

Ayer's Medicine. "Try Ayer's Pills" For Rheumatism, Neuralgia, and Constipation. Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Rheumatism. No medicine could have served me better. Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Ayer's Cathartic Pills. Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

The Canadian Post. LINDSAY, FRIDAY, JUN 13, 1890.

THE DESERTER. BY CAPT. CHARLES KING, U.S.A.

Author of "Bourbon Sketch," "The Colonel's Daughter," "The Fortunate Faith," etc.

Mrs. Rayner's maid was turning the knob of her door when she was hurrying to the front door and drawing on her heavy jacket as she did so.

"I don't think you are at all courteous to your visitors. You know just as well as I do that Mr. P. or Mr. Rayner, or some other of these young officers are sure to be in just at this hour."

Mrs. Travers stopped short in her preparations. "Kate has been so impressed by it, it was not the night before last that you reminded me of sitting here with Mr. Blake at this very hour."

"I wish people would mind their own affairs," said Mrs. Rayner, peevishly. "So do I, Kate, but they never have, and never will, especially with an engaged girl."

"You have no right to think any such thing," answered her sister, angrily. "We have suffered too much at his hands or on his account already, and I never want to hear such words from your lips."

Mrs. Rayner, quite hastily, returned from her place of refuge within the dining room, took the envelope without a word and passed into the parlor, where, standing beneath the lamp, she tore it open, glanced anxiously at its contents, then threw it with an exclamation of piteous indignation upon the table.

"You'll have to answer for yourself, Nellie. I cannot straighten your affairs and mine too. And with that she was going, but Miss Travers called her back. The message simply read: 'No letter in four days. Is anything wrong? Answer promptly,' and was addressed to Mrs. Rayner and signed S. V. A."

"I think you have been extremely neglectful," said Mrs. Rayner, who had turned and now stood watching the rising color and impatiently tapping foot of her younger sister. Miss Travers bit her lips and compressed them hard.

"I am not, and I inferred you did not intend to. Now another question. How many days have we been here?" "Eight or nine—nine, it is."

"You saw me post a letter to Mr. Van Antwerp as we left the Missouri, did you not?" "Yes, at least I suppose so."

"I wrote again as soon as we got settled here, three days after that, did I not?" "You said you did," replied Mrs. Rayner, ungraciously. "And you, Kate, when you see yourself have been prompted to declare that I say four days from the time that letter from the transfer reached Wall Street to the time the next one could get to him from here, even had I written the night we arrived."

"What two, pray?" "That he can be foolishly unreliable in estimating a woman."

"That you may be persistently unreliable in your judgment of a man." "Verily, for a young woman with a sweet, girlish face, when we saw but a week ago twirling a kitten's ears and saying little or nothing, Miss Travers was displaying unexpected fighting qualities."

throwing a cloak over her shoulders. She Travers stepped out on the piazza and gazed in delight upon the moonlit panorama—the snow covered summits to the south and west, the rolling expanse of upland prairie between, the rough outlines of the foothills softened in the silvery light, the dark shadows of the barracks across the parade, the twinkling lights of the sergeants as they took their stations, the soldierly forms of the officers hastening to their companies far across the frozen level.

Suddenly she became aware of two forms coming down the walk. They issued from Maj. Waldron's quarters and the door closed after them. One was a young officer; the other, she speedily made out, a Chinese servant, who was guiding his master. She knew the pair in an instant, and her first impulse was to retire. Then she reflected that he could not see, and she wanted to look, so she stayed. They had almost reached her gate when a wild blast whirled the officer's cape about his ears and sent some sheets of music flying across the road.

"How long does it take a letter to go from here to New York?" "Five or six days, I suppose."

"I am not, and I inferred you did not intend to. Now another question. How many days have we been here?" "Eight or nine—nine, it is."

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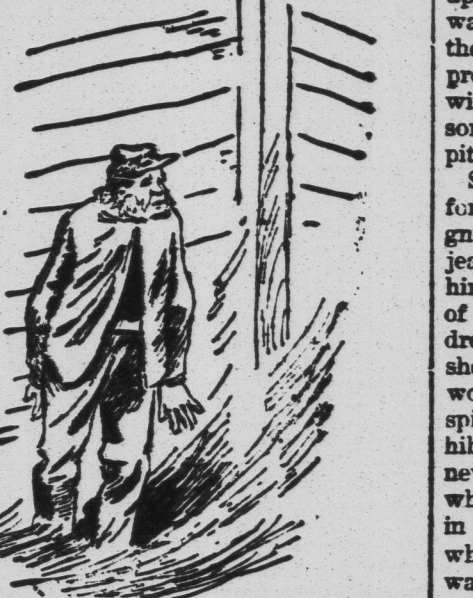
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ing the subject with the officers even of her own regiment. She was indignant, and demanded a reason. He would name no names, but told her that he had heard enough to convince him she was doing him more harm than good, and, if anything, contributing to the turn of the tide in Rayner's favor. Then she felt outraged and utterly misunderstood. It was a critical time for her, and if deprived of the use of her main weapon of offense and defense the battle was sure to go against her. Surely against her inclination, she obeyed her husband, for, as has been said, she was a loyal wife, and for the time being the baby became the recipient of her undivided attention.



True to her declaration, she behaved so coolly and with such marked distance of manner to the colonel and his wife when they met in society immediately after the dinner that the colonel quietly told his wife she need not give either dinner or reception in honor of Mrs. Rayner's return. He would like to have her do something to welcome Miss Travers, for he thought the girl had much of her father in her. He knew him well in the old days before and during the war, and liked him. He liked her looks and her unaffected, cheery manner. He liked the contrast between her and her sister; Miss Travers had listened in silence to her sister's exposition of what her manner should be to the colonel and his wife, and when they met she was bright and winsome. The colonel stood and talked with her about her father, whom she could remember only vaguely, but of whom she never tired of hearing; and that night Mrs. Rayner rebuked her severely for her disloyalty to the captain, who had given her a home.

But when Mrs. Rayner heard that Maj. and Mrs. Waldron had invited Mr. Hayne to dine with them, and had invited to meet him two of the cavalry officers and their wives, she was incensed beyond measure. She and Mrs. Waldron had a brief talk, as a result of which Mrs. Rayner refused to speak to Mrs. Waldron at the evening party given by Mrs. Stannard in honor of her and her sister. It was this that brought on the crisis. Whatever was said between the men was not told. Maj. Waldron and Capt. Rayner had a long consultation, and they took no one into their confidence; but Mrs. Rayner obeyed her husband, went to Mrs. Waldron and apologized for her rudeness, and then went with her sister and returned the call of the colonel's wife; but she chose a bright afternoon when she knew well the lady was not at home.

She retired from the contest, apparently, as had been said, and took much Christian consolation to herself from the fact that at so great a sacrifice she was obeying her husband and doing the duty he exacted of her. In every truth, however, the contest was withdrawn from her by the fact that for a week or more after his evening at the Waldrons' Mr. Hayne did not reappear in garrison, and she had no cause to talk about him. Officers visiting the house avoided mention of his name. Ladies of the cavalry regiment calling upon Mrs. Rayner and Miss Travers occasionally spoke of him and his devotion to the men and his bravery at the fire, but rather as though they meant in a general way to compliment the Rifles, not Mr. Hayne; and so she heard little of the man whose existence was so sore a trial to her. What she would have said, what she would have thought, had she known of the meeting between him and her guardian Nellie, is beyond us to describe; but she never dreamed of such a thing, and Miss Travers never dreamed of telling her—for the present, at least. Fortunately, or unfortunately, for the latter, it was not so much of her relations with Mr. Hayne as of her relations with half a dozen young bachelors that Mrs. Rayner speedily felt herself compelled to complain. It was a blessed relief to the elder sister. Her surcharged spirit was in sore need of an escape valve. She was ready to boil over in the mental ebullition consequent upon Mr. Hayne's reception at the post, and with all the pent up irritability which that episode had generated she could not have contained herself and slept.

But here Mrs. Travers came to her relief. Her beauty, her winsome ways, her unqualified delight in everything that was soldierly, speedily rendered her vastly attractive to all the young officers in garrison. Graham and Foster, of the infantry, Merton, Webster and Royce, of the cavalry, haunted the house at all manner of hours, and the captain bade them welcome and urged them to come oftener and stay later, and told Mrs. Rayner he wanted some kind of a supper or collation every night. He set before his guests a good deal of wine, and drank a good deal more himself than he had ever known to do before, and they were keeping very late hours at Rayner's, for, said the captain, "I don't care if Nellie is engaged, she shall have a good time while she's here; and if the boys know all about it—goodness, know you've told them often enough, Kate—and they don't mind it, why, it's nobody's business—here, at least."

CHAPTER VIII. MARCH had come—the month of gale and bluster, sleet and storm, in almost every section of our broad domain—and March at Waldron was to the full as blustering and conscienceless as in New England. There were a few days of sunshine during the first week; then came a fortnight of raging snow storms. The cavalry troops, officers and men, went about their stable duties as usual, but, except for roll call on the porch of the barracks and for guard mounting over at the guard house, all military exercise seemed suspended. This meant livelier times for the ladies, however, as the officers were enabled to devote just a week or more hours a day to their entertainment. There were two or three hops a week over in the big assembly room, and there was some talk of getting up a german in honor of Miss Travers, but the strained relations existing between Mrs. Rayner and the ladies of other families at the post made the matter difficult of accomplishment.

There were bright little luncheon, dinner and tea parties, where the young officers and the younger ladies met every day; and, besides all this, despite the fact that Mrs. Rayner, had at first shown a fixed determination to discuss the rights and wrongs of "the Hayne affair," as it was now beginning to be termed, with all comers who belonged to the Rifles, it had grown to be a very general thing for the youngsters to drop in at her house at all hours of the day; but that was because there were attractions there which outweighed her combativeness. Some Rayner himself overheard some comments on the mistake she was making, and forbade her discuss-

ing the subject with the officers even of her own regiment. She was indignant, and demanded a reason. He would name no names, but told her that he had heard enough to convince him she was doing him more harm than good, and, if anything, contributing to the turn of the tide in Rayner's favor. Then she felt outraged and utterly misunderstood. It was a critical time for her, and if deprived of the use of her main weapon of offense and defense the battle was sure to go against her. Surely against her inclination, she obeyed her husband, for, as has been said, she was a loyal wife, and for the time being the baby became the recipient of her undivided attention.

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CONSUMPTION SURELY CURED. TO THE EDITOR:—Please inform your readers that I have a positive remedy for the above named disease. By its timely use thousands of hopeless cases have been permanently cured. I shall be glad to send a bottle of my remedy FREE to any of your readers who have consumption. They will send me Post Office Address. Respectfully, T. A. SLOCUM, M.D., 146 West Adelaide St., TORONTO, ONTARIO.