

The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

Without a light I went up to my own room, where the moon that had shone upon me to my last night's ride, was gleaming brightly through the window. I intended to reflect and deliberate, but I was worn out. I flung myself down on the bed, but could not have remained awake for a single moment. I fell into a deep sleep, which lasted till morning.

When I awoke my poor mother was sitting beside me, looking very ill and sorrowful. She had slipped a pillow across my head, and thrown a shawl around me. I got up with a bewildered brain, and a general sense of calamity, which I could not clearly define.

"Captain Carey's man brought a letter from Julia just now," she said, taking it from her pocket; "he said there was no answer."

Her eyelids were still red from weeping, and her voice faltered as if she might break out into sobs any moment.

As soon as my mother was gone I opened Julia's letter. It began:

"My dear Martin—I know all now. Johanna has told me. When you spoke to me so hurriedly and unexpectedly, this afternoon, I could not bear to hear another word. But now I am calm, and I can think it all over quite quietly."

"It is an infatuation, Martin. Johanna says so as well as I, and she is never wrong. It is a sheer impossibility that you, in your sober senses, should love a strange person, whose very name you do not know. A Dobree could not make an adventuress his wife. Then you have seen so little of her. Three times, since the week you were there in March, I was in that room, and you were there. What is that compared to the years we have spent together? It is impossible that in your heart of hearts you should love her more than me."

"I cannot give up the thought of our home, just finished and so pretty. It was so pleasant this afternoon, before you came in with your dreadful thunder-bolt. I was thinking what a good wife I would be to you; and how, in my own home, I should never be tempted into those tiresome tempers you have seen in me sometimes. You could not know how much I love you, how my life is bound up in you, or you would have been proof against that person in Sark."

"I think it right to tell you all this now, though it is not in my nature to make professions and demonstrations of my love. Think of me, of yourself, of your poor mother. You were never selfish, and you can do noble things. I do not say it would be noble to marry me; but it would be a noble thing to conquer an ignoble love. How could Martin Dobree fall in love with an unknown adventuress?"

"I shall remain in the house all day to-morrow, and if you can come to see me, feeling that this has been a dream of folly from which you have awakened, I will not ask you to own it. That you come at all will be a sign to me that you wish it forgotten and blotted out between us, as if it had never been."

"With true, deep love for you, Martin, believe me still."

"Your affectionate
"JULIA."

I pondered over Julia's letter as I dressed. There was not a word of resentment in it. It was full of affectionate thought for us all. But what reasoning! I had not known Olivia so long as I had known her, therefore I could not love her as truly!

There was no longer any hesitation in my mind as to what I must do. Julia knew all now. I had told her distinctly and loved her for Olivia, and she would believe it. She appeared wistful to hold me to my engagement in spite of it; at any rate, so I interpreted her letter. I did not suppose that I should not live it down, this infatuation, as they chose to call it. I might hunger and thirst, and be on the point of perishing; then my nature would turn to its contracted and stultified capacities.

I went mechanically through the routine of my morning's work, and it was late in the afternoon before I could get away to ride to the Vale. My mother knew where I was going, and gazed wistfully into my face, but without otherwise asking me any questions. At the last moment, as I touched Madam's bridle, I looked down at her standing on the doorstep. "Cheer up, mother," I said, almost gaily, "it will all come right."

I found Julia standing by the fireplace, and leaning against it, as if she could not stand alone. When I went up to her and took her hand, she flung her arms around my neck, and clung to me, in a passion of tears. It was some minutes before she could recover her self-command. I had never seen her abandon herself to such a paroxysm before.

"Julia, my poor girl! I said, 'I did not think you would take it so much to heart as this.'"

"I shall come all right directly," she sobbed, sitting down, and trembling from head to foot. "Johanna said you would come, but I was not sure."

"Yes, I am here," I answered, with a very dreary feeling about me.

"That is enough," said Julia; "you need not say a word more. Let us forget it, both of us. You will only give me your promise never to see her or speak to her again."

"Olivia quite understands about my engagement to you," I said. "I told her at once that we were going to be married, and that I hoped she would find a friend in you."

"A friend in me, Martin?" she exclaimed, in a tone of indignant surprise; "you could not ask me to be that?"

"Not now, I suppose," I replied; "the girl is as innocent and blameless as any girl living; but I dare say you would sooner befriend the most good-for-nothing Jesuit in the Channel Islands."

"Yes, I would," she said. "An innocent girl indeed! I only wish she had been killed when she fell from the cliff."

"Hush!" I cried, shuddering at the bare mention of Olivia's death; "you do not know what you say. It is worse than needles to talk about her. I came to ask you to think no more of what passed between us yesterday."

"But you are going to persist in your infatuation," said Julia; "you can never deceive me. I know you too well. Oh, I see that you still think the same of her!"

"You know nothing about her," I replied.

"And I shall take care I never do," she interrupted spitefully.

"So it is of no use to go on quarreling about her," I continued. "I made up my mind before I came here that I must see as little as possible of her for the future. You must understand, Julia, she has never given me a particle of reason to suppose she loves me."

"But you are still in love with her?"

"Julia," she continued, with flashing eyes, and a rising tone in her voice,

which, like the first shrill moan of the wind, presaged a storm, "I will never marry you until you can say, on your word of honor, that you love that person no longer, and are ready to promise to hold no further communication with her. Oh! I know what my poor aunt has had to endure, and I will not put up with it."

"Very well, Julia," I answered, controlling myself as well as I could, "I had only one more word to say on this subject. I love Olivia, and as far as I know myself, I shall love her as long as I live. I did not come here to give you any reason for supposing my mind is changed as to her. If you consent to be my wife, I will do my best to be most true, most faithful to you. But my motive for coming now is to tell you some particulars about your property, which my father made known to me only last night."

It was a miserable task for me; but I told her simply the painful discovery I had made. She sat listening with a dark and sullen face, but betraying not a spark of resentment, so far as her loss of fortune was concerned.

"Yes," she said bitterly, when I had finished, "robbed by the father and jilted by the son."

"I would give my life to cancel the wrong," I said.

"It is so easy to talk," she replied, with a deadly calmness of tone and manner. "I am ready to do whatever you choose," I urged. "It is true my father has robbed you; but it is not true that I have jilted you. I did not know my own heart till a word from Captain Carey revealed it to me; and I told you frankly, partly because Johanna insisted upon it, and partly because I believed it right to do so. If you demand it, I will even promise not to see Olivia again, or to hold direct communication with her. Surely that is all you ought to require from me."

"No," she replied vehemently; "do you suppose I could become your wife while you maintain that you love another woman? I should rather be tempted into those tiresome tempers you have seen in me sometimes. You could not know how much I love you, how my life is bound up in you, or you would have been proof against that person in Sark."

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er over women and their susceptibility as he had. My mother herself would appear to forget all her unhappiness, if he only smiled upon her.

"My poor child!" he murmured; "my poor child!"

"Uncle," she said, checking her sobs by a great effort, "if you imagine I should tell any one—Johanna Carey even—what you have done, you wrong me. The name of Dobree is as dear to me as to Martin, and he was willing to marry a woman he detested in order to shield it. No, you are quite safe from disgrace as far as I am concerned."

"Heaven bless you, my own Julia!" he ejaculated fervently. "I know your noble nature. But will you not be equally generous to Martin? Cannot you forgive him as you do me?"

"Uncle," she cried, "I could never, never marry a man who says he loves some one else more than me."

"I should think not, my girl!" he said, in a soothing tone; "but Martin will very soon repent. He is a fool just now, but he will be wise again presently. He has known you too long not to know your worth."

"Julia," I said, "I do know how good you are. You have always been generous, and you are so now. I owe you as much gratitude as my father does, and anything I can do to prove it I am ready to do this day."

"Will you marry her before we leave Jersey?" asked my father.

"Yes," I answered.

The word slipped from me almost unawares, yet I did not wish to retract it. He was behaving so nobly and generously towards us both that I was willing to do anything to make her happy.

"Then, my love," he said, "you hear what Martin promises. All's well that ends well. Only make up your mind to put your proper pride away, and we shall all be as happy as we were before."

"Never!" he cried indignantly. "I would not marry Martin here, hurriedly and furtively; no, not if you were dying, uncle!"

"But, Julia, if I were dying, and wished to see you united before my death," he insisted. "A sudden light broke upon me. It was an ingenious plot—one at which I could not help laughing, mad as I was. Julia's pride was to be saved, and an immediate marriage between us effected, under cover of my father's dangerous illness. I did smile, in spite of my anger, and he caught it, and smiled back again. I think Julia became suspicious, too."

"Martin," she said, sharpening her voice to address me, "do you think your father is in any danger?"

"No, I do not," I answered, notwithstanding his gestures and frowns.

"Then that is at an end," she said. "I was almost foolish enough to think that I would yield. You don't know what this disappointment is to me. Everybody will be talking of it, and some of them will pity me, and the rest laugh at me. I am ashamed of going out of doors anywhere. Oh, it is too bad; I cannot bear it."

She was positively writhing with agitation, and tears, real tears I am sure, started into my father's eyes.

"My poor little Julia!" he said; "my darling! But what can be done if you will not marry Martin?"

"He ought to go away from Guernsey," he sobbed. "I should feel better if I was quite sure I should never see him, or hear of other people seeing him."

"I will go," I said. "Guernsey will be too hot for me when all this is known."

"And, uncle," she pursued, speaking to him, not me, "he ought to promise me to give up that girl. I cannot set him free to go and marry her—a stranger and adventuress. She will be his ruin. I think, for my sake, he ought to give her up."

"So he ought, and so he will, my love," answered my father. "When he thinks of all we owe to you, he will promise you that."

I pondered over what our family owed to Julia for some minutes. It was truly a very great debt. Though I had brought her into the house, the most painful position a woman could be placed in, she was generously sacrificing her just resentment and revenge against my father's dishonesty, in order to secure our name from blot.

On the other hand, I had no reason to suppose Olivia loved me, and I should do her no wrong. I felt that, whatever it might cost me, I must consent to Julia's stipulation.

"It is the hardest thing you could ask me," I said, "but I will give her up. On one condition, however; for I must not leave her without friends. I shall tell Tardif if he ever needs help for Olivia he must apply to me through my mother."

"There could be no harm in that," observed my father.

"How soon shall I leave Guernsey?" I asked.

"He cannot go until you are well again, uncle," she answered. "I will stay here to nurse you, and Martin must take care of your patients. We will send him away a day or two before we return, and I should like him to be gone before we reach home."

(To be continued.)

RICHEST NATION ON EARTH.

Commonwealth in the Antipodes Can Boast the Distinction.

It will surprise many to learn that the new commonwealth of Australia is the richest nation on the face of the globe. There is not as much wealth there in the aggregate as may be found in some of the older countries, but the per capita possessions of the Australians far exceed those of other people in Europe or America. The commonwealth is a continental island, rich in land fit for settlement and industry. Its national prosperity is dependent upon no single product, but embraces pastoral, agricultural and mining industries in almost equal degree, and to these are rapidly being added manufactures.

Last year the total value of the products of the colonies forming the Australian commonwealth amounted to fully \$550,000,000, of which their pastoral interests represented \$150,000,000, their agricultural \$140,000,000, their mineral products fully \$100,000,000 and their manufacturing and other industries the remaining \$160,000,000. The wool alone from the 120,000,000 sheep raised in 1900 was worth \$100,000,000.

The mineral resources of Australia cannot even be guessed at. In the last forty-eight years the country has produced gold to the value of \$1,800,000,000, in the last twenty silver to the value of \$150,000,000.

Diamonds are found in one district, rubies in another. There is at least one emerald mine in New South Wales, and opals equal to any in the world are found in Queensland, while the pearl fisheries of the northwestern coast produce a considerable portion of the most valuable pearls of commerce.—Chicago Chronicle.

The bird on a woman's hat has the wings of riches.

LAZIEST MAN IS DEAD.

PASSED HIS ENTIRE LIFE IN ANDOVER, CONN.

Never Worked from His Birth to His Death, Invented a Valuable Device to Save His Own Labor and Finally Fought an Easy Demise.

The laziest man in New England is dead.

Joseph A. Bingham was 50 years old and never in the memory of any acquaintance had he done a stroke of work. He was born, reared, lived and died in Andover, Conn. Bingham was so lazy, says the Boston Post, that the sight of a woodpile, saw-horse and saw made his head ache. The sight of men at work caused him to have fits. He usually took them under the shade of a big elm in front of the town tavern. He never washed his face, combed his hair, wore a collar nor laced his shoes. All these little minor things required some degree of animation, and Bingham abhorred animation.

Born of well-to-do parents, he was supported by their wealth as long as they lived, then a legacy was left him in trust, which the selectmen doled out to him. He boarded at Andover inn for years, until his money was gone, then the scene shifted to a little house provided by the selectmen. Here it was charged that he was too lazy to cut the wood given him, too lazy to draw water from the near-by well, too lazy to tie up his shoes. It was too much work to put on a collar, and as for cooking a meal with material all given him—well, he would starve rather than do it.

Several years ago, when he became a town charge, an effort was made to get work out of him, but it proved a flat failure. He was let out to a farmer to assist in threshing grain. Bingham was given the position of taking away the shucked straw after it had passed through the threshing machine. He watched the machine work for a few minutes and then, with a hammer and nails and two or three pieces of board, rigged up a device which, when attached to a crank on the feeder, served to carry the discharged straw away to the dump. This single effort prostrated Bingham and he took a nap forthwith.

Some one recognized the value of the new device, and the idea was patented in Bingham's name as a joke. A short time later an agent for a threshing machine company came to Andover and woke Bingham up. The agent found him under his favorite tree asleep, as usual. The agent talked; Bingham looked disturbed. The agent wanted the use of the patent; Bingham wanted to be left alone. Finally the exasperated agent, getting a reply from the lazy man, raised his bids by degrees from \$50 to \$500. Bingham turned over and settled himself to take a well-earned rest. Then the agent gave him a paper to sign, but Bingham was sleeping the sleep of the weary. The agent gave up and left town. Bingham slept on. His sleep was never disturbed by the thought of the fortune that knocked at his door.

For the first time in 25 years he looked into a mirror. What he saw there was his own reflection. He walked out and deliberately began a nap in front of an approaching train. It ended his life easily. No exertion on his part was needed, as there would have been if he had used a pistol, rope or poison.

NEW SEEDS—WATERMELONS.

Former State Senator Swink Said to Have Been Discovered in Colorado.

Former State Senator Swink has been working on the seedless melon proposition many years. During the long winter nights he sat up and wrestled with the great problem, "How can it be done?" Often daylight found him examining minutely and microscopically the seeds he had cut and hacked and desiccated, in his efforts to determine how to get along without them. And early one morning about five months ago, so it is related, Mr. Swink came bounding into breakfast after one of his all-night sessions and startled his wife and children by shouting in a perfect spasm of glee: "I've got it! I can do it!"

Then, it is said, he rushed away without explaining to his astonished family what on earth he meant.

But Mrs. Swink is reputed to have said: "Never mind; father knows." And as "father" stands quite well in the estimation of his family, the mere knowledge that he knew was quite sufficient for all. Swink selected certain kinds of seeds, planted them at certain unusual distances apart and began to watch for the first signs of their germination. After spying on the plants as they grew, it became known that he had really put some momentous enterprise on foot.

Later Mr. Swink brought and laid before his family and friends a huge, long green melon, and, dividing it clearly at one stroke of his big knife, displayed to them the pink interior of a splendid emerald sphere without a single seed. This was but the small beginning of a great end. Of course, Mr. Swink will not reveal the secret process by which he cut off a melon's hope of posterity and at the same time renders its feeding presence here most beneficent and beloved.—Denver Post.

HE JOINED THE SHOW.

But Twenty-four Hours' Work Without Sleep Was Too Much.

"I haven't been to a circus for forty years," declared the well-known business man with a chuckle, according to the Detroit Free Press. "The fact is that I always felt like leaving town whenever I hear that one is coming, for fear that I might meet the man to whom I hired out as a circus hand in the days when I was young."

"I suppose there is a period in every boy's life when his only ambition is to belong to a circus. I know there was in mine, and I had it satisfied in the shortest time on record. A small show had pitched its tents on the village green in the little town where I lived, and I desired to adopt the profession right then and there. I applied to the boss for a job and was accepted on the spot as a razorback. What is a razorback? Well, he is a member of the loading gang. You unload in the

morning and raise her back at night. I was simply appalled by the amount of work that came my way, followed by such profanity that I never hope to hear again. I was kept on the jump till midnight, when we had the outfit all loaded up, and I breathed a sigh of relief, which quickly gave way to one of despair when the boss told me to drive the wagon that had the tents loaded on it. In those days the only means of traveling was by wagon.

"Say, mister," said I, timidly, "when do we sleep?"

"Sleep?" he roared; "we don't sleep here!"

"I felt that was a fact, as I knew we had an all-night ride ahead of us, with the weary work of unloading as soon as we did arrive. But, as far as I was concerned, tired nature gave out and I was sound asleep before we had gone a mile. I awoke just as day was breaking and found myself on a lonely country road and without the slightest idea where I was. From a country boy who chanced to come along I learned that the town I was supposed to be headed for was thirty miles away, and that I was getting farther away from it every minute. When I realized my position my teeth commenced to chatter. But suddenly a brilliant idea occurred to me.

"Say," said I to the boy, "do you want a pass to the show?"

"You bet," said he.

"Well," said I, "drive this wagon to the town where the show is and I will see that you get in. One of our elephants has escaped and I have got to capture him."

"Then I made for home. I never heard what they did to that country boy when he arrived. I hope they didn't kill him."

Science and Invention

The period of five seconds between a flash of lightning and thunder means that the flash was a mile distant from the observer. Thunder has never been heard over 14 miles from the flash, though artillery has been heard at 120 miles.

It is said to be only a question of time before the Bermuda Islands will sink under the ocean. The geological theory is that the islands are merely the remnant of one large island. The subsidence within a comparatively recent period has been from 80 to 100 feet.

The earth revolves on its axis once in 24 hours. Millions of years ago the day was 22 hours; millions of years before, it was 21 hours. As we look backward into time we find the earth revolving faster and faster. There was a time, ages ago, long before geology begins, when the earth was rotating in a day of five or six hours in length. In the remotest past the earth revolved in a day of about five hours. It could revolve no faster than this and remain a single unbroken mass.

The Russian people are fond of tea, and efforts are being made to develop important tea plantations in the Caucasus. Nearly half a century ago it was found that the tea-plant could be grown in gardens on the shores of the Black Sea, but at first it was cultivated only as a curiosity or for ornament. Since 1890 plantations of considerable extent have been formed, and while the cultivators have not succeeded in imitating the fine flavor of Chinese, Ceylonese or Indian teas, yet the demand among the peasants for tea of some kind is so great that even the Caucasian variety finds a market. The Russian government is trying to encourage the cultivation.

The city of Paris is being rapidly supplied with a system of public clocks worked by compressed air under electrical control. The entire area of the city is divided into sections about a mile and three-quarters in radius, and in the center of each section is a substation provided with a reservoir of compressed air, from which air-pipes extend to all the clocks included in the section. By means of electro-magnets, energized every minute with currents from a commutator controlled by a master-clock at the central station, the air-pipes are intermittently connected with the reservoirs, and thus the compressed air, once every minute, drives forward the hands of the clocks.

It is generally known that some species of birds are able to imitate the songs of other birds, but a more surprising fact is related by a French naturalist, Monsieur Coupin, concerning a sparrow which learned the shrill chirp of grasshoppers. The insects happened to be confined in a cage hung beside the sparrow's cage, but he was not until a year afterward, when again the bird and the grasshoppers were neighbors, that the sparrow was heard imitating the notes of the insects. All the rest of its life, and long after the grasshoppers from whom it had taken its lessons were dead, the sparrow continued to intermingle with its own songs the peculiar music of its lost friends.

"Plus" Man Ever in Demand.

The "plus" man is one who is more than appears on the surface, bigger than he looks, stronger than he seems, abler than he shows in ordinary affairs, better than the world judges him, constantly rising to great occasions and accomplishing more than is expected of him, writes Victor Smith in the New York Press. There are many such men to whom great occasions never come. There are a few whose "plusness" has a chance to illuminate the earth every day.

Perhaps the finest type of "plus" man was President Lincoln. Grant, too, was plus. It might be confessed that plus, in the sense used, is nearly synonymous with successful. In commercial life Mr. Morgan is heavily plus. In railroading William K. Vanderbilt and Edward H. Harriman have loomed up rather suddenly as plus. Commodore Vanderbilt and Jay Gould were plus. Croker is plus. Odell is plus.

In the contracting line John B. McDonald is heavily plus. It is not every man of affairs who can take hold of a \$35,000,000 job and carry it along successfully without losing a pound of flesh from worry. Plus men seldom worry. They have great nerve but no nerves.

HUMOR OF THE WEEK

STORIES TOLD BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Odd, Curious and Laughable Phases of Human Nature Graphically Portrayed by Eminent Word Artists of Our Own Day—A Budget of Fun.

"Young man," said the stern parent, "do you think you will be able to support my daughter in the style to which she has been accustomed?"

Now this young man thought for a moment, and then replied:

"Well—er—I think so, with one exception."

"Aha! And what may the exception be, sir?"

"I don't think I could be so infernally stingy with the gas."—Denver Times.

A Fine Imitation.

"James Henry, are you intoxicated?"

"I deny emphatically horrible accusation."

"Then it is the finest imitation I have ever beheld."

True Resignation. The Spinster (an invalid)—Is it really true that marriages are made in heaven?

The Parson—Yes, I believe so. The Spinster (resignedly)—Oh, then I'll tell the doctor he needn't call again.—Chicago News.

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