, carelessly, "for I am going to drive this morning. I am curious to see the young lady for whom is reserved the wonderful and distinguished honor of being Sir Grant Ellison's wife."

"You speak as if you were jealous of the honor," he says, laughing, and he deposits the dog on its velvet cushion and rises.

"Jealous!—I?" and she laughs again, a mocking, derisive laugh this time. "I'm jealous, *pas si bete*, m'lord. Do you think I have any reason to be jealous of Miss Frith? Is she handsomer than I am?"

"Not a hundredth part so handsome," he answers, enthusiastically, and Miss Chester laughs triumphantly.

"I wish you would make me a good bet I do not steal Miss Frith's lover from her," she says, gayly. "A thousand to one, for instance."

"Do you think yourself so perfectly irresistible, then?" he answers, laughing. "It would be a hard theft, I can tell you."

"Why? Is she so awfully fond of her?"

"I think so—nay, I am sure so."

"Men are deceivers ever," says Miss Chester, with a sneer. "And I dare say the sheep-farmer baronet has his full share of inconstancy. Will you take my bet, Roseton?"

"Of course not—you were not serious."

"Never more so in my life."

"Nonsense, Adelaide," he replies, laughing. "Are you really going to send me away so soon? How cruel! When shall I see you again?"

"I am going to the park; then I am going to the theater—you may come this evening to supper if you like."

"A thousand thanks. Will the Russian be here?"

"Who—Prince Schwaroff?"

"Yes."

"He is coming."

"Then I shall not."

"Jealous?" laughs the beauty. "Don't be so foolish, Frank."

"I hate the man!" he says, vehemently. "Do you mean to marry him?"

"Cela depend!"

"He will not let you play fast and loose with him, as you do with others," he says, bitterly. "You had better take heed Adelaide."

"I am not afraid. I may marry him, or I may not. I don't think I shall—I like my liberty too well. I don't mean to marry any one," she replies, gayly, smiling up into his glowing face. "At least, not yet. Now, be off, or I shall lose my drive. Come tonight if you like—stay away if you don't like the sight of his highness. *Au revoir*."

She went away, her rich satin draperies sweeping the floor; and at the door she turned, gave him a bright, bewildering smile and vanished.

The park in February is certainly not a very brilliant place of resort; but as Miss Chester drove her ponies swiftly up and down, she was not by any means the only person there. The day is an unusually mild, fine day for the season, and it has tempted several of the aristocracy then in town to order their carriages, and take a drive.

Lady Ellison is there, driving with Lady Mary Featherstone and Gracie, who, with Ted, are in town for a few days, staying at Ellison House, and Ted is riding with Sir Grant and Clara.

Presently Miss Chester pulls up her ponies to speak to a gentleman who is standing by the railings, and who tells her who is the beautiful, grey-eyed lady with the soft silver hair and high-bred manner; and the actress' beautiful eyes follow Grant's mother's with a strange expression, which would have somewhat surprised her informant had he caught sight of it!

"So that is Lady Ellison!" she says, lightly. "I hear she is shortly to become a dowager. It is true I suppose?"

"Quite true. Sir Grant is to be married on the 29th. This is leap year, you know."

"And it would seem that Sir Grant does not care to have the anniversary of his wedding-day recur too often," she replies, gayly. "Have you seen the young lady?"

"Oh, yes, often! She has had a belle for two seasons."

"A belle! Is she so handsome? I wish I could see her."

"Your wish will be gratified almost immediately. She is riding with Sir Grant."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. You cannot fail to see them. Sir Grant is riding a splendid black thoroughbred, and Miss Frith is on her gray mare—a favorite horse she calls Beauty."

"I will look out for them. Good-morning Captain Robson."

As Miss Chester drives on she pulls down her veil, which is of rich black Spanish lace; besides being a protection from the east wind, it completely conceals her beautiful face, without, however, preventing her from seeing clearly.

She drives slowly; and seeing some equestrians coming toward her down the Row, she pulls up her ponies again by the railings, and waits for them to pass. The party consists of two gentlemen and a lady, and one glance is sufficient for her to recognize Sir Grant Ellison. Then the dark eyes turn eagerly to the girl's face, and as they mark its rare loveliness, a sudden, fierce, envious gleam flashes into them.

Clara looks indeed beautiful; the rich color mantling in her cheeks; the love-light in her happy eyes; the sudden, sweet smile with which she turns to Grant, to answer some remark he makes or question he addresses her, to add to her beauty; while the closely-fitting dark green habit shows to advantage a figure as faultless as Adelaide Chester's own.

A sudden, vindictive smile crosses the actress' beautiful lips as she looks; then she turns her ponies' heads, and drives rapidly homeward. She is due at the theater for rehearsal, but she does not heed that; she does not fear a scolding from the manager, and is careless whether she disturbs the routine of his arrangements or not. When she reaches her own house, she goes straight to her davenport and takes out a plain, square, cream-laid envelope, which she addresses in a bold, free hand to Miss Frith; then opening one of the side drawers of the writing-table, she hesitates for a moment as if uncertain. Then she slips a folded piece of paper into the envelope, seals it, and again leaves the house, walking rapidly to the nearest pillar-box, into which she drops the letter, and halting a hansom, drives off to her rehearsal with a strange, evil, bitter smile on her lips.

The very same afternoon, some two or three hours later the postman's rat rattles imperatively at the door of Ellison House, and among other epistles he delivers the square, cream-laid envelope which Miss Chester had addressed and posted herself. Just as the footman places them on a salver to take up to the drawing room, Miss Frith herself, a very pretty, dainty figure, in black velvet and seal-skin, comes downstairs, and almost simultaneously Sir Grant, also equipped for a drive, appears at the open door of the library, which is situated on the ground floor.

"The carriage is waiting, Clara," he says, with a long, loving glance at the pretty velvet-clad figure. "I do not think you will have time to read your letters, if there are any for you."

"Are there any, Thomas, says Clara, carelessly, intent on the buttons of her long gloves; and Thomas selects that portion of the letters which belongs to Clara, presents them to her, and hands a couple to Sir Grant at the same time.

"Mine will wait," he says, carelessly, throwing them back on the hall table.

Thomas opens the door; Lady Ellison's brougham is waiting with the coachman on the box, and a second footman standing by the door of the carriage opens it while Sir Grant assists Clara to get in, and follows himself, giving the order to drive to the Dore Gallery, and the carriage starts.

"Now, the letter, says Sir Grant, laughing. "I wonder why your sex is invariably so much more eager for correspondence than ours, Clara."

"Because, your correspondence consists principally of lawyers' letters and tailors' bills," laughs Clara. "Whereas our letters are filled with all kinds of interesting matters."

"Are they? I should like to have a few letters from you, Clara; I should think that you could make them charming—very charming—and I never had but that one little note."

Clara smiles, but colors slightly.

"Is it possible that has the power to make you blush even now?" he says, laughing; then he adds more gravely: "I remember how I used to envy the fellows who got home letters out in the bush. They used to make them so happy."

"Poor Grant!" says Clara, sofly, steal-

ing her hand into his sympathetically for a moment; then she turns to her letters, and Grant, leaning back luxuriously in the soft-cushioned brougham, thinks of the bitter past, and contrasts it with the smiling, cloudless present.

"What are all those smiles over?" he says, presently.

"Over a letter from Sylvia," she answers, gayly. "They are not going to sail till June. Is not that good news?"

"Very," he answers, warmly. "I am very fond of Sylvia, Clara."

"I know your are," she said, laughing, as she folds the letter and takes up another. "I was very jealous of her one time."

"Foolish child! You never had any cause for jealousy since I knew you."

"Had I not? I hope you don't mean to give me any in the future!"

"I don't believe I could make you jealous," he answered, merrily. "You know your own power too well!"

"Do I?" she says, saucily; and turning away from him, she breaks the seal of the cream-laid, square envelope in her hand.

"I wonder who this is from? I don't know the handwriting."

The envelope contains no letter, only a long, narrow slip of paper, which Clara looks at with puzzled eyes; then she turns to Grant and laughs.

"Did you send me this, Grant?" she asks.

"What is it, sweetheart?"

"A box for the Variety for to-night."

"I did not send it," he answers, taking the order from her hand. "But I had meant to take you to see the play there; they say it is capital."

"Then some one has forestalled you," replies, laughing. "Who can it be?"

Sir Grant frowns a little.

"How delightful, whoever it was!" she continues, gayly. "We will go of course, Grant."

"Why of course, Clara?"

"Because it would be quite too rude not to do so," she answered, merrily. "Oh! you foolish old darling, are you really jealous?"

Grant laughs.

"I am vexed that some one else has anticipated my wish to give you pleasure, sweet," he answers, taking her hand fondly.

"Don't think you need be jealous," she replies. "I have no doubt it is only Mr. Warren. He was very eloquent the other night about the beauty of the principal actress there, and wishes me very much to see her. You will go to-night, Grant?"

"Of course, my darling; unless you are tired after the pictures."

"Oh! I shall not be tired. Besides, when one is in London for a short time one must not think of fatigue. There will be plenty of time to rest when we get to Charnock. Dear Charnock!" she adds, earnestly; "how pleased I shall be to see it again!"

"So shall I, sweet; and think of the happy time we shall spend there together."

And not one shadow of the coming trouble fell upon them as they look forward—not one warning of the terrible misery both should suffer before they were at Charnock together!

### CHAPTER XXIV.

#### A BOX AT THE VARIETY.

The afternoon wore away very happily. At the picture-gallery Grant and Clara sat home the brougham, and sauntered through the rooms slowly, arm in arm, feasting their eyes on the master-pieces of the great French artists, talking of art and artist, anticipating the delight of that tour in Italy which they hoped to take together, perfectly happy and absorbed in each other, and quite unconscious of the attention they could not fail to attract. Sir Grant is tall, and stockily, and handsome; Clara, with her delicate beauty, and her costly, tasteful dress. How often, during the weary time which followed both looked back at that afternoon and its golden hours with unutterable longing—unutterable sadness!

Then, when the pictures were exhausted, Clara insisted on walking down New Bond Street, lingering before the shop windows, criticising, admiring, discussing, like two happy children, and buying all kinds of useless, expensive, pretty trifles which caught their fancy; and then Clara coaxed Sir Grant to take her to the Criterion, "just to see it once, Grant," to have some tea, and they drove off together in a hansom—the young lady delighted at the idea that they were enjoying a taste of Bohemian life in London.

"I shall not a bit mind being poor with you, Grant," she said, nestling close to him as the hansom bowled on rapidly. "I would be what Ted calls 'awfully jolly.' We should have a pretty tiny house somewhere in Piccadilly, I think—and only two servants—and we should not need a carriage, for hansom's are quite as nice and so convenient; and we should go to the theaters and concerts, just you and I together, in a Darby and Joan fashion, which would be delightful."

"I am afraid you would get tired of such a life, sweet."

"Tired—with you, Grant?"

"Besides," he said, smiling, as he glanced down at her tenderly, "if we were really poor, Clara, I am afraid even a tiny house in Piccadilly would be beyond our reach. We should have to content ourselves with dingy lodgings in the East-end, with a maid-of-all-work; and instead of hansom's, we should be reduced to tramways and omnibuses. How would you like that, Clara?"

Clara looked up somewhat dismayed.

"I should not like the omnibuses," she said, laughing. "But I should not mind the tramways; and we could walk, you know, Grant. But then, if we were really so poor as that, we should not live in London at all—we should have a tiny cottage in the country."

"I am afraid you and poverty would not agree very well, darling," he answered, smiling. "And I am very thankful to think that my little wife is a rich heiress."

"Your little wife has nothing but what belongs to her husband," Clara said, hurriedly, and just then the cab drew up at the Criterion.

Often afterward Clara looked back to that afternoon as one of the happiest of a life which then had known but few cloudy days. The novelty of the gayly-lighted room where they had tea, the people coming in and out, the buzz of voices about them, and Grant's handsome happy face—the face from which all the sadness had disappeared now as he sat opposite to her at the little marble table—all contributed to the charm of the hour; and when they drove home, Clara nestled her hand in her lover's, and whispered that she was feeling, with Coleridge, "what a beautiful thing it was to live!"

Then came dinner in the handsome dining-room at Ellison House, with the velvet-footed servants in attendance, and dainty fare

and rare wines; then a little lingering over coffee in the pretty, softly lighted drawing-room, with pleasant chat over the doings of the day, and a little laughter over the anonymous donor of the box at the Variety.

"I have half a mind to throw over the opera and go with you, Clara," laughed Gracie Featherstone. "Do you think Aunt Jennie would be very much vexed, Ted?"

"I am afraid she would; besides, Gracie, you may not get a chance of hearing Nilsson again for ever so long, and she plays *Margherita* exquisitely," said Lady Mary. "I think if Clara were coming with us she would enjoy it more than the Variety."

"Clara won't hear Nilsson spoken of in the same breath with Patti," said Sir Grant, gayly. "I tell her she shows execrable taste."

"I'm very sorry, but it's the best I've got," said Clara, laughing. "Then I'm afraid, Grant, you and I will have to go alone, as I have asked mother in vain. I can't tempt her."

"Then we will go in the Darby and Joan fashion you spoke of this afternoon," said Grant, smiling; and Clara went away to get her clock, while Grant rang for the brougham.

The Variety Theater was full from pit to upper gallery when Sir Grant and Clara entered their box. The first act of the play was over, but the curtain had not risen on the second act; and during the interval Clara glanced round the house, recognizing a face here and there in the dress-circle and boxes.

"There is Lord Roseton in the box nearly opposite ours," she said, presently. "He does not appear to enjoy himself very much. Is not that Lord Henry with him? Yes; I am sure it is. Is that some one in the royal box?"

"Yes, dear, the princess is there."

"How lovely she looks, and what an exquisite bracelet she has on her right arm! Ah! the curtain is going up. Can you see there, Grant? Come on this side; you will have a much better view of the stage, and this is a pretty scene."

Grant obeyed, changing his seat opposite her for one by her side, and then both turned their attention to the stage, where a pretty, daintily attired *soubrette* was telling the somewhat indifferent audience about the beauty and conquests and presents of her mistress, a rich young widow, who was turning all the heads and breaking all the hearts of the male portion of the population of Scarborough, where the scenes of the play—a fashionable drawing-room comedy—was laid.

In a few minutes, however, the languid attentions of the spectators quickened into something more like eager interest, and the next moment a door on the stage opened, and the rich and fascinating widow appeared, and a thunder of applause broke forth, during which the beautiful actress came quietly forward, inclining her head slightly in acknowledgment of the rapturous reception she had received.

She wore an evening dress of gold colored silk, made in the extreme of the fashion, and caught here and there by bunches of vivid scarlet geranium. Round her throat a black velvet band was clasped with a superb diamond star; while on the bare white arms and small, plump hands diamonds, sapphires, and rubies blazed in a profusion which spoke brilliantly of the generosity of the actress' admirers.

Coming to the footlights, she stood silent a moment, and her dark eyes gave one swift, upward glance at the box where Clara was seated, and as she did so a little, vindictive gleam of triumphant dislike shot into them. The young girl was distinctly visible, for, in her eagerness she had leaned forward, and the little gloved hand and bare arm lay upon the velvet on the front of the box.

"How beautiful!—how beautiful!" the girl said, drawing back a little. "I never saw so lovely a face! Oh, how magnificent she is! Grant, do look, dear. Can you see her?"

Sir Grant made no answer, and something in his silence made Clara turn toward him.

"Grant, I am sure you cannot see—do—What is the matter? Are you ill? My dearest, what is it?" she cried, in the greatest alarm, for his face was deadly pale, and into the beautiful grey-blue eyes, which made Clara's sunshine, there had come an expression of unutterable pain.

For a moment he answered her nothing; then, conquering his emotion by a strong effort, he smiled up into the anxious, tender face banding ever him.

"It is nothing, my darling," he said hastily. "An old wound which makes me wince now and then. Sweetheart, I am sorry you noticed it. It is nothing indeed."

He released her hand gently, and leaving his seat beside her, resumed the one he had occupied when they had first entered the box, and, drawing somewhat back behind the shelter of the curtain, he looked down eagerly at the stage.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### She Was too Smart.

This is the story of how a young man was saved from marrying a mercenary woman. It will be admitted by most readers that the young lady was served just right:

A young lady was engaged to a rich young manufacturer. The day was set for the wedding; the guests were invited. But a few days before the day appointed for the wedding the prospective bride learned that the firm to which her betrothed belonged was insolvent. She immediately wrote him a letter breaking the engagement and bidding him farewell. It was sent off in the greatest haste, as there was no more time to stop the preparations for the wedding. Two hours after it had been posted she learned that the rumor of the firm's insolvency was false. Accompanied by her parents she hastened to the post office to demand the return of her letter. The postmaster politely refused to give it up. The young lady insisted, but the postmaster remained firm. The parents began to argue the case. It was useless. They became excited, their daughter became hysterical, and there was a scene. But appeals, entreaties, tears, wringing of hands and threats of fainting were all in vain; the polite postmaster had but one answer. The rule admitted of no exception, but the letter was already in the eyes of the law the property of the young man. It was sent, and saved him from the great misfortune of marrying a mercenary wife. More than one tale has been written founded on the incident of a letter being lost or intercepted. Perhaps it would be well, by way of variety, for some rising author to found his next story upon the letter that was delivered against the sober second thought of the writer.

### How to Make a Good Wife.

No apology is necessary for giving the following rules. Every married man will at once see our object. He should cut this out, and put it carefully in his pocket-book, and read at least once every day. Every man who does this, and acts upon the advice given, will soon find that he has one of the best wives in Canada.

Don't fail to give her words of approbation whenever you can conscientiously approve.

Be attentive and courteous to her.

Be cheerful when you enter your house.

Don't be afraid to praise the neat room and bright fire.

Don't be afraid to praise her mending and her skill in fashioning and making.

Let your conduct be such that she will be proud of you.

Be so upright that she will be happy in teaching your children to honor you.

Give your family some of your attention.

Tell them of the amusing things that have brightened your day's labor.

Speak kindly to your children.

Play and talk with them a few moments after supper.

Interest yourself in your wife's employment.

Encourage her when she is down hearted.

Be glad with her when she is happy.

Don't wait to tell the world upon marble that which will be so grateful to her loving heart to hear from your lips.

Share with her your good fortunes unselfishly as you do your ills.

### An Enterprising Photographer.

Every now and again we seem to get a taste for blood, or for cruelty, in some new fashion or another. After the deeds of blood in India we showed our ingenuity as a civilized and Christian nation by blowing a number of natives literally from the mouth of the cannon. And now, the cables tell us, our nation is keeping her hand in practice at cruelties in Burmah. Some time since great surprise was expressed at the announcement that the war correspondent of the *Times* had been ordered away from the British camp in Burmah. The *Times* is not a paper to sit down quietly unless such circumstances, and it has caused enquiries to be made, which show that the correspondent in charging the provost-marshal at Mandalay with cruelty had been only too lenient in dealing with that officer. The provost-marshal is an amateur photographer, and he became fired with the ambition of taking a series of unique negatives. He superintended the execution of a number of dacoits, and by his order these men were executed in small batches. When the men were drawn up in line against a wall he would station the firing platoon before them and get his camera into position and prepare his plates, and then the officer commanding the soldiers was instructed to prolong the interval between "present" and "fire" to enable the provost-marshal to expose his plates and obtain pictures of the men in all the agony of expected death. On another occasion he obtained evidence against a Burmese Minister by threatening a native with execution if he did not give such testimony as the provost-marshal required.

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Last season's catch of salmon in the Maine rivers was the largest in fifty years.

"Golden Medical Discovery" will not cure a person whose lungs are almost wasted, but it is an unfailing remedy for consumption if taken in time. All druggists.

Mrs. Nilsson has just refused \$30,000 for fifteen concerts in Russia because it is so cold.

Don't hawk, hawk, blow, blow, disgusting everybody, but use Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy.

There is a club of book lovers, authors, and bibliophiles in London which calls itself "The Sette of Odd Volumes."

There is no excuse for your suffering any longer from Catarrh, Bronchitis, etc., when you can get a remedy guaranteed to cure, and which is perfectly safe. Dr. Carson's Catarrh Cure is a pleasant and effectual remedy. Ask your Druggist about it.

It is said that Shanghai shipped to America last year not less than 500,000 pounds of willow leaves disguised as tea.

The entries for the great Colonial and Indian Exhibition still come in from all quarters of the Dominion, and corporations, societies, and institutions of all sorts, are contributing to make the display of the most varied character. One of the novel features in the Dominion display will be a journal printed in the building. This paper will be edited and published by Canadians, printed from Canadian type, on a Canadian press, and from Canadian made paper. It will be published by a syndicate of gentlemen, under the name of the "Trades Publishing Co.," with offices in Toronto and Montreal.

The aggregate amount of the pension drawn by the late Lord Brougham as a retired Master in Chancery was \$530,000.

**Imperial Cough Drops will give Positive and Instant Relief to those suffering from Colds, Hoarseness, Sore Throat, etc., and are invaluable to orators and vocalists. For sale by druggists and confectioners. R. & T. WATSON, Manufacturers, Toronto.**

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