

A DOCTOR'S MISSION

BY EMILY THORNTON
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"GLENROY," "THE FASHIONABLE MOTHER," ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)

"Doctor," now queried Mr. Lee, "what course is next to be pursued?"

"We must go to the porter's lodge, on the premises—I think the keeper is still there—get the keys of the hall, and investigate the ruined part, with its concealed room. If we find all as here said, we must at once publish the facts, far and wide. I should also recall the servants, who probably are still near, and re-open the house; and from his own home bury the real baronet. All these years a false baron has reigned in his stead."

The gentlemen acquiesced in the plan, and silently wended their way to the now deserted hall. They did not take the front entrance to the grounds, but gained it by a shorter route, emerging at the rear of the house, and so passing unseen to the clump of bushes, behind which was the entrance previously used by Dr. Elfenstein.

Once in the corridor, they hastened to the end near the tower stairs, and there wide open, exposed to view through still parted panels and displaced shelves, lay the concealed room which for twenty-five years had held poor Sir Arthur a prisoner, just as the journal had described it.

Every link was now perfect! The hollowed tree was true! It further confirmation was needed, it was at hand, in the shape of the one note written by Heginald to his brother, when he had given him pen, ink and paper, at his earnest request. This note fell from a book that Mr. Lee picked from the table. Lawyer Hunting knew the writing at once, as he had often received notes from the false baron, in relation to legal matters.

Having discovered all that could be done that day, the three gentlemen wended their way from the place, and after returning to their homes for their evening meals, they all decided to meet at the village inn, and there make known the contents of the mysterious wallet.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was the morning after the events related in the last chapter had taken place, that Ethel sat alone in Lady Cläre Linwood's private boudoir, apparently engaged with some pretty fancy work, but in reality more occupied with her own sad thoughts than the needlework.

During the weeks she had been in this place everything had been done to promote her happiness. She was ever treated with the greatest kindness, and by Lady Cläre with true affection. She had entered into all her pupil's pleasures with seeming sympathy when her soul was even most cast down. How beautiful everything looked to her weary eyes as she cast them from the window! How full the air was of fragrance, from flowers and bush, and how merrily a starling was singing from the branches of an old elm tree near by! But this innocent glee awoke no answering echo in her own heart; there all was desolation and sorrow.

She felt so lonely in this her youth—no mother, aunt, relative near in whom to find sympathy and love. Yes, she was utterly alone, and would be until claimed by an unknown father; and when she might be chosen by the love of one true heart, her misfortune had allowed his respect, and all she could do was to constantly battle with her own self, and strive to overcome the unfortunate attachment that was wearing upon her health and spirits.

To-day, the more she resolved to forget this man, the more she studied over his coldness, the more fondly she remembered him, and told herself it was her own want of frankness and the suspicious circumstances in which he had found her placed, that had shaken his confidence in her integrity, and merited only his scorn. But, bound as she had been to solemn secrecy, she could not conceive how she could have acted differently, and she felt convinced that, in order to be true to the trust imposed upon her, she had done no wrong.

So deep had been her reverie that she heard no bell, no opening door, no sound, and not until the words, "Miss Nevergall, I hope I do not interrupt you," fell upon her ear did she dream that she was not alone.

Starting to her feet, she turned to face Dr. Elfenstein. She would have extended her hand and welcomed him joyfully but his grave and most stern looks deterred her, and as he offered no further greeting, she merely assured him she was perfectly satisfied, and then wheeled up a large easy chair for his use.

Not noticing the latter, however, the doctor took a lighter one, and placing it opposite the one she had resumed, said, as he sat down:

"I am glad to find you alone, as my business is important, and concerns no one but ourselves. The footman told me at the door that the family were absent, and I would find you here."

"They are absent for the day, and, therefore, I am at your service."

"The nature of my business, I fear, may startle you, but I feel that I ought not to forego it on that account. I shall be obliged to ask you several questions that you may dislike to answer, but, Miss Nevergall, allow me to say, as a preface, that perfect frankness on your part will be the best in the end. Certain things, lately transpiring, have led me to regret exceedingly that I did not use my own judgment that evening when we were together in the corridor at Glenendenning Hall. I was afraid for the cause of our fright. I came to talk with you a little upon your career while in that house. Had you, as I suppose, any especial reason for not wishing that candle lighted, and a search made?"

"Poor Ethel! She knew not what course to take now to regain his esteem. Certainly she could only falter, while a burning blush mantled cheek and brow: "I had, but I cannot explain it."

"Are you ashamed to tell the reason?"

"Not ashamed, doctor. Save for what I did under compulsion in the tower, I have no cause for shame."

"Then you certainly are a very different person from the one I took you to be," was the cold reply. "Miss Nevergall, allow me to tell you that a more infamous crime was never committed than the one you, an innocent appearing young girl, aided and abetted by your help while in that sin-stained house."

"Doctor Elfenstein!" exclaimed Ethel, rising to her feet, surprise and horror blinding together on each of her beautiful features, and her hands and dismay settling in her large hazel eyes. "What is that you are saying to me? If I understand aright, you are accusing me of being an accessory to some dark crime! Speak! Did I understand you to mean this?"

"You surely did."



that blessed feeling, and I thus joyfully sow it, and ask if it meets a return. Speak to me, dearest," he added, as he passed his arm around her slight form and drew her tenderly towards him; "is this dear girl to be my darling—my own sweet wife?"

"For one moment she bowed her head rested on his shoulder, then as he met no resistance it was raised, and kiss after kiss was pressed upon the ripe, red lips that measured softly:

"Yes; you darling; yours forever and ever."

(To be continued.)

PIANOS IN GERMANY.

Enormous Product of Fine Instruments at Half the American Price.

E. L. Harris, United States commercial agent at Elbenstock, Germany, has lately transmitted to the State Department in Washington, some interesting information on the subject of the piano industry in Germany. Among other things he says:

"But the manufacture of pianos in Germany has reached a state of perfection attained by no other nation. Admitting that in other countries particular firms produce instruments which in every respect are equal to the best German make, it is claimed that as an industry, considering the number of factories and the high exports to nearly every country in the world, the manufacturers of this empire are long distance in advance of all their rivals.

In spite of the enormous sale of pianos every year within the limits of the empire, the manufacturers are dependent upon the markets of foreign countries for the sale of fully one-half of the number produced. The success of the German piano is due to the fact that they are cheap, comparatively speaking. Two hundred and fifty dollars will buy a very fine piano in this country. The construction is always up to date, its exterior is elegant, and it is well made.

"The piano owner?" queried the doctor, the poor girl only answered: "Would I might, but I cannot!"

"Then, Miss Nevergall, I shall be obliged to tell you that all has been discovered, and that your horrible secret is known."

"You must learn then, that your night-work was to carry food to a certain concealed room, place it upon revolving shelves, and—"

"Doctor, you do indeed know all; then now am I free to speak, as no secret will be revealed by me? Those shelves were knocked over, and the apples escaped that night. It was his dreadful howl that so frightened us. Tell me, has the animal been recaptured, and returned to the owner?"

"Ape? Owner?" queried the doctor, speaking illuminating each one of his speaking features. "What can you mean?"

"Yes; Sir Reginald said it was a kind

never before seen of that species. He was keeping it concealed, until the owner returned with other extraordinary curiosities, he was abroad collecting. When he did return, all kept its existence a secret, and made impossible a solemn vow which never to reveal it, was certainly no crime. It was abused, and the absurdity sprang from a love of money, but in consenting to preserve the creature's life by giving him food, during his lordship's illness, I did it only because he was nervous, and seemed to worry so much over its helplessness. I saw nothing wrong in it, and as it was not sinful, I am not ashamed of it."

While she thus spoke, a change, indeed, came over her listener. Surprise gave place to hope, hope to joy, and as the last words were uttered, the doctor had risen and clasped both her hands in his, while he clasped:

"I see it all now! I have been rash, harsh and cruel in my judgment, and scarcely dare ask you to forgive me. But I must be forgiven, or I can never rest."

"You are forgiven. But let me hear how this animal was discovered, and also how he looks? As I fed him so long, and he frightened me so terribly, I should be one of the first to know."

"You shall hear the whole story at once. Come to the sofa, dear Ethel, and let me hold your hand in token of peace, being fully established between us. First, then, let me say you were deceived. The man calling himself Sir Reginald Glen-dunning concocted an infamous lie for your benefit, when he told you he was the author of the ape, and he was easily taken in, in that terrible prison."

"Oh, doctor, doctor! can this be true?"

"Did I indeed push that which watched food to a human being? It is too terrible to believe! I cannot endure the thought!"

"You did; but be calm, for heaven ordered it to be so. Remember that, and that through you he obtained a knife, which sliced him at last to escape."

"Never can I forget the anxiety I felt, after hearing what I then thought a terrible blunder. I feared the ape would kill himself. When he escaped that night I knew after a few minutes that it was the supposed animal, and fearing the discovery of its existence through my means, I prevented you from examining the place. I had taken a solemn vow never to reveal his being in life, neither the fact of a concealed room."

Ethel then went over her whole experience while at the hall, to which Earle listened with intense interest, and when she was dismissed, to which he also listened with fierce indignation.

When Dr. Elfenstein, in return, told his listener that Rev. Edwin C. Stiles and Sir Arthur were one, her amazement knew no bounds, and with breathless interest she listened to the whole tragic story.

"What has been done with the body?"

"It was taken to Glendale Hall this morning, where it lies in state. The servants all returned, and I have loaned Mrs. Cläre to the place until I come back from America, as wholly absent my cottage will be closed."

"Aren't you going to leave us, doctor?"

announced his companion, in dismay, as she heard these words, and he felt that he still held trouble and grief cold in his grasp.

"I must, for a very short time. I alone know the whereabouts of the younger brother Elfriz, who was so many years regarded as the murderer. This gentle man sent me here to clear his name from this foul calumny. To-day I see it unstained, and as he is now the baronet, and a great invalid, I go to bring him back in triumph to his home. Poor gentleman his days are numbered; but with care and attention I feel that he can reach the home of his boyhood in safety; but there must be no delay. A vessel leaves Liverpool to-morrow, and in it I must take passage, if possible, in order, as a medical man, to look after his health in this, to him, eventful voyage."

"Yes, now," resumed Earle Elfenstein;

"I have fulfilled my trust, and can carry to him the most blessed news the poor man could hear in this world. Ethel—let me call you Ethel this once—I, too, now know what it is to take a solemn vow, for I took one at the bedside of Mr. Rappelye, the man assumed by my employer, to be a thief; I would dedicate myself to this cause, and in order to do this, I would allow nothing to interfere with this my task. Ethel at the outset had a temptation to serve me, but I promised set before me. It was on the ocean when I saw a sweet, young girl alone, with a great sorrow and anxiety. Oh! how I longed to take this young traveler into my arms and bid her rest in my care, my love. Now I am free to yield to

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