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The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

CHAPTER XXVI.

December came in with intense severity. Icicles a yard long hung to the eaves, and the snow lay unmelting for days together on the roofs. More often than not we were without wood for our fire, and when we had it, it was green and unseasoned, and only smoldered away with a smoke that stung and irritated our eyes. Our insufficient and unwholesome food supplied us with no warm comfort. At times the pain of hunger grew too strong for us both, and forced me to spend a little of the money I was nursing so carefully. As soon as I could make myself understood, I went out occasionally after dark to buy bread and milk.

speaking, and stood before us bare headed, and howling profoundly.



"Madame," he said, in a bland tone, "to what town are you going?" "We are going to Granville," I answered; "but I am afraid I have lost the way. We are very tired, this little child and I. We can walk no more, monsieur. Take care of us, I pray you."

"I spoke brokenly, for in an extremity like this it was difficult to put my request into French. The priest appeared perplexed, but he went back and held a short, earnest conversation with the driver, in a subdued voice.

"Madame," he said, returning to me, "I am Francis Laurentie, the cure of Ville-en-Bis. It is quite a small village about a league from here, and we are on the road to it; but the route to Granville is two leagues behind us, and it is still farther to the nearest village. There is not time to return with you this evening.

"I thought it would be easy enough to convert the lay people of the town, but I realized, of course, that the ministers would be a harder task. I remember one of the first sermons I preached with that idea before me. It was a hot summer day, and a gentleman very much under the influence of liquor slid into the rear part of the church and went to sleep.

There were unshed tears in my eyes for I would not let Minima know my fears—when I saw dimly, through the mist, a high cross standing in the midst of a small grove of yews and cypresses, planted formally about it. The rain was beating against it, and the wind sobbing in the trees surrounding it. It seemed so sad, so forsaken, that it drew us to it.

Brains and Dishwashing.

The girls who groan at the task of washing dishes should take heart from an assertion by a bright New Zealand woman. She says that the reason so many girls go into the mills and stores in preference to going housework is that "more brains are required in domestic work than behind a counter or at a machine."

Members of cooking classes will remember the practical instruction which they were given in all sorts of things which the probably never thought had any connection with cooking. In a cooking school examination at Pittsburg last June, these questions were some of those asked:

"Why does a fire smoke, and what can be done to prevent it?" "Why do fried articles soak grease?" "Name one good cut of beef for soup, one for boiling, one for roasting."

A Pony Express. The pony express of Manayunk, Pa., has become famous. Joseph H. Maurer, a hardware dealer of Manayunk, has seven children, and the oldest boy, a lad of 10, is the boss driver of the pony express, in whose conduct, however, all the brothers and sisters have some greater or smaller share.

What a Difference It Makes. This is Johnny's face wrinkled with frowns when he is angry and—Indianapolis News.



Early Use of Skates. To "necessity's sharp pinch," not a desire for amusement, we owe the invention of skates and their early use. A Danish historian mentions the sport in 1134. The bone skates were also the first used in England.

The Dentist's Revenge. A dentist recently turned the tables neatly on a nimble-footed thief who had robbed the dentist's wife of her purse in the street. The husband remarked at the time that he should know the rascal again, and when a few days afterward the thief called to have some teeth attended to the dentist was ready for him.

A Girl's Composition. A 6-year-old schoolgirl submitted the following composition on "People": "People are composed of girls and boys, also men and women. Boys are no good till they grow up and get married. Men who don't get married are no good, either. Girls are young women who will be ladies when they graduate. Woman was made after man, and my Uncle Bob says she has been after him

ever since. The Lord looked disappointed after he had made Adam, and he said to himself: 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.' So he tried again and made Eve; then he was satisfied. Boys are an awful bother; they want everything they see except soap. If I had my way, half the boys in the world would be girls and the other half dolls. My ma is a woman and my pa is a man. A woman is a grown-up girl with children. My pa is such a nice man that I guess he must have been a girl when he was a little boy. That's all I know about people at the present writing."

What Imagination Is. Teacher (to juvenile class)—Can any of you tell me what imagination is? Small Willie—Yes'm; I will. Teacher—Very well, Willie. What is it? Small Willie—It's what makes you think a bee's stinger is seven feet long.

The Boy Was Guessing. "A woman glories in her hair," said the Sunday school teacher, quoting the biblical statement. "Now, who can tell me what a man glories in?" "Cause," he replied, "I want to draw an elephant and I've got to have a model."

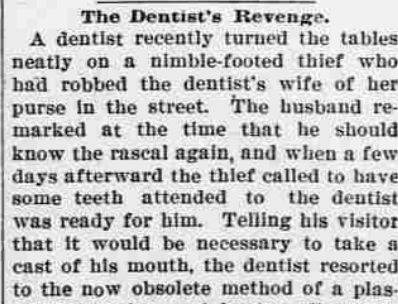
Admission Not Free. Little Mable—Does a body have to pay to get into heaven? Little Johnny—Yes; you have to be good.

Artistic and Historic Objections to Sanitary Improvements. Florence, usually the sleepest, hottest and most indifferent town in Italy in the summer, is now actually excited. When I arrived here to-day I found there was only one word to be heard in the cafes, "improvements," uttered in such different tones of voice that my curiosity was aroused, and, despite the heat, I investigated, with the following results:

It seems that the interest shown by the public all over the peninsula and even abroad in the question of the "improvement" of Florence, so as to reconcile artistic and historic associations with the demands of modern requirements, has induced the Academy of Arts to invite a gathering for the presentation of different projects with this object in view. Certain citizens are well pleased; certain others cannot contain their disdain. "Florence will be improved off the face of the earth," they exclaim, and certainly the problem is not an easy one.

English as It Is Spelled. He walked up to the hotel register, signed his name with a flourish, "E. K. Philology."

Self-Feeder for Cattle. The Iowa Homestead publishes an illustration of a self-feeder for cattle which a correspondent of that journal built. Above the triangular hopper is a floor with traps in it running the entire length of the building, and the hopper can be replenished from time to time, as occasion requires. Feed can be stored here for bad weather. A door, shown in the illustration, is where the self-feeder is replenished from the wagon when the weather is fine.



Fast Walking Horses. Horse breeders and trainers almost entirely overlook or neglect one of the most valuable features in a horse, and that is fast walking in draft and road horses, writes a correspondent in Practical Farmer. "This seems never to be bred for, and as to training for it, I, for one, have never seen it done but once. If the breeder will select a fast walking mare and stallion, the colt will most likely be a fast walker, but no attention is now paid to this point.



Other things being equal, if a team will walk 50 per cent faster than another it will be worth 50 per cent more. Once let the public become interested in fast walkers and the breeding of farm and draft horses would be conducted with that end in view, to the great benefit of all concerned in such stock.

Sheltering Tools. The farm cannot afford to have good tools and machinery on its farm, unless he can afford to have buildings to protect them from the weather, and he cannot spend an hour or a day more profitably than in cleaning them up, overhauling them and making repairs on them before they are likely to be wanted again. The plows, harrows and more expensive machinery left out of doors this winter will deteriorate in value more than one-fifth. The loss would be more than pay the interest on the cost of a good building to shelter them in, and in many cases exceed the taxes on the farm. If they were not properly cared for when last used, take one of these fine days and gather them up, clean them, oil all the iron work and paint all the wood work. Never mind getting a painter to do the job. Buy a can of ready mixed paint and a cheap brush. Use any color that you like, but use it freely, not as an ornament, but as a preservative of the wood.

Comfort for the Hog. The comfort of any living thing means a great deal, and if a hog is not comfortable, he will not do his best. The real object in keeping hogs is to make a profit out of them, and the hog that will respond the best to good care and a variety of feed is the best hog to have, says the New York Farmer.

Honey in the Cellar. The average cellar in most places is about as comfortable as a pigsty. It is chosen to keep honey, because it is a change. For extracted honey choose a dry place, for comb honey a place that is dry and warm. A place that will not keep salt dry will not do for honey. It absorbs moisture as does salt and will become thin—and in time may sour. Comb honey in a damp place will attract moisture, and finally the cells will become so full that the honey will ooze out through the cappings and sweep over the surface. Freezing will crack the comb. A good place to keep honey is in the warmest part of the kitchen, perhaps on the upper shelf of the cupboard.

Tying Up Berry Bushes. Where the snow is liable to drift and bank up over raspberry canes, breaking them down, it is a good plan to group them in bunches and tie the tops of a dozen to twenty canes together very much as a shock of corn fodder is tied, using a piece of wire. This keeps them erect, and the weight of the snow will come on the whole bunch rather than on each cane singly. They usually break so low as to be useless. To keep them from breaking is the thing to do.

To Clean Milk Utensils. Rinse first with cold water and then wash thoroughly with hot water and afterward introduce live steam if possible. If this is not available, keep in boiling water for eight or ten minutes. Let them stand in the sun as much as possible.

Agricultural Atoms. Sourkrout by the ton is a Pennsylvania industry. Black root has done great injury in New York State cabbage fields. Recent trials indicate that malted barley is not an economical feed for work horses.

An airtight silo, a mature crop and careful packing are the essentials of successful ensilage. A deficient and inferior wheat harvest in France is the report of the United States Consul at Rouen. Gather, pile and burn the old cucumber, squash and melon vines and thus reduce the next crop of beetles. Tobacco dust treatment kills root aphids of trees. Uncover the roots as far as they can be traced, cover with tobacco dust and replace the soil.