A DOCTOR'S MISSION

BY EMILY THORNTON

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

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

A few days after the promenade on deck Dr. Elfenstein was summoned by Miss Nevergail to attend her aunt, who was very ill, owing to the violence of the storm. Portioning out a sedative, the young physician turned to give it to his companion, and in handing it, their fingers met, and at the touch his heart leaped so forcibly into a delightful thrill that it caused an instant feeling of questioning as to its cause.

Their passage across the Atlantic was an unusually propitious one. It was with relief to both the physician and anxious niece as they saw the termination of the voyage, for in spite of their united efforts, Mrs. Nevergail's strength was rapidly departing.

Dr. Elfenstein had an unusually tender and sympathizing heart. He could not see so young a girl in such trouble and not in everything possible lend a helping hand.

He cared for her as a brother, and the eloquent look of gratitude that flashed upon him, as, after seeing them both safely in the Liverpool home of their cousin, Mr. Rogers, Ethel placed her hand in his, at parting, and faltered out her thanks, as he bade her farewell, never expecting to see her more, was a reward not soon to be forgotten.

After leaving his fellow voyagers, our hero lost no time in pursuing his own journey. Before a week had rolled by his way was made perfectly plain, and a pleasant home was provided. He found by inquiring of Levi Perkins, the landlord of the hotel where he stopped, that the place had just been excited, and almost stunned, by the sudden illness of Dr. Jennings, the only physician for miles around. He had been rendered helpless three days before, by a paralytic stroke, and as all feared, would never again be able to attend to his professional duties.

Instantly, on hearing this news, the young man had visited the house of the old gentleman, and showing his letters of recommendation, and his written credentials, he had offered to attend to the sick in his place, which offer was accepted, and in a few days the stranger had all the calls for medical advice that he could attend, and the result was that he bought the practice of the old and worn out man, and became his accepted successor. Dr. Jennings lived only two days after Elfenstein's arrival, for a third severe shock laid him at rest from his earthly labors forever.

The funeral was a large one, and after the day, with its many excitements, had passed, Dr. Elfenstein again visited the house where the dead had so recently lain, and asking to see the daughter, Mrs. Stewart, he offered to rent the cottage furnished for a year, provided Mrs. Clum would remain in it, as formerly, in the capacity of housekeeper.

This offer relieved Mrs. Stewart of what had been an anxiety, and as Mrs. Clum was delighted to still retain her home, all due arrangements were immediately made, papers drawn up and signed, and one week from the day of his arrival we find "Earle Elfenstein, M. D.," upon a sign, beside the door of the prettiest cottage in the place, and that young disciple of Galen busy night and day attending to the large practice so suddenly thrown upon his hands.

CHAPTER IV.

Sir Reginald Glendenning was out of humor one sunny morning in May. The daily mail had been handed him, as usual, just as he had commenced his breakfast, and one letter that he had then received had discomposed and made him surly and violent.

"What luck is this?" he muttered. "After my not going to the funeral of my sister, and thus, by my absence, showing that I had not overlooked her plebeian marriage, to think that these people have forwarded such a letter as this to me is absurd! I do not care if it was written by her before her death. They might have known I did not wish it. Take charge of her husband's niece, forsooth! She may go to the almshouse for all me! I will not have a thing to do with her.

So saying, Sir Reginald turned to his library, tossed the offensive letter into a drawer of his bookcase, locked it, and putting the key in his pocket, rang the bell furiously for a waiter, ordering him to have the groom bring to the door a young horse named Tempest at once, as he intended to ride. Springing upon the back of the handsome creature, Sir Reginald Glendenning dashed away, just as his nephew, Robert, a young man about twenty years of age, appeared upon the deserted piazza.

He was in personal appearance very tall, with a magnificent figure, dark complexion, handsome features and large, speaking black eyes, while his whole air portrayed the pride that he had so richly inherited from his own immediate family.

"Belle!" he exclaimed, as his sister, a beautiful brunette, followed him. "See our worthy relative dashing down the carriage way at that breakneck speed. Zounds! if I were to ride in that savage way he would rate me soundly for it for the next three days. I wonder what news that letter could have contained to infuriate him as it did. Do you know, he is always terribly provoked when he rides like that."

"I do not, neither does Aunt Constance. I should like to read it though, would not you?"

"Yes; I wonder where he put it?"

"In the drawer of his bookcase, where he keeps letters not answered. I wish I could unlock it, but the key has gone down the carriage way in the old gent's pocket," replied the unfilial girl.

"Well, since you express a wish to see it, perhaps I can aid you. See! this key looks as though it might fit any lock," returned the young man, readily enough falling into the suggestive mood of his sister.

Laughing, the young girl turned quickly with him, and both glided with stealthy steps towards the library and their uncle's desk. The key fitted; a fact Robert well knew, as it was not the first time it had been tried by the unprincipled nephew, and the following letter, written with a hand evidently feeble from sickness, was eagerly read, then as quickly returned to its hiding place, and the drawer relocked, as they had found it.

On the envelope was written, "To be sent to Sir Reginald Glendenning, Bart., after my death."

"Sir Reginald Glendenning:

"My Dear Brother—You will doubtless be surprised to receive this letter from one who has been so many years separated from her family, in consequence of having married, secretly, the man of her choice. Allow me merely to say that when you read this, the sister that you once loved will have passed away, and, therefore, she trusts that all hard feelings that her marriage may have occasioned will be buried forever. Brother, I write to you now in order to crave a favor at your hands. My only child died in infancy, and just twenty and a half years ago, I, with the consent of my husband, took charge of a little girl of gentle blood and some pleasant future prospects, and gave her the love of a true mother. On her twenty-first birthday she will be at liberty to open certain documents laid aside for her, and then will come into possession of her own property, for some little awaits her majority. Until then, after my death, she will be friendless and alone. Now, I ask if you will care for her until that date, October fifth is reached? Can she not be in some way of service to you, and thus compensate for her board and trouble? Do this for me, my dear brother, and be kind and care for my beloved Ethel, and my dying gratitude will be yours.

"Your affectionate sister,

"GERTRUDE."

"Of all impudent proposals, that is the climax!" ejaculated Belle, indignantly. "Take her into his own family, indeed! The minx don't come here, if I can help it. She is no earthly relation to him!"

"Your opinion will not be asked, sister mine," returned her companion in evil deeds; "and you must remember that you are supposed to know nothing of the contents of that letter. But do not be alarmed. Our relative looked too much like a thunder cloud to be cajoled into receiving her here."

Need we stop now, after relating such a scene, to describe the wholly heartless characters of these relations of Lady Constance Glendenning? Indulged from infancy by their own parents as much as by the Lady Constance, whose whole affections had centered upon them, in consequence of the cold manner of her moody, passionate husband towards herself, it is not to be wondered at that they developed with each year selfish and unamiable dispositions under her foolishly fond sway.

As for Lady Constance, her naturally amiable disposition had grown hardened. Life with her violent tempered husband had proved anything but pleasant, and as she finally saw his ugly features of character being imitated by these children under her charge, she became morbidly indifferent and cold to such a degree that her nearest relatives could scarcely recognize in the proud Lady Constance Glendenning the once light-hearted and gay young cousin, whose society was so much sought in former years by the three brothers before their father's death, when life had been so different for each. This morning Lady Constance felt unusually dispirited. Her apathetic heart had been moved the night before by a singularly vivid dream, in which she had met once more her never forgotten early lover, and the face of Sir Arthur had appeared in that midnight hour with all the realness of life, while she seemed to hear him wail in despair:

"Oh, Constance, Constance!"

Starting from this dreary sleep, she tossed restlessly until morning, and then after rising, found that the impression made upon her mind had not in the least vanished. She sank upon her knees, and weeping bitterly, moaned:

"Oh, Arthur, why was I so unfaithful to thy precious memory? Why did I forget thee so soon, my own, my own? Wretched guilty woman that I have been to wed for a title and inheritance, so unfeeling and heartless a man as I, alas! have done! Oh, heaven, forgive this, my sin, and grant me peace with thyself after my weary life is ended!"

Long and bitterly she thus wrestled with her own heart, never stirring from her lowly posture until she was suddenly aroused by a horrified scream from lips she knew to be Belle's, while a strange call in tones of anguish for "Aunt Constance" caused her to rise and open the door, where she, too, was startled to see the whole household assembled in the halls, and then the first knowledge of some awful calamity fell upon her heart.

CHAPTER V.

Leaving Sir Reginald to his wild ride on that lovely May morning, we will go back a day or two in our story, and again seek Dr. Elfenstein. In many of his visits, which were all professional, he had, by dropping some leading word, striven to discover the public mind in regard to the murder committed in their midst twenty-five years before.

To his surprise, he met everywhere a decided reluctance to talk upon the subject, as the law had acquitted the only one suspected, but the gloomy looks and wise shakes of the head he so often met told him well that the younger brother Fitzroy was still held guilty in the opinions of the general mass of the inhabitants.

Sorry to see that his friend was still so hardly thought of, Earle Elfenstein dropped the subject. Jumping into his gig, he drove away to the village, resolved to go through the extensive grounds of the "Hall," as strangers were in the daily habit of doing.

Glendenning Hall lay next to his own cottage home, and stopping at the gate lodge, he asked permission of the keeper to drive around the premises.

This permission was easily gained, and the son of the gatekeeper, an intelligent boy of fourteen, volunteered to ride with him, to explain the places on the route. So climbing to his side, Sandy began at once to chatter of all that came into his young head.

"You are the new doctor, I know that well," he remarked; "so it is all right for you to know how to get to the Hall, in case you are sent for in a hurry. It is quite a ride, you see, before the mansion comes even in sight. This front part of the house is where the family live, and is of stone, very handsome; but all that wing, or part, that runs back, is very old, deserted and almost falling to pieces."

"There was a murder committed here once, I have been told, my boy. Which part was that done in?"

"It is not on the front, but on the right-hand side, where the blind is half open. That was Sir Arthur's room, and is now occupied by Sir Reginald. It is in the second story; but the balcony railing that surrounds it, you see, is not so very far from the ground, as the house sets so low at that end. The body was swung from that balcony to the ground, by means of a rope tied under the arms. The rope was dangling there, the next day, in the wind. See! this path leads to a beautiful lake; you can see the water plainly through those parting tree boughs. There the body was supposed to have been flung, to hide it for a time; but it must have been carried away the same night, for it never has been found."

"That is very strange!" quoth the doctor. "Where could the murderers have hidden it?"

"No one can tell. People think his brother did the deed, as they had quarreled the night before it happened; but when he was tried it seemed to be proved that he did not."

"Yonder is a curious looking building," remarked Earle, pointing to a square brick tower that stood beyond, yet attached to, the deserted wing. "What may that be?"

"It is called 'The Haunted Tower.' Please drive fast past that, doctor, for I shiver whenever I think of it, even, much less pass near it!" returned Sandy.

"Why?"

"Because it is a fearful place. It is haunted!" was the whispered reply.

"Who says so?"

"Everybody. No one likes to take this path, even in daylight, such terrible things appear at those windows at the top of the tower on dark stormy nights."

"Who, for one, has seen these things?"

"I have; and so has every person who lives in a house with windows facing this way, or who is out much nights. You see, that tower is very tall, and soars way above the trees. I saw it myself the last time we had a terrible storm. I was staying with Jim Colgrove all night. Jim lives just below you, in the village. It was about ten o'clock and we were in his room. When we were ready for bed, Jim put out the light and I ran to the window to see if it still stormed, when, suddenly, a bright light caught my eyes, in the top of the tower, and, looking up, I saw the most frightful object eyes ever beheld, dancing inside, plainly seen through the windows!"

The boy stopped here, while his eyes seemed dilating with horror at the remembrance, and his lips grew pale.

"What was it like?"

"Oh, I don't want to describe it! I can't, really! Jim looked out when I screamed, and was as frightened as I, so we both jumped into bed, quick, and covered up our heads to shut out the sight. It was terrible, doctor, terrible!"

Dr. Elfenstein said no more, but inwardly resolved to be on the lookout for the specter of the Haunted Tower. Yet, while he resolved, he laughed at himself for putting the least faith in this boy's unlikely story.

"It is a wild tale these villagers have invented, in order to excite strangers, and draw attention to this quiet, rural place. I do not believe one word about the ghost, yet, for the joke of the thing, I will look this way about ten, some real stormy night, and see what is to be seen."

As if to keep the thing in remembrance, Earle saw that the sun was sinking, even then, into a bank of clouds, and he concluded that a thunder storm would burst over them that very night.

One thing, however, Earle Elfenstein noted, the present baronet's apartments were on the same side of the building that connected with the ruined portion, while the tall old tower which seemed of more modern build, stood just back of the whole, while its large windows on each of the four sides, could be distinctly seen by the whole village inhabitants, as it rose so far above the houses, and even above many of the numerous trees that filled the grounds.

(To be continued.)

Plant with Deadly Odor.

There are criminals among plants as well as among animals and human beings. Those that have the most sinister reputation are known as death plants, which are found only in the volcanic districts of Java and Sumatra. The plant's appearance quite belies its name, for it is really very attractive, being a low growth shrub with long thorny stems covered with beautiful broad leaves. The upper surface of these leaves is a vivid emerald, while the lower surface is a brilliant scarlet. The flowers are great white bell-shaped blossoms, which exhale a sweet and deadly perfume.

The death plant grows in the most fertile spots, but all about it the ground becomes barren of vegetation and neither bird nor beast may come within a wide radius of it. They know better, but rash man, with no warning instinct to guide him, will occasionally linger too long in its vicinity, enchanted by its delicious and heavy fragrance, until he experiences the distressing effects of his imprudence—a blinding headache, which, if he still remains, will be followed by temporary deafness, convulsions of muscles of the face and insensibility.

The Brutal Young Husband.

Friend—But what started the quarrel?

Tearful Bride—Why, I said if we ever did quarrel he would be the first to do it, and he said I would surely be the one to start it.—New York Times.

A Medical Clay.—The latest improbable discovery in medical mineralogy is a clay containing a small per cent of the silicate of aluminum which is said to have curative properties. It is claimed that no mineral known to scientists is purer than this. It is nine times finer than the finest starch. The discoverer claims he can drink four gallons of water without any discomfort after using the new material as a medicine and that his weight has increased as well as his strength. He claims he can cure with this clay any case of typhoid fever or diseases of that kind within an hour, but of course all these things have to be taken with the grain of traditional salt.

Leg-Ache in Children.—These pains, so common in children, are probably of neuralgic nature and are associated with a disproportion between the amount of waste matter formed and that exuded. A few heavy meals, or even one such eaten during dry, cold weather when the child is active and drinks freely, will have no bad effect. The same quantity of food, however, taken during damp weather, when elimination is less active, may give rise to these growing pains. The cause then in a word is uneliminated waste and the treatment giving best conditions for prevention and relief is care of the diet, free exercise and water drinking and more than all else care of the excretions by baths, sweat baths, enemas and so on.

ON THE STREET IN JAPAN.

Some of the Experiences of the Foreigner in Mikado's Land.

When one's work is done there is left the mild excitement of walking up the great alimentary canal of Nikko, says a writer in The World To-day. All that is done in Nikko may be seen. On the veranda of a house madam is having her bath, her head sticking up above the steaming water. The youngsters in their original suits are hailing you, "Sinko san, ohiyo!" "Mr. Stranger, good-day." An array of great gilt lotus flowers and leaves on long stems shows that a member of the family is dead. In the front room, unprotected from the street, one sees the square kagolike box in which, with knees against the breast, the last journey is taken. A bevy of gayly dressed geisha girls, with attendants carrying kotos and samisens, are bound for some dinner or entertainment, their hair black and shiny and filled with bright ornaments, their faces and necks white with rice powder and their lower lips bright with scarlet paste. They are chattering in the shrill, penetrating voices which are peculiar to them.

The merchant steps from his shop to tell you he has some new kakemona or carving to show, antiques from 300 years old to those so recent that the lacquer is hardly dry. "Step in, sir," cries a young man waving his hand in the air as he paints with an imaginary brush an imaginary picture, "and see how Japanese artist uses his brush." He hands you his card and you are pleased to read the motto of his house is "Earnest is the best policy." "I was waiting for you," says a pretty girl, smiling. "Will you please come in my shop? I have brack racker and red racker trays. Yes, very pretty." She spends all her time in front of her shop between the two bridges. If she sees one cross either bridge she is already waiting when he has crossed. No one escapes.

Synonym for Tail.

A pedigree undoubtedly adds to the value of an animal, but all pedigrees are not so much in evidence as the one herein described. When little Majory heard that the Maddens had an Angora cat "with a splendid pedigree," the child was naturally desirous of beholding a quadruped with such an unusual attachment; she had known and loved many kittens, but never one blessed with a pedigree. At last her curiosity was satisfied, she saw the favored animal in the flesh, and returned home in a great state of excitement.

"Oh, Mother!" she cried. "You should see the Madden's cat! It has a pure white pedigree that measures six inches around and looks exactly like the ostrich plume on your Sunday hat!"

Wheat in Algeria.

Practically all the wheat grown in Algeria is hard wheat. The total product in 1902 was 21,000 metric tons. Of the annual crop all but a very small portion is consumed in Algeria. The native population use only the Algerian wheat, which is made into bread, semoules and couscous. The latter is a dish highly esteemed by the Arabs, and very extensively used. The flour used for breadmaking and other cooking purposes by the European population is imported.

Usual Method of Calculation.

"How old would you say she was?" "Well, let's see: When we were in high school together she used to snub me because I was a kid. Now, I'm 37, and, um—u—um, well, I should say she was about 28 by this time."—Town and Country.

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Algy—Aw—can you spare me a few hundred to wun ovah to Lunnon?

Father—What's the object?

"Golf."

"Good! If you learn how to play golf, it may——"

"Oh, I don't want to play it. I want to learn how to pwonownce it."

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslows's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children during the teething period..

Equality is the share of everyone at their advent upon earth; and equality is also theirs when placed beneath it.—Enclos.

Contaminated.

"You are an authority on his[illegible] lieve?"

"No," replied the scholar, [illegible] used to be before I began re[illegible] torical novels."—Chicago Post.

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Nearly all negro babies [illegible] when born, and so continue fo[illegible]

When a woman has reache[illegible] of forty-two in Japan, and is [illegible] the authorities pick out a hu[illegible] her, and compel them to ma[illegible] plan reduces the number of [illegible] but forces many men to suici[illegible]

Mrs. Fairbanks tells how neglect [illegible] warning symptoms will soon prostra[illegible] woman. She thinks woman's safeguar[illegible]

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compo[illegible]

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—Ignorance and neglect are the [illegible] untold female suffering, not only with the laws of health but [illegible] chance of a cure. I did not heed the warnings of headaches, [illegible] pains, and general weariness, until I was well nigh prostrated. I [illegible] had to do something. Happily I did the right thing. I took L[illegible] Pinkham's Vegetable Compound faithfully, according to di[illegible] and was rewarded in a few weeks to find that my aches and p[illegible] appeared, and I again felt the glow of health through my body. [illegible] I have been well I have been more careful, I have also advised a [illegible] of my sick friends to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable [illegible] pound, and they have never had reason to be sorry. Yours ve[illegible] MRS. MAY FAIRBANKS, 216 South 7th St., Minneapolis, Minn." (Mr[illegible] banks is one of the most successful and highest salaried travelli[illegible] women in the West.)

When women are troubled with irregular, suppressed or painful m[illegible] ation, weakness, leucorrhœa, displacement or ulceration of the wo[illegible] bearing-down feeling, inflammation of the ovaries, backache, blo[illegible] flatulence), general debility, indigestion, and nervous prostration, [illegible] beset with such symptoms as dizziness, faintness, lassitude, excitabi[illegible] tability, nervousness, sleeplessness, melancholy, "all-gone" and "wa[illegible] left-alone" feelings, blues, and hopelessness, they should remember [illegible] one tried and true remedy. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Com[illegible] at once removes such troubles. Refuse to buy any other medicine, [illegible] need the best.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—For over tw[illegible] I suffered more than tongue can expre[illegible] kidney and bladder trouble. My physic[illegible] nounced my trouble catarrh of the b[illegible] caused by displacement of the womb. I [illegible] frequent desire to urinate, and it was ver[illegible] ful, and lumps of blood would pass w[illegible] urine. Also had backache very often.

"After writing to you, and receiving [illegible] reply to my letter, I followed your advi[illegible] feel that you and Lydia E. Pinkham's [illegible] table Compound have cured me [illegible] medicine drew my womb into its [illegible] place, and then I was well. I ha[illegible] any pain now, and can do my hous[illegible] with ease."—MRS. ALICE LAMON, Kincaid, [illegible]

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