

By IAN MACLAREN

what

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"Do you like this kind of thing, Crashaw? ' for the drawing room was full and they were standing in the hall. "Those religious conversations. in evening dress, with supper following, are rather a variety entertainment, even without Tootle on 'Amusements the Dry Rot of the Christian Church.' Wasn't that the title?"

"More on less; it couldn't be much worse at any rate, and for my part I'd rather do an hour in the treadmill than listen to that talk. Just hear him, Jack; he's in h's glory on dancing.

"Do not suppose, my friends," an oily voice was heard within, "that all dencing is sinful, for David danced with much ac-It is only what may be called, if ceptance. I be permitted such a word, promiseuous dancing between exces that is condemned, not the joyful movements of a spiritual man. Many, indeed, would like to see again the separate male dance. * * *" "lan't that good, Jack. And yet they say

these people have no sense of humor. How our host can stand Tootle parses me, for he must know his record, "What was it? O, he had business

baby linen or something like that—and falled for 18 pence in the pound. Then he was secretary 10 some institute or other, and got into difficulty with his accounts. Now our host and a few other excellent men keep him to lift religion—rather ma irony." irony.

'Do you see the smile on his face? That is one of his points, and is much admired. He has got hie whole expression arranged

to a religious grin, and I'm told that they advertise him as 'The Smiling Evangelist.'' ''How in the world, Crashaw, is a man like Arkwright taken in by such a trans-parent humbug? Arkwright is narrow sold

parent humbug? Arkwright is narrow prid bigorid, but he's as straight as the day. You remember how he paid up his failure, with 5 per cent interest?" "That's so, but you know his etory, a self-made man who has had no culture and doesn't read anything beyond his bible and the 'wool spinner,' so he's just a prey to tho whole race of Tootle. There, he's at it apair." Again

"A dear sister present asks whether know of any edifying Sabbath game for young people. My dear friend will excuse young people. My dear friend will excuse me if I suggest that exercise would be a better word than game. Young people's Sabbath 'exercise,' let us say,'' which was received with sympathetic murmurs, "Well, you must not think it presumptuous if I mention a simple, but I hope not un-profitable fittle exercise which a dear child of me near Invested and which has been of my own invented, and which has been found helpful by many parents. We call it scripture quartets, and it is, I think, in-genious. Each card has a bible character on it, and four make a set. You ask abou on it, and four make a set. You ask about till you get Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jo seph, that is, the patriarchs. Then there are the bables of the bible and the beasts. guite a nice variety." "What brought me to listen to such twad-

dle, Crashaw? Well, we do business with Arkwright, and he has no quartet nonsense when he's on wool. One has many social trials, and has it ever occurred to y u how much Mrs. Awkwright has to endure living in this atmosphere and paying homage to Tootle?"

"By the way, Jack, people say she is a very handsome girl, and a lady. How did she ever marry Arkwright? Was it religion -taking the veil, you know, as a Protestant?

"I believe it was her mother's doing, no her own, for my conviction is that though she keeps up a fair show, Mrs. Arkwright is not much troubled with religion. old woman was pious and poor, and when Arkwright, who had been to busy with woo and bible readings up to the age of 70 that the had never thought of marriage, came forward, she grasped the chance. Talked of it as a providence that her girl shuld be committed to the charge of such a good

man.

go away. Loura; I want you to hear say to the pastor. The doctor says 'at ma days are few,

mayhap only tomerrow, and it's best to speak



nown you long, but there's no mon I've glad you are not genile---" the minister iked better or could trust more." And he was very bold--"for you would not be your oked steadily at Egerton with a certain self." "You've been very kind to me and to the not sure that I am ready for canonizing? hapel. Mr. Arkwright, and I hops it may Do you know I feel immensely relieved; supe God's will to spire you and raise you up gain," and, although the words were formal, he accent was teader and moving. 'No, no, lad; our times are in his hand, nd I have received the summons, and so we III go to business. And first about ma iffairs. I wish ye to understand everything that ye may be able to do your duty by ma Egerton was conscious that Mrs. Arkright straightened herself, and could feel he sl'ence in the room, but the dying min as not one to appreciate an atmosphere.

"That gives me the strength I need for e time, and my work is nearly unce.

a low tone. 'it seems to me a crime against nature and God to sacrifice a young woman to a hard, bloodless old Puritan like Ark-wright, who will not all w her to go to a convert, or a dance, or to ride, or anything else that she would like, and would him self rather attend a conference, or what-ever they call it, and hear a succession of Tootles than be with his wife."

"This is the first time I've been in Ark wrigh"'s house, Jack, and I came too late to be presented to my hostess, but I'm quit e nyinced from your enthusiasm that Mrs Arkwright is extremely good looking. General rumor has evidently your hearty ap-proval."

"Cease from impertinence, old man," and I'll let you judge for yourself. See, there or Tootle's left, against the curtain. Isn't she beautiful?"

part by ye."

pained.

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or a glass

an abandoned eriminal that math



HE HAD NEVER SEEN HER SO BEAU FUL.

of hers was," after a pause of silent ad-miration. "Why, Jack, that woman ought to have been a countess and leader of society in town. Her face is the most perfect piece of Grecian beauty I ever saw—nose, eyes, chin, mouth perfect, forehead the slightest bit high, perhaps, and that glorious hair, brown shot through with gold. "What a set the other women are. Sho is

'What a set the other women are. She like a goddess among a lot of peasants: se how she holds her head and her proud gravit



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most grateful, but I really can't accept your kindness. It is not likely that I will ever sarry, and I've got enough for myself." As be speke, Mrs. Arkwright chook up the illows hastily, and then went to a side table

have heard much go'd of him; personally we could never be friends for various reasons, but he is not unworthy to be the husband of of it, but you will grant me another favor which may be harder." and for a minute Arkwright seemed to hesitate. a good woman. That is all I have to say, "Ma wife will be left young and rich, and and the saying of it was plainly very hard to although I have never said it to you, ma the minister.

"You recommend me to marry Mr. Cra-shaw, if that gentleman should do me the lass, she is beautiful.' 'John, this is not seemly." Her voice was

ibrant with passion. honor to ask my hand or do you propose to suggest this step to him, so as to complete "Blame me for not saying this once, and another he present, he is our friend, and your duty as guardian?" Mrs. Arkwright was ow standing and regarding Egerton with

am coming to my point; the brandy again, and I'll soon be done. "You have no brother, and I have no perlerce scorn "My information seemed to me reliable" on of my blood to guide you, ma lass; ye night be persecuted by men 'at would bring he was also standing, white and pained-"and I thought it would help you in that case to know what I have told you, when you now: but trouble and vexation of heart. You need an honest man to be your guardian

you came to decide." "If I knew who 'old you such falschoods ! and give you advice. "Ye may never want to marry again, for it may be ye have had little joy these years, or ye may-peace lass, till 1 be done, 1 was ever rough and plain-said someone must see that your busined by a statistical someone must see that your husband be a right mon.

"So I turned it over in ma mind, and I sought for a friend 'at was sound of heart and faithful. This speaking is hard on me, but it 'll soon be done." And as Mrs. Ark-wright stooped to give him brandy once more. Egerton saw that her cheeks were burning. "An older mon might have been better.

parted wi' the foolishness o' youth. You in her wrath-he had nover seen her so have some notions I don't hold with, for I'm beautiful-till he stood with his back to the door, and she before him as a lioness not and be damed—but ye're no a man to say yea and do nay. Naa, naa, I have seen more than I aild, and though he have the true doctrine and dees some folk good, that chaap Tootle is shoddy stuff.

"Goorge Egerton, as I have done good to you and not ill these years, will ye count Laura Arkwright as your sister, and do to her a brother's part, as ye will answer to God at the lasst day?"

God at the last day?" The wind lifted the blind and rustled in the curtains; the dying man breathed heavily and waited for an answer. Egerton looked across the bed, but Mrs. Arkwright had withdrawn behind the curtain. Arkwright's

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"Are you really dying?" She sat down and looked at him, her head between her heads. "You and I are, at least, able to face the situation."

face the situation." "Yes, without doubt; but I am not a martyr to overwork, or anything else; do not let any one speak of me in that fashion; I simply caught a cold and did not take care; it's quite commonplace." When he

care; it's quite commonplace." When he emiled his face was at its best, the dark blue eyes having a rougish look, as of a Mrs. Arkwright leaned back on her chair

and bit her lower lip. This is goodby, then, and our friendship 'Had I known you were so ill I would have called to inquire, but cothing was said of oneumonia, only a bad cold." -six years long, isn't it?-is over. Had I known it was to be so short-well we had not "You forgive me, then, that ill-judged in-terference. Mrs. Arkwright, and anything else in which I have offended you or failed quarreled."

"Not over," and he looked wistfully at her;

"Not over," and he looked wistfully at her; "this life does not end all." "Ab. you have the old romantic faith, and one would like to share it, but no one knows, this life is the only certainty." "In a few hours." he went on, "I shall know, and I expect to see my filend John Arkwright, whom I loved although we only knew one another for three years, and he will ask for you."

Mrs. Arkwright regarded Egerton with amazement. "He will ask how I kept my trust, and I

will be ashamed, unless you hear my con-fession and forgive me. For I have sinned

"In what?" she asked, with a hard voice "God knows that I had no thought of yo ie might not have read while he was here And afterward for a year I was in here. your brother; and then-O, how can I say 't and look you in the face, who thought me good and a faithful minister of Christ?" and his eyes were large with pain and sorrow. "Say it," she whispered, "say it plain; you must," and she stretched out her hand in commandment.

in commandment. "I loved you as a man, till it came to pass that I made excuses to visit you, till watched you on the street, till I longed for the touch of your hand, till I-O, the si and shame-thought of you in the servic

and at my prayers." "And now?" She had risen to her feet. "I have finally overcome, but only within these few days, and my heart is at last single. You are to me again my friend's wife, and I shall meet him in peace, if you

forgive me." For a few seconds nothing was heard but his rapid breathing and then she spoke with low, passionate voice. "Your love needs no forgiveness; your

He lived for two hours and he spoke twice. Once he thanked his nurse for her attentions and just before he pussed away she caught the words, "through much tribulation-enter the kingdom-God."

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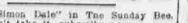
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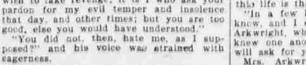
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eagerness.

my brother's part?"

"Do not speak like that to me unless you

wish to take revenge; it is I who ask your

continued, as she and not speak not tok at him, beyond one swift glarce as she came into the room; "and belleve me, I would not have forced myself on you, nor would I have asked this favor, had it not been that I have something of which I must de-"If I knew who 'old you such faisehoods I would never speak to them again, and I would make them suffer for their words. Mr. Crashaw' and it was to that cynical, worldly tailor's block you were to marry me. What ill have I done you?" "God krows I did not desire. I mean do you not see that I fried to do what was right of source? Why he so anyry with me?" ver my soul." "You are not dying; you were a strong at a cost? Why he so angry with me?" "Pecause I do not care what any person nan, and a few days' iliness couldn't be fatal." she burst out, and it seemed as if Mrs. Arkwright for once was going to lose control and fail a-weeping. Then she mastered herself, and said almost co'dly,

in this town or all Yorkshire says about me but I do care and cannot endure that you burning. "An older mon might have been better, but ye're old for your years, pistor, and have And she drove the minister across the root

She looked at him stormily for ten seconds;