

The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

CHAPTER I.

I think I was as nearly mad as I could be; nearer madness, I believe, than I shall ever be again. Three weeks of it had driven me to the very verge of desperation. I cannot say here what had brought me to this pass, for I do not know into whose hands these pages may fall; but I had made up my mind to persist in a certain line of conduct which I firmly believed to be right, whilst those who had authority over me were resolutely bent upon making me submit to their will. The conflict had been going on, now more or less violently, for months; now I had come very near the end of it. I felt that I must either yield or go mad. There was no chance of my dying; I was too strong for that.

It had been raining all the day long. My eyes had followed the course of solitary drops rolling down the window panes until my head ached. There was nothing within my room less dreary than without. I was in London, but in what part of London I did not know. The house was situated in a highly respectable quarter, as I judged by the gloomy, monotonous rows of buildings which I could see from my windows. The people who passed up and down the streets on fine days were well-to-do persons, who could afford to wear good and handsome clothes. The house was a fine one, with many rooms, which I had not been allowed to leave since we entered the house, three weeks before—were very badly furnished. The carpet was nearly threadbare, and the curtains of dark red moreen were very dingy. My bedroom opened upon a dismal back yard where a dog in a kennel howled dejectedly from time to time, and rattled his chain as if to remind me that I was a prisoner like himself. I had no books, no work, no music. It was a dreary place to pass a dreary time in, and my only resource was to pace to and fro—to and fro from one end to another of those wretched rooms.

A very slight sound grated on my ear; it was the hateful click of the key turning in the lock. A servant entered, carrying in a tray, upon which was a lamp and my tea—such a meal as might be prepared for a school girl in disgrace. She came up to me, as if to draw down the blinds.

"Leave them," I said; "I will do it myself by and by."

"He's not coming home to-night," said a woman's voice behind me, in a scolding tone.

I could see her in the mirror without turning round. A handsome woman, with bold black eyes, and a rouged face, which showed coarsely in the ugly looking glass. She was extravagantly dressed, and not many years older than myself. I took no notice whatever of her, but continued to gaze out steadily at the lamp-lit streets and stormy sky.

"It will be no better for you when he is at home," she said fiercely. "He hates you; he swears so a hundred times a day, and is determined to break your proud spirit. We shall force you to knock under sooner or later. What friends have you got anywhere to take your side? If you had friends with me, my lady, you'd have found it good for yourself; but you've chosen to make me your enemy, and I'll make him your enemy."

"I set my teeth together and gave no indication that I had heard one word of her taunting speech. My silence served to fan her fury.

"Upon my soul, madam," she almost shrieked, "you are enough to drive me to murder! I could beat you. Ay! and I would, but for him. So then three weeks of this hasn't broken you down yet! We shall try other means to-morrow."

She came up to where I stood, shook her clenched hand in my face and flung herself out of the room, pulling the door violently after her. I turned my head round. A thin, fine streak of light, no thicker than a thread, shone for an instant. My head was still, and I heard a beat like a hammer. I stole very softly to the door, and discovered that the bolt had slipped beyond the hoop of the lock. The door was open for me!

I had been on the alert for such a chance ever since my imprisonment began. My sealskin hat and jacket lay ready to my hand in a drawer. I had not time to put on thicker boots; and it was perhaps essential to the success of my flight to steal down the stairs in the soft velvet slippers I was wearing. I stepped as lightly as I could. I crept past the drawing room door. The heavy house door opened with a grating of the hinges; but I stood outside it in the shelter of the portico—free, but with the rain and wind of a stormy night in October beating against me.

I darted straight across the muddy road and then turned sharply round a corner. On I fled breathlessly. As I drew nearer to shop windows an omnibus driver, seeing me run toward him, pulled up his horses in expectation of a passenger. I sprang in, caring very little whether I might carry me, so that I could get quickly enough and far enough out of the reach of my pursuers. There had been no time to lose, and none was lost. The omnibus drove on again quickly, and no trace of me was left.

The omnibus drove into a station yard, and every passenger, inside and out, prepared to alight. I lingered till the last. The wind drove across the open space in a strong gust as I stepped down upon the pavement. A man had just descended from the roof, and was paying the conductor; a tall, burly man, wearing a thick waterproof coat, and a seaman's hat of oilskin, with a long flap lying over the back of his neck. His face was brown and weather beaten, but he had kindly looking eyes.

no, and the stranger who had not passed on, turned pleasantly to me.

"You have no change, mam'zelle?" he asked slowly, as if English was not his ordinary speech. "Very well; are you going to Southampton?"

"Yes, by the next train," I answered, deciding upon that course without hesitation.

"So am I, mam'zelle," he said, raising his hand to his forehead. "I will pay this expense, and you can give it me again when you buy your ticket in the office."

I smiled gladly but gravely. I passed on into the station. At the ticket office they changed my Australian gold piece, and I sought out my seaman friend to return the sixpence he had paid for me. I thanked him heartily.

He put me into a compartment where there were only two ladies, touched his hat and ran away to a second-class carriage.

In about two hours or more my fellow-passengers alighted at a large, half-deserted station. A porter came up to me as I leaned my head through the window. "Going on, miss?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," I answered, shrinking back into my corner seat. He remained on the step whilst the train moved on at a slackened pace, and then pulled up. Before me lay a dim, dark scene, with little specks of light twinkling here and there, but whether on sea or shore I could not tell. Immediately opposite the train stood the black hulls and masts and funnels of two steamers, with a glimmer of lanterns on their decks. The porter opened the door for me.

"You're only to go on board, miss," he said.

"Leave them," I said; "I will do it myself by and by."

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"Going down to Southampton?" said the conductor to him.

"Ay, and beyond Southampton," he answered.

"You'll have a rough night of it," said the conductor. "Sixpence, if you please, miss."

I offered an Australian sovereign, a pocket piece, which he turned over curiously, asking me if I had no smaller change. He grumbled when I answered

fresh air smote upon me almost painfully. The sea was glowing brighter, and glittered here and there in spots where the sunlight fell upon it. I stayed on deck in the biting wind, leaning over the wet bulwarks and gazing across the desolate sea till my spirits sank like lead. How lonely I was! how poor! with neither a home nor a friend in the world—a mere castaway upon the waves of this terrible life!

"Mam'zelle is a brave sailor," said a voice behind me, which I recognized as my seaman of the night before; "but we shall be in port soon."

"What port?" I asked.

"St. Peter-port," he answered. "Mam'zelle, then, does not know our islands?"

"No," I said. "Where is St. Peter-port?"

"In Guernsey," he replied. "If you were going to land at St. Peter-port I might be of some service to you."

I looked at him steadily. His voice was a very pleasant one, full of tones that went straight to my heart. His face was bronzed and weather-beaten, but his deep-set eyes had a steadfast, quiet power in them, and his mouth had a pleasant curve about it. He looked a middle-aged man to me. He raised his cap as my eyes looked straight into his, and a faint smile flitted across his grave face.

"I want," I said suddenly, "to find a place where I can live very cheaply. I have not much money, and I must make it last a long time. Can you tell me of such a place?"

"You would want a place fit for a lady?" he said.

"No," I answered. "I would do all my own work. What sort of a place do you and your wife live in?"

"My poor little wife is dead," he answered. "We live in Sark, my mother and I. I am a fisherman, but I have also a little farm. It is true we have one room to spare, which might do for mam'zelle; but the island is far away, and in the winter Sark is too mournful."

"It will be just the place I want," I said quickly; "it would suit me exactly. Can you let me go there at once? Will you take me with you?"

"Mam'zelle," he replied, smiling, "the room must be made ready for you, and I must speak to my mother. If God sends

us fair weather I will come back to St. Peter-port for you in three days. My name is Tardif. You can ask the people in Peter-port what sort of a man Tardif of the Havre Gosselin is."

"I do not want any one to tell me what sort of a man you are," I said, holding out my hand. He took it with an air of friendly protection.

"What is your name, mam'zelle?" he inquired.

"Oh! my name is Olivia," I said.

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was going to fish, and I had helped him to pack his basket. I could see him getting out of the harbor, and he had caught a glimpse of me, and stood up in his boat, bare headed, bidding me good by. I began to sing before he was quite out of hearing, for he paused upon his ears listening, and had given me a joyous shout and waved his hat round his head, when he was sure it was I who was singing.

By 12 o'clock I knew my dinner would be ready, and I had been out in the fresh air long enough to be quite ready for it. Old Mrs. Tardif would be looking out for me impatiently, and she might get the meal over, and the things cleared away, and order restored in her dwelling.

(To be continued.)

His Mania Is for Clocks.

One of the most ingenious mechanics in the world is a Frenchman named Le Boulait, living at La Coutances, who has made himself famous for the curious clocks he manufactures. He can make a clock out of almost any conceivable material. Straw and paper are among the raw materials he uses. For twenty years he has been manufacturing freak clocks and most Frenchmen who want something out of the common in that line apply to Le Boulait.

A while ago he turned a lot of newspapers into pulp, mixed it with hardening substance and carved the clock out of the compound. Even the wheels and all the machinery of the clock were made of this material. Naturally this curious clock does not keep very correct time, but the wonder is that it goes at all. The newspaper clock is one of Mr. Le Boulait's latest triumphs.

Another of his designs appears to be merely a collection of large and small sticks held together by wires. It is only upon close inspection that one sees that it is a clock constructed on excellent principles. It keeps very fair time, never varying more than two minutes in a week.

Now and then the clockmaker receives commissions from wealthy Frenchmen for clocks of unique design in silver or gold, decorated with precious stones. Some of these clocks are entirely made of gold, with diamond-tipped hands, and rubies, garnets, pearls, opals and emeralds to represent the figures on the dial. Some of his clocks are beautiful works of art and a few of the most interesting specimens are among the smallest of timepieces.

There is a little girl in Detroit whose passion for the truth under all circumstances embarrassed her father very much the other day. Not long ago he lost a high-salaried place in a business house because of its absorption by a trust, and in the evening denounced all persons connected with trusts as thieves and robbers. But the trust found that it needed him, and he was soon holding his old place, in addition to a good block of stock. It was noticed that the little girl was deeply impressed with the incident, and looked at her father doubtfully when he was home. One evening there was company at the house, and the host became involved in a heated political debate with a peppy guest. The former made a statement which the latter flatly denied.

"Why, my dear man," laughed the little one, "you don't mean to call me a liar?"

"No, he doesn't," declared the little one, as she sprang in front of the visitor and glared at him with flaming eyes, "and I won't have it. My papa is a robber and a thief, but he is no liar!"

The explanation was soon secured from the child, and the hilarity following the exposure was the joy of the evening.—New York Tribune.

Air Torpedo.

The Swedish government has given 5,000 kroner (\$1340) to Major W. T. Unger for the purpose of making further experiments with the air torpedo invented by him. Major Unger's invention is patented under the name of the "flying torpedo." It is intended to convey through the air large explosive charges for considerable distances, and looks like an elongated cannon shell. It is propelled through the air in the same manner as a rocket. In a separate compartment the torpedo contains some kind of slow-burning chemical composition, the propelling charge, which generates gases in large quantities. In the base of the shell is a turbine through which these gases escape, thus furnishing the motive power and causing the shell to rotate around its axis.

Ingenious.

The most recent triumph of the French postal administration is an ingenious little machine which not only automatically weighs letters and samples, but records on an indicator at the side the amount required for stamps. When the article deposited on the balance exceeds the regulation weight, the indicator promptly hoists the sign, "Too heavy."

America's First White Child.

The first white child born on United States soil was the granddaughter of White, the governor of Ronoke Island. She was christened Virginia Dare, and her birthday was on Aug. 18, 1587.

Slow but Not Sure.

"They are not engaged yet? I suppose he is slow and sure."

"Well, he's slow, but she isn't at all sure."—Brooklyn Life.

Water for Plants.

Plants need a good deal more water as the days grow longer and warmer than they do in midwinter.

Woman may be at the bottom of all man's troubles, yet without her life would not be worth living.

EVENTS OF THE DAY

FROM THE FOUR QUARTERS OF THE WORLD.

A Comprehensive Review of the Important Happenings of the Past Week Presented in a Condensed Form Which Is Most Likely to Prove of Interest to Our Many Readers.

Germany will soon establish a colonial army.

The United States may send more warships to Colon.

An Ecuadorian force is preparing to invade Colombia.

Von Walderssee hopes to become chancellor of Germany.

General MacArthur has arrived at San Francisco from Manila.

The results of the gulf storm were not so bad as at first reported.

Hayden, the embezzling treasurer of Swift & Co., cannot be found.

A force of Colombians invaded Venezuela, but were driven back.

San Francisco retailers have made a move towards ending the strike.

Kruger urges the British Nationalists to continue their efforts to secure peace.

Venezuelan officials blame the Colombian government for the present trouble.

The steel trust is landing non-union men at Monessen and will start up the mills there.

A Chicago trolley car collided with a passenger train, killing four and injuring 11 people.

Explosion of two cars of powder wrecked an entire train on the Southern Pacific near Glendale, Or.

The Alaska steamer Islander struck an iceberg and sank immediately, carrying down about 60 of the passengers and crew and \$250,000 in gold.

Both sides are making gains in the steel strike.

The Shamrock II is being put in order for racing.

There is little change in the San Francisco strike situation.

Crispi's remains were taken by a warship from Naples to Palermo.

A. J. Montague was nominated for governor by Virginia Democrats.

The gunboat Machias has been ordered to Panama immediately.

The German Crown Prince may be engaged to the Princess of Battenberg.

The fishing season on the Columbia has closed and the pack will be about 337,000 cases.

Over a dozen lives were lost by the burning of the waterworks crib in the lake at Cleveland, Ohio.

Chicago steelworkers who would not obey the strike order were put out of the Amalgamated Association.

River and harbor recommendations for the coming year are about the same as in the bill that failed to pass last winter.

Burglars who attempted to rob an Ohio bank were frightened away before they secured anything and are now surrounded in the woods near the town.

The Union Pacific Railroad has notified its employees that habitual drinking or even the mere frequenting of saloons will in future be considered cause for discharge.

A coal famine in San Francisco is imminent because of the strike.

Two men were asphyxiated and others nearly so in a Montana mine.

Colombian insurgents are operating along the line of the Panama railroad.

The remains of Dowager Empress Frederick were interred at Potsdam.

A passenger train was robbed on the M., K. & T. road in Indian Territory.

American looters in China were sentenced to four years imprisonment.

SERIOUS BATTLE IN COLOMBIA.

Engagement of July 28 Resulted in Heavy Loss on Both Sides.

New York, Aug. 17.—Details regarding the Venezuelan-Colombian conflict of July 28th have been received, and convey the first intimation that the battle was a serious one. The engagement was fought at Las Pitas, La Parada and Pirinos, and lasted 26 hours. The Colombian forces were compelled to retire, but not before 1100 men on both sides had been killed and wounded. Among these were General Resendo Medina, of the Venezuelan side, and four Colonels. The army of 6000 invaders was divided into 28 regiments, some of which were of the regular Colombian army, commanded by government officers and using the army artillery.

Because of the strict postal, press and cable censorship exercised, the victors were until now given as mere rumors. A list of these battles was sent to the press by Dr. Resendo. July 10, according to insurgent advices, General M. Jose Castillo defeated the government troops under General Luis Velez at Palmira, taking many prisoners, arms and supplies. General Clodomir Castillo won a battle over a regiment that attempted to intercept his column in its march to Rio Haca. General Marin's troops have won several engagements, and now practically control the Department of Toluca.

Two other battles with favorable results took place on the border at Canas and Gatun. Department of Panama. Four battles have been fought during the last month in the south of Cauca, which were also government defeats, though details are lacking.

Strength of Insurgents.

New York, Aug. 17.—According to the latest bulletin of the Colombian insurgents, a copy of which has just been received here, the rebels have a fighting strength of 28,000 men.

English Warships at Panama.

Victoria, B. C., Aug. 17.—H. M. S. Icarus, sloop-of-war, which has been ordered to England, will leave Friday morning. She will call at San Diego and Panama, remaining at the latter point until the trouble there has been settled. H. M. S. Phaeton is now at Panama. H. M. S. Warspite, flagship of the Pacific station, whose commission concludes in January, will be succeeded by the first-class cruiser Graton.

The government is concentrating troops from the more remote provinces. Telegraph communication with coast points is interrupted, and hence nothing is known here regarding the situation at Cartagena and Barranquilla. General Alban has not yet returned to Colon, but is expected at any moment with reinforcements. Troops continue to patrol both ends of the Isthmus line at night.

Liberal's Chances Good.

Kingston, Jamaica, Aug. 17.—A large number of wounded men, belonging to the government troops, were taken to Colon Monday. This is regarded as an indication of the persistence of the rebel attacks.

The converted cruiser Namouna has been found to be practically useless, owing to the bungling attempt to mount heavy guns on board of her. The Colombian government is now negotiating for the purchase of the steamer Bernard Hall, of the West India & Pacific Steamship Company, Limited, of Liverpool.

The Darlen brought 40 passengers, who were obliged to leave Colon in order to avoid conscription. They say the chances of the Liberals' success seem better than ever since the commencement of the revolution. The British consul at Colon has entered a protest against the Colombian government to fight against the rebels. Guards are still kept on board the trains running between Panama and Colon.

Both sides are committing atrocities. In the attack made on the government troops, Sunday, a few miles out of Colon, the rebels defeated the government force, and one of the latter was afterwards found shot in the abdomen, with both legs amputated. This was a reprisal for the torture by the government of political prisoners.

Raids Along Panama Road.

Colon, Colombia, Aug. 17.—Raids continue almost daily or nightly along the line, owing to the entire absence of military protection. Last night Matatin was again raided and cattle belonging to sympathizers with the government were stolen. Two women were kidnapped at Gorgona station Sunday night and the Chinese there were pillaged. On most occasions the trains running between Panama and Colon.

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