

Shell Wilden.

A ROMANCE

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

Shell flushes crimson; the one wish of her girlhood has been to possess a volume of Tennyson all her own. Yet, now that she stands with the treasure in her hand, a strange perversity makes her feel more than half inclined to thrust it back upon the donor.

"It is very kind of you, Bob and Meg," she says, in a tone of angry impatience; "but I cannot think of accepting your present. Take it home and keep it until you are grown up—then you will be able to understand it!"

"Don't you like it, then?" queries Bob, looking anxious and distressed. "Pa thought you would rather have a book; but I'll tell him to send you a watch instead."

This threatened alternative sounds so very alarming that Shell hastens to explain to the children her detestation of watches in general and her unbounded admiration of poets.

"What are you making such a chatter and fuss about, Shell?" interposes Ruby, crossing to her sister's side and taking up the volume in dispute. "Oh, only a copy of Tennyson!" with a contemptuous curl of her lip at the plain though handsome binding. "I wonder what induced Robert Champley to send you that? You have not been devoting yourself to his children."

"No, I should hope not," answers Shell, with emphasis. "Neither do I want any present—I shall return it."

"Return it? What conceited nonsense!" scoffs Ruby. "I suppose he thought some slight acknowledgment was due to you for playing with the children occasionally. If you want to make yourself absurd and conspicuous, of course you will return it."

On the next morning the Champley household take their departure for the moor. Ruby chances to be near the deserted lodge of the Wilderness when the wagonette—containing the two brothers, the children and the nurse—drives by.

She makes a dainty picture, standing in the shade of the chestnut tree in her pale-blue morning dress, and waving her handkerchief in token of adieu. The gentlemen raise their hats and smile, the children shout, the nurse gives a defiant snort, and the next moment they are out of sight.

"Two months of freedom!" thinks Robert Champley to himself. "On my return home I must make other arrangements."

CHAPTER IX.

"Mamma, there is a most enticing cottage to be let at Oakford," cries Ruby, glancing up excitedly from the paper in her hand. "Listen! Oakford. To be let, furnished, charming cottage residence—five rooms, large garden, every convenience, rent moderate, air bracing, close to moor."

"Yes, my dear," responds Mrs. Wilden in mild surprise. "Well, what about it? Do you know of any one wanting a cottage?"

"I thought it might suit us," replies Ruby, a little crestfallen.

"It certainly might if we wanted to go there," asserts Mrs. Wilden with a good-natured laugh; "but, as you know, Ruby, I have a great dislike to leaving home."

"But, mamma, I think you require change of air," persists Ruby with unwonted affection. "You have been suffering so frightfully from neuralgia all spring. I am sure your nerves want bracing. Why not take this cottage for a month or so? Change is good for everybody."

Mrs. Wilden shakes her head, but not after a very determined fashion. "What do you say, Vi?" she asks, turning to her niece.

"Well, I really don't think I care two straws either way," answers Mrs. Flower lazily. "If somebody will pack my things I am willing to go, but I couldn't undertake to pack them myself."

"Now that just shows how much you need change," cries Ruby eagerly. "Your whole system wants stirring up—before we had been a week on the moor you would be as brisk as a bee."

"Should I?" says Violet, with a dubious laugh. "I very much doubt it; but I am willing to try the experiment."

Truth to tell, if Violet Flower consulted her own feelings, she would rather remain in her present comfortable quarters; but Ruby having confided to her a scheme for visiting the moor if possible, she has promised not to oppose the plan.

There is a fair amount of resistance on Mrs. Wilden's part, but her energetic daughter overrules each and every obstacle as it is presented to her. Her eloquence is so great in advocating a change that one would wonder, to hear her talk, how they have managed to exist so many summers through at the Wilderness without acquiring all the maladies to which flesh is heir.

Shell is not present when the discussion takes place, but her indignation when the plan is unfolded to her is unbounded.

"You don't mean to say, Ruby, that you are actually thinking of following the Champleys to the moor?" she says,

in a voice of such infinite scorn that Ruby flushes uneasily.

"What nonsense you talk, Shell!" she returns angrily. "You seem to have the Champleys on the brain. We are going to the moor because mamma is in need of bracing air. Is there anything so very extraordinary in that?"

"There is something extraordinary in your having selected the same village," answers Shell decidedly. "If mamma wants bracing air why not take her to the North of Devon?"

"Because rooms there would be frightfully expensive; whereas the cottage on the moor is a mere trifle," responds Ruby loftily.

This argument is unanswerable, for no one knows better than Shell that their income is not equal to any great additional strain. Feeling that any resistance she can offer will be futile, Shell shrugs her shoulders and leaves the room. Nothing remains to her now but to strike out a separate line of action for herself. She is fully determined about one thing—wild horses shall not drag her to Oakford.

When everything is fully arranged and packing is at its height, Shell starts the household.

"It will be very awkward having only three bed-rooms," Vi remarks in a grumbling tone, for the more she contemplates six weeks spent away from civilization the less she likes the prospect.

"Of course the servants must have one; and then we must all cram into the two others."

"Not at all, dear," Ruby hastens to explain. "Mamma and Shell can have the big room, and you and I a little one each; as for Mary, she can do quite well with a chair-bedstead in the kitchen."

"How delightful for Mary!" laughs Shell. "It is to be hoped she has a strong liking for cockroaches and crickets."

"Now, please, Shell, don't go setting Mary against the arrangement," says Ruby imploringly. "Mamma, do ask her not."

"Don't be alarmed," answers Shell, with a curious little laugh. "I have not the slightest intention of interfering with any of the arrangements at the cottage. They don't concern me in the least, since I shan't be there."

"Not be there—what do you mean? Of course you will be there!" declares Ruby, looking very much astonished.

"Not unless mamma insists upon it; and I am sure she won't," laughs Shell. "As you know, I have been set against the idea from the commencement, so I mean to remain here—monarch of all I survey—and have a right down jolly time of it all to myself."

"What rubbish!" cries Ruby impatiently. "Susan is going to be put on board-wages; and she is to give the house a thorough cleaning during our absence."

"Well, I can be put on board-wages too; and I certainly won't prevent Susan from cleaning the house. I shall be out all day long," responds Shell.

"Mamma, please make her go. It would seem so odd her not going," urges Ruby.

But Mrs. Wilden is too easy-going to oppose actively any of her children. Truth to tell, she rather envies Shell her coming solitude, and even expresses it as her opinion that it is a pity that dreadful cottage was ever taken. This rebellion on her indulgent mother's part is quickly talked down by Ruby, whose constant fear from the beginning has been that her scheme will ultimately fall through. She knows that her mother would rather stay at home; she is fully aware that Violet is groaning in spirit over what she is pleased to term her "coming exile"; so she thinks it wiser on the whole to leave Shell to her own devices, lest enlarging on the theme should stir up revolt in other and more important quarters.

Then there comes a triumphant morning when, backed up by a vast amount of unnecessary luggage, Ruby carries off her three victims—for Mary can truthfully be reckoned in that category—to enjoy the bracing air and scant accommodation of Oakmoor.

Shell, as she stands on the doorstep and waves them a smiling adieu, looks the impersonation of mischievous contentment.

"Be sure to change the library books the moment you get them, and don't delay a single post in sending them off," entreats Violet earnestly.

"And any groceries we can't get there you must send by Parcels Post," adds Ruby.

"How the Oakmoor postman will bless you!" laughs Shell as she nods assent; and then, springing on to the step of the cab, she imprisons a dozen hasty kisses on her mother's troubled cheek.

Why does she heave a sigh, notwithstanding the brightness of the morning, as she turns to re-enter the house?

CHAPTER X.

A week has passed. Shell has grown tired of her self-imposed solitude; the big, bare, echoing rooms have become hateful to her. Even the grounds seem changed and unfamiliar. The certainty that there is no chance of interruption to her lonely musings, at

first so delightful, now seems to fill her usually cheerful spirit with a sense of depression. Until robbed of all companionship she never guessed what a sociable creature she was. Happy would she be if even the most inane and common-place caller would come to break the monotony of her endless days! But it is understood in the neighborhood that the family at the Wilderness are away; so from morn till night Shell wanders aimlessly about, with only the gray cat to bear her company.

It is evening. Shell is even more desolate than her wont. Susan has asked permission to go into Mudford to make a few purchases, and already she has been absent over three hours. It is now seven o'clock, and the empty house seems to Shell's excited imagination like a haunted place. She fancies she hears hurrying through the passages. A door slams, and her heart stands still with fear. Shell however is not one to give way to morbid feelings, and, rousing herself from her book, she starts on a tour of inspection through the house, shutting all windows and securely barring all doors on her way; then, with a renewed sense of security, she returns to the drawing-room and determines to while away the time with music.

Shell is one of those sensitive folk who never play so well as when alone—she cannot pour her whole heart into her music when she has listeners. Now, with the house to herself, she soon becomes lost to her surroundings, and the room echoes to such heart-stirring strains as it rarely falls to one's lot to hear.

Suddenly however her music comes to an end, and her heart throbs with terror, for through the empty hall echoes the sonorous thunder of the big iron knocker.

Shell's first impulse is to take no notice—to hide herself or to make her escape by some back window; then her natural good sense returns, and she laughs in a nervous manner at her fears and with fast-beating heart advances into the hall.

"Is that you, Susan?" she asks, but without unfastening the heavy chain. There comes no answer save a vigorous ring at the bell.

"Who is there?" demands Shell, this time in a firmer tone and one more likely to penetrate the thick oak panels.

"A messenger from Mrs. Wilden," answers a voice which is somehow familiar to Shell's ears.

With trembling hands she shoots back the heavy bolts, and, taking down the chain, opens the door. There she stands—pale, big-eyed, and scared-looking, before—Robert Champley.

"Oh, what a fright you gave me!" is her first involuntary exclamation.

"A fright! How so? What have I done?" queries her visitor, looking much surprised.

"Oh, nothing!" answers Shell, whilst the ghost of a smile flickers round her still colorless lips. "It was my own foolishness; but I was not expecting any one excepting Susan, and your knock frightened me—I suppose I must be getting nervous—with a self-deprecating little laugh.

"Nervous? I should think so!" cries Robert wonderingly. He has taken her hand in greeting, and feels it cold and trembling in his warm grasp. "But surely you are not alone in the house?"

"Only for a short time; I am expecting Susan back every minute," explains Shell, who feels heartily ashamed of her late weakness.

Her visitor looks grave. "You ought not to be left alone in a house like this," he says very decidedly. "Why, you are trembling still!"

His words remind Shell that he still has possession of her hand—with a little impatient movement she withdraws it.

(To be Continued.)

INDIANS AS RUNNERS.

Instances of Their Remarkable Powers of Endurance.

General Cook is quoted by Edward S. Ellis as having seen an Apache lope for 1,500 feet up the side of a mountain without showing the first signs of fatigue, there being no perceptible sign of increase of respiration. Captain H. L. Scott, of the Seventh Cavalry, has related some astonishing feats performed by the Chiracahua Apaches forming Troop L of his regiment. He tells how nine of these Indians, after a hard day's work, by way of recreation pursued a coyote for two hours, captured the nimble brute and brought it into camp; how, on another occasion, the scouts gave chase to a deer, ran it down some nine miles from camp and latched it in alive. Hence I see no good reason for doubting the word of an old-timer I met in the Rocky mountains, who told me that, in the days before the Atlantic and Pacific railroad was built, the Pima Indians of Arizona would recover settlers' stray horses, along the overland trail, by walking them down in the course of two or three days. After this one may begin to believe that "Lying Jim" Beckworth, whose remarkable adventures early in this century are preserved in book form, was a much-maligned man and that he spoke no more than the truth when he said he had known instances of Indian runners accomplishing upward of 110 miles in one day.—Lippincott's Magazine.

He Knew the Ladr.

Wife (with a determined air)—"I want to see that letter." Husband—"What letter?" Wife—"The one you just opened. I know by the handwriting it is from a woman, and you turned pale when you read it. I will see it! Give it to me, sir!" Husband—"Here it is. It's your milliner's bill."—Tit-Bits.

THE POPULIST CALAMITY STATEMENT

An Abortive Attempt to Prove that the People of Nebraska are Unable to Pay Their Taxes.

ONLY PART OF THE STORY IS TOLD.

And the Matter of Truth is Not Given Consideration at All Figures Taken from the County Treasurers' Books Show the True Situation.

About a month ago the state officials compiled and published a statement the patriotic object of which was to show that, instead of taxes coming in faster than ever, that the delinquent list in the state was growing larger. Like their bureau organized to prove that "farming does not pay," this compilation was for the purpose of proving that the people of the state are unable to pay their taxes.

This calamity statement was published in the "reform press" under the caption: "Delinquent Taxes Grow—Increase in School Monies, Not Due to Payment of Taxes, but to Honest Government—The Facts from the State Records."

Then this popocratic compilation went on to show that during the year 1897 the total state tax levied against the counties was \$1,181,919.76 and that the total tax paid during the same year was only \$1,173,232.17, making an increase in the delinquent list of \$8,687.59. This fact was exulted over and the "reform press" article closed its dignified argument by shouting: "Bring on the next campaign lie!"

TELL ONLY PART.

In the table of figures prepared by the state officers only a part of the "facts from the records" were given, the intent of the statement being to deceive the people of the state. In the column showing the "total tax paid in 1897" the payment of interest on delinquent taxes was left out and the showing of the amount of money paid by the counties was just \$31,759.76 less than the records actually show.

The correct figures are taken from the county treasurer's reports on file in the office of the state auditor and are shown below. The first column shows the payments made according to the calamity compilation. The second column shows the total payments that were made as shown by the records. The third column shows the total amount paid the state by the counties during the year 1897, including tax, interest and funds derived from the lease and sale of school lands:

Counties.	Populist figures.	Actual amt. paid.	Total tax and interest.
Adams	19,847.38	20,386.36	37,750.50
Antelope	10,140.52	10,470.11	22,517.02
Banner	1,223.48	1,265.08	1,532.76
Blaine	785.87	837.91	1,003.74
Boone	11,861.38	12,197.19	23,113.49
Box Elder	4,277.32	4,510.73	5,248.78
Boyd	1,790.47	1,828.69	2,182.69
Brown	3,000.24	3,130.03	3,554.25
Burt	17,002.40	17,672.13	25,351.92
Butler	22,175.92	22,629.83	33,130.05
Cass	28,196.55	29,252.01	38,225.69
Chadron	12,562.62	12,826.69	17,547.32
Chase	2,828.21	2,868.38	3,340.25
Cherry	7,553.15	7,848.37	11,289.90
Chryse	7,887.95	8,275.77	11,206.39
Clatsop	17,674.32	18,140.42	23,551.52
Colfax	12,579.08	13,000.04	16,391.88
Cuming	16,584.18	17,016.73	22,551.52
Custer	11,327.61	11,779.22	15,314.56
Dakota	17,516.22	17,979.22	23,551.52
Dawes	9,852.71	10,442.43	13,282.82
Dawson	11,927.12	12,256.25	16,599.47
Deuel	5,125.32	5,326.35	6,146.40
Dixon	10,619.19	11,030.01	13,532.54
Dodge	23,278.71	23,576.95	28,155.32
Dodge	140,861.11	144,465.87	186,374.92
Dundy	3,435.71	3,554.34	4,287.75
Fillmore	19,127.59	19,598.91	25,551.52
Franklin	7,649.77	7,855.33	9,407.68
Furnas	7,763.72	8,011.16	10,090.77
Gardner	15,954.40	16,320.79	20,560.33
Gesler	37,685.69	39,180.72	48,864.06
Greeley	1,243.36	1,309.55	1,592.94
Grant	6,152.98	6,380.69	7,687.84
Harlan	1,791.29	1,837.11	2,212.29
Harrison	6,274.43	6,523.08	7,833.24
Haskell	19,511.70	20,076.69	27,818.67
Hamilton	13,611.07	13,755.24	16,447.70
Harlan	9,298.47	9,490.45	11,411.59
Hayes	3,081.75	3,242.93	3,920.74
Hickok	4,980.39	5,257.68	6,300.27
Holmes	13,294.19	13,530.09	16,532.54
Hooker	45.21	49.26	59.58
Howard	10,143.72	10,730.24	13,202.51
Jefferson	18,475.59	18,968.55	23,475.86
Johnson	14,973.84	15,320.79	19,152.52
Kearney	8,558.92	8,815.11	10,832.17
Keith	5,738.78	5,846.49	7,068.46
Kearney	2,904.87	3,011.02	3,610.62
Kimberly	1,824.01	1,880.04	2,268.43
Knott	10,822.24	11,233.85	13,820.19
Lamar	69,659.58	71,851.92	90,029.64
Lancaster	14,833.92	15,222.60	18,723.72
Logan	790.99	821.24	1,000.31
Loup	1,017.59	1,050.94	1,260.01
Madison	17,900.61	18,329.54	22,811.31
Mahar	785.40	815.00	990.50
Merck	13,629.07	14,028.28	17,272.55
Nance	11,452.81	12,173.05	15,012.55
Nebraska	17,674.32	18,140.42	23,551.52
Nemaha	15,954.40	16,320.79	20,560.33
Nichols	15,945.46	16,307.46	20,372.29
Otoe	31,553.96	32,904.37	42,317.75
Pawnee	15,826.92	16,399.77	20,560.33
Perkins	3,297.75	3,427.26	4,182.75
Phelps	10,198.87	10,748.42	13,423.72
Pierce	9,529.15	9,861.96	11,996.57
Platte	17,658.08	18,165.74	22,830.21
Polk	18,914.24	19,390.35	24,235.97
Red W'ch	7,580.19	8,014.73	10,000.00
Richardson	21,296.64	21,970.50	28,478.86
Rock	3,294.36	3,411.73	4,154.35
Seward	18,914.24	19,390.35	24,235.97
Sarpy	13,886.81	14,137.12	17,686.13
Schuyler	23,735.52	24,262.27	30,000.00
Stanton	1,824.01	1,880.04	2,268.43
Stearns	13,209.44	13,660.82	16,447.70
Thayer	6,638.06	6,855.21	8,450.30
Thompson	6,824.32	7,192.12	8,845.03
Tioga	3,599.32	3,712.19	4,523.57
Townsend	9,571.97	9,896.57	12,000.00
Union	16,237.96	16,690.32	20,845.25
Valley	744.94	775.65	950.55
Washington	3,199.32	3,257.50	3,920.74
Wayne	18,564.99	18,947.37	23,630.67
Webster	11,673.71	12,055.83	14,868.43
Wheeler	1,785.16	1,826.25	2,212.29
Total	\$1,173,232.17	\$1,204,991.95	\$1,906,786.05

On an examination of these figures it will be noted that the populist statement made a deduction from the actual amount paid in every county and that instead of paying less tax money in 1897 than the total levy of that year the counties actually paid the state \$23,072.17 more than the tax levy called for and that in addition to this the counties paid on account of the educational lands. The school apportionment for the same year amounted to \$739,991.93, so it will be noted that the counties during 1897 turned into the state treasury \$1,167,194.15 more than they got back through the medium of the school apportionment.

SENATOR ALLEN'S FRANK.

How the Popocrats Circulate Campaign Literature.

The Pop campaign document has gone out. Within the last few days into every home in Nebraska has gone a large heavy manilla envelope with Senator Allen's frank on the outside and the Pop circular on the inside. There is no stamp on these envelopes as the farmers will observe, but the stamp of crookedness is on the whole transaction from the preparing of this circular under the direction of the Governor six months ago down to the use of Senator Allen's frank. The Governor's clerk prepared the circular and sent it to Senator Allen at Washington. In order that the Pop State Committee might beat the general Government out of the cost of distributing the circular to the Pop voters of Nebraska it was necessary for Senator Allen to invent some means by which he could use his frank for this distribution. The Senator, it seems, was equal to the emergency. He stood up in the senate and made a few remarks about economy, and then held a paper in his hand which he said was a part of his argument, asked leave to have it printed as a part of his speech. This pop circular was not a part of his speech, but the senators did not know that. They were not suspecting a trick of this kind from the reformed senator of Nebraska and the circular was printed without objection. It has gone out and is now distributed at the government's expense. The State House politicians are congratulating each other over the neatness and completeness of this little piece of sharp practice by which they have avoided the payment of a \$3,000 postage bill. It was a crooked scheme from beginning to the end. It purports to come from the governor but it is signed by his clerk. The circular undertakes to show that the large amount of school money distributed in the last two years is an evidence of unusual honesty and competency on the part of this state administration and is a reason why the farmers of the state should again endorse populism. Because people have prospered under the McKinley administration and have been able to pay up their back taxes and the back interest on their school land leases, therefore, populism and Bryanism should be endorsed at this election. Because what McKinley promised has come true, and what Bryan promised has failed, therefore, Bryan should be endorsed at this election. The tax payers of Custer county because of hard times, during the first six months of 1896, paid taxes to the amount of only \$40,000. During the first six months of 1898 they paid \$73,000 of taxes, and because the people of Custer county were able in 1898 to pay nearly twice as much taxes as they paid in 1896, paying not only for that year, but delinquent taxes which had accumulated in former years; because the McKinley administration had enabled them to clear away this burden of delinquent taxes as well as a large