

A FATAL WEDDING.

By Lottie Brabant.



CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

"Ten years!" he repeated. "Is it ten years since our short correspondence, Mr. Robson? Your voice is a young man's voice," he added, with a slight smile. "You could have been little more than a lad then."

"All the mere reason—" Mark Robson began, then broke off sharply and was silent, biting his lip under his heavy mustache.

"Mr. Francis turned his calm, sightless eyes upon him.

"I know what you would say," he said—"that, in consideration of your youth, of which, you must remember, we were ignorant at the time, the letter which you wrote to me should have received a different answer. You are right. In any case the answer should have been different. I thought so at the time, and it was with sincere regret that I transmitted to you my client's decision."

"The actor's lip curled slightly, but he said nothing.

"Have you Mr. Robson's letter there, James?" asked his father, as the young man resumed his seat at the table.

A shadow appeared on the old lawyer's kindly face.

"He has no sons," he answered, gravely. "He had two, and he lost them both. One, the eldest, was killed some years ago in a railway accident, killed, too, at a time and in circumstances which made his death a terribly sad one; the other, the son of his second wife, died three months ago of typhoid fever. Lord Eldale is alone now, and— Did you speak, Mr. Robson?"

"No," Mark replied shortly, in a tone so changed and husky that James Francis looked at him in some surprise; but his face was hidden by his hand.

With somewhat unsteady fingers Mark drew the certificate from among the papers in his pocketbook. Just beside it was a letter, directed in a delicate feminine handwriting, at sight of which his lip quivered.

"Will you leave me your address, Mr. Robson, and accept my thanks for this visit," the old lawyer said urbanely. "Lord Eldale's debt of gratitude to you shall not be forgotten."

"Lord Eldale owes me no gratitude," Mark responded huskily. "What I did for the child was done for her sake, not for his."

CHAPTER IV.

A chill twilight was gathering without. A train had just come into the station, and some city men who lived in the smart stuccoed villas which had sprung up during the last few months were hurrying home. A tall, slender man came down the road, and, stopping at a wicket gate opening into a front garden, pushed it open and entered, walking slowly up the flagged path.

"That Mr. Bryant who called here the other day was an actor, was he not?" asked a young girl within the house, but not looking away from the cheery fire which was reflected in her dark eyes.

"Yes, I did not know that you saw him," Mrs. Clavering answered, with a little annoyed start.

"I saw him through the window for a moment, and I heard him say, 'That Stella Ord's daughter?' in a tone of surprised incredulity, as if he could not believe it. I am not at all like my mother, I suppose?"

after, and wear beautiful gowns, and win applause."

"A noble ambition!" he observed scornfully. "My mother was an actress."

"Your mother had other reasons than yours."

"She worked for her bread; why should not I work for mine?"

"Have you ever been made to feel your dependence, Barbara?"

"Ah, no—no! she cried, earnestly: "You are only too good, too generous. But, Mark, you work so hard, you have so little rest, while I live idle here! Why may I not work with you?"

"And so you want to be admitted, and run after, and wear smart gowns, and be a queen of fashion?" he said lightly. "Well, such things are never unattainable with such a face as yours, Barbara mine; and, even if you were not pretty, all these are within your reach now."

"Not at all," she responded. "They are waiting your acceptance even now."

"Even now? Mark, have you come into a fortune?"

"No, but you have, Barbara."

The warm, creamy pallor of her face changed to whiteness, the vivid scarlet faded slightly from her lips, as Mark told his story.

"He caught her on his arm, as she swayed backward, and supported her for a minute, during which the dandy's pallor lessened slightly and the languid lids were slowly raised from the bewildered eyes. She had not fainted, although for a moment it seemed as if unconsciousness were leaving her as her head sank forward upon her bosom."

"Barbara!" he repeated gently—so gently that it was no wonder that she never guessed how his heart sank within him, and how faint became the hope which he had cherished as he looked down at her.

"Yes," she replied in a feeble tone.

"You are better? I have been too abrupt. Sit down, dear; you do not seem able to stand. Barbara, it is only good news which I have brought you."

CHAPTER V.

A group of people were standing on the platform at the station of Stornton, a large town in the Midlands, looking after the down train, from which they had just alighted, as it steamed slowly away.

There had been some delay in removing their luggage from the van, and the task had only just been completed when the train glided out of the station, while a middle-aged, gravel-looking individual examined the trunk and imperious when the porters were passing upon tracks.



CHOOSING A HUSBAND.

A GIRL thinking seriously of her future does not lay any great stress on good temper. A noble form, a pair of fine eyes, a noble profile—any of these might easily outweigh good temper. Yet Mr. Stuller assures us that "After the first year married people rarely think of each other's features, whether they be classically beautiful or otherwise; but they never fail to be cognizant of each other's temper." As to a husband's fortune, it is not so important as the qualities which lead to fortune—ambition, determination, industry, thrift; and position such a man may attain for himself. Education a man should be at least his wife's equal. Undoubtedly there is some subtle affinity between opposites. Yet there must be likeness as well as unlikeness. The latter will lead to pugnacity which is pleasant, but the former will give peace which is essential. At first love itself will be all-sufficient, but a little later the individual characteristics reassert themselves, and then in the absence of comprehension and sympathy in one's partner, and theories a barrier springs up, slight, unlooked for, but still impassable, and in one's sense at least man and wife are not "one," but distinctly "two."—Woman's Home Companion.

With Ashmore.

Mrs. Isabel Mallon, best known by her pen names of "Rab" and "Ruth Ashmore," who died recently at her home in New York, was born in Baltimore and came of the old Stoen family of Hartford County, Maryland. Her paternal ancestors dwell for five generations in Baltimore, where she lived until her marriage to William Mallon in New York, when she was but 15 years of age. After her husband's



MRS. ISABEL A. MALLON.

death, Mrs. Mallon was employed by a paper publishing house in New York to write fashion articles, and for over three years kept at this line of work, when she left it to begin writing her "Rab" letters. The idea of these letters was her own, and no one has successfully imitated her. Besides her "Rab" letters she wrote, under the name of Ruth Ashmore, a moral etiquette guide for a ladies' magazine.

The impressions of Motherhood. Let us be content with motherhood as an all-absorbing and all-sufficing vocation. Exceptional women there doubtless are, and all eyes will be, whose devotion is not that of their sex; and yet I am sorry for them, and I think it one of the most beautiful compensations of life that the entire self-sacrificing mother is rewarded by such unexampled freedom and fitness of self-expression. There are few men who have a theoretical, congenial, occupation, or one into which they can pour without reserve their highest and best selves.

The wife supreme in the house has a degree of personal liberty unknown to the husband, held in the merciless grip of competition and commercial laws. Her feeling for art should enable her daily life; her intelligent patriotism to inspire her sons to action. Her ideals, her enthusiasms, her prayers, may enrich the soil in which she labors, and flower into abundant capabilities in her children.—Woman's Home Companion.

Set a Good Example.

Some one has said that our children desire to begin where we leave off. Consequently, if they can procure the elegance of life in no other way, they will secure them on the credit system. For it is a fact that the poor pay far higher for the accommodations they receive than do the rich for theirs. The usual outcome of this kind of house-keeping is that the debtor falls behind in his payments, is annoyed by duns, borrows a trifle from a friend to ward off the evil day and at last abandons hope, losing furniture and all that has been paid as interest and principal.

Care of the Hair.

Muddy weather is always a sore trial to a woman wearing a nice skirt, but she can do something to preserve it from permanent ruin. In the first place, when returned from a muddy street, she or her maid should hang the skirt before a fire, but not too close, so that the mud may dry quickly. When dry, the mud spots should be loosened by rubbing with the edge of a penny, and the dust should then be gently brushed off with a brush of moderate

WOMAN AND HER WAYS.

firmness. Too rough a brush must not be used, especially upon smooth-faced cloths, for it is liable to roughen the surface. If after this brushing the mud marks are still visible, sponge the spots with alcohol or methylated spirits, and the material will be left clean and unmarked. In taking off a damp skirt be careful to hang it out as flat as possible over a chair, as if thrown down carelessly in that condition it will contract inelegant creases.

Beauty in Business.

A retail merchant of Chicago, talking to an *Inter Ocean* reporter recently, told in a bright and witty way why, in his opinion, beauty is not only not desirable in women who have to work for a living, but is a positive drawback in many cases to their securing and retaining employment, and although it is hardly probable that the average woman would not prefer beauty to anything else, the merchant makes out a strong case. Here is what he says:

"It's no joke, and there's no sentiment about it. It's just a cold-drawn matter of business. I don't care how competent a strikingly handsome woman may be, or how discreet and quiet and industrious she is—all the same she's bound to demoralize the force. She makes the women jealous and the men absent-minded, and it tells on their work."

"Years ago a big Chicago confectionery shop became famous all over the country for its beautiful salesladies. The result of the experiment is thus described:

"The place lost all of its women customers, and the trade of the men proved worthless. A young chap who would drop in, buy a stick of gum for a cent, and talk for three hours at a stretch. At last the proprietor discharged the whole force and engaged a lot of the homeliest women in Illinois. And so it goes. Pretty women—very pretty women—are at a great disadvantage in business. It's next to impossible for one to get a job. The homeliest girls have the call."

A Wise Woman.

There is one wise little woman who declares she always keeps her company manum for her husband, together with her prettiest gowns. "If I must be cross and horrid and have to do my hair up in kids to make it curl, I intend to reserve those reservations for persons whom I do not care so much about pleasing. Of course in time he will find out; I have not an angelic disposition and also that my fluffy hair was not bestowed upon me by nature, but I do not intend to enlighten him until I am obliged to."

Not Always Women's Fault.

Dr. Shady's assertion that the course of American life is straining after luxury for women's sake, and that their lives are shortened thereby, does not meet with the approval of the bright club women of the city, who bring an abundance of evidence to the contrary. The ignorance in which most men keep their wives regarding the state of the family finances and the unequal division of the man's income, where no allowance is made to the wives after paying the family bills has found terse expression from the lips of a practical woman who says: "You can't expect women to take interest in the matter of saving and accumulating unless they have the run of the pocketbook too."

Rides and Races Horses.

One of the riders who attracted most attention at the New York horse show was Miss Elsie Jones, of Brookville, Canada, who is noted as being the only lady in Canada who ever personally supervised the training of a horse for racing. Miss Jones is a magnificent horse-woman, a member of the Montreal Hunt Club, and knows more of a horse's points than most men.

About Women.

Clara Barton, President of the Red Cross, is writing a book giving a full history of that society and its work in the recent war, answering charges made against it and its officers.

Miss Frances E. Mason is President of the National Bank in Limerick, Me. It was founded by her father, J. M. Mason, and its interests have been a little promoted under her leadership.

Mrs. Herbert Dumaresq and Mrs. Arthur W. Foster, of Boston, have presented the Free Hospital for Women with a new ward, as a memorial to their father, the late H. D. Jordan.



MISS JONES.