

**THE WEDDING
BELLS. AN ECHO OF
'THE CHIMES'**

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The Wedding Bells. An Echo of 'The Chimes' by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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'THE CHIMES'**

THE WEDDING BELLS.

An Echo of "The Chimes,"

SECOND EDITION.



LONDON :
THOMAS ALLMAN, 42, HOLBORN HILL.

MCCCCLVI.

PREFACE.

THE following Pages were suggested, and thrown off upon reading Charles Dickens's "Chimes," with the powerful descriptions and inimitably delightful Hero of which the writer sympathizes, while differing from the moral they illustrate.

THE WEDDING BELLS.

CHAPTER I.

“Reuben and Rachel were a faithful pair.”

CRAIG.

“I THINK,” said Bessy, “we had better wait, and ask Dr. Merton’s opinion.”

“Wait! Now that’s just like you, Bessy,” pouted her friend Patty. “Wait and see! Wait and ask! Always wait! It’s the word I dislike more than any other that was ever invented, that word, Wait! George and I are quite of the same mind on that subject.”

“I know it,” replied her friend, quietly.

“I only want to know,” resumed the younger of

the girls, who was indeed several years younger than her graver friend, to pass a few hours with whom she had brought her work to Bessy's house—for Bessy and Patty were both sempstresses by profession, "I only want to know what good all your waiting has come to, or the good it ever comes to? Now I know so many stories, all true, which I could tell you, to prove what I say about waiting, and long courtships—if you would only not be angry, and take them to yourself—would you, would you, Bessy?"

And Patty, undiscouraged by look or word, proceeded to enlighten her friend with sundry veracious narrations as to the unhappy results of lingering engagements, with various illustrations and pointed allusions to feelings worn away, and changed by time and its vicissitudes—all very pertinent to the case in question. Some true, and all tending to prove, as plainly as words could prove, that Patty Owen would do very foolishly, as well as unsentimentally, to follow the over-prudent advice of her friend, Bessy Markham, in pausing and waiting, and wasting time in consideration, ere she decided to act according to

her good will and pleasure in her own affairs, whether matrimonial or otherwise.

“Well, Patty?” urged Bessy, mildly.

“Well, Bessy, what does all I have been telling you prove?”

“Not exactly to me, at least, what you and George fancy. In the first place, if the heart is of that nature, it will grow cold under whatever circumstances, and trials come, whether married or single. Then married people do sometimes, for their mutual sakes, keep their grievances to themselves. Sometimes we know it is not so; more's the pity. But in a long courtship, like Charlie's and mine, it seems the business of all people, married and single, to watch every change in the sky; or fancy, and predict changes, and look wise about it all. Humble as we are, we do not escape—we are marks for the nods, and suspicions, and guesses, and knowing shakes of the wisest, as well as the silliest heads amongst the gossips of the village; of the married, of whose number we are not, and the single and free, who own no fellowship with us. We belong to neither set, and are found fault