

**UNDER ONE STANDARD: OR,  
THE TOUCH THAT MAKES  
US KIN: A STORY OF THE  
TIME OF THE MAORI WAR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649283002

Under one standard: or, The touch that makes us kin: a story of the time of the Maori War by  
H. Louisa Bedford

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Cover @ 2017

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**H. LOUISA BEDFORD**

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DAVID, LIFTING HIS CAP, BROKE INTO A CHEER.

*Under One Standard.*

p. 89.

*Frontispiece.*

# UNDER ONE STANDARD

OR

THE TOUCH THAT MAKES  
US KIN

A Story of the Time of the Maori War

BY

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"A HOME IN THE BUSH," "JACK THE ENGLISHMAN," ETC.

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LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING  
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

NEW YORK AND TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN CO.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN.

PR  
6003  
B38434

## UNDER ONE STANDARD

### CHAPTER I

#### A BOLT FROM THE BLUE

"IT'S an important decision, Abel."  
"Yes;" but Abel Godwin's tone and the determined set of his square jaw left little doubt on the mind of his young wife that the decision was already made and in the affirmative.

For the first time in their short married life Mary Godwin felt inclined to question her husband's judgment, for the matter he was dismissing in such summary fashion was none other than the uprooting of their home in the old country and sailing over unknown seas to establish another in New Zealand. The letter which suggested this great change had only arrived that morning, and now before the sun had set Abel had made up his mind to go.

The time of which we write was nearly fifty years ago, before the great ocean steamers had



resolved communication with the other side of the world into an easy five or six weeks' voyage. Then a trip to New Zealand implied four months on the sea in a sailing vessel, when week after week would pass with never a sight of land, and all communication with the old world and the new was completely cut off, an experience which none who have not tried it may fully understand. No wonder gentle Mary's heart failed her at the suddenness and greatness of the undertaking.

"You'll sleep upon it, Abel?" she pleaded.

"I think not, dear. Ever since our marriage I have felt stuck in a hole, with no hope of climbing out of it. This offer seems like the ladder which will help us to reach independence, and, please God, prosperity."

"But David's fortune is involved as well as our own."

"A boy of fourteen should have a better chance in the new world than in the old," said Abel, a little impatiently. "He shall have the offer of coming with us, and if he does not like it when he gets there, he can at any time work his passage back again."

"Will Uncle Peter be very angry?" and there was a quiver in Mary's voice. "Do you think it's quite right to leave him when he's getting old, and has neither wife nor child to look after him? You fill the place of son to him."

"A servant rather! Else how should he suffer it, that I, his heir, should occupy the posi-

tion of working bailiff on the farm that will one day be my own ; that you, a lady born and bred, should begin life in a cottage and lead the life of an ordinary working woman ? ”

“ That need not trouble you. I’m a very happy woman ! How can I help it, being, as I am, your wife ? ” And Mary’s sweet eyes were lifted to her husband’s troubled face.

“ If on my marriage he had treated you differently, offered us a home at the Holt, and given you your proper position as mistress, then there could never have been a question of deserting him ; but now with a month’s notice, he will have no difficulty in getting another bailiff. He may have to give him higher wages than mine, for there is a steady rise now in labourers’ wages all through the country, but my place can easily be filled.”

“ And you will forfeit every chance of ever possessing the farm ? ”

“ Yes, I have thought of that ; but, after all, what more hateful position can one be in than waiting for a dead man’s shoes, more especially when the very presence of the man for whose death you wait becomes daily more intolerable ? And it’s Uncle Peter’s own brother who offers me the start in New Zealand. Well, I must not go on talking. There is the seven acre being carried to-day, and I must go out and give a hand.”

Contrary to her usual custom Mary did not

set herself to work when her husband left her. She lingered in the doorway, looking with wistful eyes on the lovely view which it framed. In the distance a soft outline of hills, clothed almost to their summits by trees, which already were beginning to hang out signals of the gorgeous autumn hues of crimson, russet, and yellow, which would reach their full beauty in a few weeks' time; and at the foot of the hills nestled Plymouth, the only town of any size with which Mary Godwin was intimate, and shimmering in the afternoon sunshine were the waters of the bay, where ships from many lands lay peacefully at anchor.

Those ships as they came and went had been Mary's chief connection with the outside world. In fancy she had often pictured herself voyaging in one of them to some fair distant land, but it had never been one of her ambitions that her fancy should become fact.

Mary was a Devonshire lass, born and bred, the only daughter of the clergyman of the village where she still lived as Abel Godwin's wife. She had been very happy managing her father's house and ministering to the wants of the villagers; but her cup of happiness was full to overflowing when Abel Godwin, a yeoman of very old family, whom she had known from girlhood, asked her to become his wife. The engagement promised to be a long one, for Mary was only twenty and Abel twenty-three, but the wholly unexpected death of her father had thrown her and her young brother