

THE ACADIAN.

HONEST, INDEPENDENT, FEARLESS.

Vol. II.

WOLFVILLE, KING'S CO., N. S., JANUARY 25, 1884.

No. 8.

Doct'n.

OPPORTUNITY.

I hold it truth with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the year,
And find in loss a gain to match;
Or search a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

—TENNYSON.

FOR MOTHER'S SAKE.

'I'm done with him. I've said so,
and I'll stand to it. He's disgraced
himself and my good name, and I wash
my hands of him from henceforth and
forever.'

Mrs. Arnold stood in the cottage
doorway, the sweet bloom and verdure
of spring time about her, and listened
to her husband's angry words.

'Oh, James,' she entreated, 'remem-
ber, he is our son.'

'I shall make it my business to for-
get it from this hour; he is no son of
mine.'

'But James, James, think, what the
end may be. What if they send him
to State prison?'

'Let him go—he deserves it.'

The angry father strode away, a
hard, relentless look upon his face.

The mother stood there in the early
sunshine, her poor face white with ag-
ony, her hands clutched hard together.

She could see the village spires from
the cottage porch, and in the village
prison her only son lay. The trouble
had come about in this wise:—

Dick Arnold was confidential clerk
in the hardware house of Robinson &
Co., at a very fair salary. A promising
young fellow was Dick, bright, intelli-
gent, and as shrewd and clever in busi-
ness matters as he was genial and win-
ning in his social relations. But his
character had its weak points. In the
first place, he was fond of strong drink;
in the second, he had not the courage to
say 'No,' when temptations assailed him.

Many a scrape poor Dick was lured
into, many a headache he caused his
fond mother, many a sitting-down he
got from his over-severe father; but
he did not mend his ways.

Nevertheless, his employers were
fond of him, and trusted him, and
winked at his short comings.

'He's a fine fellow; he'll get his
wild oats in, and do better after awhile'
they said.

One afternoon Dick was summoned
into Mr. Robinson's office.

'Here, Dick' said that gentleman,
putting a sealed envelope into the

young man's hands, 'I want you to
take this, and deliver it to Mr. Selby,
in Covington. You know the place?'

'O yes, sir.'

'Very well, mind you keep steady on
your legs, my boy, and deliver it safely.'

Dick put the envelope in his breast
pocket, bowed himself out, and was
steaming on his way to Covington in
the next train.

He reached the little town just before
nightfall, and feeling somewhat tired
and thirsty, he dropped in a restaurant
for a drink. Ah, me, if there were no
such places, how much misery and sin
and shame would be banished from the
world. But they meet us at every turn,
these devil's dens, wherein men are dis-
poiled of their earnings and their honor.

Dick went in and stumbled right into
the midst of some three or four old
cronies. They leaped up and welcomed
him with uproarious delight.

'Why, Dick, old fellow, haven't seen
you for an age! Well met, pon my
soul! Here, landlord, brandy and
seltzer for four and be spry about it.'

The brandy and seltzer appeared and
vanished. Broiled steak and oysters
and crackers followed and then came
rum grog to wash it down.

By sunset poor Dick's weak head
was in a whirl. When darkness fell
his errand was still neglected, and he
sat in the little bar-parlor, looking on
while his boon companions played cards,
a hot bloom in his cheeks, an insane
glitter in his handsome eyes. 'Come
up Dick, and try your luck.'

'Don't care if I do, said Dick, and
at it he went.

His own purse was soon emptied, and
then, he never could clearly recall how
it all happened, but insane from drink
and determined to retrieve his losses,
he ventured to open the sealed envelope
and borrow a stake from the funds in-
trusted to him by his employer.

'I'll soon double it,' he thought, 'and
then I'll replace the amount.'

But he lost instead of doubling, and
then swallowed more brandy in his ex-
citement, at the invitation of his good
friends.

The end was that they made a night
of it and when the morning dawned,
poor Dick found himself alone, forsaken
by his friends, and the sealed envelope
and its contents both gone.

The shock sobered him. He got up,
and with his head beating like a trip-
hammer, walked back to his native vil-
lage, and seeking his employer, confess-
ed all that had happened. Mr. Robin-
son was greatly provoked, and at once
put the matter into the hands of the
law, and Dick Arnold was arrested and
sent to prison.

When the news came to his father's
ears, he refused to give his son either
aid or countenance.

'I'm done with him. Let them send
him to State prison; he deserves it.'

But the mother, her faithful heart
going out in yearning pity for her err-
ing boy, stood and pondered how she
might save him.

In a little while she turned, and en-
tering the pleasant cottage, went slowly
up stairs, and into the chamber where
her daughter Rose sat sewing on her
bridal robes.

Sitting down beside her, she told her
the story of her brother's trouble.

Rose understood her mother's mean-
ing even before she could put it into
words. There was a little box on the
table, which contained her marriage
dowry. Little by little the father and
mother had hoarded it in their only
daughter's name, that she might not be
dowerless on her wedding day.

Pretty Rose took the box and put it
in her mother's hands.

'Take it, mother,' she said, 'and do
with it as you think best.'

'Heaven bless you, my daughter, but
it is hard to deprive you of your mar-
riage dowry, and your wedding day so
near.'

Rose's fair cheeks bloomed like her
namesakes in the little garden below,
and the blue eyes lit.

'Never mind that, mother,' she said.
'Charlie will be willing to take me with-
out the dowry—I am sure of it.'

So Mrs. Arnold took the box and
went her way. Before the day ended
she had refunded the money to Mr.
Robinson, the charge was withdrawn,
and her boy was out of prison.

'I can't go home, mother. Father
does not want me; he told me so,' said
Dick, as they stood under the green
locust trees, beyond the cottage lawn.

'Let me go out into the world and work
my way up, and then I'll come back.'

She put her arms about his neck and
looked up at him with streaming eyes.

'Oh, Dick, my boy, my darling, you
will do better,—you will, Dick, for
mother's sake.'

'Yes, mother. God being my helper,
I will. I've caused you so much trou-
ble, and you have always been good and
gentle to me. Forgive me now; I'll
come back and be a comfort to you yet.'

My boy I forgive you, and I believe
in you. Here Dick, and she drew a
purse and a worn little bible from her
bosom, 'take these. You may need
the money; the Bible is mine, Dick—
mother's Bible, don't forget that.

Mother has read in it every day and
night for the last thirty years. You'll
think of that, Dick, and you'll read
it for mother's sake.'

'Yes, mother.'

'Every night, Dick, no matter where
you may be, you'll read a chapter, and
get down on your knees and pray—the
little prayer mother taught you, if
nothing else? Promise me, Dick.

Every night at ten o'clock, at the hour
I shall be on my knees praying for you,
my boy. I shall never miss a night,

while I live; promise me you won't,
Dick. Promise me you'll do it, for
mother's sake?'

'Dick tried to promise, but let his
handsome head drop down on his
mother's bosom instead, and wept there
like a child.

As the sun set they parted.
'Good-bye, my boy, and God bless
you. You'll keep your promise, for
mother's sake.'

'Yes, mother, with God's help.
Good-bye?'

Across the fields, with the little Bible
in his bosom, and his bundle on his
arm, went poor erring Dick, and down
the pathway Mrs. Arnold returned to
the cottage.

'I'll never give up my boy,' she said.
My prayer shall prevail with God for
him. He will return to us yet and be
the comfort of our old age.'

But her husband, stern and remorse-
less at heart, laughed her to scorn.

Month followed month; summers
came and went; harvests were sown
and gathered in; winters heaped their
white snows, and spring sunshine came
and melted them.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Arnold, busy with
her daily tasks, did not lose hope.

Pretty, dowerless Rose had married
and gone to live in a happy home of
her own, and as the years came and
went the master of the cottage, enfee-
bled and made helpless by disease, sorely
repented of his harsh severity to his
only son.

'If I had dealt kindly with him, he
might have done better,' he said in his
remorse; 'but I drove him from be-
neath my roof with reproaches, and now
in my old age I am childless and deso-
late.'

The mother held her peace, but ev-
ery night at the appointed hour she
knelt down and prayed for her wander-
ing boy.

Just about that time the whole
country was ringing with the renown of
a young reformer—a man of talent and
genius, who was spending the best days
of his manhood for the good of his
fellow-men. His eloquence, it was
said was irresistible, and thousands of
erring sinners was flocking after him as
they followed the Master of old.

News came at last that this wonder-
ful man would deliver a lecture in the
village. Preparations were made, and
expectations were on tiptoe. On the
appointed night Mrs. Arnold went with
the rest.

The speaker took his stand, and an-
nounced the subject of his discourse.
It was:—

'FOR MOTHER'S SAKE.'

The poor mother, her heart yearning
for her absent son, looked on and lis-
tened, blinded by swift flowing tears.
She could scarcely see the tall form

(Concluded on Fourth page.)