

# The Castle Comedy

By THOMPSON BUCHANAN

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## CHAPTER I.

CASUALLY the young man raised his eyes from his harp to find that he had an audience. He sprang to his feet, looking all embarrassment at the two girls standing so close at hand. Pictures of twin beauty, contrasts they were, framed in the door-free stone archway of the half ruined hut.

One was tall, perhaps, and slender perhaps, with the hair of the Italian master—the hair that the red sun kisses, and then, unable to leave for the glory his kiss had awakened, hides in.

Her mouth was made for kissing, for smiling or for the sly saying of things that cut, and her hazel eyes would smile always unless a sad tale dewed them.

But the other—there could be no "perhaps" here. He looked and gasped, for in those deep eyes he seemed to find, all intermingled, the witchery, the appeal and the compelling power of midnight. Here was one who could jump the octave of emotions from laughter to rage and strike not a mood between. Her hair was black, and dimly, he was aware of her nose rising faintly upward, a bit supercilious above the lips that met so straight and yet so tender, while under the white skin he could see the blood ran quick this way and that at the dominating black eyes' command. And they answered every thought.

Thus she stood, an imperious little empress of hearts, who needed no herald to announce her rank, for a new subject bowed down before her.

"Come, come, Sir Post. There are two of us. Which were you honoring?" She of the red gold hair it was mocked him.

He bowed and answered her gayly, but his looks sought the other, the smaller girl, who held him.

"Ah, mademoiselle, a poor dancing master can serve but the most beautiful."

"A dancing master!" Her tone was different now. "Why, we thought to have found a love sick poet swain when we heard you playing in our pet hut. Didn't we, May?"

"Why, Eff, a dancing master will be of far more use to us awkward country maids. We'll learn to courtesy right and perhaps the minuet!" Her black eyes took him in with one swift glance.

"Master Dubarre," he stammered. "Master Dubarre will teach us," she ended.

"The honor would overwhelm a poor Frenchman." This with another and a deeper bow.

"French?" cried the poet seeter. "Why, you speak English like an Englishman!"

"Ah, mademoiselle, I was reared in England, but"—the French shrug spoke volumes—"who would employ an English dancing master?"

The laughter of the three, intermingled, swept away all stiffness.

"Come, May," laughed the Titan haired one, "have you not a French cousin?"

"And by that token should be almost as good a frog eater as this man, I suppose," cried May. "But you must not speak of him."

"Think, Eff, he is fighting English when he is half English himself."

His mother was my cousin Sarah, daughter of Cousin John Percy. It was by her running away with the young Vicomte de St. Croix when he was secretary of the French legation that the castle came to our, the younger, branch of the family. It killed Cousin John.

"I sought the castle," interrupted Dubarre. "At the time they told me one Sir Henry Percy had a most beautiful daughter, and she a friend who might show me how English girls can dance."

CHAPTER II.

"COME, come, mademoiselle, that is all wrong."

The dancing master spoke sharply, as one could to an unruly child, for Mistress Percy was in one of her obstinate moods, and the lesson had gone awry from the beginning. They were at one end of the long, narrow, bare feneing hall, which since the arrival of Dubarre had become, too, a dancing room.

Now the girl drew herself up to make the most of her inches.

"M. Dubarre, I am not accustomed"—she began.

"To hear the truth," he ended for her, smiling lightly; then, with grave politeness: "Certainly, if mademoiselle wishes to achieve awkwardness, I will say already she is far on the road to perfection. Pardon me for libarding her mistake the aim of mademoiselle."

Mistaking the aim of mademoiselle, his mistake showed deep concern at his mistake. Only about the eyes was the quizzical humor of a man amusing himself at the expense of a spoiled child.

Her eyes flashed danger signals; but, altogether unmindful, he turned to his assistant.

"Pierre, put your fingers out to tune, that the music may keep step with mademoiselle."

At the command, as an automaton might, Pierre, seated before his big harp at the other end of the hall, juggled the strings out of all time or tune.

"Do you not like it?" Dubarre asked when the girl involuntarily put her hands to her ears. "If after three months you will not keep time with the music, then the music must keep time with you. My reputation as a dancing master demands that you keep together."

There was joy now in his tone as at the solution of a great difficulty.

"Possibly were the teacher better progress had not been so slow," Mistress Percy blurted angrily.

The Frenchman bowed profound acquiescence. "Mademoiselle is right," he said, now sadly. "I should never have attempted the task. My father, a famous dancer, often told me that only an old man could muster patience to teach the very young, who have no idea how to learn."

The girl whirled on him, splendidly angry.

"Am I to be insulted by my dancing teacher? Monsieur, I would have you know this shall be the last lesson."

"Then it were wise to make the most of it," he answered coolly and took her hand. "Pierre, play slowly. We will dance the minuet."

From pure wonder at his presumption, she yielded. For a time back and forward in graceful measure they trod through the stately dance. Ethel Courtleigh, waiting her turn, thought she had never seen so well matched a couple.

The dancing master stopped short and shrugged his shoulders impatiently. "One, two, three, four. Can you not possibly keep time?" he asked.

"Now, Pierre, again."

Once more they trod the measure. A second time Dubarre stopped short.

"Is mademoiselle a clumsy milkmaid dodging cows' tails? Have you no knees?" he asked with exaggerated politeness, then added mournfully, "Oh, that courtesy!"

And then the storm broke forth in earnest. Mistress Percy jerked her hand from his.

"When came it," she cried, "that a paid teacher so addressed his pupil, and that pupil a lady? Am I a child to be ordered about by a runaway Frenchman, a trickster with his feet? No; I will not dance. I am utterly weary of it, and I will never, never dance again!" And with her head very high and her body held very stiffly erect the girl turned her back on him and walked proudly to the side window to see how utterly miserable everything looked without.

The man merely shrugged his shoulders and glanced at the clock.

"Certainly mademoiselle has taken more than her fair share of the time, but, then, Mistress Courtleigh learns so quickly that it will make little difference."

His tone was easy and absolutely cool. With a sigh as though to himself he added, "Mon Dieu, it is exhausting to teach a young lady with a quick temper, who will not try to learn."

Mistress Percy whirled about to speak, then as quickly turned back to the window. Looking closely at Dubarre, Ethel Courtleigh thought she saw about his mouth the faint shadow of a smile that was quickly pressed away. Then he came over to her.

"Will Mistress Courtleigh so honor a poor dancing master by affording him a little real pleasure?"

The tone was supplication, the bow a courtier's. Ethel Courtleigh arose promptly.

"Pierre, we will dance that minuet." Again the girl at the window started. She would not look, but she could hear everything. Now Dubarre was speaking. Above the music of the harp the words came to her.

"One, two, three, four—a gracious courtesy! A little more now. That is it. Ah, Mistress Courtleigh, it is, indeed, a pleasure to dance with one so graceful, so eager to dance well. Play that again, Pierre. I would see if Mistress Courtleigh can reach perfection twice." A pause of a few moments, and he cried, with enthusiasm, "Indeed, indeed, you could not, for the last was even better than the first."

"With such a teacher, M. Dubarre, it were, indeed, hard not to dance well!" And Ethel Courtleigh smiled her gratification, while May Percy drummed violently on the window pane.

Once more the music started, and again, after some time, Dubarre began to speak.

The girl at the window at last turned

ed to see M. Dubarre leading his pleased pupil to her seat. He bent low over the little hand.

"May I thank you for a very great pleasure?" he said earnestly. "It was worth the trip from France."

And Mistress Percy turned back to dismal counting of the trees outside. Pierre stopped playing and began to put the cover on his harp. Gaston Dubarre was preparing to go. Suddenly the girl at the window moved away from it. She hesitated for a moment; then, with her old time impulsiveness, walked straight down the room to where the man who had chided and laughed at her stood.

"Monsieur"—she stopped, strangely embarrassed—"if—if—you please, I will dance that minuet."

She stood before him, her cheeks pink, her eyes wonderfully soft and moist, with the sweet humiliation of her first defeat. Not even his eyelashes flickered, but the man bowed very low.

"Her dancing master is always at mademoiselle's service," he said. "Pierre, the minuet."

Fifteen minutes later Captain Thorncliffe and Sir John Wilmerding came in for their daily bout with the fells, just in time to hear Mistress Percy ask:

"And do you think I will improve?"

Dubarre smiled. "Already mademoiselle shows marked improvement," he answered.

"Thank you, monsieur." And the newcomers wondered at her tone.

Pierre put the cover on his harp and went away, the girls left, and Sir John, big, strong and hotheaded, assumed his mask and foil against Captain Thorncliffe, the bluff and hearty soldier who had won promotion and gazette mention off and over for his ability in fighting.

Yawning, the dancing master went to the window.

"You are strong, Dubarre, I know. Why don't you fence or shoot or ride?" asked Captain Thorncliffe as he was getting ready.

The one addressed laughed. "Those accomplishments are scarce within the province of a dancing master, monsieur, but I have tried all three."

"Come, are you ready, Hal?" asked Sir John impatiently, and they crossed swords, while Dubarre turned back to his window. Soon the noise forced him to look around.

Assuredly the bout was becoming hotter every minute. The narrow place of arms resounded to the tramping of feet, while over all the two blades sang their rasping, clashing song of the steel. Up and down the room the contest waged, now Captain Harry Thorncliffe and now Sir John Wilmerding holding the advantage. They fenced with the eager animosity of tried friends opposed in mimic combat.

"Touched!" Captain Thorncliffe cried it out, stepping back, raised his foil, smiling.

"No, Hal, I protest. You touched me not. Your point failed to reach by quite an inch. I twisted away as I saw it coming."

Sir John was almost angry in his disclaimer. Captain Thorncliffe still showed his good humored smile.

"Come, come, Jack. Be generous. You have beaten so many that you can easily afford me one little point. Besides, I know I touched you. I felt it plainly. 'Twas the old French Percy trick that involuted me from Spain. We'll let M. Dubarre decide as referee."

Sir John sneered. "What can a dancing master know of fencing? Let him stick to his fgs, where he is at home. Zounds! You choose a queer umpire between gentlemen, Hal!"

Dubarre, who had been watching the fight with indifferent attention, reddened ever so slightly. He walked over and, with the utmost respect, offered Sir John his handkerchief.

"Would monsieur have me wipe off the chalk from his plastron?" he said and deftly pointed out a faint white dot on the red heart of the plastron.

It was Sir John's time to rebuke. Captain Thorncliffe's chance to rebuke.

"Pardon, gentlemen," said the dancing master. "I cannot umpire longer. For Mistress Percy desired me to bring her Sir John Suckling's verses from the library."

## CHAPTER III.

EVERY girl should desire to marry."

Sir Henry Percy puffed out his stomach and pursed up his lips to emphasize this distinctly orthodox sentiment. He was a large, heavy man, who thought that God made the Percys and then the world to fit them.

"But I don't intend to marry."

Mistress Percy stamped her little foot, and that made Sir Henry's emphasis seem tame.

"At least, dad," with an upward flash of her eyes, "at least not yet."

"Ab!" Sir Henry breathed once more, while Sir John Wilmerding, standing near, became again his normal red.

For this was the serious time when the years fostered plans of two old men and the day dreams of one young one were to be put to the test of a girl's caprice. From earliest childhood she had known that in the far ahead, lazy, indolent some time there would come a fateful five minutes when she must decide. In those days when old Sir Elmer Wilmerding and Sir Henry Percy often sat together talking of their lifetime friendship and the shared joys of the long ago, the two children playing in the hall knew that sooner or later in the talk one of the fathers would look at them. Then invariably both men rose, and, standing, the old cronies would drink a health to the children, May and John, whose future union was to cement the life long comradeship of their fathers. That either of the children might object never entered the heads of the

two squares. They were friends; their children were to marry; that was all there was to it.

Now was come that time when, under the agreement of the long ago, the children were to be brought together. Sir John Wilmerding knew the old agreement by heart—how three days before her seventeenth birthday they must be betrothed. The marriage might be delayed two years, but no longer.

It was a merely formal matter of a few minutes, Sir Henry Percy thought as he called the young man an I girl to the library that morning. The betrothal was in a hurry to get away for his ride, but he decided regretfully that he ought to spare a few minutes for telling his daughter she might begin preparing for her marriage.

His very first sentence had raised the storm. Mistress Percy now paced

up and down the library in most un-grown-up-like excitement. To be brought face to face with marriage when for weeks she had been planning nothing more serious than a birthday party was enough to disconcert any about-to-be-seventeen-year-old miss.

"Why did you not tell me of this, dad?" she demanded, stopping short and regarding the two men standing helpless before her.

"My child, the agreement—you knew it," he protested weakly.

"Agreement! How could you and Sir Elmer agree whom I should marry?"

"But, May," Sir Henry answered, more firmly now as the Percy stubbornness aroused itself, "Sir Elmer desired it; I desired and do desire it. Remember your duty to your father, child. John Wilmerding, now!"

"But you can't want me to marry a man I don't love, father?" The word "father" in place of the old, familiar, loving "dad" should have warned him, but it did not.

"Love! Puff! Fiddlesticks!" The square fairly snorted. "What's love got to do with housewifery, the ordering of servants and the raising of a family? You do those things, and I'll warrant me John Wilmerding will do the loving for the pair of you."

Then the old man discovered there were two Percys in that room. The girl drew herself up, cold and white. Only her eyes were blazing.

"John Wilmerding may gamble or fight his way into another's love, father, but I don't intend to marry him!" Her tone was calm, even, rigorously indifferent. It might have been, "I don't care for a glass of water, thank you."

Sir John Wilmerding went white to the lips; Sir Henry Percy red to his ear tips.

"You d-d-don't," he stammered.

"Why, you baggage, you shall marry him. Do you think I am going to be put out by a bit of a sixteen-year-old girl, my own child at that? Not marry Wilmerding? Why not? Now you shall marry him if he were the worst rascal in the county, if he had fought a dozen duels over a dozen women instead of one. Do you want a milkpout for a husband? If you do, I want no wifey faced preaching parson for a son-in-law. I tell you, he's only a bad of spirit!" And, turning, Sir Henry patted the white faced young man on the shoulder affectionately. "Did you ever see a finer boy?" he said and whirled back to face his daughter.

Then his jaw dropped very suddenly. May Percy had gone over to the table, seated herself and was busily turning the leaves of a book as though searching for something.

"What are you doing now?" asked Sir Henry in very different tones.

"I was trying," she said courteously, "to find that piece Mr. Butler wrote, in which he says:

"Alone for sins they are inclined to. By damning those they have no mind to."

"I thought probably you and Sir John might like to read it. It damns the wifey faced hypocrites in great style."

Sir Henry's face became mottled purple now.

(Continued Next Saturday.)

## WHY

have a torpid liver when Herbine, the only liver regulator, will help you? There is no reason why you should suffer from dyspepsia, constipation, chills and fever or any liver complaints, when Herbine will cure you. F. C. Waite, Westville, Fla., writes: "I was sick for two months with chills and fever, and after taking two bottles of Herbine am well and healthy." Sold by Linn Drug Co.

Notice of Final Settlement.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, administratrix of the estate of E. P. Coleman, deceased, has filed her final account in said estate and the first Monday, the 6th day of May, 1907, has been set for final hearing by the County Court of Lane county, Oregon.

Dated this 22d day of March, 1907.

MARY A. COLEMAN,

Administratrix.

Walton & Ness, Attorneys.

## Registration of Land Title

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lane.

In the matter of the application of Just D. Petrie to register title to the land in said application described, to-wit:

West one-half of the west one-half of section 26 in township 20 south range 5 west of the Willamette Meridian, containing 160 acres of land in Lane county, Oregon.

To all whom it may concern:

Take notice, that on the 25th day of March, A. D. 1907, an application was filed by said Just D. Petrie in the circuit court of Lane county for initial registration of the title to the land above described. Now unless you appear on or before the 29th day of April, A. D. 1907, and show cause why such application should not be granted, the same will be taken as confessed and a decree will be entered according to the prayer of the application and you will be forever barred from disputing the same.

[Seal.] E. U. LEE, Clerk.

By F. L. Gibbs, Deputy.

WILLIAMS & BEAN,

Applicant's Attorney.

## Summons.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lane.

Amanda E. Wilcox, plaintiff,

vs.

Asher Wilcox, defendant.

To Asher Wilcox, the above named defendant:

In the name of the state of Oregon you are hereby required to appear and answer the plaintiff's complaint filed against you in the above entitled court and suit on or before six weeks from the date of the first publication of this summons, which date of first publication is February 25th, 1907; and you are hereby notified that if you fail to appear and answer said complaint within the time aforesaid the plaintiff will apply to said court for the relief prayed for in said complaint, to-wit: a decree of divorce dissolving the marriage contract and the bonds of matrimony heretofore existing between said plaintiff and defendant, and for such other relief as to the court may seem equitable and just.

This summons is published by order of the Hon. G. R. Chelsman, county judge of said Lane county, Oregon, which said order was made and dated February 23, 1907, directing the publication thereof in the Eugene Daily Guard, published in Eugene, Lane county, Oregon, for a period of six successive weeks.

Dated February 25th, 1907.

KISSINGER & MARTIN,

Attorneys for Plaintiff.

## Registration of Land Title.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lane.

In the matter of the application of Just D. Petrie to register the title to the land in said application described, to-wit:

Beginning at the NW corner of the Daniel Lewis donation land claim, being claim No. 48 in T. 20, S. R. 5 W., in Lane county, Oregon, North 350; thence south 9.43 chains; thence east 31.72 chains, to the center of the county road No. 155; thence southeasterly along the center of said road to the south line of said donation land claim; thence east to the northeast corner of the R. L. Ferguson donation land claim No. 42 in T. 20, S. R. 4 W., in Lane county, Oregon; thence south 8.13 chains to the NW corner of lot 2 of sec. 19, said T. 20, S. R. 4 W.; thence south 14.42 chains; thence west 74.50 chains to the west SW corner of said R. L. Ferguson donation land claim, being claim No. 49 in said T. 20, S. R. 5 W.; thence north 20 chains to the SE corner of the Isaac M. Gardner donation land claim No. 47 in said T. 20, S. R. 5 W.; thence west 55.90 chains to SW corner of said claim No. 47; thence north 60.35 chains to NW corner of said claim No. 47; thence E. 22.53 chains to corner of said claim; thence south 5.25 chains to angle in boundary of said claim No. 47; thence east 33.08 chains to the place of beginning, all in sections 13, 14, 23, 24 and 25 in said T. 20, S. R. 5 W., and in sec. 19 in said T. 20, S. R. 4 W. Also lots 1 and 2 of section 23, and lots 4 and 6 of section 24, and lot 1 of section 25, and the NE 1/4 of NW 1/4 of section 23, all in T. 20, S. R. 5 W., in Lane county, Oregon; containing 800 acres, more or less, in Lane county, Oregon.

Against Irving W. Petrie, defendant.

To all whom it may concern:

Take notice, that on the 25th day of March, A. D. 1907, an application was filed by said Just D. Petrie in the circuit court of Lane county for initial registration of the title to the land above described. Now unless you appear on or before the 29th day of April, A. D. 1907, and show cause why such application should not be granted, the same will be taken as confessed and a decree will be entered according to the prayer of the application and you will be forever barred from disputing the same.

[Seal.] E. U. LEE, Clerk.

By F. L. Gibbs, Deputy.

WILLIAMS & BEAN,

Applicant's Attorney.

## Administratrix notice

Notice is hereby given that Jemima Gibson has been appointed administratrix of the estate of Absalom Gibson, deceased, by the county court of Lane county, Oregon, and all persons having claims against the estate are hereby notified to present the same to said administratrix duly verified as by law required, at the law office of I. H. Harbaugh, situated in Room 5, over the First National Bank in the city of Eugene, Lane county, state of Oregon, within six months of the date of this notice.

Dated this 1st day of February, 1907.

JEMIMA GIBSON,

Administratrix

I. H. Harbaugh, attorney for estate.

## Administrator's Notice to Creditors.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been by the court of Lane County, Oregon, appointed administrator of the estate of Andrew J. Weston, deceased. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same, duly verified, to the undersigned at the law office of Williams & Bean, in Eugene, Lane county, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice.

Dated this 9th day of March, 1907.

GEO. YERINGTON,

Administrator of the estate of Andrew J. Weston, deceased.

WILLIAMS & BEAN,

Attorneys for the Estate.

## Notice to Creditors.

Notice is hereby given that George M. Widmer has been appointed executor of the estate of Conrad Widmer, deceased, by the county court of Lane county, Oregon. All persons holding claims against the said estate are notified to present the same to the undersigned.

Dated March 2, 1907.

GEO. M. WIDMER,

Executor.

WALTON & NESS,

Attorneys.

## Notice to Creditors.

Notice is hereby given to whom it may concern that the undersigned has been by the county court of Lane county, Oregon, executrix of the estate of Pauline G. Risdon, deceased. All persons having claims against said estate are requested to present them, with proper vouchers, at the office of John M. Pipes, in Eugene, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice.

Date of first publication, Monday, April 1st, 1907.

ELLA RISDON DAVIES,

Executrix of the estate of Pauline G. Risdon, deceased.

JOHN M. PIPES,

Attorney.

## Summons.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lane.

Nannie Davis, Plaintiff,

vs.

Monroe Davis, Defendant.

To Monroe Davis, the above named defendant:

In the name of the state of Oregon you are hereby required to appear in the above entitled court and cause and answer the complaint of the plaintiff therein within six (6) weeks from the date of the first publication of this summons, and if you fail to so appear and answer said complaint, the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in her complaint, to-wit: For a decree of said court dissolving the marriage contract now and heretofore existing between the plaintiff and defendant, and giving to the plaintiff the care, custody and control of the minor children of the plaintiff and defendant, Cleo Davis and Rosalie Davis, and for judgment against you for the plaintiff's costs and disbursements herein to be taxed. This summons is served upon you by publication in the Eugene Daily Guard for a period of six (6