

THE ACADIAN

AND KING'S CO. TIMES.

HONEST, INDEPENDENT, FEARLESS—DEVOTED TO LOCAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

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No. 45.

THE ACADIAN.

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Rates for standing advertisements will be made known on application to the office, and payment on transient advertising must be guaranteed by some responsible party prior to its insertion.

The ACADIAN JOB DEPARTMENT is constantly receiving new types and material, and will continue to guarantee satisfaction as all work turned out.

Newspaper communications from all parts of the county, or articles upon the topics of the day are cordially solicited. The name of the party writing for the ACADIAN must invariably accompany the communication, although the same may be written over a fictitious signature.

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Impressions.

The touch of a hand, the glance of an eye,
Or a word exchanged with a passer-by,
A glance of a face in a crowded street
And afterwards life is incomplete;
A picture painted with honest zeal
And we lose the old for the new ideal.
A chance remark, or a song's refrain,
And life is never the same again.

An angry word from one lip is sped
Or a tender word is left unaid,
And one there is who, his whole life long,
Will cherish the brand of a burning wrong.

A line that staves up from an open page,
A cynical smile from the lips of age,
A glimpse of loving seen in a play,
And the dreams of our youth are swept away.

A friendly smile and love's embering spark
Leap into flame and illumines the dark;
A whisper "Be brave!" to our fellow-men
And they pick up the thread of hope
—again.

Thus never an act or a word or thought
But that with unguessed importance is fraught,
For small things build up to eternity,
And blazon the ways for a destiny.

SELECT STORY.

A Life for a Love.

BY L. T. MEADE.

CHAPTER XXXI.—Continued.

He felt wonderfully calm and quiet; he was not excited, nor did his conscience smite him with a sense of any special wrong-doing. Right or wrong he was going to do something on which no blessing could be asked, ever which no prayer could be uttered. He had been brought up in a house where prayers had been many; he had whispered his own baby prayers to his mother when he was a little child. Well, well, he would not think of those things now. The hour was come the moment for action was ripe. There was a little daylight, and during that time he meant to occupy himself with one last task; he would write a letter to his wife, a cheerful, bright everyday letter, to the wife for whose sake he was about to rush unbidden into the arms of death. He had a part to act, and this letter was in the programme. To make all things safe and above suspicion he must write it, and leave it carelessly on his table, so that the next ship they touched should convey it to her.

He took out a sheet of foreign note-paper, and wrote steadily. His hand did not shake, he covered the whole sheet of paper; his words were bright, contented; no shadow of gloom touched them. They were full of anticipation, of pleasure in the moment—of pleasure in the coming reunion.

The writing of this letter was the very hardest task of the man's whole life. When it was over great drops of sweat stood on his forehead. He read it steadily from beginning to end, however, and his only fear was that it was too bright, and that she might see through it, as in a mirror, the anguish beneath.

The letter was written, and now Wyndham had nothing to do. He had to sit with his hands before him, and wait for the gathering darkness and the ever-increasing gloom.

He sat for nearly an hour in his own cabin, he was past any consecutive thought now; still, so great was the constraint he was able to put over him, self that outwardly he was quite calm. Presently he went into the saloon. Cecily Harvey alone was there, all the ladies having gone in to dinner. She sprang up with a cry of delight when she saw Gerald.

"Mr Wyndham, have you come to stay with me? Why aren't you at dinner?" How white you look!

"I am not hungry, Cecily. I thought you would be alone, and I came out to see you. I wanted you to give me a kiss."

"Of course I will—of course I will," said the affectionate child, throwing her arms around his neck.

"You remind me of one of the little sisters I have lost," he said hurriedly.

"Thank you, Cecily, thank you. Be a good child, always. I would say 'God bless you' if I dared."

"Why don't you dare? You are a good man, a very good man, the best I know."

"Hush, Cecily, you don't know what you are talking about. Give me another kiss. Thank you, sweet little girl."

He went back again to his own cabin. The longing for compassion at this crucial moment had made him run a risk in talking so to Cecily. He blamed himself, but scarcely regretted the act.

It was certainly going to be a dirty night, and already the sailors were busy overhead. The good ship creaked and swung as she fought her way through the waters. The ladies loudly expressed their uneasiness, and the gentleman-passengers fought down some qualms which they considered unmanly.

Wyndham rose from his seat in the dark, pressed his lips to the letter he had written to his wife, suddenly he started, reeled a step and fell back.

There was no accounting for what happened—but happen it did.

Valentine herself stood beside him, stretched out her arms to him, uttered a brief cry, and then vanished.

He felt like a madman; he pressed his hands to his head and rushed on deck.

"Stand there, Mr Wyndham, there," said the sailor Loggan. "You'll be safe enough. Oh, yes, more than one wave will wash us. Shall I lash you to the wheel, sir? My life it would be safer."

"No, no, thank you."

The voice was quite quiet and calm again.

Certainly the night was a rough one, but between and under the loud voices of the stern, Loggan and his companion exchanged some cheerful phrases.

"No, sir, I ain't never feared."

"What if you were to go to the bottom?"

"The will of the good God be done, sir. I'd go a-doin' of my duty."

"What an odd fellow, Loggan; shake hands with me."

"That I will, Mr Wyndham. What are you doing with that rope, sir? It's cold, it's slippery—oh, the knot has gone, I'll call a man to tighten it, sir; let me—let me. You'll be over, sir, if you don't look out; we're going to lunge this way. Take care, sir—take care—for God's sake, take care!"

Wyndham took care.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The summer came early that year. The rector was a charming place in the summer, and on this particular bright day in June one of the numerous school-teasts was in course of preparation, and all the young Wyndhams were working with a will and energy which could scarcely be surpassed. The feast was in full progress; the village children consumed tea and buns, as only village children can. Augusta was refusing to help the babies to any more; Joan and Betty were half-crying because she snatched the rich currant buns out of their hands; Marjory was leading the most obnoxious members of her flock away to the other end of the long meadow, where they could play orange and lemons, nuts in May, and other festive games; and Lillias, as she helped to pack away the remnants of the feast, was answering some questions of Carr's.

"We ought to have heard by now," she was saying. "My father is a little uneasy, but I am not—at least, of course, I am anxious for Valentine. The suspense must be very trying for her!"

"When did your brother's ship sail?"

"On the 25th of March."

"And this is the 15th of June. The *Esperance* must have been reported as Lloyd's long ago."

"How stupid of me never to think of that," said Lillias, her face brightening. "But would they not put the arrivals in the papers? I have certainly looked and never seen it."

"You have probably overlooked it. I will write and inquire for you. The *Esperance*, even allowing for delays, has probably reached its destination some weeks ago. On the other hand it would be scarcely possible for you to have had a letter from your brother. Yes, you are right not to be anxious. I will go and have a chat with your father presently. Is Mrs Wyndham well?"

"I think so—fairly well. She is coming to stay with us next week."

"Carr strolled away."

"What a nice comfortable young man he is turning into," said Marjory,

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who came up at that moment. "Ah, yes, your face is brighter already for having had an interview with him. Whisper no secrets to me. I know—I know."

Lillias' clear brown skin was transfused with color.

"Don't be silly, Marjory," she said. "I don't mind avowing that Mr Carr is a comfortable person to talk to. He has just been removing my fears about Gerald."

"Oh, I thought you had no fears."

"Well, father's fears, then. He has been saying things to me which will remove my father's fears completely."

"That is right—Heaven be praised. You and the rector are nothing but a pair of old croaks lately. Hey-oh! I am perfectly weary of your long faces and your apprehensions. Thank goodness, Val is coming; she'll wake up a little."

Lillias opened her dark eyes.

"I did not know you cared so much for Valentine," she said.

"I admired her very much the last time I saw her. That was a month ago—she seemed so spirited and courageous. I used to think her something of a doll, but she's a woman now, and a fine one. Perhaps it's the thought of the baby coming."

"Or perhaps," said Lillias, "she has found out at last what our Gerald is."

"Beth, most likely," said Marjory.

"Anyhow, she's changed; and the funniest part is that that old man—"

"What old man, Marjory?"

"Don't interrupt me—her father. I always call him that old man—well, I think he's afraid of her. She doesn't put him the way she used, but she's very gentle with him. Oh, she's a good bit altered; there's something in her now."

"I suppose there was always something in her," said Lillias. "For Gerald—her lips trembled—"gave up so much for her."

"No more than any man gives up for any woman," said Marjory. "A man shall leave his father and mother. Oh, yes, poor old Lil, I know how you felt it. You always made an idol of Gerald. I suppose you'll marry somebody; you are so pretty—and I'm—"

"h'm—there's somebody waiting for somebody—there, I don't want to tease only when you do marry, my pretty Gerald in your heart."

"I won't marry until I love some one even better than my only brother," replied Lillias in a grave voice. "That

possible delay, she is at least that time overdue. The last tidings of her were from the Cape, and it is feared from their date that she must have encountered rough weather in the Southern Ocean. Nothing is known, however, and every hour we look for a cable announcing her arrival at Melbourne if not at Sydney. It is possible she may have been injured, which will account for the delay, but I scarcely apprehend anything worse. I ought scarcely to say that I am anxious; up to the present there is no real cause to apprehend anything worse than an accident to the vessel. Vessels are often a month behind their time, and all is satisfactorily explained at the end. I am now troubling you with regard to another matter. I do not want my daughter and your son's wife to be needlessly alarmed. It is most important that her mind should be kept free from apprehension until after the birth of their child. You kindly asked her to go to see you. Can you have her at the rectory at once? And will you send Lillias to fetch her? I know you and yours will keep all fears from her, and, poor child, she rests my face like a book.

"Yours faithfully,

"MONTRESS PAGE"

"Well, Lillias," said the rector, "well? He's a little over nervous, isn't he, oh? Vessels are often a month overdue. Eh, Lillias? But of course they are. Somehow I'm not nervous since I got that letter. I was before, but not now."

He rubbed his hands together as he spoke.

"It's summer now, and we'll have Gerald back before the next snow comes. I told the boy so when he hid me good-bye; he was a bit upset that night after you girls went to bed. Poor fellow, I had quite to cheer him; he's a very affectionate lad. No, I'm not nervous, and I wonder at Paget. But what do you think, Lillias?"

Lillias folded up the letter, and put it back in her old father's hand. Then she stole her arm round his neck, and kissed him.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

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