

A DOCTOR'S MISSION

BY EMILY THORNTON

Author of "ROY RUSSELL'S RULE,"
"GLENROY," "THE FASHIONABLE MOTHER," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

"But Sir Reginald compelled me to do it. I begged and entreated him to excuse me; I told him it was sinful, but he flew into a passion, and bade me disobey him on the peril of his everlasting displeasure. Sir, I was homeless, and he was sick! What was I to do?"

"Forgive me! You poor little girl, I was fast and cruel in my judgment. You were, indeed, obliged to execute the vile plans of the baronet. There," added he, tenderly, as he drew her hands from her face, and with his handkerchief wiped away her tears; "weep no more; you were not to blame. Child, give me your hand in token of forgiveness."

"Then you do not despise me?"

"Despise you? No! no! I only," he stopped; he was about to say "love you," but remembering his vow, he added softly, "pity you."

"Yes, you may pity me! Oh, auntie, auntie! why did I ever promise you to come to this wretched place?" was her wailing cry.

Still holding her hand in his, and also taking from her the candle, he turned and led her down the long, steep stairs. Only once did Ethel speak, then she merely said:

"Sir Reginald will be very angry if he hears of your entrance here! Must he be told?"

"I will think it over and let you know to-morrow. You must sleep to-night and so recover from this nervousness."

They soon reached the bottom stair, and entered the corridor. Then Ethel remembered that her work was not half done, and the rest could not be accomplished until Dr. Elfenstein had left her. Turning to him, she said:

"Will you kindly tell me how you entered this place? You must leave me now, going silently as you came."

"I will. I came through the ruins. I saw you open a door and reach for a basket, then I instantly entered."

"But surely, I fastened it again?"

"You were so agitated, you forgot to do it. I certainly opened it, without difficulty, and crept after you, eager to solve the mystery of the haunted tower, which I then, for the first time, began to connect with your movements. But you are weary now, so I will leave you, and return as I came."

Giving back the candle, he took her hand and was just saying, "Good night, Miss Nevergill," when suddenly both stopped short in their walk; both turned deadly pale, as a short, strange, loud report, close by their ears, startled and confounded them.

Then, to their horror, something darted towards them, a huge form swooped past, dashing the candle to the ground, thus extinguishing it, leaving them in total darkness and gloom.

"Oh, what is it? What is it?" cried the terrified girl, as she nestled close to her companion, while he, scarcely realizing what he did, threw his arms around her form, to protect her from the unknown what.

Suddenly a wild, unearthly laugh, or yell, floated to them from the other end of the corridor, and as it passed, Dr. Elfenstein pressed the girl he held closer to his heart, and laid his cheek against her frightened face.

"Oh, do not leave me! I shall die! I shall die!" gasped Ethel.

"I will not. You are not so afraid now, and thus, close to me, are you, dear?"

"No; not so fearfully afraid as I was." Gently stroking her hair, the young man felt, even in the terror, inspired by their dreadful position, a feeling almost of rapture steal over him, as he held her thus close in his arms, with hers clinging to his waist. But suddenly, calmer reflections came; he felt this thing must be seen to; whatever presence had been near them must be discovered, and that he ought to follow up the sound.

"Child!" he whispered, "whatever has been near us, I know by that last cry, has escaped into the ruins, through the door by which I entered. That being so, I must in duty carry you to a place of safety, then search around to see what it could have been."

Instantly, then, he flashed over Ethel's mind, that the ape, Sir Reginald's choice concealed treasure, had escaped, and that the knife she had so carelessly given him had done the deed. He had cut his way out. Oh, the terror this thought thrust into her heart was almost unbearable! At once, she became, as it were, a dead weight again in the doctor's arms.

Then another thought came that imparted new life. Her oath had been taken never to reveal the existence of that animal, nor of the concealed room. In order to keep this vow, Dr. Elfenstein must not examine the premises.

She knew well now the meaning of that first report. The beast had knocked down the iron shelves, burst open the panels, and in consequence a light would show the doctor that opening, and the room beyond. No! he must never examine this corridor. Nervous herself for a new task, she said:

"Doctor, I cannot consent to being left a moment here alone! Nor will I consent to your exposing yourself further to-night. Take me, then, to my room, and we will look up this place, and you can steal softly from the house another way."

"But, Miss Nevergill, surely this ought to be investigated. I cannot allow it, cannot endure it!"

"Oh, no, please do not investigate! I cannot allow it, cannot endure it!"

As she spoke, a long, deep shudder passed over her frame, and the doctor, noticing it, knew at once that her nervous system could stand no more, therefore, felt it was best to yield.

"Shall I not, at least, light the candle?"

"No, no! I cannot bear it!" murmured the poor girl, horrified at the thought of what a light might reveal.

"Tell me, then, which way your room lies, and I shall carry you thither at once!"

"Straight! Just beyond the door by which you entered, through a passage-

way, my room lies opposite its door," she returned. "But, indeed, doctor, I can walk, if you will only let me hold to your arm. I would rather."

"Well, be it so!" returned the man, releasing her, yet still retaining her hand, which he drew under his arm.

When they neared the door of the ruin, however, Ethel felt a strong current of air upon her cheek, which revealed the fact that it stood wide open, and instantly a deadly fear of the horrible creature that had escaped, being still near, seized her, and again she shrank close to her friend, while her faltering steps told of departing strength.

Without a word, Earle Elfenstein lifted her in his arms, and so passed into the passageway. Remembering that his presence there must be kept a secret, the young girl whispered:

"Step softly; let no one hear!"

"I will," he breathed back, and guided by the dim light under the door indicated, he passed through, emerging from the open wardrobe, into the bedroom.

Placing her in a large easy chair, he stepped back, closed and fastened both doors, then returned to her side.

"Please, doctor," she murmured, "examine every part of this room before you go, to be sure the dreadful—the dreadful!" she hesitated.

"Yes, I know," he interrupted, "and you will soon see you are perfectly safe."

Obedying her wish, he then made a thorough search of room and closet. But as he supposed, nothing was to be seen.

"Now, how will you leave the house?" she murmured, anxiously.

A sly look towards the corridor caused her to exclaim, in a whisper, as she laid her hand entreatingly on his arm:

"Not there, doctor, promise me you will not return to that place this night, but go directly home."

Again Earle yielded to the pleading of the sweet girl beside him, and again answered:

"Then I must either drop from your window or go through the hall. Stay! I see a moment's strap around your trunk. Is the very thing! I will fasten it to the balcony, and so slip down by its aid to the ground. Are you willing?"

"Perfectly. Doctor," she whispered, "do you know I should have died from fright had you not been there?"

"Yes, I know; and now, before I say good night, I shall mix you a composing draught, and then you must promise me, to go instantly to your bed, as soon as you take in the strap, and close the window, and the last thing, swallow the preparation I shall leave. Will you do this, in return for my not investigating further, what I see you do not wish explained?"

Ethel hesitated, then remembering that she could not see Sir Reginald that night, she gave the promise.

A moment more passed, and then the strap had been fastened, the doctor had whispered "Good night," and she watched him disappear amid the darkness and storm.

Darting out, she secured the strap without trouble, fastened down the window, and soon slept under the effects of the anodyne he had so thoughtfully left for her use.

Well indeed was it for her that she could sleep, for without some rest she could never have borne the terrible excitement that awaited her in the nearing hours of the coming day.

CHAPTER XVII.

The next morning Ethel attempted to rise, as usual, but found herself so ill with a sick headache that the attempt was vain. Every time she lifted her head from her pillow, it throbbed wildly, while a blind dizziness came over her to such an extent that she felt it were better to keep still for a while until it passed away.

At nine o'clock a servant came to her room, and she sent an excuse to the family for her non-appearance. About ten a message came from Sir Reginald, asking how soon she could come to him? She returned for answer that her head was still in such pain that she feared not until afternoon.

About five Dr. Elfenstein called to see his patient, and his lordship at once requested him to look after his secretary, saying that she was not able to come to him, while he was most anxious to see her. Mrs. Fredon was then dispatched to Miss Nevergill's room to prepare her for a visit from the doctor.

As the young man entered, he was really startled to see how wan and pale the excitement of the night before, and a few hours' illness, had made her. She had made several attempts to rise, and had succeeded in dressing herself, but the exertion had overcome her, and once more she had been obliged to recline upon the bed, while her large dark eyes, and black dress, made her cheeks seem almost like snow.

"Oh, doctor!" she sighed, as he advanced and took her hand in his. "Can you give me something to stop this headache, so that I can go to Sir Reginald? He has wanted me all day, and has sent for me several times, and I must see him, but I cannot seem to get there."

"You have done right to keep still. I will give you a remedy that I think will cause you relief in an hour's time. Until then, you should try to sleep."

Preparing a liquid, he carefully held the tumbler to her lips, saw her drink it, then throwing a light shawl over her, left, saying as he did so:

"If you sleep now, I am almost certain you can visit his lordship in the length of time I mentioned."

It seemed that the medicine, and his calm, kind words did soothe her, for at once she fell into the restful sleep so much needed. The nap proved quite a long one, and it was seven o'clock in the evening before she crept through the hall, and with a trembling frame but head greatly relieved, entered Sir Reginald's presence. At once she saw that her ill-

ness had decomposed him, and that he was unusually irritable and nervous.

"I am sorry I could not come to you as usual," she began, but he interrupted her by saying crossly:

"Oh, yes; I dare say. Stop all apologies and while we are alone tell me if you obeyed my orders last night."

"I did," faltered the poor girl.

"Did the thing work well?" asked he, eagerly.

"It did. I had no trouble in the Tower, at all; but, O, Sir Reginald, something terrible has happened!"

"What?" exclaimed the sick man, starting up in so sudden a manner that it caused him to fall back with a groan, although he kept a firm grip on the arm he had seized in his excitement regardless of the fact that his tight grasp caused her to turn pale with pain.

"I dread telling you, but just as I left the Tower to push back the panels a frightful noise of a heavy fall came, then a large monster darted out, dashed the candle from my hand, and with a howl disappeared, leaving me half dead with fright."

"Girl!" yelled the infuriated man, his face turning purple with rage, "what is this you tell me? Gone! Escaped! Speak!" added he, roughly shaking her by the arm. "Tell me this is a lie—a lie that you said just now!"

"No, Sir Reginald," returned the pallid Ethel; "it is the truth. Whatever you had there got out last night and ran off through the ruins!"

"What did you do wrong that made this happen? Answer, or I will tear you to pieces!"

"Release my arm, sir! You are cruel in your rage! You hurt me!"

"Speak then. How did he get out of his prison?"

With a faltering voice the frightened girl, while writhing in his grasp, murmured:

"I dropped the knife on the shelves a few nights before and forgot it. It whirled around, and I knew by the cry he gave that he had it."

"Idiot!" returned the enraged being before her, as he gave her arm such a fearful wrench that it dislocated the elbow. "Out of my sight; out of my house this instant! You have ruined me with your carelessness! Not another night shall you sleep under this roof!"

Once again he raised his arm—this time to strike. But fortunately, with a moan of pain at the injury she had already sustained, she had darted back, and so the blow descended on empty air.

Without another look at the man before her the poor young girl crept from his presence, and dragging herself back to her room, fastened herself in, while she sought to prepare for her departure.

With her arm hanging motionless by her side, and nearly wild with pain, she opened her trunk and thrusting her valuables inside as well as she could with one hand, she locked them and dropped the key into her pocket.

Fearing, she scarcely knew what, she put the package of papers her aunt had given her, with her purse, also in her pocket, that she might be certain of their safety. Then hastily putting comb, brushes and night apparel in a hand satchel, she paused to rest.

Advancing to her window, she found that a heavy rain was still falling, and that darkness was even then over the earth. Throwing her waterproof over her shoulders, with its hood drawn over her hat, she opened her door and glided through the hall, down the stairs and out of the front entrance, fortunately without being seen by any of the family.

As she had passed the sick man's room she knew by the sound of many excited voices within that they had gone to his assistance, and she judged he must have injured his hip by his passionate frenzy.

While she pitied the man, she feared him, and never breathed freely until outside the door. Then with a hurried step she passed down the ramble.

Once away from the house and beyond the reach of Sir Reginald's wrath, she paused to consider whether she should go, and what she should do.

As she paused one thing seemed plain. She could do nothing until a physician attended to her wounded arm. In order to have this accomplished, it was evident that she must seek Dr. Elfenstein at his home.

She shrank from doing this. Still it could not be helped. Her arm could not be raised, and on that arm she depended now for her daily bread.

Once in the road beyond she could see lights in windows of dwelling houses far down the road. The first of them she knew was where Dr. Elfenstein lived, and hope revived once more, and she pressed on, thinking soon to be there.

(To be continued.)

OVERSTRAINED YOUTH.

Experts say that Germany's Commercial Rise Has Been at Great Cost.

Prussian military authorities are becoming alarmed at what they term the degeneration of the German youth. In countries like Germany, where a term of military service is required of every able man, the examinations for army fitness are pretty apt to indicate the true state of the nation's health, and when seventeen out of every thousand applicants have weak hearts, it is no wonder that the authorities decide there is something wrong.

Between the years 1881 and 1886 the annual average of persons with heart trouble was low, only 1.5 per thousand, and high-water mark was reached in 1898, when the average was found to be 17.4.

Perhaps the best opinion on the cause of this state of affairs is that offered by Dr. Stricker, an army surgeon, who has given the matter careful study. He declares that overwork, irregular exercise, and immoderate and too early use of tobacco and intoxicants are responsible for much of the trouble. Another point to which the Doctor calls attention is the practice of putting children at work too early. As they often are required to toil beyond their strength, the strain, with irregular hours of rest, results in premature breakdowns, which, the Doctor is positive, have much to do with the general standard of health.—Washington Post.

People are never so careless as when they have a big lot of explosives around.

Bank records show some surprising things about "good" men.



Buff Orpington Breed.

For many years the one desire of the practical poultryman has been to obtain a breed which would equal the Leghorn in egg production and the Plymouth Rock as a table fowl. It is claimed that the Buff Orpington is that breed and certainly it has done wonders since its introduction into this country from England. The fowls are exceedingly attractive and the pullets begin laying when five months old, keeping at it without the break usual to pullets of most breeds.

An average weight for a bird at maturity is nine to ten pounds, hence it is evident that as a table fowl they will closely approach the famed Plymouth Rock. As layers they equal the Leghorn and they make excellent mothers. They appear to be quite as hardy as the Plymouth Rock, hence



Buff Orpingtons.

will do well in cold sections. Both fowls and eggs are scarce in this country and consequently high in price, but if the breed keeps up to the reputation it already has more breeders will handle it, so that in a year or two eggs and birds will be within range of the poultryman's pocketbook.—Indianapolis News.

Care of the Farm Horse.

During the busy months of the year farmers are anxious to get all the work possible out of their horses, which is proper enough. Food alone will not do the trick. A horse may be fed the best of rations, but he needs care in addition, so try these things which may seem simple, but which will do a great deal toward making the horse contented and more valuable to you. Keep his coat clean, not only by brushing and the use of the comb, but use water on him freely, especially during the warm period. When his work for the day is done take a sponge and wash each part of his coat where the harness touched. If his muscles are sore take equal parts of iodine and sweet oil, mix them and rub the mixture well into the joints and tendons. Wash out his mouth occasionally and take care of his feet. Above all, in warm weather see that his stable is well ventilated and that screens are placed so that vermin are kept from annoying him. In watering the horse let him have it before eating and also a small supply between meals, even if he is warm. It will not hurt him unless you give him too much.

Protection from Sun Scald.

Sun scald kills thousands of newly set trees. The wind also whips them unmercifully unless supported. Kill two birds with one stone by driving two sharpened strips of board on the sunny side of the tree, as shown in the cut, tying a bit of cord about the top, advises American Agriculturist.

This guards against both sun and wind, and the tree will have a much better chance of getting safely through the critical first season. This protection can be left on during the winter and will prevent effectively injury from rabbits, mice, etc. Renew as often as necessary until the tree has passed the danger period.



Butter in Argentina.

An English dairy expert, who has been on a visit to Argentina, states that from the Argentine were sent last year no less than 9,075,000 pounds of butter, made by the best modern scientific methods and the finest machinery that could be supplied from Europe. He visited one factory under the management of Argentines, which turned out twenty tons of butter a day. He saw another center where the milk of seven thousand cows was handled.

Pork Making.

One of the features of the pig, which is not sufficiently appreciated, is its prolificacy. While the horse, cow and sheep, as a rule, produce but one or two young annually, the pig may produce from sixteen to twenty-four, an enormous percentage of increase. To make the most out of pork, the old style of keeping pigs eighteen months or so before slaughtering is abandoned,

and the animals are being fitted for the block at six or eight months. The first one hundred pounds of gain are made the cheapest, the second one hundred pounds cost more, and so on increasingly, as far as one chooses to go. Economy would dictate, then, that certainly when two hundred pounds are reached the animal should be disposed of and a fresh start made with younger stock. The best breed is one which matures early, provided it is of good size.

Borghum Culture.

It is scarcely worth while to say anything to farmers west of the Missouri river on the importance of growing sorghum. The uncertain character of the corn crop where there is less than twenty inches of rainfall forces farmers to seek a substitute. They have found admirable substitutes in cane and Kaffir and other varieties of sorghum, saccharine and non-saccharine. The farmers in the humid area, speaking generally, at some distance west of the Missouri river and eastward, have been slow in appreciating the value of this great forage crop, and it is to these that we particularly address ourselves. Sorghum, or cane, is a warm weather plant, and hence should not be planted until about ten days after the time for the first planting of corn in any locality. To plant it earlier is to invite failure. It can be sown or planted for two months after the time for planting corn and mature, if the earlier varieties, such as Early Amber, are selected. It is especially to be recommended for lands which for any reason cannot be put in corn within three or four weeks after the oak leaves are the size of the squirrel's ear, which is the proper time for the first planting of corn.

Potato Cultivation.

Those who have tried the plan of cultivating the potato field, even to the point that some growers would pronounce excessive, have found that it pays well. There can be no possible doubt but that frequent cultivation, especially during the period in which the top growth is being made, gives the growing tuber a chance to get all the possible benefits of moisture and heat with the desired result. The first cultivations should be close to the plant and to some considerable depth; later cultivations are farther from the plant and quite shallow, but this last sort of cultivation is kept up all through the growing period. If the plan seems new to you try it on a small scale and note the results. Especially is it worth trying on a field where the application of fertilizer has not been as heavy as it should have been; at harvest time compare the results from this field with those from a field that has been better fertilized, but not so frequently cultivated. You will then have proof of the adage that "cultivation is manure."

Farm Notes.

There is no single breed that possesses only good qualities.

A cross-bred animal should never be chosen as a breeder.

Nothing so surely impoverishes the farm as the selling of hay.

With improved stock, to insure success, must come improved treatment.

Any kind of live stock will depreciate in value when cut short in their rations.

In hot weather especially horses subject to colic should be handled with great care.

Always sift coal ashes before putting them in the dust box for the use of poultry.

All things considered, the best place to put manure is on a freshly plowed soil. Haul out as fast as made.

In buying a horse reject one with scraggy hips. They never do credit to feeding, particularly if also slack in the loins.

It is much easier to tell how a thing should be done than it is to demonstrate the advantages of a plan by experiment.

Circumstances and management have about as much to do in making mutton-growing profitable as in turning the scale toward profit in any other farm product.

After the harvest work is finished up is a good time to put in drainage where needed. This is something that should be done thoroughly and well, and not hurriedly.

Reject a horse with forelegs not straight. They will not stand wear. Stand behind the horse as he walks away from you and you will be able to notice these defects if they exist.

Poultry Pointers.

Apoplexy and egg-bound are the result of excessive fat.

Use no deformed or weak fowls for breeding purposes.

In mating always endeavor to use active, vigorous cocks.

Never under any circumstances allow other hens to molest a sitter.

Cooked food fattens quickly, probably because it is more completely digested.

When it can be done, the poultry-house should have two rooms—one for laying hens.

While sour milk is relished by the hens, it should not be made a substitute for water.

Dust the sitting hens with insect powder to prevent the little chicks having lice on them.

Hens will rarely eat their eggs if they are supplied with plenty of broken bone, oyster and clam shells.

Healthy, thrifty fowls are invariably early risers and should be fed as soon as they fly down from the roosts.

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He who rules must humor full as much as he commands.—George Eliot.

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Hypocrisy is the necessary burden of villainy.—Johnson.



Miss Agnes Miller, of Chicago, speaks to young women about dangers of the Menstrual Period.

"To Young Women:—I suffered for six years with dysmenorrhea (painful periods), so much so that I dreaded every month, as I knew it meant three or four days of intense pain. The doctor said this was due to an inflamed condition of the uterine appendages caused by repeated and neglected colds.

"If young girls only realized how dangerous it is to take cold at this critical time, much suffering would be spared them. Thank God for Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, which helped me any. Within three weeks after I started to take it, I noticed a marked improvement in my general health, and at the time of my next monthly period the pain had diminished considerably. I kept up the treatment, and was cured a month later. I am like another person since. I am in perfect health, my eyes are brighter, I have added 12 pounds to my weight, my color is good, and I feel light and happy."—Miss Agnes Miller, 25 Potomac Ave., Chicago, Ill.—\$6.00. Forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

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