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The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

CHAPTER XX.—(Continued.)

"You love her?" said Johanna.

"Certainly," I answered, "as my sister."

"Better than any woman now living?" she pursued.

"Yes," I replied.

"That is all Julia requires," she continued; "so let us say no more at present, Martin. Only understand that all idea of marriage between her and my brother is quite put off. Don't argue with me, don't contradict me. Come to see us as you would have done but for that unfortunate conversation last night. All will come right by-and-by."

"But Captain Carey—" I began.

"There! not a word!" she interrupted imperatively. "Tell me all about that wretch, Richard Foster. How did you come across him? Is he likely to die? Is he anything like Kate Daltry?—I will never call her Kate Daltry as long as the world lasts. Come, Martin, tell me everything about him."

"She sat with me most of the morning, talking with animated perseverance, and at last prevailed upon me to take her a walk in Hyde Park. Her pertinacity did me good in spite of the irritation it caused me. When her dinner hour was at hand I felt bound to attend her to her house in Hanover street; and I could not get away from her without first speaking to Julia. Her face was very sorrowful, and her manner sympathetic. We said only a few words to one another, but I went away with the impression that her heart was still with me.

"At dinner Jack announced his intention of paying a visit to Richard Foster.

"You are not fit to deal with the fellow," he said; "you may be sharp enough upon your own black sheep in Guernsey, but you know nothing of the breed here. Now if I see him I will squeeze out of him every mortal thing he knows about Olivia."

Jack returned, his face kindled with excitement. He caught my hand, and grasped it heartily.

"I no more believe she is dead than I am," were his first words. "You recollect me telling you of a drunken brawl in a street off the Strand, when a fellow, as drunk as a lord, was for claiming a pretty girl as his wife; only I had followed her out of Ridley's agency office, and was just in time to protect her from him. A girl I could have fallen in love with myself. You recollect that?"

"Yes, yes," I said, almost breathless.

"He was the man, and Olivia was the girl!" exclaimed Jack.

"No!" I cried.

"Yes," continued Jack, with an affectionate lunge at me; "at any rate I can swear he is the man; and I would be thousand to one that the girl was Olivia."

"But when was it?" I asked.

"Since he married again," he answered; "they were married on the 23d of October, and this was early in November. I had gone to Ridley's after a place for a poor fellow as an assistant to a druggist, and I saw the girl distinctly. She gave the name of Ellen Martineau. Those letters about her death are all forgeries."

"Olivia is not," I said; "I know her handwriting too well."

"Well, then," observed Jack, "there is only one explanation. She has sent them herself to throw Foster off the scent; she thinks she will be safe if he believes her dead."

"No," I answered hotly, "she would never have done such a thing as that."

"Who else is benefited by it?" he asked gravely. "It does not put Foster into possession of any of her property, or that would have been a motive for him to do it. But he gains nothing by it; and he is so convinced of her death that he has taken a second wife."

"What can I do now?" I said, speaking aloud, though I was thinking to myself.

"Martin," replied Jack, gravely, "isn't it wisest to leave the matter as it stands? If you find Olivia, what then? She is as much separated from you as she can be by death. So long as Foster lives it is worse than useless to be thinking of her."

"I only wish to satisfy myself that she is alive," I answered; "just think of it, Jack, not to know whether she is living or dead! You must help me to satisfy myself. This mystery would be intolerable to me."

"You're right, old fellow," he said, cordially; "we will go to Ridley's together to-morrow morning."

We were there soon after the doors were open. There were not many clients present, and the clerks were enjoying a slack time. Jack had recalled to his mind the exact date of his former visit; and thus the sole difficulty was overcome. The clerk found the name of Ellen Martineau entered under that date in his book.

"Yes," he said, "Miss Ellen Martineau, English teacher in a French school; preliminary to be paid, about fifty, no salary; reference, Mrs. Wilkinson, No. 19, Bellingranger street."

"No. 19 Bellingranger street!" we repeated in one breath.

"Yes, gentlemen, that is the address," said the clerk, closing the book. "Shall I write it down for you?" Mrs. Wilkinson was the party who should have paid our commission; as you perceive, a premium was required instead of a salary given. We feel pretty sure the young lady went to the school, but Mrs. Wilkinson denies it, and it is not worth our while to pursue our claim in law."

"Can you describe the young lady?" I inquired.

"Well, no. We have such hosts of young ladies here."

"Do you know where the school is?"

"No. Mrs. Wilkinson was the party," he said. "We had nothing to do with it, except to send any ladies to her who thought it worth their while. That was all."

As we could obtain no further information we went away, and paced up and down the tolerably quiet street, deep in consultation. That we should have need for great caution, and as much craftiness as we both possessed, in pursuing our inquiries was quite evident. Who could be this Mrs. Wilkinson? Was it possible that she might prove to be Mrs. Fos-

ter herself? At any rate it would not do for either of us to present ourselves there in quest of Miss Ellen Martineau. It was finally settled between us that Johanna should be entrusted with the diplomatic enterprise.

Johanna put in the next day following down the clues Jack and I had discovered.

"Well, Martin," she said that evening, "you need suffer no more anxiety. Olivia has gone as English teacher in an excellent French school, where the lady is thoroughly acquainted with English ways and customs. This is the prospectus of the establishment. You see there are 'extensive grounds for recreation, and the comforts of a cheerfully happy home, the domestic arrangements being on a thoroughly liberal scale.' Here is also a photographic view of the place; a charming villa, you see, in the best French style. The lady's husband is an avocet; and everything is taught by professors—cosmography and pedagogy, and other studies of which we never heard when I was a girl. Olivia is to stay there twelve months, and in return for her services will take lessons from any professors attending the establishment. Your mind may be quite at ease now."

"But where is the place?" I inquired.

"Oh! it is in Normandy—Noireau," he said; "quite out of the range of railways and tourists. There will be no danger of any one finding her out there; and you know she has changed her name altogether this time."

"Did you discover that Olivia and Ellen Martineau are the same persons?" I asked.

"No, I did not," she answered; "I thought you were sure of that."

"But I was not sure of it; neither could Jack be sure. He puzzled himself in trying to give a satisfactory description of his Ellen Martineau; but every answer he gave to my eager questions plunged us into greater uncertainty. He was not sure of the color either of her hair or eyes, and made blundering guesses at her height."

"What was I to believe?"

"It was running too great a risk to make any further inquiries at No. 19 Bellingranger street. Mrs. Wilkinson was the landlady of the lodging house, and she had told Johanna that Madame Perrier boarded with her when she was in London. But she might begin to talk to her other lodgers, if her own curiosity were excited; and once more my desire to fathom the mystery hanging about Olivia might plunge her into fresh difficulties, should it reach the ears of Foster or his wife."

"I must satisfy myself about her safety now," I said. "Only put yourself in my place, Jack. How can I rest till I know more about Olivia?"

"I do put myself in your place," he answered. "What do you say to having a run down to this place in Basse Normandy, and seeing for yourself whether Miss Ellen Martineau is your Olivia?"

"How can I?" I asked, attempting to hang back from the suggestion. It was a busy time with us. The season was in full, and our most aristocratic patients were in town. The easterly winds were bringing in their usual harvest of bronchitis and diphtheria. If I went Jack's hands would be more than full. Had these things come to perplex us only two months earlier, I could have taken a holiday with a clear conscience.

"I had just jump at the chance of going back for a week," replied Jack; "he is bored to death down at Fulham. Go you must, for my sake, old fellow. You are good for nothing as long as you're so down in the mouth. I shall be glad to be rid of you."

In this way it came to pass that two evenings later I was crossing the Channel to Havre, and found myself about five o'clock in the afternoon of the next day at Falaise. It was the terminus of the railway in that direction; and a very ancient conveyance was in waiting to carry on any travelers who were venturesome enough to explore the regions beyond.

I very much preferred sitting beside the driver, a red-faced, smooth-checked Norman, habited in a blue blouse, who could crack his long whip with almost the skill of a Parisian omnibus driver. We were friends in a trice, for my patois was almost identical with his own, and he could not believe his own ears that he was talking with an Englishman.

The sun sank below the distant horizon, with the trees showing clearly against it, and the light of the stars that came out one by one almost cast a defined shadow upon our path, from the poplar trees standing in long straight rows in the hedges. If I found Olivia at the end of that star-lit path my gladness in it would be complete. Yet if I found her what then? I should see her for a few minutes in the dusk of a school, perhaps with some wealthy, spry French woman present. I should simply satisfy

myself that she was living. There could be nothing more between us. I dared not tell her how dear she was to me, or ask her if she ever thought of me in her loneliness and friendlessness.

I began to sound the driver, cautiously wheeling about the object of my excursion into those remote regions. I had tramped through Normandy and Brittany three or four times, but there had been no inducement to visit Noireau, which resembled a Lancashire cotton town, and I had never been there.

"There are not many English at Noireau?" I remarked suggestively.

"Not one," he replied—"not one at this moment. There was one little English mam'zelle—peste!—a very pretty little English girl, who was voyaging precisely like you, m'sieur, some months ago. There was a little child with her, and the two were quite alone. They are very trepid, are the English mam'zelles. She did not know a word of our language. But that was droll, m'sieur! A French demoiselle would never voyage like that."

The little child puzzled me. Yet I could not help fancying that this young Englishwoman traveling alone, with no knowledge of French, must be my Olivia. At any rate it could be no other than Miss Ellen Martineau.

"Where was she going to?" I asked.

"She came to Noireau to be an instructor in an establishment," answered the driver, in a tone of great enjoyment—"an establishment founded by the wife of Monsieur Emile Perrier, the avocet! He! he! he! how droll that was, m'sieur! An avocet! So they believed that in England? Bah! Emile Perrier an avocet!"

"But what is there to laugh at?" I asked.

"Am I an avocet?" he inquired derisively. "Am I a proprietor? am I even a cure? Pardon, m'sieur, but I am just as much avocet, proprietor, cure, as Emile Perrier. He was an impostor. He became bankrupt; and his wife ran away to save themselves; the establishment was broken up. It was a bubble, m'sieur, and it burst."

My driver clapped his hands together lightly, as though Monsieur Perrier's bubble needed very little pressure to disperse it.

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "but

It could be no other than my Olivia! She had been living here, then, in this miserable place, only a month ago; but where could she be now? How was I to find any trace of her?"

"I will make some inquiries from my daughter," said the Frenchman, "when the establishment was broken up I was ill with the fever, monsieur. We have fever often here. But she will know—I will ask her."

He returned to me after some time, with the information that the English demoiselle had been seen in the house of a woman who sold milk, Mademoiselle Rosalie by name; and he volunteered to accompany me to her dwelling.

It was a poor-looking house, of one room only, in the same street as the school; but I found no one there except an old woman, exceedingly deaf, who told us that Mademoiselle Rosalie was gone somewhere to nurse a relative, who was dangerously ill, and she knew nothing of an Englishwoman and a little girl. I turned away baffled and discouraged; but my new friend was not so quickly depressed. It was impossible, he maintained, that the English girl and the child could have left the town unnoticed. He went with me to all the omnibus bureaux, where we made urgent inquiries concerning the passengers who had quit Noireau during the last month. No places had been taken for Miss Ellen Martineau and the child, for there was no such name in any of the books. But at each bureau I was recommended to see the drivers upon their return in the evening; and I was compelled to give up the pursuit for that day.

(To be continued.)

SPOILED THE FLIRTATION.

Pony Was a Racer and Had to Keep in the Front.

A gentleman who is a member of the Meadow Brook Hunt Club and delights in horseback riding received a few days ago a wiry "cayuse" or cow-pony, as they are called in the Northwest. The animal had some speed and an easy gait, and after riding it around the country roads a few days, he rode it, one evening, with a party of ladies and gentlemen who were out for a moonlight canter.

The party split up into couples, and while the gentleman in question would much prefer to have taken the rear of the line with the lady whose escort he was, yet the pony developed an unexpected ambition to lead the procession, according to the New York Mail and Express. He let the "cayuse" have its own way only to find that the headstrong animal insisted on being at least one-half a length in front of the horse ridden by the lady.

There was no holding that pony back on even terms with the other horses. It pranced about, jumped from side to side and pulled the bit and would be quiet only when it had its nose well to the front. The lady enjoyed it immensely, but the gentleman—well, he left unsaid many things which he had planned to say to the young lady when they started on the ride. Subsequently the gentleman found the pony had been used for racing in the West and had been trained to "go to the front and stay there."

Where Centenarians Dwell.

More people over one hundred years old are found in mild climates than in the higher altitudes, according to the "Family Doctor." According to the last census of the German Empire, of a population of 55,000,000 only 78 have passed the hundredth year. France, with a population of 40,000,000, has 213 centenarians. In England there are 148; in Ireland, 578; and in Scotland, 46. Sweden has 10, and Norway 23; Belgium, 5; Denmark, 2; Switzerland, none. Spain, with a population of 18,000,000, has 401 persons over 100 years of age. Of the 2,250,000 inhabitants of Serbia, 575 have passed the century mark. It is said that the oldest person living is Bruno Cotrim, born in Africa, and now living in Rio Janeiro. He is 150 years old. A coachman in Moscow has lived for 140 years.

Further Information Wanted.

In one of the later settlements of New South Wales a man was put on trial for stealing a watch. The evidence had been very conflicting, and as the jury retired the Judge remarked kindly that if he could give any assistance in the way of smoothing out possible difficulties he should be happy to do so.

Eleven of the jury had filed out of the box, but the twelfth remained, and the expression on his face showed that he was in deep trouble.

"Well, sir," remarked the Judge, "is there any question you would like to ask me before you retire?"

"The juror's face brightened, and he replied eagerly:

"I would like to know, my lord, if you could tell us whether the prisoner stole the watch."

Wanted to Be a Heathen.

Little John (after casting his penny into the fund for the Bamaliam Islanders)—I wish I was a heathen!

Sabbath-School Teacher—Oh, Johnny! Why do you wish such an awful thing as that?

"The heathen don't never have to give to nothin'—they are always gettin' somethin'."—Harper's Bazar.

What He Was Doing Of.

Mrs. Kelly—Did you hear of the felly across the way dyin' of Anglaphobia?

Mrs. Googon—Yes, mean hydrophobia, Mrs. Kelly—No; I mean Anglaphobia! He wuz cheerin' fer King Edward, an' he gung heard him!—Judge.

Speed of Ocean Steamers.

The speed of our fastest ocean steamers is now greater than that of express trains on Italian railways.

Few Millionaires in France.

There are four millionaires in England to one in France.

A second-class joke has caused many a man to lose a first-class friend.



Fair Dorothea, a goodly mayde, From Puritan descended, In kirtle, cap and kerchief prayed That plump score be ended.

Though plump and fair albeit she kept, She tired of frugal living, So prayed she wuld the Elders sleep, That she might have a turkey.

The cunning lass, she had no lack Of gown or ermine tippet, Of mottled purple's pillioned back, Or pretty lawning whippet.

The roses in her saucy cheeks Are not by famine shrunken, Her wholesome appetite bespeaks The pies of quince or pumpkin.

But ah, her secret you have guessed, Her eyes her tricks discover; For Mistress Dorothea is vexed To miss her soldier lover.

Who, with his bullets, powder, match, In forests dense is living, That he the bounding roe may snatch To make their first Thanksgiving.

Ah, Miss Dorothea, your face In smiling beauty painted, Looks on me from a panel's space— Long, long have you been pined.

May we, though centuries apart, In peace and plenty living, Voice your petition of the heart, Lord, send a true Thanksgiving.

JIMMY'S THANKSGIVING.

BY PAUL INGELOV.

PROCLAMATION—By virtue of authority in me vested, do hereby by appoint— as a day of thanksgiving—

In sonorous, well-rounded accents the sentences rolled forth. Little Jimmy Quinn, new-boy and wait, listened, catching not all that was spoken. But he understood the import, and he thought how grand and majestic did the name and the official designation, "Governor," fill out the dignified, well-worded announcement.

He was outside the hotel. Now he tipped and looked over a screen into a lounging room.

Jimmy saw a person he thought the nicest-faced, noblest looking man he had ever met, standing facing a mixed audience, who had been listening while he read the Governor's Thanksgiving proclamation, though Jimmy, not seeing the

man, two to half orphans, three to—

"Gave?"

Ned disdainfully turned the cold shoulder on his brother.

"But, say—"

"Naw! There's nothin' to it. Somebody's been kiddin' you!"

"But it was the Governor! Didn't he talk out the pro-clamation? Don't he look a Governor all over? Two turkeys."

"Say, Jimmy," gravely interrupted Ned, "drop it. You've been hoaxed. Get down to business now, if you ever expect to make a man of yourself."

Ever since the last circus came to town the Quinn boys had been "making men of themselves" in a way unique—the acrobatic way.

They were spry, supple, daring. Ned was "India rubber!" He could flip up in the air like an expert tumbler already, after a month's practice. And as to Jimmy's wire-walking feats—Ned declared they would soon be earning "fifty per" as "the celebrated Flying Brothers!"

And they had a sacred motive in view, "for mother's sake." She had scrubbed, washed, worked day and night to raise them. Now, even out of the trivial amount they earned selling papers, they had saved a small sum to buy her a new "comfort-rocker" when she came out of the hospital.

Jimmy went through his practice in a half-hearted way. His cherished hopes had been "sat on." He believed in fairies and luck, and therefore in "the Governor" and his turkeys, and he determined to find out more about them the next day, without saying anything about it to the scolding Ned.

Opportunity presented the following afternoon. Jimmy was getting rid of his last "extray," when he recognized a splendid figure coming up the street—it was the Governor!

With due awe and hesitation Jimmy approached him, and the smiling, good-natured young man, noticed it.

"Well, youngster," he said, "you act as if you wanted to speak to me."

"I do, Governor."

"What's that?" exclaimed the other, puzzled.

"Oh, I know you!" nodded Jimmy in a mysterious, Masonic way—and blurted out his story, and asked to be put on "the two-turkey list."

An amused expression crossed "the Governor's" face. He was only a traveling jewelry salesman, but he could not mar this lad's bright faith. He looked interested and grave when Jimmy told all his story of hardship, hope and endeavor.

"Jimmy Quinn," he said, taking out his note book and making an entry. "Keep quiet about my being the Governor, because I'm a modest man, and don't like to attract attention."

"Yes, sir," promised Jimmy fervently, proud of the confidence implied.

"Thanksgiving day, when your mother comes home, you shall have two turkeys,"

behind a satchel containing—but it's gone up! I hoped I could cross to the roof."

"Which room, sir?" demanded Jimmy, in the sparkling ardor of a mighty thought.

"That—where this wire crosses to an arm, and cuts above the court. Boy, stop! Jimmy!"

What! Jimmy had seized the wire. Like a spittle he made a descent to which his practiced hands were insured.

Into the open window—lost in the smoke a moment, into view again, blundering, spluttering, a satchel strapped to his arm!

"I've got it!" he yelled hilariously. "For mercy's sake, be careful!" remarked the anxious "Governor."

But Jimmy laughed. He even cut an acrobatic caper across the dangling wire, and, flushed and happy, landed on the opposite roof, tendering the satchel with the words:

"There you are, Mr. Governor!"

That satchel contained "the Governor's" samples, \$25,000 in precious gems. When he wrote to his firm and then to the insurance people explaining Jimmy's brave and daring exploit, one sent a check for \$300, the other for double that amount.

The happiest woman in Christendom the bright Thanksgiving day ensuing was Mrs. Mary Quinn.

Her "brave lads" had placed \$900 in bank to her account.

And, true to his promise, "the Governor" saw that their merry dinner table was actually graced with two turkeys!

The Meaning of It.

Little Erastus—Poppy, why did say Fanksgibbin' turkey, huh?

Poppy—Dat's er cause yo' fank de own ob de coop fo' leabin' de do' open. St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Causes for Thanksgiving.

For all that God in mercy sends; For health and children, home and friends, For comfort in the time of need, For every kindly word and deed, For happy thoughts and holy talk, For guidance in our daily walk— For everything give thanks!

For beauty in this world of ours, For verdant grass and lovely flowers, For song of birds, for hum of bees, For hill and plain, for stream and wood, For the great ocean's mighty food— For everything give thanks!

For the sweet sleep that comes at night,



paper he had just put aside, supposed he had been speaking it out.

"Further," said the pleasant faced, fine-eyed young man who held the interest of the group by his magnetic oratorical grasp and general good fellowship, "be it ordained that I, the Governor, command that one ten-pound turkey be given to every poor family, family with no father two turkeys, family with no mother three turkeys."

Jimmy got down from painful tiptoe poise, full of the rarest excitement, wrought up by a vivid imagination.

"Crackey!" he exploded. "Here's news!" and bolted down the street for home.

"Home" was a rickety cabin in an unkept yard. It had known no woman's care for three weeks. Jimmy and his brother had been "keeping bachelor's hall" while she was in the hospital.

Across the back yard was stretched a tant wire, and against it leaned a balance pole. Just near it was an impromptu spring-board, with an old torn mattress under it.

Jimmy's older brother, Ned, had just turned a double somersault as the former burst upon the scene with a prolonged:

"Hello! what's up?" queried Ned, posing for another tumble.

"Hold on! Say—great news!"

"The Governor's in town!"

"Hey! what Governor?" challenged Ned, suspiciously and incredulously.

"Why, of the State—the big nob, see? I saw him! I heard him speak his proclamation—go ahead."

"He promised one turkey to every poor

I pledge the Governor's royal word for it, friend Jimmy?"

Jimmy turned over in bed with a yell, and his brother grabbed him. He had been dreaming of ten thousand turkeys roasting on a spit a mile long, and thought he fell in among them, so—

"Bet your life!" cried Ned. "Get up! There's a corker of a blaze somewhere!"

Sure enough, there was. The town was astir. Half-dressed, the brothers were soon scudding wildly down the street.

"Jimmy," said Ned, breathlessly, as they turned the corner, "the Central's all ablaze!"

The principal hotel of the little inland city was doomed. In the crush the brothers became separated.

Jimmy was hurrying past a building adjoining, when he gave a quick stare.

A man in his shirt sleeves, hatless and barefooted, dashed past him.

"Why?" said Jimmy, electrically, "it's the Governor!"

The man darted up the dark stairs of the vacant building, next across a brief court to the hotel.

Jimmy put after him, he hardly knew why. Up one flight, two, three—the roof, through a scuttle, the man went, before Jimmy overtook him.