

THE ACADIAN.

HONEST, INDEPENDENT, FEARLESS.

Vol. II.

WOLFVILLE, KING'S CO., N. S., DECEMBER 28, 1883.

No. 6.

Poetry.

The Angels' Song.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace to the earth, good-will to men
From heaven's all-gracious King!"
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring:
Oh! hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low;
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,—
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
Oh! rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When Peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

The Telegram.

"I didn't say a great many words," said John Macklefresh in a glum, grinding sort of a way, "but I guess it'll cut."

"I wish ye hadn't writ so hard, John," said his wife, pleadingly. "Twas all the worse for bein' so short. Your brothers and I don't never mean to believe that Samuel meant to cheat ye out o' that \$200."

"What did he mean then?" snapped her husband fiercely, his square, dogged chin in the air as he combed his whiskers upward, a favorite action of his when he felt particularly pugnacious.

Mrs. Macklefresh turned one of the long stockings she was darning from heel to toe and back again before she answered:

"Didn't mean nothin', husband," she answered softly. "We're all feller-

mottles. Some of us is human some-time. Thought he'd pay ye, I expect, when he borryed it. Then he could'n't, that's all."

"I dunno' anything about 'couldn't's; I know about 'didn't,'" said John Macklefresh doggedly, still combing that perverse chin into the air. This I know, he's got the two hundred, and I hasn't, and I'll never—"

"Don't, John, dear!" interrupted his meek little wife.

"Well, bein' a deacon and a—"

"Christian" suggested his wife, seeing he skipped that hard word.

"I s'pose I can't say I won't forgive him. But they ain't no commands between the led's of that air Book about—"

"Twenty-five cents to pay" said a small, business-like voice at the door. Mrs. Macklefresh turned the rough, brown envelope over fearfully in her hands, trembling as people do, at telegrams. I wonder if the telegraph boys ever get used to it.

"Don't be bothering, Alice," said her husband, pushing her away, not ungently, though his words were rough as usual.

This is what he read when he had torn a thin outlet at the end of the envelope:

"Your brother Samuel died this morning. Come at once."

The Western Union Telegraph Company has a good deal to answer for—but then so have a great many other people. John Macklefresh did not swoon away on the door-step, or throw up his hands with a piercing cry, or any of those things. He mechanically took out a quater from his loose change pocket, careful even in this moment to count the pennies given in change, shut the door, handed the dispatch to his wife, and walked away to the window. It was only his heart fainted. This, then, had come to the man he had said, but a moment ago, he would never—

no, no, not that; he didn't say that—

Alice had stopped him, you know. Besides he was a deacon and a—Christian?

Alice had said so.

But then he couldn't forget. That was what he had been going to say when the door opened. The Bible don't ask that. Or, does, it when it speaks of God cast'ng our sins into the depths of the sea—behind his back—remembering them no more against us. Forget?

Forget?

Forget?

Forget?

Forget?

What was there to forget? He had lent his brother \$200. Might have given it to him and never missed it. Under his remorseful eye his great fields stretched away, white now with snow,—white as the soul God had forgiven, but yellow enough he knew as the summer came on, yellow as the gold they would bring to pocket. Those few poor, pitiful hill-sides of Samuel's! Why hadn't he given it to him right out and saved hard feelings? There was Johnny (named for him) wanting to go to college ever since he was out of petticoats. Suppose he had given it to him.

Misery—misery of remembering unkindness when too late! And then that cutting letter! Had it reached him before he died, or was it only his poor stricken brother's family that would read the brief harsh words?

He turned to his wife who sat holding the dreadful envelope, sad, doubting if she would be wise to speak yet to him.

"Get your things on, will ye," he said in a voice that sounded dry and harsh even to himself. "I'll be round with old Billy to the front door. Wrap up warm and take a soapstone. I'll have the buffaloes. It's mortal cold."

She was ready and waiting when he brought Billy around. The house could take care of its-elf. She locked it.

They had some sixty miles to ride. In the course of it his tongue became somewhat loosened, and he told in broken and jerky sentences into her sympathetic ear what little of the chaotic grief and remorse he was able to put into words.

"My brother, after all. Used to play together when we were little. Hum, hum."

A man grows very tender when he goes back to the days when he was "little."

"Bought me a pair o' skates once when I wanted some. Older than me—Samuel was always a making me kites and whistles and all s'en rattle-traps. Never could seem to get along. Big family? Yes. I ought to have helped him. Ain't a man livin' could scratch anything but moss off them rocks he calls a farm. I'll help the boy—see if I don't."

It was a long, cold ride. Mrs. Macklefresh wrapped the buffaloes higher and higher till at last she was quite ex-

tinguished in their folds, and her husband thought on drearily alone.

Almost there. The house is in sight. A long, long, unpainted affair. The old st inhabitant could not remember when its owner had had money enough to paint it. Here at last. "Who's that?"

Billy! You remember the old hitching post though it is so long since you've stopped at it. There hasn't been much visiting lately. Remember how brother used to rush out in his old blue coat,

Alice, and—

"Why, John! Why, John!"

Mrs. Macklefresh rose up out of her enveloping furs like a startled Esquimaux. She pinched her husband's arm hysterically, he in his turn, rubbed his eyes half out at the sight of the apparition that confronted them.

"Come in! come in!" it cried cordially. "You must be half frozen, both of you."

"How do you come here?" said John Macklefresh, fearfully, not stirring a step in answer to his invitation.

"How do you come, I should say," returned brother Samuel, for it was he, blue coat, brass buttons and all. Come, are you dead? You act so.

"No," broke in Mrs. John, who had found a tongue, "but we thought you were. It said so—the telegraph did. We came up to the funeral!"

And so, between hysterical tears and laughter and questions that nobody pretended to answer, they unloaded and got into the house. At least Mrs. John. The two brothers sidled off behind the barn. There John got hold of brother Samuel's hand and shook it silently and solemnly, while the strong tears ran down both their rugged faces. Neither offered or asked explanations. In that moment their hearts spoke plainly enough. "This my 'brother' was dead and is alive again."

In the house they went to work more reasonably to unravel the mystery. Mrs. John showed them the telegram.

"I see!" cried one of them with a sudden light, "there's a Samuel Macklefresh down at the Four Corners, and I did hear he was very low last week. He's got a brother John, too, but I didn't know he lived in your town. Now he won't get it. Ain't that too bad?"

The brothers now came in wiping.

(Concluded on Fourth page.)