THE ACADIAN

AND KING'S CO. TIMES.

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

Vol. XIII. WOLFVILLE, KING'S CO., N. S., FRIDAY, JUNE 29, 1894. No. 45.

THE ACADIAN.

Published on FRIDAY at the office WOLFVILLE, KINGS CO., N. S.

TERMS:

$1.00 Per Annum.

(IN ADVANCE.)

CLUBS of five in advance $4 00.

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

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Editors & Proprietors,
Wolfville, N. S

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POETRY.

A Woman's Heart.

A woman's heart is a curious thing!
You may bruise and break it and roughly fling
The bauble away as a useless thing;
But the sunshine and warmth of a kindly word,
Will nourish the tendrils broken,
And newness of life within it stirred,
By a word so gently spoken.

O! woman's heart is of priceless worth.
The tenderest love within has its birth;
Go search and you'll find there is naught on earth
When once it is freely given;
That can comfort the sad, such joy impart,
Though with grief her own is riven.

But woman's heart is a foolish thing!
With never a doubt all its wealth 'twill bring
And freely bestow. To its idol will cling
Though the world may condemn. Ah! a woman's heart,
To reason will never listen;
She will peril her soul, scorn every art,
And barter her hopes of heaven;

Will stand unwearied, through night and day,
By the bed of pain; will tenderly lay
Her own life down; through years will watch and pray
For the soul of one, who could never know,
Could ne'er believe, except in part,
All the strength of love, all the joy and woe,
That lie concealed in a woman's heart.

SELECT STORY.

At the World's Mercy.

BY FLORENCE WARDEN.

CHAPTER X.—*Continued.*

I knew what he meant, and I held my breath.

"Are you afraid? Delilah wouldn't write about it, for fear you would not come back; but you must know; so I thought it better to tell you. There is nothing for you to be afraid of. You won't want to go away again, will you?" he went on entreatingly, as I was silent.

"No, I am not afraid, only very sorry," said I, with tears in my eyes.

"Perhaps it is not so bad as we think. He has been harassed and worried lately. But things are looking better now, and I dare say he will get over it. It will all go right now you are back."

It was of no use to argue that this was absurd; he did not contradict me, but only stroked his moustache and quietly laughed.

"I won't answer for the consequences if you take such long holidays next time, Miss Verney. I've taken to going regularly to the City—and I hate the City—to fill up the endless three weeks."

"I am very glad," said I; "it is much better than doing nothing."

"I don't know whether you would say so if you knew the City. And I don't do much good there. Tom says I make the worst clerk in the office."

I thought this very probable; but I would not discourage his new industry; and in a few minutes we were spinning through the park up to the house.

Every one seemed pleased to see me, and I was glad to be back at Hawkstone, in spite of the aching at parting with Elsie. Tom was waiting in the schoolroom when I came down to tea after my rapid unpacking. He took my hands in both his and squeezed them heartily.

"Glad to see you, Miss Verney. You have to thank Hubert's stupidity that I did not inflict myself upon you on the journey down. I suppose you have heard all the news from him?"

"Yes," said I, a little archly.

"Ah, he has been tattling about my affairs, of course!" said Tom, with a short laugh.

"May I congratulate you?"

He did not know how eagerly I longed for him to say "Yes."

"Well, you may in a few days, I suppose."

I stood perplexed. Had Lady Kate really thrown over Eugene, or was it possible that she was only playing with Tom, and had let the game go as far as this? My mind, now prejudiced against her, told me that it was possible; and I decided to summon courage to warn him, if it were not too late. For I thought I could guess what a terrible effect an unexpected rebuff would have upon his proud self-reliance. But the task was difficult. I had no right to betray Lady Kate's affairs, yet nothing less than an approach to the truth would do, I felt sure.

"Please don't think me impertinent or ill-natured; I have heard a report that she is engaged already."

He looked surprised at my gravity, then said confidently—

"Rumor has gone a little too fast, as usual; but Fact will soon catch her up in this case"—with a laugh. "You will be glad to see me 'settled,' like all the rest of my kind friends; won't you, Miss Verney? I won't say how much your influence has had to do in inducing me to settle," he went on, with sudden gravity.

I looked up at him in astonishment.

"Because I am abrupt and brusque," he went on, "and don't melt at a word, like Hubert, you think my hide is as tough as an elephant's. But you cannot know how strong the influence of a noble minded woman is to urge a man to make the best of himself. Don't look so meek and frightened. You must know what you have done for Hubert. During all these three weeks that you have been away, contrary to my expectation, I confess, I have never seen him anything but sober. I declare I thought him nothing but a lout till you came; and now I begin to think there is something in him. I hear Mrs Godfrey's voice; she is coming to welcome you back."

I thought her lovely face looked worn. She was very kind, and seemed glad to see me. So did Mr Godfrey, whose look and manner were more restless than ever.

A few days afterwards, when he and Tom were talking "shop" at the breakfast-table, I heard something that interested me deeply. It was about the Bouches du Rhone. The thing had been brought forward again, with good names to back it this time, and some prospect of success. The Stock Exchange was in doubt whether to take it up; Mr Godfrey spoke well of it—Tom was cautious. Then came what was the pith of the talk to me.

"That young Barach has astounding pluck; his audacity is really splendid. Fancy coming back to worry the thing into life again, with the defeat still fresh in people's minds," said Mr Godfrey.

"Then you think he is something more than the fly on the wheel?"

"Not a doubt of it! He went to the Count himself and almost persuaded him to look into it—almost, so far. He deserves to succeed. They call him Sisyphus Barach in the House."

"Yes; in the Foreign Market yesterday some fellow asked 'Who was Sisyphus?' There was a roar, of course; but half of them had to hunt him up in Lempriere, I expect."

I struggled against my thoughts all through that day in vain; they would fly back again and again to Eugene Barach. With all my heart I wished him good luck. I wondered whether he had forgotten me, whether this man, so strong in his energy and perseverance, was light of love; and I felt that it could not be. For the first time the thought sprang up in my mind that a will like his would make its way over the stoutest obstacles, and that the barriers between him and me must give way like the rest. Perhaps the great barrier was already broken; perhaps Lady Kate had set him free. If so, why had he not sought me out already? Of his power to find me, if he had the will, I had no doubt. I was saved from giving myself up to this anxiety by a nearer one.

Mr Godfrey was growing day by day more morose, gloomy, and restless. Of late it had been impossible to content him. At one time he would have the house full of visitors, and be almost boisterously gay. Then he would insist upon his wife's getting rid of these as quickly as she could, saying he wanted quiet; then his sullen irritability would bring the frightened, helpless look into Mrs Godfrey's eyes. At these times she would ask me to come and play the piano in the drawing-room after dinner; it seemed to soothe him, half stupefied as he generally was. His physician had prohibited "alcohol in any form," but he recklessly disregarded this caution.

Once, when I had gone to my room, my nerves highly strung with a fear of coming peril for him, which had seized me as I saw a look of vacancy come suddenly into his eyes, I fancied I heard a woman's shrill cry—Mrs Godfrey's—come along the passage from their room. It might be fancy; but it was only too probable. My heart ached for the poor little creature, at the mercy of a man who alternately neglected and tyrannised over her, and for the tyrant scarcely less.

He was ordered change of air, and went away for a fortnight to Paris, but came back in four days, fiercer, more sullen, irritated to frenzy by the grim welcome which met him. For Mrs Godfrey and Tom were talking and laughing with some friends, I was sitting half behind a curtain, and Hubert was lounging not far off, when the master of the house walked quietly in. And the surprise brought—not welcome, but dead silence, while his wife turned ghastly white and caught her breath.

In another moment one of the ladies, with tact which should have been readier, gave the signal for a general expression of delighted astonishment. But the harm was done. In that terrible first moment, as he stood there, a feared and hated intruder in his own home, I longed to spring forward and tell him I was glad to see him. I tried to look so when he espied me in my corner and came up to speak to me; and he seemed pleased.

The next morning, when he came down, he asked me to tell him what had gone on in his absence, and I gave him an account of the small daily events as brightly as I could.

"Go on," said he, when I paused.

When he had finished breakfast, instead of going away, he drew an armchair to the fire and told me to go on talking.

"I suppose you think I'm off my head, Miss Verney; but don't be afraid; I am not—yet. Never mind if you have nothing to say—just talk; it keeps me from thinking."

I dared not take up my work; I know instinctively that would irritate him; so, taking a chair by the window, I chattered on. Heaven knows what I said—whatever nonsense came uppermost—and it was not easy even to talk nonsense with the unhappy man's eyes fixed intently upon me, as if I held some charm to drive away evil thoughts or evil dreams.

So I sat for nearly two hours. I began to wonder restlessly when I should be free, for the strain was growing too hard, when he got up and came to me.

"You are a good little creature, and a sunbeam in this infernal dismal place. I must not keep you any longer." He patted my shoulder as if I had been a child; and, with a stretching and stamping, as if to shake of his melancholy, he left the room.

Of course I found the children in mischief; delighted at this unusually long play-hour, they had ended by a pitched battle, in the full enjoyment of which I fell upon and separated them.

But that day had brought for me a new duty. The long morning talk, which was all but a monologue, entered regularly into my day's work. Tom and Hubert were sometimes in the room, and then they helped me; but sometimes even their voices would jar upon him, and then they had to go. He would come down now early, now late; but I must always be ready with tea and talk; so Mrs Godfrey, thankful to be able to count on a short time of peace, sent the children every morning for a long walk with the nursemaid. He had been advised not to go to the City for a time; but advice was lost upon him.

"Ask the quacks what I am to do if I am not to go to the City, and not to hunt, and to sign the pledge. I'll kill myself my own way, and then let them prescribe for the body."

He hunted still; but, though the fatigue brought sleep, the exercise did not bring enjoyment. He had lost his nerve, his sons said.

"It brings a lump into my throat to see my father, who used to have nerves of iron, look twice at a fence, Miss Verney; it does indeed," said Hubert. "You know he came a cropper out with the hounds last week? Well, it happened like him. For the first time in my life I saw him looking for a gate; he noticed my curious look, and I saw his face grow dark. He made straight for the fence—it was an awkward place; the brute he was on rushed at it, and the governor got pitched over his head."

Tom was most uneasy about his father's doings in the City.

"If somebody would only persuade him to keep away from the office for a few weeks, it would be better for him and for the business too. I can do everything there is to be done as well as he. He does no good in the state he is in now—only thunders at the clerks and makes clients uneasy. Do you think you could do anything, Miss Verney? It can do no harm to try; he won't mind anything you say."

I naturally felt shy of making such an attempt; but one day I did suggest, as he got up to go to the City, that he should take a drive instead; and he followed my advice.

When he came back early from the City, he would often send for me and the children. I tried to interest him in them and encourage them to prattle to him, which was difficult at first, as they stood in awe of their father. But the eager desire for distraction, which was so painfully apparent to my older eyes, made him treat them with a new gentleness and playfulness which reminded me of Hubert. I even dared to tell him laughingly that he ought to mind the doctors orders, and not to drink between meals.

The change from the hearty, somewhat abrupt manner, which had seemed to denote self-reliance, to docility was touching and even alarming. I was glad of the little I could do to cheer him, and to avert the catastrophe which Tom confided to me that he feared—viz. that his father would break away from home altogether. This confidence shocked me.

"Does Mrs Godfrey know," I asked anxiously.

I had often been annoyed by her helpless shrinking from her husband, which irritated him and made her rather a hindrance than a help to his recovery. As well as I could, without being obtrusive, I had calmed her fear of him, and introduced her under the brightest colors into my talk to him. At my question Tom looked down and answered shortly and gravely—

"I believe she does. But you must not count on her to help keep him at home."

This insinuation, coming from Tom—who, to do him justice, was not fond of slander—startled me.

"I must speak freely to you, Miss Verney; for you, who can do most, ought to know all. Mrs Godfrey cares for nobody but herself. It is hardly surprising that the poor little characterless thing has got tired of being bullied; and she wants to be rid of her husband now that he has become her tyrant. He has been kind to her for years in his way, and it was the way of diamonds and indulgence, the way she liked best; but of course during the past two months she has had time to forget all that. He frightens her, and then she irritates him by little lies and prevarications. And now that her mother has put it into her head that we are going to fail, why, it is hardly worth while, you see, to continue to love, honor, and obey."

I looked up at Tom with a sharp glance of reproach; but it was not an idle sneer—it was the bitterness of his heart that had brought out the stinging words.

"Madam has set her heart—pardon me, Miss Verney; you have heard of such things—upon a sensation-scene in the Divorce Court. You must forgive me for speaking plainly; you may do something with her. Talk to her of her children, of her own modesty. No, no; use a stronger argument than those. Tell her that we are not going to fail, that riches are going to increase, that there will be bigger diamonds and older china than ever for her, if she will only wait a little," he burst out, in sharp scorn.

"Oh, you are cruel!" I cried.

"Miss Verney, I can't help it. If I were married to a woman like that, I would blow my brains out. Anything but that fatal want of truth; it paralyses a man. Heaven knows I pity my father!"

And this man loved Lady Kate! What would happen if he found her false? The thought flashed across me as he spoke, and haunted me when I was alone. Since the unhappy change in his father, Tom had developed rapidly, and he was now the real head of the house, at home and in the City. I had always admired his coolness and quick decision; but I had seen him too in his stormy moods, and I could guess the strength of the passion which would now and then break out so fiercely in the confidences he gave me. Did Lady Kate know what she was doing? Was Lady Kate off with the old love? Had Lady Kate thought that both her strong-willed lovers would be like wax in her hands, when she made up her mind which she preferred? She was growing into a Fate in my mind, with the threads of the lives of men and women in her capricious fingers. Whenever I thought of Tom, Eugene Barach, poor Hubert, or myself, like that of a baleful enchantress, rose in my mind the handsome face of Lady Kate.

CHAPTER XI.

I felt almost startled when, a few days after this talk with Tom, I received an invitation from Lady Kate to bring my pupils and spend an afternoon with her. When Tom heard of it, he said he would come home early and drive us over himself. He was back from the City soon after luncheon. I noticed that he had had his hair cut; and he said one of his boots pinched him, from which I opined that they were new. And he confided to me composedly, as we drove along, that he was "going to try his luck." Indeed, he looked as handsome and manly a suitor as even a spoilt beauty could desire. I believe I felt more anxious about her answer than he did. For my anxiety was threefold—for Tom, for myself, and—for Eugene.

When we drove up the avenue to the house, we saw a horse, with a man's saddle, being led from the front door to the stable; but my prophetic instinct failed me on that afternoon.

Lady Kate's mother had been dead many years, and she had a kind and convenient chaperon in the person of a rather dull-witted aunt, whom we found in the drawing-room. Kate was in the garden, the blundering old lady said, and she offered, with no great alacrity—she had a cold—to lead us to her. We thanked her, would not trouble her for the world, should find Lady Kate easily ourselves; and Tom and I sallied forth, leaving the children with her, by her wish.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

Those who suppose that the people of all China use the same language are badly mistaken. There are as many different dialects spoken in the Flowery Kingdom as there are in all Europe.

The world's coal fields already known and worked contain coal enough to last for a thousand years.

The Best Medicine.

J. O. WILSON, Contractor and Builder, Sulphur Springs, Texas, thus speaks of Ayer's Pills:

"Ayer's Pills are the best medicine I ever tried; and, in my judgment, no better general remedy could be devised. I have used them in my family and recommended them to my friends and employes for more than twenty years. To my certain knowledge, many cases of the following complaints have been completely and

Permanently Cured

by the use of Ayer's Pills alone: Third day chills, dumb ague, bilious fever, sick headache, rheumatism, flux, dyspepsia, constipation, and hard colds. I know that a moderate use of Ayer's Pills, continued for a few days or weeks, as the nature of the complaint required, would be found an absolute cure for the disorders I have named above."

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