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God should take you home to His rest in heaven, I would follow you soon, for I could not live without you, my priceless little treasure. "If we are ever parted on earth, we shall surely be reunited in a better world. And you, dearest, you will ever be true to me, either living or dead? But why do I ask you to be true when I know so well that you will? I am foolish and notional, perhaps, but let me hear your sweet voice whisper that you will be true to me through all time and eternity."

She listened to those pleading words and her face grew deathly pale. She could not tell why, but a nameless terror seemed to take possession of her, and clinging to him as though she feared he would leave her side even for a moment, she answered:

"I will be true to you no matter what may come. Living or dead, I will be no other man's wife but yours. You would be just as dear to me in your grave as you are to-day. I would love the memory of my dear one, and be faithful to it, for you are my first and only love."

The sweet voice ceased. Beneath her passionate words there was a ring of sadness, and her heart kept saying over and over again,

"If he knew the truth, ah, Heaven pity me, if he knew all! But I dare not tell him, for I love him so dearly, so truly, that to lose him would break my heart. So I must be silent; I must be a living lie for my dear love's sake."

And he—he looked up into the perfect face above him all aglow with love, and he swore then and there that no power upon earth should ever part them. She was his own beautiful love, and he would keep her. She was his to have and to hold through all the years yet to come.

"God bless my darling," he said fondly, his lips again seeking her red mouth. "God bless you, and make me worthy of your dear love."

The bronze-crested head sank lower and lower until it rested upon his shoulder, and a half sob burst from her lips. Astonished and amazed, he tried to look into her face, asking tenderly:

"What is it, little girl? Tell me why you weep? Are you not happy? My darling, I thought that love always brought perfect happiness with it, and here you are in tears."

"I am too happy, perhaps," she said, with a half wistful smile, drying her tears. "It is all so new, so strange, and yet such bliss that I can hardly understand myself. I will not give way to tears again," and she laughed a merry laugh that rang out like the chime of silver bells at noon, her eyes growing bright and luminous.

He gazed at her wonderingly, thinking what a dear little sprite she was, one moment laughing gayly, the next melting into tears as easily as the rain-drops fall from out an April sky, and his heart seemed ready to burst with the great and mighty love that filled it. No matter what might come to him, she was first in all things. She was his love, his life.

Oh, fond and foolish lovers, you are blinded by so great a love, that pain and sorrow seem as far removed from your lives as the sun is above the desert sands. Everything is perfect. Your hopeful eyes look upon life through a rosy veil, and the sun is very fair and bright. Only once can such a divine passion enter the human heart—once, and once only, will the blood leap madly in the veins of youth, and the pulses thrill at the touch of a hand, the sound of a voice; after that time has passed, love is nothing but friendship.

Hand in hand the happy pair stood, gazing into each other's eyes. A little bird near by began to sing a rippling song, and a stray beam of sunlight kissed the girl's head, turning it to a living, burning gold, like a shaft that falls from heaven.

## CHAPTER IX.

"IF ANYTHING SHOULD ROB ME OF MY LOVER, I WOULD KILL MYSELF."

She was the first to speak, and turning to him, she gazed straight into his love-lit eyes, whispering:

"I must go now, indeed I must, for they will miss me, and wonder what has become of me. I wish—"

The snowy lids drooped meekly over the bright orbs, and she did not finish the sentence. What she wished she did not say, but he guessed what the tender thoughts and desires were, and pressing her to his breast, he said softly:

"I know what you wish, my pet. You wish that you and I need never more be parted, and it will not be many days before we need never separate again. Am I not right? Is not that true?"

"Yes," she answered, hiding her face upon his breast. "Oh, yes, it is true!"

"And you do not even know my name yet," he said, smiling. "You do not imagine who I am, do you, sweetheart?"

"I only know that I love you," she replied, in perfect trust and confidence. "That alone is all I want to know. I always knew that some day I should meet you and love you. Something seemed to whisper in a low, sweet voice that you would meet me and love me. I was waiting, that was all—waiting for the beautiful, new life with you to begin, and it has, oh, it has!"

She had thrown back her head, and was looking into his eyes, her red lips parted as if pleading for a kiss. And his heart gave a great throb of love as he whispered passionately:

"Oh, my darling, my darling, how I

love you! Do you realize, can you understand, what affection is in my heart for you? Ah, no! You love me, too, but is it such a storm? Is it such a tempest that moves your heart until it seems ready to burst with love?"

"Yes!" she answered suddenly, her face growing scarlet, her breath coming thick and fast through her parted lips. "Yes, my love for you is just as strong, just as mighty! I do not love you; I adore you! Ah, Heaven! how can I prove it to you, my king, my own true love?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## The Plain Truth

Is good enough for Hood's Sarsaparilla—there is no need of embellishment or sensationalism. Simply what Hood's Sarsaparilla does, that tells the story of its merit. If you have never realized its benefits a single bottle will convince you it is a good medicine.

The highest praise has been won by Hood's Pills for their easy, yet efficient action. Sold by all druggists. Price 25 cents.

## What is Death?

The following extract of a sermon on "Death," delivered by Rev. C. C. Colton, M. A. of Cambridge, England, in 1820, has been sent to The Toronto Empire for publication: "In the whole course of our observation there is not so misrepresented and abused a personage as Death. Some have styled him the King of Terrors when he might with less impropriety have been termed the terror of kings; others have dreaded him as an evil without end, although it was in their own power to make him the end of all evil. He has been vilified as the cause of anguish, consternation and despair, but these, also, are things that appertain not unto death, but unto life. How strange a paradox is this, we love the distemper and loathe the remedy, preferring the fiercest buffetings of the hurricane to the tranquillity of the harbor. The poet has lent his fictions, the painter his colors, the orator his tropes to portray death as the grand destroyer, the enemy, the prince of phantoms and of shades; but can he be called a destroyer who for a perishable state gives us that which is eternal. Can he be styled the enemy who is the best friend only of the best, who never deserts them at their utmost need, and whose friendship proves the most valuable to those who live the longest? Can he be termed the prince of phantoms, and of shades who destroys that which is transient and temporary to establish that which alone is real and fixed? And what are the mournful esurcheons, the sable trophies and the melancholy insignia with which we surround him, the sepulchral gloom, the mouldering carcases and the slimy worm? These indeed are the idle fears and empty terrors not of the dead but of the living. The dark domain of death we dread indeed to enter, but we ought rather to dread the ruggedness of some of the roads that lead to it; but if they are rugged they are short, and it is only those that are smooth that are wearisome and long. But perhaps he summons us too soon from the feast of life. Be it so. If the exchange be not for the better, it is not his fault but our own. Or he summons us late. The call is a reprieve rather than a sentence, for who would wish to sit at the board when he can no longer partake of the banquet, or to live on to pain when he has long been dead to pleasure? Tyrants can sentence their victims to death, but how much more dreaded would be their power could they sentence them to life! Life is the jailer of the soul in that filthy prison, and its only deliverer is death; what we call death is a passport to life. True wisdom thanks death for what he takes, and still more for what he brings. Let us then, like sentinels, be ready, because we are uncertain, and calm because we are prepared. There is nothing formidable about death but the consequences of it, and these we ourselves can regulate and control. The shortest life is long enough if it leads to a better, and the longest life is too short if it does not."

No better preparation for the hair has ever been invented than Ayer's Hair Vigor. It restores the original color to faded and gray hair, and imparts that natural gloss and freshness, everyone so much admires. Its reputation is world-wide.

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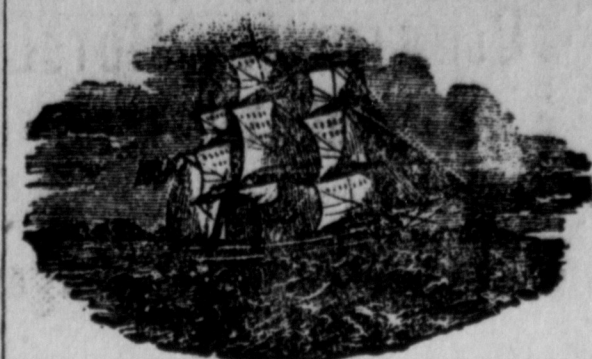
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