

# LOVE AND LAW.

By the author of BONNY'S LOVER.

## CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

My heart sank as I remembered the incident of last evening, the evidently clandestine meeting in the shrubbery at Forest Lea. Could this journey be connected with that meeting, and could the timid, modest girl I had known at Forest Lea be capable of planning and carrying out secret arrangements, surrounded by so many difficulties in her circumstances? What did it mean?

The endless green panorama still flitted by; not a sound, save the occasional rustling of a newspaper, broke the silence of the railway carriage; the passengers were either sleepy or unsocial. An irrepressible desire to speak to Miss Branscombe possessed me—I could bear the situation no longer. I turned toward her with the paper I had been reading in my hand, intending to offer it to her. She was already occupied with a book—one of those thin paper-covered volumes bought at book-stalls—and she did not raise her eyes from it or otherwise appear to have noticed my movement. There was no doubt of her wish to ignore our previous acquaintance. And a conclusive further proof of her identity was given me in her dress, which I now had the opportunity of seeing more distinctly. It was of a brownish shade, and the pattern a little check—a simple girlish costume which I remembered she had worn in the morning of the day Col. Branscombe died. Could I forget the least detail connected with her?

A sudden inspiration flashed through my mind. Miss Branscombe had sought this method of communicating with me privately, away from her family circle, and the reserve she maintained was necessary for the moment in the presence of our fellow-passengers, some of whom might be known to her by sight at least. When the proper moment arrived she would explain herself. I

"Young lady not coming back, sir?" said one of them, a portly squire, with a humorous twinkle in the corner of his eye. "She's left her cloak and her book"—pointing to the latter where it lay on the floor. "Not coming back—eh!"

"I suppose not," I answered as indifferently as I could, stooping to pick up the dropped volume. On the fly-leaf was written in pencil the name "Nona Branscombe."

## CHAPTER VII.

"Five minutes past four," I said to myself as I sprang out on to the platform at Euston Station. "I shall just have time to report myself at the office before Rowton leaves, get a feed somewhere, and catch the 6:30 back to Forest Lea. Here, hansom—as fast as you can drive to Chancery Lane!"

My plans had been rapidly formed in the time which elapsed between Miss Branscombe's disappearance at Molton Junction and my arrival at Euston. If Miss Branscombe intended to return to Forest Lea that night, reference to Bradshaw had shown me that it must be by the 6:50 train from town—there was no other stopping at Westford; and if she did not return from that mysterious errand—which I could no longer flatter myself was in any way connected with me—then my presence at Forest Lea might be urgently needed. Such testimony as I could give as to Miss Branscombe's movements might be of the utmost consequence if she was to be saved from some unknown villainy of Charlie Branscombe's. I shuddered at the thought of her possible danger in his hands, and urged my cabby to swifter speed over the rattling London streets. James Rowton received me with open arms.

"Awfully glad you've come back, old man; the chief is still laid up, and I find myself up to my ears in work."

Gladstone. "I have never seen at Venice, and"—examining it more closely—"this is not my bag; the key doesn't fit."

"Whew—w!" whistled my partner. "A case of 'exchange no robbery.' You've bagged somebody else's, and he's bagged yours"—laughing at his own pun. "Awfully disgusted he'll be when he sees the documents."

"It's an impossibility," I ejaculated. "The bag was put into the carriage and taken out again by my own hands, and it never left my sight throughout the journey. It was on the opposite seat. I can swear there's been no mistake. It's a robbery! Send for the police."

"The words died on my lips. A terrible suspicion darted into my mind. Nona Branscombe had carried a black bag—and I had deposited it beside my own on the vacant seat. In her precipitate flight she had taken the bag, leaving cloak and book behind her, and, as I remembered now, effectually covering up the Gladstone she had left. In her agitation she had evidently exchanged the bags by mistake.

"Robbery? Nonsense—it's a case of exchange!" persisted James Rowton. "Can't you remember who had the other? Did he come all the way?"

"Yes," I said confusedly, putting my hand to my head. "I remember; she got out at Molton." "She!" echoed my partner. "Was it a woman? And with a Gladstone?" "Yes," I answered, heartily vexed with myself for the involuntary admission. "It was a woman. I'll go back to Euston and wire to Molton at once. The mistake may have been discovered and my bag left there; and I will follow the message by the first train."

"Off again?" exclaimed Rowton ruefully. "There's a week's lag here"—pointing to a pile of documents which filled the table.

"Can't help it!" I retorted. "The funeral takes place the day after tomorrow. I must be present to read the will, take executor's instructions, and so on; and there is other business which must be attended to."

"Can't I run down?" proposed Rowton. "Is the helress there? I should like to see her."

"I must find the will," I replied. "There's no time to be lost. The Colonel gave me special instructions; I am bound to be present—other things must wait."

"You're off then?" said Rowton, reluctantly. "Well, ta-ta, old fellow! Wire when you've got the bag. It's an awful joke, though—such a sell for the lady."

"Don't let the chief hear of it," I stopped to request as I left the office, the fatal bag in my hand—"it would upset him."

"All right," nodded the chief's nephew. "It was an awfully flat thing to do, you know, Fort—to let a woman run off with the old Colonel's will. And a ready-going fellow was you, too! Now, if it had been I—"

I stayed to hear no more. My hansom was waiting, and my Jarvis received his instructions to hurry back to Euston with the equanimity of his order. What did it matter if all the world had gone mad so long as his fare was a good one?

My message was soon dispatched, and whilst I waited for the answer I made my way to the refreshment room. But, notwithstanding my long fast, I was too fevered and excited to eat, and could only swallow a glass of wine and break a biscuit. Then I hovered impatiently about the door of the telegraph office, musing on the complication which this unlucky accident had brought into the whole affair.

## CARD-PLAYING STORIES.

They Must Have Been "Perfect Ladies" in Those Days.

One of the most notorious female gamblers of the eighteenth century was Miss Pelham, the daughter of the prime minister, says Temple Bar. She not only ruined herself at cards, but would have beggared her sister Mary as well had not their friends intervened and insisted on the sisters separating. Horace Walpole gives a pitiful account of "poor Miss Pelham sitting up all night at the club without a woman, losing hundreds a night and her temper and beating her head."

Another writer says that the unhappy woman often played with the tears streaming down her cheeks. Lady Mary Compton, an old maiden lady, a contemporary of Miss Pelham and, like her, addicted to gambling, had the same propensity to tears. When she lost, we are told, she wept bitterly—"not for the loss itself," she was careful to explain, "but for the unkindness of the cards." Both ladies, when luck went against them, lost their tempers, as did many others, and among them Mrs. Clive. The actress, after her retirement from the stage, lived at Twickenham, in a cottage lent her by Horace Walpole. The place had then a reputation for quiet card parties. In Montpellier row lived four aged dames, known in the neighborhood as Manille, Spadille, Basto and Pimto; terms drawn for the game of quadrille. They were accustomed to assemble every night at each other's houses to play cards. On the first of the month each in turn gave a grand party. A relative of one of the ladies has left an account of one of these functions at which he was present. Mrs. Clive was one of the guests and happened to have for her opponent an old lady with very white hair, who in the course of the game displayed two black aces. There upon Mrs. Clive flew in a rage and screamed: "Two black aces! Here! take your money, though I wish instead I could give you two black eyes you old white cat!"

## WIDOW COXE'S WIG.

"Yes," said Ella Witherley, "I really think I'm going to have a step-grand-mama at last!"

She spoke in a whisper, so that the hale old squire, reading the newspaper on the front porch, should not hear her, neither should her voice reach the ears of the Widow Cox, who was making lemon pies in the kitchen.

Ella stood out among the currant bushes, while Josie Hall, her boarding school mate and dearest friend, leaned over the garden wall.

"Dear, dear, how dreadful!" said Josie, in sympathetic accents.

"Not so bad, after all," retorted Ella, stooping to gather a four-leaf clover. "Mrs. Cox is a nice sort of woman, if grandpa fancies here—and in case they should get married, you see I am free to go to New York and take those drawing and painting lessons that I have sighed for so long."

"But she is such a horrible old scoundrel!"

"That's a fashionable failing." "And she goes patting around in those plush slippers like a supernatural pussy cat—and she talks about the dear squire."

"Well, why shouldn't she?" "Oh, Josie," with a careless toss of the head, "if you're satisfied no one else should object."

The squire had finished the newspaper when Ella returned to the house.

"Where have you been, my darling?" he demanded, blandly.

"Down in the garden, grandpapa, after currants."

"And where is Mrs. Cox?" "In the kitchen."

"What is she doing?" "Making lemon pies, grandpapa, I believe, and getting ready to preserve gooseberries."

"Ah-h-h-h!" said the squire, comfortably nodding his head. "Nice woman, Mrs. Cox. I chanced to mention yesterday that I was fond of gooseberry jam in the winter, and here she is trying to anticipate my wishes already. A very nice woman."

"Yes, grandpapa," said Ella, demurely.

"By the way," cried the squire, suddenly starting up as a new thought struck him, "there are more of those choice seedling peaches gone again since last night. Did you see it?"

"I noticed that the branches were broken down a little, grandpapa."

"Burglars! Sneak thieves!" cried the squire, the bald crown of his head becoming a rosy pink in his excitement.

"To dare to steal my fruit before it is ripe! But I'll be even with 'em yet! I'll chain Don, the bloodhound, to the foot of the tree! I'll have a man-trap with teeth as sharp as a steam saw—I'll—dear me, is that the dinner bell? But Mrs. Cox is so surprisingly prompt."

"Dear me, dear me," said the squire, "this is a very nice wig."

And it was. For the squire lost his winter store of gooseberry jam, Ella lost the housekeeper, and the widow lost her wig. It was awkward. And yet, after all, it was nobody's fault.—New York News.

## Write the "Heavenly Twins."

About a mile from Tunbridge Wells, England, in a little gray house, lives Sarah Grand, who wrote "The Heavenly Twins." She is nearing middle age, is a medium-sized woman, with dark hair, clear-cut features, and is an easy conversationalist. In the room where her writing is done there are many quaint things, among them a stork mounted so he appears to be watching her at work. That she may not forget the suffering in the world, she keeps close to her desk an engraving of Dudley Hardy's picture of the destitute poor of London. Her desk is a table of mahogany, filled with drawers, and the top is littered with blotters, books, ink, pens and papers. The chair at the desk is high-backed, with curved legs, and a bookcase stands close at hand. There is a bay window in the writing room which has been made into a cosy corner, with couch, pillows and curtains. Hand-some rugs and paintings are to the room. Sarah Grand is very fond of children, especially Beth, the baby daughter of her stepson, and the child frequently plays about while her grandmother is writing, seemingly not at all disturbed by its childish prattle.

## Drought Kills the Insect-Eating Toad.

Aside from the parching up of his garden truck, which worries the amateur farmer in the suburbs as keenly as it does the man who farms for a living, the disappearance of the friendly, insect-devouring toad is a disappointment. The toad is a victim, too, of the drought, for moisture is necessary to his existence. Many of them, now unable to find the requisite shelter and dampness, have died outright; others have migrated from the gardens and other exposed places to the woods, seeking some congenial spot not yet parched by the sun. As it is estimated that a single toad will destroy nearly 10,000 insects and worms in one summer, his retreat will leave a victorious army of vegetation destroyers in full possession of the already suffering gardens.

## His Fobbe.

He wasn't superstitious, Ne'er read between the lines; But as a first-class letterer, He had great faith in signs.

Governor Stone of Pennsylvania has a magnificent historical library containing 2,000 volumes devoted to Pennsylvania alone.

## PROMINENT WOMEN'S WORK.

Mrs. Greer Cleveland's and Mrs. George Gould's Good Example.

Mrs. Willie K. Vanderbilt, Jr., has started Newport by going to market each morning and making a personal inspection of fruits, meats and fish for her table, says the Criterion. She has also introduced the innovation of paying cash for her purchases, something unheard of among the Newport ostentagers, whose habit of having things charged and bills sent monthly is a boon to the dealers at the Rhode Island colony, as elsewhere. Every housekeeper knows that while the latter plan saves time and trouble, it puts many dollars into the pockets of the market men.

Mrs. Willie K. Jr., has shown her good sense and good training in this, as in many other respects since her marriage. The idea that a careful espionage of servants and household affairs is beneath the dignity of a woman of position and fashion is an entirely erroneous one, bred among the most undesirable social circles. Many women of fashion make a boast that they have rid themselves of their household cares, servants, etc., by employing a housekeeper for the purpose, as they employ nurses and governesses for the care of their children, but women who preside over the happiest homes are those who give their attention to the small details of the household menage and the nursery. Two notable examples are Mrs. Greer Cleveland and Mrs. George Gould, both of whom have presided over their homes and their children, not as figure-heads, but actually guiding and overlooking the care of their tables and the workings of the domestic programme from day to day. These women's lives seem to be filled with the gentler duties and joys of existence, to the exclusion of every possibility for remark and gossip. And there are numerous circles less important socially, who take pleasure in the idea that the role of chateleine is still a crown of graceful dignity more desirable than gems of great price.

## AWESOME TREES.

How the Giants of the Yosemite Impressed a Traveler.

We made a side trip to the big trees of the Mariposa group, which are about one hour's ride from the hotel, says a correspondent of the Pittsburg Dispatch. If the smallest of these trees could be planted anywhere in Pennsylvania the railroads would run excursion trains to it and make money. The trees in this grove are so large that it takes a good while to fully appreciate the facts about the size of the biggest of them. The "Grizzly Giant" is 34 feet through at the base and over 100 feet high. This tree would overtop the spires on the Pittsburg Cathedral by 100 feet clear to the first limb, which is 20 feet in circumference. Many other trees here are very nearly as large as this one, and there are 400 in the grove. Through several tunnels have been cut and a four-horse stage can go through these tunnels on the run and never graze a hub. You get an approach to an adequate idea of their size by walking off 100 yards or so while the stage is standing at the foot of a tree and glancing from top to bottom, keeping the stage in mind as a means of comparison. The stage and the horses look like the little tin outfit that Santa Claus brought you when you were a good little boy. These trees are no longer to be called the largest in the world, however. A species of eucalyptus has been found in Australia as large or larger. Emerson warns us against the use of the superlative but when you are in this region of the globe you can't get along without a liberal use of it. He himself says of Yosemite: "It is the only spot I have ever found that came up to the brag." And as I stood in the big tree grove I remembered that some one called Emerson himself "the Sequoia of the human race."

NO CRIME  
To Tell of What Occurs in a Grand Jury Room.

New York Journal: The written decision of Justice Fursman, based on his recent order directing the case of Roland B. Mollieux to be resubmitted to the grand jury, was filed yesterday. In this decision Justice Fursman formally expresses his opinion of the duties and proper conduct of grand jurors, and he also touches on such proceedings before the grand jury which in his opinion should be kept secret. Regarding the presumption that all the proceedings of a grand jury are secret, Justice Fursman says in his decision: "It is quite a mistake to suppose that everything that occurs in a grand jury room is secret. Some things must be kept secret, to-wit: The finding of an indictment where the party indicted is not in custody. Also, how any grand juror votes upon the finding of an indictment—that is not to be disclosed. But whatever occurs during the examination of a witness, whether the district attorney and the foreman of the grand jury or any grand juror and a witness, cannot in the nature of things be kept secret. Any witness may disclose to the outside world everything that took place, and there is no inhibition in any law whatever to prevent it, nor is it an offense for him to disclose it."

## Just Like Them.

"He says his wife can't cook a little bit." "That's unfortunate." "Yes, but that isn't the worst of it. She insists on cooking a lot."—Philadelphia Bulletin.



"IT WAS NONA HERSELF."

knew what fruitless attempts she had already made to enlist me on her side.

This idea did not perhaps remove the primary and greatest difficulty of the situation, but I hailed it eagerly. It gave Miss Branscombe the loophole which my love demanded. I was content to wait my lady's pleasure—nay, I was more than content—I forgot all the doubts and fears which had harassed me a moment ago in the rapturous delight of the thought that she trusted me, she turned to me for help in her difficulties. A man in love will forgive any indiscretion of which he is himself the object and by which he profits.

The train sped on, the afternoon shadows lengthened. The express stopped at few stations on its rapid journey, and, as one after the other of these halting places was passed without a sign from Miss Branscombe, I began to conclude that her destination was the same as my own—or, was she only sitting out the fellow-passengers, not one of whom had left us?

The question was presently answered in a startling and unexpected manner. Molton, a large busy junction, was reached. We were on the point of leaving it again after a three minutes' halt, when Miss Branscombe, with a hurried glance at the platform, started to her feet, and before I could assist or prevent her, she had snatched her bag from the opposite seat, beckoned to a passing porter, and left the carriage as she had entered it—swiftly and suddenly.

I sprang after her. "Just starting sir—time's up!" called the porter.

I gave little heed to the warning; but a stream of passengers just arrived by the branch line interposed between me and Miss Branscombe, the whistle of the express sounded, and the remembrance of Col. Branscombe's will, left behind me in the carriage, recalled me to my duty. I dashed back just in time, mad with disappointment and baffled curiosity, and regained my seat in a condition which roused my somnolent fellow-travelers.

The junior was not fond of work. "There's that case of Rose versus Emery—you know all about it, I suppose, and old Mrs. Entwistle's estate, and Sir Everard Brimbone's settlements—they are all on me like a pack of wolves. Morton, from Morton and White's, has been in three times today. Sir Everard wants the thing pushed on—marriage comes off at the end of the month. Wish people wouldn't get married! Fagged to death—ugh!"—rising and stretching himself. "Well, what's your news? Old man dead?"

"Yes," I said laconically, for his tone jarred upon me. "Colonel Branscombe's will is here"—pointing to my Gladstone bag. "We'd better take a copy, I suppose."

"Yes, I suppose so. What has the old fellow done—left everything to that rip of a nephew?"

"No," I answered unwillingly. Nona's name had become a sacred word to me, and I hesitated to pronounce it in such a presence.

"No? Then what has he done with the estate? I thought he had no other relations."

"He had a niece," I replied, fumbling for the key of my bag. "Oh, here it is!"—taking the key from my pocket. "Jennings must stay and make the copy, and send it down."

"A niece?" interrupted Rowton. "Who is she? Never heard of her. What's she like? Young or old? Does she come in for the land and all? Why don't you speak out, man?"

"I—I will in a moment," I rejoined. "What on earth is the matter with this key?"—holding it up to the light.

"Something in the barrel—dust, I dare say," suggested Rowton carelessly. "But about the niece—I'm interested, Fort. Is she young and beautiful, and an heiress?"

"It's the lock," I exclaimed; "the key's right enough, and yet the bag has scarcely been out of my sight. What the—!" I stared at my partner, whilst I felt every vestige of color leaving my cheeks. "This bag isn't mine; it's—it's—look at this"—pointing to a half-effaced label of a foreign hotel adhering to the bottom of the



IT WAS A WIG.