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THE ACADIAN.

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Newsy communications from all parts of the county, or articles upon the topics of the day are cordially solicited. The name of the party writing for the ACADIAN must invariably accompany the communication, although the same may be written over a fictitious signature.

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—Rev. P. M. Macdonald, M. A., Pastor. St Andrew's Church, Wolfville: Public Worship every Sunday at 11 a. m., and at 7 p. m. Sunday School 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting on Wednesday at 7.30 p. m. Chalmer's Church, Lower Horton: Public Worship on Sunday at 3 p. m. Sunday School at 10 a. m. Prayer Meeting on Tuesday at 7.30 p. m.

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ST JOHN'S CHURCH—Sunday services at 11 a. m. and 7 p. m. Holy Communion 1st and 3d at 11 a. m.; 2d, 4th and 5th at 8 a.m. Service every Wednesday at 7.30 p.m.

REV. R. F. DIXON, Rector.
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WOLFVILLE DIVISION S. of T. meets every Monday evening in their Hall at 8 00 o'clock.

CRYSTAL Band of Hope meets in the Temperance Hall every Friday afternoon at 3.30 o'clock.

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The Evening Vision.

Along the west the day is dying,
Athwart the world the shadows dwell,—
Comes touch of fingers, softly, gently lying
Upon my heart, stilling its light-time crying;
And whispers in the gloaming, "It is well!"

I feel a Spirit Presence, hovering
Some where, some how, by my side,
I see eyes, sad but full of perfect loving—
A diadem of thorns, lips in compassion moving,
I see the Christ, the guiltless, crucified.

Oh Love, oh Life divinely fair,
After Thou reached Thine Heavenly rest,
Through blasts of earthly sin, and strife, and care,
Again returning from Thy glory there,
Teach us for ever more, what is, is best.

The Master of the Mine.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

CHAPTER XXIV.—*Continued.*

"Measter Hugh," said John, "what da 'ee mean to daw, sir?"

"I shall wait here till Annie gets better," I said; "then I shall persuade her to come home. You will be back again on Thursday, won't you?"

"Yes; and mayhap she'll be well enough by then to come. We'll make her a bed i' the awld waggon and take her careful, Measter Hugh!"

Never in my life had I thought so much of the honest-hearted carrier as now, when I saw him shedding tears for my poor cousin. I took his hand and grasped it warmly.

"God bless you!" I said.

He turned his head away, and drew the back of his hand across his eyes; then he turned again to me.

"Measter Hugh," he said, "I dawn't mind tellin' you, 'cause you ain't like some as 'ud laugh at me. I'm a big rough fellow, and a bit stupid p'raps, but I've got a heart like the rest on us; and that dear lass found her way to it, and made me love her, as I can never love anybody in my life again. She don't know this any more than you did afore this minute. She never thought anything o' me, and I didn't blame her for it; for twarn't no fault o' hern; but I went on lovin' her all the same. I thought, Measter Hugh, she might ha' married you; and if she had, and had ha' been happy—why, I should ha' been contented. But when she went away it a'most brawke my heart."

"It was a blow to all of us. God grant better times are in store."

"Measter Hugh, I ain't told you this to-day for the sake of talking. I want you to understand that if I can help her paw, when she wants help, 'tis all I ask for."

So saying, he opened his purse, took out a few sovereigns, and offered them to me; but I shook my head.

"I don't want it," I said. "I have still got some of my own left—when that is done, it will be time enough for me to come to you. Poor Annie shall be well looked after, be sure of that; and I hope that by Thursday I shall have her well enough to take her home."

Looking rather crestfallen, he put the money back into his pocket, and turned to go.

"Very well, Measter Hugh," said he; "I'll come again on Thursday."

He had given me a warm handshake, and had got half-way down the stairs, when I called him back.

"If you are calling at the cottage," I said, "don't tell them anything of this. Don't let them know that Annie is here, or that you have seen her. It will be better to keep the secret yet."

If he could not induce me to take money, John Rudd determined to render assistance in some other way. About half an hour after he had left, a doctor arrived to see Annie; then came several bottles of wine, and some fruit; and I had strong reason to suspect that the landlady had not been quite so averse to accepting his money as I had been. At any rate, she was unstinting in her attention to Annie, who rapidly recovered.

When John Rudd came on the Thursday, he found her sitting up in bed, able to recognise him and talk to him, but still too weak to walk into the adjoining room. Nothing was said about going away that day; but I judged that she would be able to make the attempt on the following Monday, the day of the carrier's return.

On the Sunday morning, therefore, when she had left her bedroom, and sat in the arm-chair by the sitting-room fire, I took her poor thin hand in mine, and said,

"Annie, my dear, do you feel strong enough to take a journey?"

For a moment she turned her frightened eyes on mine.

"A journey, Hugh?" she asked, faintly.

I saw her cheeks grow very white, but I knew that what I had to say must be said; so I went bravely on.

"John Rudd will be here to-morrow," I said, "and I want to take you home."

It was pitiful to see her face. "Oh Hugh! I can't go!" she cried. "I can't face father, it would kill me! You go, and leave me—try to forget you have seen me, and they will never know."

I saw it was a hard task I had before me, but I tackled it as bravely as I could.

"Annie," I said, "the time has come when you must tell me the whole truth. When we met in London, you said you were a married woman. Was that true, or false?"

She shivered, and turned away her face.

"Don't ask me, Hugh! don't!"

But I persisted, and at last she replied:

"When I told you, I thought it was true. He said I was his wife. We went before a sort of lawyer together in Plymouth, and though I prayed sore to be wed in church, he said it was the same thing. Afterwards, when we quarrelled, he told me that the man was in his pay, and that it was no marriage at all. That was why I left him, and went out into the streets to starve."

"Now, answer me," I cried, "who is the man who deceived you? If he is living he shall make amends!"

"Too late, too late!" she cried.

"What!" I exclaimed, startled by her tone, and thinking of the murdered man. "Is he dead?"

"No, Hugh; he is living!"

"His name? Tell me his name!"

"Hugh, dear, I cannot—at least not yet. But I trusted him, and he deceived me. He made me swear to keep his secret for a time, saying that if folk knew of our marriage it would be his ruin. At last, when I could bear suspense no longer, he told me the truth. With the aid of him that's dead, he had deceived me!—our marriage was all a pretence! Oh, God help me! What shall I do? What shall I do?"

My head whirled; I had a sore struggle to collect my furious thoughts. At last I mastered myself, and cried,

"You must come home with me. You must tell the truth to those that love you. If not—"

She clung to me, looking up into my angry face.

"Hugh, you won't ask me! Promise me that!"

I did not answer her, I could not trust myself to answer. I was thinking of all the evil that had already happened, of the dead man, of the hand which, in a moment of madness, had laid him low. I was thinking, too, of Madeline.

At last I turned to my cousin.

"You must leave it all to me," I said: "Now go and lie down; I will call you early in the morning."

It was a wretched night for both of us. I walked about the sitting-room hour after hour, and listened to Annie's stifled sobs and moans from the adjoining chamber. In the morning I called her according to promise. She looked deathly pale, but tolerably composed, and when John Rudd knocked we were both ready to go. When we got to the waggon, we found that there was a nice bed made up for Annie, and near to it was a basket full of things for her to eat.

I shall never forget that journey; to me it seemed interminable, but to poor Annie it ended over quickly, I fear. At starting, she took her place inside the wagon, upon the bed which John Rudd had made up for her, and there she stayed until the end. As we drew nearer and nearer to St. Gurlott's, her agitation increased terribly; and when at last John pulled up within a hundred yards of the cottage-gate, she began to cry pitifully, and beg to be taken away. I soothed her as well as I could, and, having left her in the van, I walked on to the cottage to prepare the way for her reception. I entered the gate, went softly up to the cottage, and looked in at the kitchen window. It was quite dark outside; but inside the kitchen lights were burning, and a fire was blazing on the hearth. Before the fire, seated in his arm-chair, was my uncle. His face looked whiter than ever, his hair was like snow; on his knee he held the big family Bible, which he was reading, tracing the lines with the forefinger of his right hand. I looked around the kitchen for another figure—that of my aunt. She was not there. I hastened back to the wagon, lifted out Annie, more dead than alive, poor child; and half-led, half-carried her to the kitchen door.

"Go in, Annie," I whispered, "your father is there!" Then I opened the door, and leaving her on the threshold, returned to my post of observation at the window to see what took place.

For a moment Annie swerved and half-turned, as if about to fly, then she laid her hand upon the door and sobbed "Father!"

I saw my uncle start nervously and drop the book upon his knee; then he rose, and, with a piercing cry of joy, held forth his arms.

What followed I don't know. I rushed to the kitchen door, and when I reached it I saw poor Annie lying half-fainting upon her father's breast.

CHAPTER XXV.

It was a sight to bring tears to the eyes of a strong man. The poor old father—white-haired, haggard, trembling like a leaf, and feverishly clasping the child who had been the darling of his days. He looked into her face—he smoothed back her hair with his wrinkled hand—he murmured her name—while, sobbing and moaning, she clung to him and entreated his forgiveness.

I stood looking on, almost terrified. As I did so, my aunt brushed past me, and, entering the kitchen, uttered a cry of surprise.

"Annie!"

The tone of her voice was harsh and cold, and her face was stern indeed.

Releasing herself from her father's embrace, my cousin turned to her mother with outstretched arms.

"Yes, mother! I have come back!"

But my aunt, with the same stern expression, repulsed her, and the poor girl fell back with a pitiful moan.

"Mother, mother dear? won't you speak to me?"

"Bide a bit! Wha brought 'ee? Did you coom back alone?"

Annie turned her eyes pitifully toward me.

"We came home together," I said, stepping forward.

"Let me look at 'ee!" cried my aunt, suddenly approaching her daughter, who hid her face and sobbed. "What, can't 'ee look your mother in the face? Naw? Then away wi' 'ee for you'm na daughter o' mine!"

My uncle, who had sunk trembling into a chair, looked up, amazed, as she continued,

"Look at your father! Look at the shame and trouble you'm brought upon him! A year ago he were a happy man, and I were a happy woman; but now—look at us both now! Better to be dead and buried than to coom back yer, wi' thy shame upon 'ee, bringing sorrow and disgrace on folk that once held their heads up wi' the best!"

I was lost in amazement at my aunt's severity; for never for a moment had I anticipated such a reception. Hitherto, indeed, my uncle had seemed to take the affair most to heart, and it was his attitude toward Annie that I had most dreaded. But the parts of the two seemed reversed—my aunt was the stern man; my uncle, the gentle and forgiving woman.

"Come, come, aunt," I said. "You must not talk to Annie so. There has been trouble, no doubt; but it is all over now, and everything can be explained."

But my aunt was inflexible.

"What has she been all this while, tell me that? She left o' her awn free will, and she comes back o' her awn free will; but till I know what she ha' done, I'll ne'er sit down or break bread wi' her again."

"I told you how it would be!" cried Annie, addressing her words to me, but still hiding her face. "Let me go! I wish I had never come!"

And she made a hurried movement toward the door, as if to fly. Seeing this, my aunt relented a little; though her manner was still harsh enough.

At this moment, my uncle rose.

"Annie," he said, "dawn't heed mot her. She dawn't mean it, my lass—she dawn't mean it! Whate'er you'm done, this is your home, and you are our child—our little lass." Then, turning to his wife, he added, "Speak to her, wife! speak kindly to her! Maybe she'll tell 'ee all her trouble."

His broken tones, so pleading and pitiful, melted the mother's heart. With a wild cry she sank into a chair, the tears streaming down her face.

"Oh! Annie, Annie! may the Lord forgive 'ee for what you ha' done!"

Suddenly mastering herself, my cousin uncovered her face and looked at her mother. Then, drying her tears, and speaking with tremulous determination, she said,

"I know I have been wicked. I know I should never have gone away. But if you have suffered, so have I. I never meant to bring shame and trouble upon you or father; I loved you both too well for that. But if you can't forgive me, if your heart is still bitter against me (and God knows I don't blame you, for I deserve it all), I had better go away. I don't want to be a trouble or a burden. I have made my bed, I know, and I must lie upon it; and if I had not met my cousin Hugh I should never have come home."

"Tell me the truth, Annie Pendragon," said my aunt. "Wha took thee from home? Was it him as is lying, dead and murdered, in his grave?"

Annie opened her eyes in wonder. My uncle started, and then, curious to say, averted his face, but stood listening.

"What do you mean, mother?"

"What daw I mean?" echoed my aunt, sharply. "What should I mean, Annie Pendragon? Folk say you did leave St. Gurlott's wi' a man. Were that man him that is dead?"

"I have already asked her that question," I said; "and she denies it."

I saw my uncle start again. He was still eagerly listening.

"No, mother," said Annie firmly.

"Naw? Ye were seen together i' Falmouth; all the folk think the overseer took 'ee away fra' home."

"Then it is not true."

My uncle turned; his face, which had been troubled before, now ghastly beyond measure.

"Annie, Annie, my lass!" he cried. "Dawn't deny it! Speak the truth, and we'll forgive 'ee! It were Measter Johnson who brought thee to your trouble—say it were, Annie, say it were!"

His voice was pleading and full of entreaty. I alone of all there, guessed why. But Annie shook her head sadly, as she replied,

"No, father. Him you speak of was nothing to me, and never harmed me by word or deed."

"John Rudd saw ye together i' Falmouth," cried my aunt; "and after that, the overseer were away for days. Why will 'ee lie to her that bore 'ee, Annie Pendragon?"

"I am not lying, mother. I am telling you the Gospel truth. Father, she won't believe me! But you will, won't you? God knows I would not deceive you, after what has past!"

But my uncle had turned away, like a man mortally wounded, and, leaning against the lintel of the window, was looking wildly out.

"Dawn't speak to me!" he said; "dawn't, my lass! I can't bear it!"

I thought it time to interfere; so, gently taking Annie by the hand, I led her to my aunt, and made them shake hands and kiss each other. Thus some sort of reconcilement was established, and presently the two women, mother and daughter, went upstairs together. My hope was that, after that, recriminations would cease, and some sort of peace be established in the unhappy house.

Directly we were alone, my uncle turned and faced me. I saw that he was still greatly agitated, and fancied that I guessed the cause.

"Hugh, my lad," he said, "I knew I can trust 'ee. Ever sin you was a little lad, you'm been a'most a son to me."

With the tears standing in my eyes, I wrung his hand. I pitied him, with my whole heart and soul; for indeed I loved him like a son.

"Hearken then, Hugh, my lad. Did you hear what poor Annie said about hersen and the overseer?"

I nodded; and he continued,

"Be it truth, think 'ee?"

"I think so—nay, I am certain."

"There were nawt between them?"

"Nought. Annie would never have looked at such a fellow. Lord forgive me for speaking so of one that's dead!"

He drew his hand across his brow, where the perspiration stood in beaded drops.

"I think you'm right, lad; I don't think my Annie would lie. But it has allays been on my mind, d'ye see, that Johnson 'ticed her fro' her home. God forgie me if I ha' been mistaken! More than once, lad, dreaming like, I ha' fancied—I ha' fancied—that overseer hissen confessed wi' his awn mouth that he were to blame; and only last night abed, dreaming like again, I thought I had my fingers at his throat.....and tried to take 'un's life! I might ha' done it, I might ha' done it, if what I thought were true!"

As he spoke, he raised his voice to a cry, and a strange mad light, such as I had never seen there before, began to gather in his eyes.

Terrified at his words, I moved to the kitchen door, and closed it quickly.

"Hush! Uncle, don't speak so loud! Some one may hear you!"

He was quiet in a moment. Subdued and gentle, he let me lead him to a chair. Then our eyes met, and though we exchanged no word, he saw that I guessed his secret, and, groaning painfully, he buried his face in his two hands, and called on God to forgive him for his sins.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

"A notion has," says Commissioner of Agriculture Wieting of New York, "prevailed to some extent heretofore to the effect that education unfitted a person for farm life; that as a result of his education, he was bound to enter into one of the professions. The idea is fast becoming one of the past among New York farmers, as we now have in our state many young men who are well educated who are devoting their knowledge and energies to the work of farming and who take as great pride in it as in a profession."

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