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THE ACADIAN

AND KING'S CO. TIMES.

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

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POETRY.

Once in a While.

Once in a while the sun shines out,
And the arching skies are a perfect blue.

Once in a while amidst clouds of doubt
Faith's fairest stars come peeping through.

Our paths lead down to the meadows fair,
Where the sweetest blossoms nod and smile;

And we lay aside the cross of care,
Once in a while.

Once in a while within our own,
We feel the hand of the steadfast friend.

Once in a while we hear a tone
Of love with the heart's own voice to sound.

And the dearest of all our dreams come true,
And on life's ways a golden mile;

Each trusting flower is kissed with dew,
Once in a while.

Once in a while in the desert sand
We find a spot of the fairest green;

Once in a while from where we stand
The hills of paradise are seen.

And a perfect joy in our hearts we hold,
A joy that the world cannot defile;

We trade earth's dross for the purest gold,
Once in a while.

SELECT STORY.

At the World's Mercy.

BY FLORENCE WARDEN.

CHAPTER XII.

Another anxiety had been growing up for me lately. Poor little Elsie found the restraint of life as a resident governess too irksome, and had taken lodgings a little way from her pupils, so that, after her daily teaching, she might have her evenings to herself.

She was working again at the South Kensington Art Schools, and again at Shakspeare. And at last came a pitiless letter, imploring me "not to be angry," but she could not go on living this "gray life," struggling on with the teaching which she hated and the drawing which would not pay—alone and without friends. There was only one way out of it, a way she would have taken long ago but for me; but now, she thought, being all alone, she ought to choose her own career; she wanted to—she must go on the stage.

It was a great blow to me, though I had long known the way her wishes went, and great as I knew the difficulties and dangers of the life of an actress, I hardly doubted her strength any more than her courage.

But yet I feared that the terrible publicity of such a life must rub the bloom off a woman's nature; and to think that Elsie might possibly become less feminine, less modest, was torture to me. And we should drift away from each other—that would be inevitable; and my heart sank. I had looked forward, vaguely but hopefully, to a time not far off, when we should "drudge" no more in the schoolrooms but have become practised enough in her drawing, I with my writing, to support ourselves together. That vague ambition of all to live in the world of wealth and wit and leisure, was only a dream; but this other, more modest one, had seemed within the reach of fact. The hope of it had been more to me than I had thought; for, now that it was slipping away, I felt desolate.

I wrote to her, entreating her to take courage, to wait just a little while, until I came back to her at Easter; I am afraid sorrow and disappointment made the tone of my letter bitter. It was harder than ever to be cheerful after this. I felt that the children must think me harsh, and the feeling made me more wretched still. Hubert noticed my depression, and must have put it down, poor fellow, to "that fellow Baruch"; but his compassion only made him shy, and he spoke less to me. Tom noticed my sulcastness too; but, not being in love with me, he made a better guess at the cause of it. One day, as I sat in a corner of the drawing-room after luncheon, with a book, he brought the illustrated papers and sat down beside me.

"I have seen them, thank you."

"As it doesn't matter. Bringing them was only a flimsy pretext for coming to talk to you. You have hardly spoken to me, or to any one else, and I have begun to be afraid lately, that the gloom of this horrible house, with its gloom of skeletons, is grinding the brightness out of you. May I ask for your confidence so far? Are they our troubles only which are

making you look so sad?"

He spoke so kindly that tears, which in my late maudlin state, had always been too ready, welled up into my eyes.

"No, no; it is nothing. I am only discontented and—"

I paused for a word, and he went on gravely—

"Is it anything about your sister?"

I started.

"Ah! I am not a conjurer, Miss Verney, but I know that you have only one sister, and that you are very fond of each other; so I guessed, not out of idle curiosity, you may be sure. Do you want a week's holiday to go and see her?"

I shook my head sadly.

"No, thank you; Christmas is not long past, and Easter not far off; I had better wait. It is only that she is lonely, and feels her life dreary; so I, her elder sister, of course have to give her a lecture on contentment with her lot. But it must be dull for a girl of nineteen, alone in lodgings in London."

"Good heavens! I should think so! Why do you let her live so?"

"What can I do? She likes even that better than what she calls 'bondage and slavery' as a resident governess. She gets her evenings free to work at the art-schools."

"It is too hard a life for a young girl; she ought not to do it. But what pluck you both have! I should like to see her and compare her with you."

"I hope you will not, and I should suffer horribly in the comparison."

"I am sorry to see that you are jealous, Miss Verney," he answered, with much gravity. "You have picked my curiosity. Look here—will you trust to my discretion, and let me give your sister a lecture for you?"

I burst out laughing.

"Mr. Godfrey, you cannot be in earnest. I have told you my sister lives alone."

"I will lie in wait for her, if you will only tell me where she is to be found. If you won't, I shall be forced to make inquiries at the art-schools, as if your sister were 'anted' for some crime. Without joking, I want you to entrust your next letter to your sister to me, instead of to the postman; and you can pack a box of camellias for her, which I undertake to deliver safely. And I swear she will think me the nicest postman in the country, as I shall come straight from you."

I hesitated a little at this strange request; but he insisted, and further asked me not to warn her of his coming.

"Don't spoil my fun, Miss Verney," he pleaded. "So I did entrust my next letter to his care, gave him the address in Onslow Square where she taught, and told him at what time she left in the afternoon. He got one of the gar deners to pack a little cardboard box full of hot-house flowers, and went off to town that morning with a laugh full of mischief at my still half-bewildered face."

Two days afterward I received the following letter from Elsie.

"MY DEAREST GUINNY,—How could you call Mr. Tom Godfrey rough and brusque? And how could you be so mean as to let me be taken at a disadvantage? If you had warned me, I should have arrayed myself in my neatest approach to gorgeous raiment—i. e., my black silk, now rather shiny at the seams—and done credit to the House of Verney. Instead of which he will certainly inform his friends that you belong to a family of rag-pickers. I had just left my sweet charges—Lily had been dreadfully naughty and tired some—and I was feeling cross as I walked down the square, when I noticed a gentleman snuffering along towards me, who seemed to know me by sight."

"I was aghast."

"You are looking elder-sisterly, Miss Verney, and you are manufacturing thunder for poor Miss Elsie for having been so frank. But it was not her fault. I gently insinuated that I thought you were too hard upon her, and she thought I knew more than I did; and still I think it was clever of me to find it all out, for your sister is quick of fence."

"So you have taken advantage of this unfairly won knowledge to encourage an ignorant girl to rush into all sorts of peril!"

"Ignorant! I have never met a young girl who understood the world better, and I assure you I neither discourage nor encourage her."

"She is not your sister, of course," said I bitterly.

"No, and Hubert and I are no your brothers, and that is why it is all the same to you whether we sink or

Your sister has sent you a few flowers; may I carry them home for you?"

"Oh, thank you, it will not trouble me to carry them! I am not going home now; I am going to have tea at the Museum to-night, and go to a lecture afterwards."

He asked if he might go with me, and if I would show him where the refreshment-room was, as it was so very convenient to know where to get a sandwich.

"Where not to get one, I thought I; but I did not say so."

For I did not want to send him away. But what would he think of the students? And what would the students think of him? It was impossible to hope that he would pass for my brother. I must say he looked nobly unconscious of my rags; but I am sure I must have looked conscious of his new gloves. Why, not a male frequenter of the refreshment-room ever knows his own number! How ever, we ran the gauntlet of fifty faces that I knew, and sat down to tea at one of the little marble tables. He ate three of those awful rolls, and drank two cups of that terrible tea. I am sure his digestion must be impaired for life. I was so sorry for him, for he was so nice, and he was so much interested in you. He asked if I would mind showing him a little of the Museum, as he did not know his way about very well; so I gave up the lecture and showed him everything. I took him into the 'opera-box,' to give him a 'bird's-eye view,' and he had a long talk in front of the monster violoncello; and he spoke so generously of you and the good influence you had over everybody, that if it had not been for a policeman, I should have embraced him. Then he insisted upon seeing me home; and, at the door, we parted with as fervent a handshake as if we had been friends for years. I have finished my 'Diary,' and am doing a head from the life. I will write again in a day or two, but have no time for more now."

"P. S.—I must tell you—inside the Museum we met Mr. Burns, waiting about with a book he had promised to lend me, and he looked so grimy, although he had washed his hands in honor of me, that just for the first moment—oh, Guinny, it was mean!—I thought I would not see him. But I repeated, and apologising to Mr. Godfrey, shook hands with him; and the poor, dear, kind little fellow looked sunbeams upon me with one eye and lightning and thunderbolts at Mr. Godfrey with the other; but I think the thunderbolts hit me instead, for I nearly cried to see him look so much hurt. He is always so kind."

I wished Mr. Burns at—the Royal Academy.

Tom did not often go to church; but he went the Sunday after this, and, returning, he walked with me.

"Miss Elsie is more cordial than you are, Miss Verney."

I looked up surprised. He went on quietly—

"I have promised to send all the clerks into the stalls at her debut, and to offer a junior partnership to the one who spelt the greatest number of gloves."

"I was aghast."

"You are looking elder-sisterly, Miss Verney, and you are manufacturing thunder for poor Miss Elsie for having been so frank. But it was not her fault. I gently insinuated that I thought you were too hard upon her, and she thought I knew more than I did; and still I think it was clever of me to find it all out, for your sister is quick of fence."

"So you have taken advantage of this unfairly won knowledge to encourage an ignorant girl to rush into all sorts of peril!"

"Ignorant! I have never met a young girl who understood the world better, and I assure you I neither discourage nor encourage her."

"She is not your sister, of course," said I bitterly.

"No, and Hubert and I are no your brothers, and that is why it is all the same to you whether we sink or

swim; is it not, Miss Verney? Just as little as you care for us, just so little do I care for you and Miss Elsie."

He meant what he said—that was Tom's strong point. I was softened, and presently I listened to what he called "reason"—i. e., an array of arguments to prove that every one capable of making a choice has a right to choose his own career, and will probably choose what is best for him.

What he said was not without both truth and wisdom;—it left me half convinced, but not half comforted.

To the great relief of his sons and myself, Mr. Godfrey had begun to get better. But, unluckily, Mrs. Godfrey, who had been cowed into submission by his late fierceness and irascibility, no sooner felt her dread of his outbreaks subsiding than she gave way again, like a spoiled child, to fits of peevish fretfulness, all the more violent from the restraint she had lately put upon herself. It was a dangerous indulgence. Her husband bore with her sullenly, and this state of things kept the onlookers, his sons and myself, in a state of painful tension. Not for long. The improvement in Mr. Godfrey was not yet of a settled kind; but the heavy black cloud which had hung over him of late rose sometimes and left him almost his usual self; and he would then go to the City or to the "meet," as usual. But, after a few days' relief, the shadow would pass over him again, and I had to resume my strange duty of chattering to him for an hour or two after breakfast.

One morning, when he was at his worst, and I was trying to persuade him to drive out instead of going to the City, Mrs. Godfrey came in. She too was at her worst, I could see, from the disconcerted look on her fair face. Her tact seemed to have forsaken her of late. I could not warn her; but I trembled for the effect of a fit of fretfulness on her husband's gloomy mood. Her opening took me rather by surprise—

"Are you always going to take up half Miss Verney's morning, Thursday?"

He turned to look at me—I must indeed have looked miserable between my nervous fatigue and my dread of what was coming.

"Poor little woman! I am too exacting. But she cheers me up so. She has been trying to persuade me to drive to Bromley, instead of going to the City."

"And of course you are going to follow her advice," said Mrs. Godfrey, with peevish emphasis.

"I believe it would do me good. Can you go with me? I want to have some one to talk to me."

"You know I am going to Mrs. Prior's."

"Then make it a holiday, and I will take Miss Verney, if she will come. We'll tuck the children in somewhere, and then no objection can be made."

"But hush the tears welled up into Mrs. Godfrey's beautiful eyes."

"Miss Verney—always Miss Verney!" she sobbed.

I knew so well that this absurd jealousy was only a freak, which she would laugh at and be ashamed of in an hour, that it did not trouble me much; but the effect of her capricious tears upon her husband was sudden and terrible. He started up, with clenched fists, then checked himself and only said bitterly—

"Very well—very right, Lilla! After letting this child wear herself out in trying to keep me from going mad—I know what a tax it is upon her, though I am selfish enough to accept it, and you are glad enough to get me off your hands for a little while it is time to warn her that I am a fascinating elderly Lothario. But there—what humbug! Never mind, child; I won't tease you any more to-day. I'll go to town. And"—turning to his wife—"I shall not be home to dinner." He left the room and soon after, the house.

I was so much distressed and frightened to see him go off in that black mood that at first I could scarcely try to calm the miserable sobbing wife. In a few moments she was begging my pardon, as I had expected, for her silly words, saying she was so wretched that she scarcely knew what she said, and trifles irritated her. After pouring out my sympathy—I was indeed

very sorry for her—I gently told her that, if she were to speak like that again, I should have to go away, as absurd as they were, no girl could stay where such things were said to her. She drew me to her then, absolutely trembling, and begged me not to think of it again, and not to talk of leaving her. And so, sadly enough, she let me go back to my work in the schoolroom.

CHAPTER XIII.

Neither Mr. Godfrey nor his eldest son came home to dinner that evening, and Mrs. Godfrey presently sent Hubert to ask me to come into the drawing-room.

"She is very low spirited, and it is of no use for me to try to advise her," said he. "It drives every idea out of my head to see her sitting there looking so wretched. She is anxious about my father. I hope to Heaven she won't provoke him when he comes home, for, to tell you the truth, he alarmed us all at the office to-day."

"There is nothing to be done but to try to calm and cheer her," said I. "You must second me, Mr. Hubert. Try to look as if you were enjoying your evening."

"I shall enjoy my evening," he answered promptly, looking down into my face as he opened the drawing room door.

He seemed to find two easier to amuse than one, for his spirits rose to boyish fun as he sat and chatted to us and, with a little help from the piano, which Hubert very kindly accompanied on the lutes, the evening passed away easily. When we went up-stairs, Mrs. Godfrey took me to her room, and said good night reluctantly. "It was clear that she was in fear of her husband's return, and living on a hope that he might spend the night in town. At last, as I was leaving her, she sprang forward, and half-whispered, with her eyes glistening and a tearful flash on her cheeks—

"Leave your door ajar, Miss Verney, and if I call—oh, do come!"

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

Mineard's Liniment Cures Croup in Cows.



Mrs. J. H. HORNSTYDER, 112 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, Cal., writes:

"When a girl at school in Reading, Ohio, I had a severe attack of brain fever. On my recovery, I found myself perfectly bald, and, for a long time, I feared I should be permanently so. Friends urged me to use Ayer's Hair Vigor, and, on doing so, my hair

Began to Grow,

and I now have as fine a head of hair as one could wish for, being changed, however, from blonde to dark brown."

"After a first attack, my hair came out in combats. I used two bottles of Ayer's Hair Vigor and now my hair is over a yard long and very full and heavy. I have recommended this preparation to others with like good effect."—Mrs. Sidney Carr, 1400 Regina St., Harrisburg, Pa.

"I have used Ayer's Hair Vigor for several years and always obtained satisfactory results. I know it is the best preparation for the hair that is made."—C. T. Arnett, Mammoth Spring, Ark.

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FOR ALL BOWEL TROUBLES

USE SKODA'S DISCOVERY, The Great Blood and Nerve Remedy