While they were still sitting there, chatting over the old times and the new days, the sound of wheels was heard approaching, and Sam drove up in the wagon, in which was Ishmael's trunk and a large box. Jim was called in from the kitchen

where he had been engaged in making love to Sally, to assist in lifting the luggage in. The trunk and box were deposited in the middle of the parlor floor to o opened—l'egause, forsooth, all that

and look on at the opening. Ishmael's personal effects were in the trunk they guessed; but what was in the box? That was the rid-dle and they could not solve it. Both the children pressed forward to ears pricked, his nose straight and C. S. LOTT see. Even the dog stood with his as though he expected a fox to break

on the interesting box

Phone 883:: Burns Block cover from it as soon as it was

Ishmael had mercy on their curios ity and ended their suspense by ripping off the cover.

And lo, a handsome hobby horse which he took out and set up before the delighted eyes of Johnny. He lifted the tiny man into the saddle, fixed his feet in the stirrups, gave him the bridle and showed him how to manage his steed.

"There, Johnny," said Ishmael, "I cannot realize your aspirations in respect to the driver's seat on the oxcart, but I think this will do for the

"Ah, yes," cried the ecstatic Johnny, "put Molly up behind and let her sit and hold on to me. My horse can carry double." "Never mind; I've got something for Molly that she will like better

than that," said Ishmael, smiling kindly on the little girl, who stood with her finger in her mouth looking as if she thought herself rather ne And he unlocked his trunk and

took from the top of it a large and finely painted substantially dressed wooden doll, that looked as if it could bear a great deal of knocking about without injury. Molly made an impulsive spring towards this treasure, and was imme-

dately rendered happy by its pos-Then Sally was elevated to the seventh heaven of delight by the gift of the coral breastpin Hannah received a handsome silk

dress and Reuben a new writing desk, and Sam a silver watch, and Jim a showy vest pattern. And Johnsol having di his presents, ordered his trunk to be carried upstairs, and the box into

the outhouse. When the children were tired of their play Hannah took them off to hear them say their prayers and put them to bed

And then Ishmael and Reuben were And the opportunity that Ishmael wanted had come.

He could have spoken of his parents to either Reuben or Hannah separately, but he felt that he could not enter upon the subject in the presence of both together. Now he drew his chair to the side

of Gray and said: "Uncle Reuben, I have something serious to say to you." "Eh, Ishmael, what have I been doing of? I dessay something wrong

in the bringing up of the young uns", said Reuben, in dismay, expecting to be court-martialled on some grave "It is of my parents that I wish

to speak, Uncle Reuben."
"Oh," said the latter with an air "You knew my mother, Uncle Reuben; but did you know who my moth-

"No," said Reuben, thoughtfully "All I knowed was as he married of your mother in a private manner, and from carcumstances never owned up to it; but left her name and yours to suffer for it-the cowardly rascal, whoever he was."

"Hush, Uncle Reuben, hush. are speaking of my father."
"And a nice father he wur to le your good mother's fair name co grief and leave you to perish

"Uncle Reuben, you know too little of the circumstances to be able of Canada. to judge.'

"Law, Ishmael, it takes but little knowledge and less judgment to un derstand, as when a feller fersakes Capital Paid Up \$4,500,000 his wife and child for nothink, and leaves them to suffer undesarved Rest \$4,500,000 scandal and cruel want, he must be an unnatural monster and a parjured villain.'

"Uncle Reuben, you are unjust to my father. You must listen to his vindication from my lips, and then you will acquit him of all blame. Corner Stephen Ave. and Centre But first I must tell you in confidence his name-it is Herman Bru-

"There now," exclaimed Reuben, dropping his pipe in his astonishment; "to think that I had that fact A. L. NUNNS, right afore my eyes all my life and never could see it. Well, of all the blind moles and owls, I must a been the blindest. And to think as I was the very first as warned the poor girl agin him at that birthday feast. But, law, arter that I never saw 'em together agin no more, no not once. So I had no cause to s'picion him, no more nor others. Well and now, Ishmael, tell me all how and about it. Long as it was him, Mr. man, there must a been something uncommon about it, for I don't believe he'd do anything dishonorable

not if he knowed it." 'Not if he knew it. You are right there, Uncle Reuben," said Ishmael, who immediately related the tragic story of his parents' marriage, ending with the family wreck that had ruined all their happiness.

"Dear me, what a sorrowful story for all hands, to be sure. Well, Ish mael, whoever was most to be pitied in former times, your father is most to be pitied now. Be good to him,"

'You may be sure that I willdo all I can to comfort my father, Un-

cle Reuben. And now a word to you. Speak of this matter to me alone whenever you like, or to Aunt Hannah alone whenever you like, but to no others: and not even to us when we are together, for I cannot | bear that this old tragic history should become the subject of general conversation.

"I know, Ishmael, my boy, I know. Mum's the word," said Reu-

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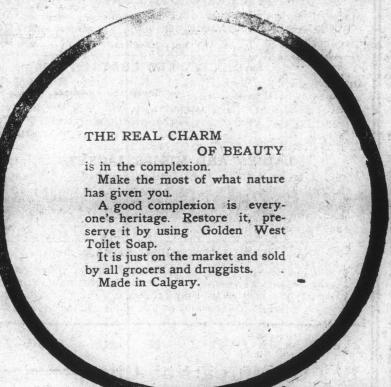
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