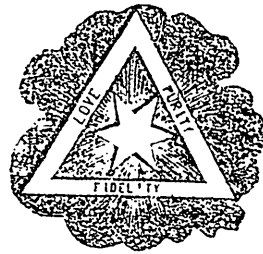


CANADIAN SON OF TEMPERANCE



AND LITERARY GEM.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."—PROVERBS, Chap. 20.

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PASSING AWAY.

BY EDGAR ELTON.

Blooming, dying,
Laughing, sighing,
Are all things below.
Ever fleeting and retreating,
Nothing rest doth know.

Youthful pleasures,
Dearest treasures,
Vanish one by one;
And life's care's all unawares,
Come swiftly hastening on.

Friends we loved,
Have faithless proved,
And, in hearts ere while,
Firm united, love is blighted,
By suspicion vile.

Hopes have perished,
Fondly cherished,
In our happier hours;
And our nearest joys and dearest,
Faded like the flowers.

And thus ever,
Life's rough river,
Bears us swiftly on:
Never staying, nor delaying,
A moment—and we're gone.

THE BARONETS STORY — A JEALOUS HUSBAND.

The following story was related to me by an old friend, an Irish baronet, and as far as my memory serves, I will give it to you in his own words:—

About four months after my marriage, it was my wont each morning, after breakfast, to stroll about my gardens and fields until, perhaps, one o'clock, at which hour I returned home to enjoy my wife's society, and when the weather permitted, we occasionally took a walk or ride.

One morning, feeling myself not quite well, I returned much earlier than usual, about 11 o'clock, and went into the house by a back entrance, as neither

knocking or ringing announced my arrival, my wife was not aware of my return.

I sought her first in the drawing-room, but not finding her there, proceeded to her bed-room, and while passing the dressing-room to it, I was surprised by a sudden rush to the bed-room door, which was instantly bolted from within. I instantly heard low whispering, and, as I thought, a hurried receding step; yet altogether I was not kept waiting more than a few seconds. My wife's maid opened the door, when, to my great perplexity, I beheld my wife's usually pale face suffused with crimson blushes. I also detected her manoeuvring a comb through her hair, to hide, as I instantly suspected, her blushes from me, or her disordered curls.

"What is the meaning of this?" thought I. "It is strange! The maid, too, looks confused and frightened."

My wife did not hasten to meet me with her usual sunny welcome: there was not even one smile to greet me. At length, recovering herself a little, she, with a hesitating manner, said, "Well, my love, how goes on the farm?"

But I was grieved: for the first time in my life I felt that I was not welcome. I felt that something was going on that I was not to know, so merely saying, "I will tell you when we meet in the drawing-room." I quitted her abruptly.

Not knowing whither I was going, or why I suffered so sudden, so frightful a revolution of my feelings, I hurried down stairs, rushed through the hall across the lawn, and plunged into the fir-path that leads to a sequestered part of the grounds; nor did I slacken my pace until I was fully a mile from the house, when I threw myself upon a green bank by the side of the river, the most miserable of men. I, who one hour before was the happiest of men, now unaccountably, wretchedly wretched.

Pride had, at that moment, prevented my asking for an explanation, that I thought ought to have been given unsought; and I determined not to ask Lady — why my visit was evidently so unwelcome.

But henceforth I resolved to keep a watchful eye upon her. A thousand cruel thoughts crowded upon me, now that I discovered in that there was some thing which my wife kept concealed from me; she whom I thought so artless, so free from duplicity.

At this period I had attained my thirtieth year. Lady — was only two years younger than myself: but from her sweet and girlish style of beauty, and gay, happy manner, no one would suppose her more than twenty. She had been educated on the continent. I knew that soon after leaving school, she had received matrimonial proposals—if she had not been actually engaged to a gentleman—before quitting Paris. Hitherto, this circumstance had never given the slightest uneasiness, but now my thoughts involuntarily adverted to it, and haunted me day and night.

Between my wife and her maid there was an unusual intimacy, owing, as I understood, to the latter, being what is called an old follower of the family. This woman was one of the tallest I ever knew, and large in proportion: her face was handsome, the features strongly defined, her eyes large, intensely dark and penetrating; her long black ringlets looked false; in appearance you would have said that she was nearer fifty than forty. This person, with her erect figure, was, taken altogether, what some would pronounce a very fine woman, but somewhat masculine.

Having described my wife's maid, how shall I tell you of the horrible suspicion which seized upon my imagination!

I thought, perchance, this maid—was—her foreign lover in disguise!

And yet I did not, could not believe it, though the frightful idea never absented itself from my brain. To hint such a thought to my beautiful Agnes, my beloved wife, I could never bring myself. I strove hard to banish the idea from my mind as a suggestion of Satan.

From that day I became much changed, both in outward and inward man. My happiness was gone, my naturally light and cheerful manner gave place to irritability and gloom. Time flew on; days and weeks passed without any particular occurrence, until one morning having arranged to accompany a gentleman in the neighborhood on a fishing excursion, I informed Agnes that I should not return until evening, when I should bring my friend to dinner. Immediately after breakfast, we started in a dog-cart. We had not proceeded more than four miles, when, in turning a corner of the road, a boy, who was shooting sparrows, fired so near to the horse's head, that it took fright and dashed off at a furious gallop, nor stopped until we were upset in a ditch. We were compelled to give up our day's excursion, and leaving the groom to take care of the bruised horse, my friend and myself walked smartly home by a short cut, and entering the house, after conducting my friend into the drawing-room, I hastened up stairs to relate my disaster to Agnes. When as I again passed through my dressing-room, the door was again bolted, and I distinctly heard my wife say, with a faltering voice:

"He is returned—we are discovered!"

The scales fell from my eyes; I had no longer any doubt; my worst fears were realized!

In the agony of the moment! I staggered back a few paces: my head reeled: my heart felt bursting, and I had well nigh fallen to the ground, when a frenzy of despair and rage seized me. I made one rush for the door, and roared for instant admittance. Agnes opened the door and stood trembling before me; her attendant flew to the farthest end of the apartment. I dashed my wife aside, shouting, "this moment quit my house," and darting across the room, seized my