

What was it his father could not tell him? What ailed his mother's pleasant, happy room?

There was plenty of light—a fire was burning, and yet a strange look of confusion pervaded everything.

Miles glanced hastily around, then going up to the bed, he pushed aside the curtains to search for his mother.

Doubtless she would explain away this strange scene, tell him what it all meant, and set his beating heart at rest.

Yes, she was there, smiling too as only she knew how, and stretching out her feeble hand, she laid it on the little fellow's head.

Miles gave one long intense look into her face, and then—suddenly, quietly too, and almost without pain at first—the knowledge no one could explain to him—his mother had sent for him to say good bye. That long illness of nearly a fortnight, during which he never could make out what ailed her, his nurse's tears that night, his father's face, above all, the expression in the eyes now gazing at him, the feel of the hand that now rested on his head, all told him the truth, he knew why the familiar, happy room seemed so unlike itself—his mother was going away, his mother was dying.

The knowledge brought with it absolute surprise and bewilderment, but little pain at first. Miles knew something of death, though he had never seen any one die. He knew what his mother could tell to so young a child on this subject. He knew that he had a soul within him, and that some day his soul must leave his body and go away. His body would be put in the ground—God wished it to be put there, and he himself would take care of it, and on no account allow it to be lost; and his soul, if he loved God, would go at once to a beautiful place, with golden streets, where the children played together, and where children, and grown people, and all, were happy.

This was his idea of death; and he knew that the graves he saw in the village church-yard were the homes where God kept very safely the bodies of those whom he loved. Miles knew also that some day God would come and fetch these, and raise them up again, all perfect and beautiful. His mother had herself given these happy ideas of death, and she was not now at all afraid of saying what she had to say to him.

Still keeping her hand on his head, she spoke—

"Miles," she said, "I am going away from you..... I have sent for you to tell you so..... I am going to die, my darling. God will put my body into its home in the church yard, and take good care of it there..... and my soul he will carry up to heaven. You know about heaven, Miles, for I have told you of it. Always now think of mother up in heaven..... wearing a white dress..... and singing to a harp..... and being close to God, and feeling..... oh! so very, very happy!"

"You will be lonely, my darling," she continued after a pause, "very lonely, and sad at first, but you will be brave about it, Miles. I want

you to promise me something..... something..... before..... I go..... from you."

"Yes, mother," answered Miles, coming close to her.

"If you promise me, you will keep it, my boy. I look to you to keep it; it is this—be good, Miles..... grow up good, try for it with all your little strength, and God will help you with all his great strength..... promise me, my son."

For an instant, but no longer, the child was silent, then he said very solemnly and emphatically—

"I promise"  
"Kiss me," said the mother.  
They kissed each other.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer, of Wellesley College, has this to say regarding a subject of absorbing interest to ladies, viz: "How to be beautiful."

I am sorry for the girls and women who have no great and absorbing interest outside of themselves. In studying faces at a social gathering one can hardly fail to be impressed with the different expressions upon the countenances of those accustomed to assemble purely for pleasure and those whose lives are dominated by any noble purpose. Girls naturally desire to be beautiful. But if the beauty is to be lasting, if at forty and sixty they wish to have that certain something in their personal presence which makes women of that age so attractive, they must live outside of themselves. Self-culture, sought for its own sake, will never make a girl winsome. Her graces, her accomplishments, her talents of every sort, must subserve some higher good to be really valuable possessions. This is why an outside interest has such an ennobling effect upon a young lady's character. It carries thought and affection to the farthest limit. Therefore, girls with all your gettings, pet an enthusiasm for Christian work.

#### A UNIQUE MAGAZINE.

A unique experiment will be tried in the February issue of *The Ladies' Home Journal*. The entire number has been contributed in prose, fiction and verse by the daughters of famous parentage, as a proof that genius is often hereditary. The work of thirty of these "daughters" will be represented. These will comprise the daughters of Thackeray, Hawthorne, Dickens, James Fenimore Cooper, Horace Greeley, Mr. Gladstone, President Harrison, William Dean Howells, Senator Ingalls, Dean Bradley of Westminster, Julia Ward Howe, General Sherman, Jefferson Davis and nearly a score of others. Each article, poem or story printed in this number has been especially written for it, and the whole promises to be a successful result of an idea never before attempted in a magazine.

*The Greatest Need of College Girls* is the subject of an important article to appear in the Atlantic Monthly for January. It is by Annie Payson Call, author of the excellent little book "Power through Repose."

#### LITERARY NOTE.

Thomas Whittaker has published immediately "A Cyclopaedia of Nature Teaching" with an introduction by Hugh MacMillan F.L.D.

#### DEATH.

TWINING.—Entered into rest, at Halifax, N.S., on 19th Dec. last, aged 46 years, Ellen Haunette, third daughter of the late Charles Twining, Esq., Q.C. of Halifax, N.S.

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