

THE SIBYL'S PREDICTION.

La Vinette is a beautiful village. You might search through France, and hardly find a prettier.

And nowhere will you find prettier maidens than those of La Vinette.

To be sure, they are not high born, nor versed in the elegant accomplishments. Fortunately, however, beauty and high birth are not always inseparable, nor do they always go together.

At least, there is many a countess who would count no price too great by which she might purchase the charms of Marie Maillard, who outshone all the other maidens of La Vinette as the sun does the stars.

One afternoon it chanced that Marie and several of her companions were returning, merrily, from the vineyard, when, all at once, one of them espied an old woman, walking along by the help of a staff.

She turned towards them, and awaited their coming.

'What can we do for you, good mother?' inquired Marie.

'Cross my hand with a silver piece, my pretty maid, and I will tell you your fortune.'

'You are a sibyl, then?' 'You may call me so. It is given to me to see, ere they arrive, the chances which Fortune may have in store.'

They looked at her with growing reverence, despite her tattered garments and unprepossessing face.

'Here mother,' said Lizette, one of the gayest of the party, holding out her hand 'you may tell me my fortune.'

The sibyl took the extended hand, and, after a single glance, fixed her penetrating eyes upon her.

'I see she said slowly, a bridal train proceeding to the village church. Flowers are strewn along the way over which pass the bridal pair. Nod I mention the name of the bride?'

Lizette drew back with a blush. The sibyl was right; for on that day week she was to stand at the altar.

Another took her place and still another till Marie alone remained.

She came forward and submitted her hand to the interpreter of Fate.

The sibyl started, as if suspicious that that her art had failed her.

But a moment's survey dissipated her doubts, and she murmured, as it to her self—

'Maiden, a brilliant destiny awaits you. You will wed a title, and become the mistress of a fair estate. Servants shall be in waiting to do your bidding, and wealth will pour forth its choicest offerings at your feet. Such is the decree of Destiny.'

'Mother,' said Marie, 'you have certainly read wrong for once. Such a fate is not for me, and I would not that it were.'

'No matter,' said the sibyl, composedly; 'you cannot change the course of events. Wait patiently for their unfolding. Be not apprehensive of evil, for this line—and she placed her withered finger on Marie's palm—'betokens a long life and a happy one.'

'I am much obliged to you, mother,' said the girl, laughing, 'for your favorable prediction, and when I become a countess, I will take care that you are provided for.'

'You owe me nothing,' was the reply. 'I am but the oracle of Fate. I may demand the fulfilment of your promise sooner than you think.'

'Be it so, mother. When you are entitled to make it, be sure that I shall not withdraw from my engagement.'

When Sibyl had hobbled away, richer by some francs than before, Marie was bantered not a little by her companions on the destiny which had been marked out for her.

'Which shall it be, Madame la Duchesse, or Madame la Comtesse?' inquired Lizette, gaily.

'I have a good mind,' said Marie, 'in return for your malice, to steal away your Philip, and marry him myself. In that case, at least, the prediction—'

Lizette, who would have been very unwilling for Marie to attempt in earnest what she threatened in jest, deemed it best to drop the bantering tone she had at first assumed.

As for Marie, she thought little of the prediction. To her mind it was altogether improbable.

The country around La Vinette is somewhat uneven, though it contains no very high hills. To the north of the village there is a little stream flowing over a rocky bed, with considerable impetuosity.

Over the stream, which is, however, too shallow to be dangerous, there is a narrow foot-bridge.

It so chanced that, about a week after the events above described, Marie, returning from a visit to a neighbor, on the other side of the stream, had occasion to pass over the bridge.

Doubtless her thoughts were preoccupied or she would have been more careful.

As it was, her foot slipped when half-way across, and she fell in.

It was not a very serious affair, but she felt awkward enough, and vexed at the necessity which compelled her to wade through the water.

She had hardly picked herself up, when a pleasant voice was heard at her side, saying—

'Mademoiselle, permit me to escort you to the other side.'

Marie looked up, and encountered the gaze of a young man, dressed in working attire, with a broad-brimmed straw hat up on his head.

She had time to think it was but a moment, to perceive that he had fine black eyes and a prepossessing countenance.

Not being disposed to prudishness or coquetry, she accepted, without hesitation, the proffered aid, and was soon upon the bank.

'I am much indebted to you,' said she, casting down her eyes, for she could not avoid noticing that those of the young man were fixed upon her in admiration.

'There is no need, mademoiselle. The obligation is all on my side,' was the reply.

'Will you be kind enough to inform me,' he added, after a pause, 'whether there is anyone in the village who would be likely to employ me upon his farm? Pardon my troubling you, but I am a stranger, and know no one here.'

'I think,' said Marie, after some hesitation, 'I heard my father say lately that he wished to secure additional assistance. If you would like to inquire, you may accompany me.'

'Thank you,' said the young man, 'nothing would please me better.'

They walked along together, conversing sociably, and Marie learned incidentally that her companion's name was Henrique Armand.

Farmer Maillard was prepossessed in his favour, and it was not long before a bargain was struck, and the new-comer was installed as a member of the household.

He soon became a general favourite. When the labours of the day were over, he would get his flute or guitar, for he was versed in the use of both instruments and play for the entertainment of those who were attracted to him.

Occasionally, he would accompany himself on the guitar in a peculiarly rich and melodious voice.

On one occasion, having rehearsed a popular song to the general satisfaction, he was pressed to sing it through once more.

'No,' said he, 'I will not do that; but, if you like, I will sing you one of my own composition.'

This proposal was received with pleasure, and he at once commenced—

'Know'st thou my love? Her dark blue eyes Shine with a soft and pleasant glow, As if the colour of the skies Had found its way to earth below.

Know'st thou my love? When morning comes And sunbeams on her pathway fall, She trips along the flowery meads, Herself the fairest flower of all.

Know'st thou my love? Full well I know No natter dwells beneath the sun; Ah! I would that our divided lives Might in one peaceful current run.'

The rich voice of the singer lent much sweetness to the simple words.

All applauded the effort—all except Marie.

She stood apart from the rest with a pensive air, and said nothing.

From this time she treated Henrique with less familiarity than she had been accustomed.

One afternoon, he, in passing through the garden, saw her sitting in an arbour with her eyes fixed musingly on the ground.

'It is a fine day, Mademoiselle Marie,' said he, approaching her.

She started, for she had not been aware of his approach, and murmured an affirmative.

He laid down his pruning-knife, and stepping into the arbour, sat down on a rustic bench at her side.

'Marie,' said he, 'there is a question I wish to ask you, but I hardly know how to set about it. Will you promise not to be offended?'

'I do not think you would ask any question which would render it necessary.'

'Tell me, then, why for some days past you have seemed to avoid me, and when in my presence, have shown a reserve and constraint altogether different from the friendly familiarity you used to evince. Have I offended in any way?'

'There is nothing in which you have offended me,' said Marie, in a tremulous voice.

'I am glad of it,' said Henrique, his face brightening, 'for it emboldens me to make still another request. I love you, Marie,' he added, impulsively. 'I love you most devotedly. You must have noticed it in my looks, and every action. Do you remember the evening when I sang—'

'Know'st thou my love? It was of my own composition, as I said. Did you not divine that it was of you I was singing?'

Marie started with surprise, and a blush of pleasure mantled her features.

'Was it indeed of me that you were singing? I thought—that is, I did not know—'

Marie did not finish the sentence. Henrique perceived that herein lay the secret of her apparent estrangement, but with true delicacy he forebore to speak of it.

'May I hope,' he asked, 'that I am not wholly indifferent to you?'

'If you think me worth taking,' said Marie, frankly, 'you may have me.'

'I shall never more believe in fortune-telling,' said Marie one day to Henrique, as she sat busily employed in preparations for her approaching marriage.

'Why not?' he asked.

'Because,' was the reply, 'it was foretold of me that I should wed a title, and become mistress of a fair estate.'

'Who told you?'

'A sibyl who was passing through the village. But I put no credit in it. I told her that if ever it should come to pass, I would provide for her.'

'And are you sure that you do not regret the non-fulfilment of the prediction?'

'Can you ask?' said she, reproachfully. On the bridal morning, the sun shone out with more than ordinary splendour.

Before the altar of the humble village church stood Henrique and Marie, and the white-haired priest pronounced the sacred words which united them.

The nuptial blessing was scarcely over when an old woman, bent with infirmity, passed up the aisle, and stood before the bride.

'I have come to claim your promise,' said she.

It was old soothsayer.

'But,' said Marie, 'it was dependent on marrying a title. You see I have not done so. You were wrong.'

'Rather,' said the old woman, 'it is you who are wrong, Madame la Comtesse.'

'What can she mean?' asked Marie, looking towards her husband with surprise.

'She is right, Marie,' said he, gently. 'In me behold not Henrique Armand simply, but Comte Henrique D'Armand, the possessor of much wealth, but of none

more precious than yourself. Being desirous of seeing country life in its varieties, and mingling in it without being known, I found my way to your pleasant village. The rest you know. Will you forgive me?' It is needless to say that pardon was accorded, and that Marie graced the high station to which she had been elevated.

Her promise to the sibyl was fulfilled to the letter.

FORK TREES.

They are found in Bronx Park and are a source of delight to the birds.

The strange sight of a man nailing chunks of salt pork to the tops of tall trees was witnessed in Bronx Park yesterday. The scene of action was near the site of the new Zoological Garden, and many pounds of prime pork were used in the operation. The man, who was a park attendant, was armed with a long ladder and a bag of pork. Now and then he would place the ladder against a tree, climb up, nail on a chunk of pork, and then wander away to another tree to repeat the performance.

'It's for the birds,' he explained. 'There are a large number of them in the park, and we want to encourage them to remain here. Just as soon as the birds learn that they can obtain food in the winter they are not liable to go away. Birds want something to peck at, and as the ground is all frozen hard we nail up this pork for them to exercise their bills on, and I tell you they appreciate it. They know every pork tree and have a grand time.'

'We feed the birds through the winter on other food besides pork. We scatter cracked corn and wheat about, and they grow fat on it. The squirrels also eat it. The park is filled with squirrels, and the city provides well for their care during the winter, when they cannot provide food for themselves. These cute little animals know their feed time just as well as a human being does, and their appetites are always in first-class condition.'

It was suggested when the fact became known that pork could be found all ready for cooking, on the trees in Bronx Park it might tend to induce tramps to stroll that way and sample the novel fruit.

'I do not think we have much to fear on that score,' said the park employee. 'You see these trees grow a long way from the Bowery, and travel is not at its best just at present. Besides, the pork is nailed high up from the ground, and no one can reach it without the aid of a ladder. No tramp is going to walk all the way up here with a ladder on his shoulder just for the sake of getting a piece of salt meat. Besides that, the park is well watched in the daytime, and at night no one could find the trees, so I guess the pork is safe.'

The only birds the reporter saw flying about the pork trees were sparrows, although the park employee said that there were a few other kinds about. The squirrels, however, were in evidence and thoroughly enjoying themselves.

His Ability.

'You are the first one I ever heard mention Bradley's literary ability.'

'Well, I never heard of him writing any books, but he can borrow more of them than any other man I know.'

'Dan,' said a four-year-old to his brother, 'give me sixpence to buy a monkey.'

'We have one monkey in the house already,' said his brother.

'Who is it, Dan?'

'It's you,' was the reply.

'Then, Dan, give me sixpence to buy nuts for the monkey.'

The brother could not resist this appeal.

Don't experiment—buy Magnetic Dyes which have been successfully used in Canada for twenty-five years. Price 10 cents for any color.

English traveller (to Irish porter labelling luggage): 'Don't you keep a brush for that work, porter?'

Porter: 'Shure, yer honour our tongues is the only instruments we're allowed; but they're aisy kep' wet, yer honour!'

Hint taken.

PRESIDENT-SUSPENDER.

PATENTED.

THE LATEST FAD.

BORN.

Tremont, Dec. 10, to the wife of George Wilson, a son.

Middletown, Dec. 21, to the wife of C. F. Fisher, a son.

Kentville, Dec. 17, to the wife of Fred Laundry, a daughter.

Moncton, Dec. 20, to the wife of William Leaman, a daughter.

Digby, Dec. 10, to the wife of J. A. McNeill, a daughter.

St. Croix, Dec. 16, to the wife of Fred Crowell, a daughter.

Springhill, Dec. 15, to the wife of A. W. Foster, a daughter.

Truro, Dec. 22, to the wife of Prof. H. W. Smith, a daughter.

West Arichat, Dec. 16, to the wife of C. ine Bosdet, a daughter.

Westchester, Dec. 18, to the wife of Daniel Stewart, a son.

Marquess Harbor, Dec. 6, to the wife of Alex. Slade, a son.

Diligent River, Dec. 21, to the wife of Clarence Allen, a son.

North Sydney, Dec. 17, to the wife of Hugh Ferguson, a son.

Economy Point, Dec. 13, to the wife of Loring McLellan, a son.

Beaver River Corner, Dec. 21, to the wife of Byron Perry, a son.

Parrsboro, Dec. 20, to the wife of J. W. Rutherford, a daughter.

Port Maitland, Dec. 15, to the wife of Warren Solow, a daughter.

New Glasgow, Dec. 11, to the wife of James Morrison, a daughter.

Beaver River Corner, to the wife of Charles Raymond, a daughter.

Parrsboro, Dec. 18, to the wife of Capt. C. A. Kelly, a daughter.

Salmon River, Digby, Dec. 6, to the wife of O. P. Comeau, a daughter.

New Glasgow, Dec. 20, to the wife of Chas. L. Chisholm, a daughter.

Married.

Boston, Dec. 14, Stanley H. Morrison to Cora B. Fales.

Providence, R. I., Nov. 29, David Acorn to Janie Gillis.

Spencer's Island, Dec. 21, H. C. Jenks to Miss Sayre.

Economy, by Rev. A. Gray, C. F. Lewis to Minnie Colquhoun.

Dartmouth, Aug. 10, by Rev. Mr. Morrison, John L. Ferrow.

Maitland, Dec. 13, by G. R. Martell, Charles Burns to Mary Mauley.

Chapman, Dec. 21, by Rev. D. Clark, John McKel to Maggie Ward.

Pictou, Dec. 21, by Rev. R. B. Mack, Alex. Grant to Minnie M. McEwen.

Milton, Dec. 21, by Rev. Mr. Johnson, Wilmet N. Gates to Hattie Britton.

Halifax, Dec. 21, by Rev. R. Smith, James W. Anderson to Grace Weaver.

Hantsport, Dec. 9, by Rev. G. R. White, Capt. F. Davison to Alice M. Shaw.

Tusket, Dec. 6, by Rev. W. M. Brown, Wm. Van Emburg to Zephia Babine.

Nictaux, Dec. 14, by Rev. L. J. Tingley, Chas. S. Rogers to Hattie E. Bates.

Northville, Dec. 14, by Rev. G. R. Martell, Edward Henderson to Maggie Leung.

Port George, Dec. 21, by Rev. J. Astbury, John H. Fritz to Annie M. Doug.

Halifax, Dec. 22, by Rev. Mr. Bullock, Alfred Southby to Maggie McInnis.

Overton, Dec. 20, by Rev. C. P. Wilson, Frank V. Thomson to Edna Stawford.

Halifax, Dec. 20, by Rev. J. Armitage, W. M. Ferguson to Katie Robinson.

Gay's River, Dec. 14, by Rev. A. B. Dickie, John R. Elliott to Ethel A. Harvey.

Pembroke, N. S., Dec. 14, by Rev. C. P. Wilson, Charles Fevens to Etta Scoville.

Port Lorne, Dec. 17, by Rev. E. P. Coldwell, Stephen Neaves to Alberta Sabean.

Sussex, Dec. 15, by Rev. J. S. Sutherland, L. P. Knowlton to Emma L. Walker.

Port Maitland, Dec. 21, by Rev. D. H. McQuarrie, Frank L. Trask to Hattie Perry.

Newton Mills, N. S., Nov. 26, by Rev. D. S. Fraser, Ernest Chaplin to Alice Gammell.

Liverpool, N. S., Dec. 14, by Rev. R. D. Bambrick, Wallace Pleasant to Maud Taylor.

Tidnish, Dec. 10, by Rev. D. A. Steele, Hadley V. Robinson to Minnie P. Trenholm.

Beaver Mountain, Dec. 14, by Rev. J. A. Cairns, John McLean to Mary McDonald.

St. Peter's, Dec. 15, by Rev. J. Calder, Edward Peabes to Mary K. McPhail.

Westbrook, N. S., Dec. 14, by Rev. S. Howard, W. W. Halliell to Edith M. Purdy.

Bridgewater, Dec. 19, by Rev. E. P. Churchill, Zacharia Hubley to Emma P. Fitch.

Fredericton, Dec. 21, by Rev. G. F. Johnson, Kinman N. Gosbee to Angelina McLeod.

Haverhill, Mass., Dec. 21, by Rev. McLeod Harvey, John A. McLeod to Mary O. Watson.

Rossway, N. S., Dec. 31, by Rev. W. H. Evans, James A. Robbins to Edith A. Denton.

Lower Selma, Dec. 15, by Rev. J. W. Cox, Daniel F. Cameron to Adelaide C. Dalrymple.

Bear River, Dec. 21, by Rev. G. F. Johnson, J. Christopher Harris to George M. Allan.

Central Economy, Dec. 21, by Rev. Andrew Gray, Herbert D. Pugsley to Florence Pugsley.

Clifton, Gloucester Co., Dec. 21, by Rev. W. Harrison, Perin Harbrook to Mary J. Knowles.

Wallace, Cumberland, Dec. 13, by Rev. L. W. Shepherdson, Frank H. Morris to Mabel B. Edgett.

St. John, Dec. 21, by Rev. Job Shenton assisted by Rev. Wm. B. Tennant, Rev. Wm. J. Buchanan, to Maude E. Hannan.

St. Martins, N. B., Dec. 21, by Rev. J. B. Champson assisted by Rev. J. K. Bealisto, Capt. Clarence G. Canning to Edith M. Palmer.



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