

THE ACADIAN

HONEST, INDEPENDENT, FEARLESS.

DEVOTED TO LOCAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

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Owing to the hurry in getting up this Directory, no doubt some names have been left off. Names so omitted will be added from time to time. Persons wishing their names placed on the above list will please call.

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THE MAIDEN AT THE LOOM.

Weeps the scented clover-top; lowly hangs the passive moon;

Stands a lover in the cot; sits a maiden at the loom.

Diligently weaving, she mindeth not the bleeding tone;

All unheeded pleadeth he, all unheeded makes his moan.

Sharply ticks the kitchen clock: Quick the minutes slip away—

Bends she o'er the weaving block—he has gone for eye and eye.

Yet, unmoved, she weaveth still; she has lovers half a score.

What though one has left her ill?—she will have a dozen more;

She can spare him—well-a-day! Some must come and some must go;

Some must wander, some must stay. Now her shuttle moveth slow.

Thoughtful grows the marble brow—shall she let him thus depart?

But his step, faint-sounding now, echoes back upon her heart.

Droops the lily by the rill; slowly fades the passive moon;

Walks a lover o'er the hill; weeps a maiden at the loom.

—McCormack Rogers.

Interesting Story.

The Boys at Dr Murray's.

CHAPTER XVII.—Continued.

The color rushed out of Will's face as quickly as it came, and for a moment Grant was alarmed.

"There! don't be frightened to death!" he exclaimed, running to his friend's chair, and bolstering him up with pillows, "I thought you were strong enough to bear good news! Don't turn so white—look up!—Here, Will! Howth, you'll faint, at this rate!—and at good news, too!"

But Will was in no danger. He opened his eyes in a minute more, saying—

"Truly? O, Grant, you wouldn't joke about that!"

"No!—never. I've told you the truth and nothing else! Don't you rejoice? Aren't you glad?"

Will was silent, for how could he answer about that which, as yet, he failed to comprehend.

"An uncle!" he said, presently, "are you sure? Isn't there some mistake? How can you know?"

"O," said Grant, "that will take two hours to tell, at least. But I will."

"Wait," interrupted Will. "Did Mr Phillips write?—did the letter come while I was ill? or what?"

"Neither! It was your uncle himself that wrote. His name is Howth, like yours, and he has but just—but wait! I'll begin at the beginning, and tell you all! Can you bear it?"

"Bear it! I can't bear waiting!" said Will.

So Grant sat down and repeated the contents of the letter which had so astonished himself and the Doctor; how the wanderer had never heard of his nephew's existence till three short months ago; and how, in one week, he had been at Murray Institute; suppressing that part in which the uncle inquired respecting his nephew's studies, habits, etc., and concluding with—

"Now, Will, there's your good news! Now you know what Mr Phillips hinted at! And now let me congratulate you!" which was done with a hearty handshaking, and then Grant went down to dinner and left him alone.

When he came back Will had fallen asleep. But the happy days that followed,—days of anxious, eager, expectant waiting,—are quite beyond description. Sometimes Will could but just baffle his impatience for the week to end; and again he dreaded the moment when his relative was to make his appearance. But between alternate impatience and dread, the seven days flew away, and at nightfall of one of the lovely spring days, when the sun was lavishing earth and sky with the glory of its dying rays, one of the city coaches rolled up the avenue, and one of two eager persons at a window exclaimed—

"He's come, Will! he's come!"

Then a strange gentleman descended the coach rolled away city-ward, and taking a look at the sweet sunset, the hurrying elm-buds, the long brick buildings bathed in sunlight, the stranger came up the steps, and Grant hurried down-stairs to meet—Will's uncle.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

Dr Murray, it seems, had neglected to mention in his note to the inquiring uncle, that his nephew was an invalid. So, when Grant came running down stairs, the gentleman held out his hand, saying—

"Is this Will?"

"No, sir," said Grant, "Will is sick; and as he saw the faint shade that passed over the new-comer's face he added—'but almost well now! The Doctor ordered me to show you up to his room. This way, sir, if you please,' and Grant led the way upstairs."

He had had but one look at the stranger's face, and that in the failing light, but there was something in it that made his heart light and glad, and happy for Will's sake. They passed through the dusky upper hall, and quickly to the sick-room. Opening the door, Grant ushered him in, and pointing to the easy chair wheeled before the window, said simply, "This is Will; and feeling very much out of place, he managed to withdraw without being observed. Through the window the faint yellow radiance from the sky fell upon the easy-chair and its occupant, whose face was flushed and eager with expectation, and there, as he came into the clear light, uncle and nephew beheld each other for the first time. An eager, almost trembling voice cried—

"O, Uncle Howth! and a warm, kindly 'My boy!' was its answer; and then, with hearts too full, perhaps, for further utterance, both were silent. Pretty soon the kind voice said—

"And so you've been ill! I did not know that, or I would have come a week earlier. But you're better? you're recovering fast?" it said.

Will bowed his head for an answer, not daring to trust his tongue. How those words sank into his heart! how that kind tone thrilled him! He felt his uncle's eyes upon him, and it seemed to him that they were reading his very thoughts; but, though the gaze seemed neither stern nor severe, he had not quite the courage to raise his own.

"You must have been very ill," he continued, "to look so thin and pale. Poor fellow! it's a hard thing to be sick at school," he thought to himself then aloud—"But you must get well fast now! We're to be the best of friends, and I'm a capital nurse, and you've no idea how fast you'll grow strong! Come, look up to me, and laugh."

Will looked up, soberly enough, though his heart was brimful of happiness.

"Ah, you're the very image of your father!" of brother George. My dear boy," with a sudden tenderness of manner, "we've both of us been strangers and friendless quite too long! But it's all over now, isn't it? We two are all that is left, and we belong to each other. God forbid that I ever prove other than a father to you!" and with that the new uncle put both his arms around his nephew in one long embrace that betokened the fullness of his heart.

Whatever reserve or constraint there was in Will's nature, vanished at this, and uncle and nephew were firm friends at once.

The twilight settled softly around them without either noting it. The new uncle skilfully drew Will's story from him little by little; about his desolate, forlorn condition after his parents' death; how he was every-body's boy until Mr Phillips took pity on him, and placed him in Murray Institute; and then, with unwonted confidence and a frankness that was new to him, Will related the narrative of his school troubles, beginning with the accident that befell the Doctor's conservatory, and faithfully telling the story of his wrong doing at M. Chantilly's, sparing nothing, and faithfully revealing all the disgrace which he had brought upon himself. And then came the story of his struggle to win back the regard and esteem of his fellow-students; how everything seemed to beat him back and spread snares for his feet; and how, after he seemed to have gained his old footing once more, he was thrown back to his old state of bitter pride and despondency,

and ran away; and when he was brought back again, the illness came on.

"Now, Uncle Howth," said Will, as he concluded, "you see what a poor, worthless nephew you've come so far to claim."

"My dear boy," said the uncle, "I'm thankful that you're not ruined by your temptations and misfortunes! I'm thankful that I've not come home to find you a cast-away! We'll let all the cold, cheerless past be driven from our minds by thoughts of the brighter future. Come, you must talk no more to-night, at any rate!"

Then Will suddenly remembered his friend, and called—"Grant!—Where's Grant?"

"Grant?" said his uncle.

"Yes! the best friend that I've got, except—you. I should have been a poor miserable outcast by this time, if it had not been for him; for he's borne blame for me, and taken my part when I had a friend in school, and helped me with my studies, and taken care of me nearly all the time that I've been ill, and—"

But the particulars that Will entered into are too numerous to relate, and it will suffice to say that when Grant came in, thinking that it was high time that the lamp was lit, he was greeted with a warm pressure of the hand by the new uncle, and a hearty—"God bless you for what you have done!"

Then Grant, at his request, showed him the way to the Doctor's study, and after an introduction to the LL. D., ran back to Will's room. Will's face, bright and joyous, expressed what his tongue could not. "That's good and kind, and ready to forgive my faults! And, do you know?—his name is Will, too, and I'm to call him Uncle Will!"

Grant smiled at his friend's eagerness, and expressed his gratification that he was so well pleased.

"And now," he said, "you must go to bed, or we shall have to call in Dr Leigh again, I'm afraid."

Will complied very graciously, and went to bed.

In the study, Dr Murray and the new uncle were having a long conversation. The Doctor, bland and smiling, was giving some account of what he was now pleased to term—"Your nephew's boyish frisks."

"Well," observed the uncle when the Doctor had done, "Will has been telling me the whole story himself; and though I do not at all approve of passing lightly over such serious misdemeanors, I think the boy has suffered considerably for his folly,—more, perhaps than was for his good."

"Very likely," assented the Doctor, complacently, "for there are always those in such a large school who are not high-minded enough to overlook another's failings, and if possible, delight to torment him with sneers and taunts. But I am happy to say, Mr Howth, that your nephew found one friend among my boys, who was as noble and faithful as heart could desire."

"Yes;—Grant Westery. You see, Will has told me about all his affairs. I am very thankful that he found that friend, for, according to his own confession, he would have left school, and sought relief from his troubles in evil associations, but for him."

"Yes," said the Doctor, slightly pompous, "I fancy that the good effects of my training are visible in the conduct of that Westery. Indeed, Mr Howth, I endeavor to do my best to instill all that is good into the natures of my boys."

Mr Howth nodded.

"But," continued the Doctor, "your nephew is a little out of the ordinary run of boys. He has a very strong will, and quite violent prejudices, I assure you. He is very sensitive to censure or blame, but if one once gets the right side of his nature, as has Westery, for instance, he seems to be a very good scholar, and a great deal better than the average, sir. Altogether, I think you will find him a promising boy!"

Will's analysis of Will's character with a grateful inclination of his head in Mr Howth's direction.

The uncle acknowledged the compliment in his dignified way, that was quite equal to the Doctor's, and rose to go.

"Consider yourself at home, and welcome to our hospitality as long as you can make it convenient to stay!" said the bland LL. D.

"Thank you," said Mr Howth, "but I've made no plans yet. However, if I conclude to stay until my nephew recovers his strength, I shall be glad to accept your offer." And bidding the Doctor good-night, the uncle went back to his nephew,—the boy of "strong will" and "violent prejudices,"—whom he found had fallen asleep in his absence.

Grant was studying at the table, with his form between the lamp's rays and Will's face, and the gentleman sat down in the easy-chair by the window which the invalid had vacated. The sleeper's pale face was turned toward him.

"Ah," he thought, as he looked upon it, "perhaps the Doctor is right. You may have 'strong will' and 'violent prejudices,' and be over-sensitive, but you've got a warm heart and a kind one, and I'm not sure that the Doctor has those, even. But you cannot be so very disagreeable, since you are such firm friends, for he does not look like one who is over-fond of disagreeable comrades. Poor fellow! I think you must have seen some lonely, sorrowful hours; but now I'll make them as bright and cheerful, and full of promise as it is in my power to do. You shall have a home,—a happy one, too,—and all that can make you happy."

So mused and thought the new uncle as he sat in his easy-chair. His heart was very full as he remembered his own boyish days, when Will's father, a kind elder brother, taught him all sports, and mingled their studies, and helped him onward and upward. What blithe, merry days they were! When, in the years that had rolled over him since then, had he ever found the hours so full of joy and sunshine? a whole week's pleasure half so sweet as one moment of those blissful days?

And here was Will, as like that brother as another could well be, who had been desolate, as it were, since babyhood!

"O," thought the man, with a yearning heart, "the shall be my own!—dear unto me as life itself! We'll both be happier for it, I'm thinking."

And were they not? To Will it seemed almost a new world. How happy he was to have that strong arm ever ready to assist him;—to bear him up when he ventured to put feet upon the floor, to gently place the pillows under his heavy head, and smooth away all the wrinkles and vexations that attended the tedious process of getting well. But above all, it made him happiest to realize that this new joy was his,—that he had the right to call upon this ever-ready hand.

Mr Howth stayed a week at the Institute, and then went to Castleton to see his old friend, Mr Phillips, and attend to some business matters. When he came back, which was at the end of a long week, he brought Will a little packet of papers, which proved to be the deeds and title-papers of a new home in Castleton,—yet hardly a new home after all, for it was the old homestead where Mr Howth passed his boyhood, and where Will himself was born!—but which had been long in stranger's hands.

CHAPTER XIX.

GRANT'S BAD NEWS.

The happy days flew by so swiftly, that the weeks were a month before any one was conscious of the fact. Will, meantime had slowly gained in strength,—had taken two short rides into the country, and had even walked the length of the avenue. With the month's ending, vacation expired, and back came the crowd of students to books and study again. Of a sudden, the Institute that had been so sleepy and quiet, resumed its old habit of noise and confusion, and Harris, after his month of leisure, came to his round of duties refreshed and invigorated. Again the lower hall was noisy with the bustle of arrivals; the stairs resounded with pattering feet; the trunks went steadily up to their owners' rooms in an almost unending procession; their

teachers returned from their resting-spells, and soon the new term was fairly inaugurated. Will and his uncle were sitting in their room at nightfall of the first day, when the bustle and confusion of the returning host was greatest. Grant had gone down to welcome some of his friends. Presently there was the echo of quick footsteps in the hall, then the door burst open, and Ned Hall—landlubber and roaster-checked than ever, if that were possible,—rushed in, exclaiming—

"My dear Will, how are you? A whole month since I saw you last! It doesn't seem a week, though. But how are you,—better?"

"Yes! almost well. I'm glad to see you, Ned!"

"Glad! I rejoice to see you! How much stronger and better you look. Going to commence with us? But where's Grant?" and then, without waiting for an answer, he turned to the table and beheld—not Grant, but a strange gentleman.

A dead silence followed. Then Will laughed merrily at his friend's confusion, and exclaimed—

"My uncle, Ned! Go and shake hands with him."

A characteristic "Good gracious!" escaped Hall's lips, and he looked first at the uncle, and then at the nephew, and then—stood still. Will's merriment increased.

"But it's true, Ned!" he said. "Do as I tell you!"

And Ned obeyed, confused and embarrassed. Then he made the best of his way out. Raining down into the hall, full to overflowing with boys, he cried out—

"Good gracious, boys! Will Howth has got an uncle!"

"A what?" chorused a score of voices.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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