

# 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 inward warmth. At times the pangs 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.

I found that I had no duties to perform as a teacher, for none of the three French pupils desired to learn English. English girls, who had been deceived into the same snare by the same false photograph and prospectus which had entrapped me, were all of families too poor to be able to forfeit the money which had been paid in advance for their French education. Two of them, however, completed their term at Christmas and returned home weak and ill; the third was to leave in the spring.

Very fast melted away my money. I could not see the child pining with hunger, though every son I spent made our return to England more difficult. Madame Perrier put no hindrance in my way, for the more food we purchased for our selves, the less we ate at her table. The bitter cold and the coarse food told upon Minima's delicate little frame. Yet what could I do? I dared not write to Mrs. Wilkinson, and I very much doubted if there would be any benefit to be hoped for if I ran the risk. Minima did not know the address of any one of the persons who had subscribed for her education and board. She was as friendless as I was in the world.

So far away were Dr. Martin Dobree and Tardif that I dared not count them as friends who could have any power to help me. Better for Dr. Martin Dobree if he could altogether forget me, and return to his cousin Julia. Perhaps he had done so already.

Towards the middle of February Madame Perrier's coarse face was always overcast, and monstere seemed gloomy, too gloomy to retain even French politeness of manner towards any of us. The household was under a cloud, but I could not discover why. What little discipline and work there had been in the school was quite at an end. Every one was left to do as she chose.

Early one morning, long before the day-break, I was startled out of my sleep by a hurried knock at my door. It proved to be Mademoiselle Morel. I opened the door for her, and she appeared in her bonnet and walking dress, carrying a lamp in her hand, which lit up her weary tear-stained face. She took a seat at the foot of my bed and buried her face in her handkerchief.

"Mademoiselle," she said, "here is a grand misfortune, a misfortune without parallel. Monsieur and madame are gone."

"Gone!" I repeated; "where are they gone?"

"I do not know, mademoiselle," she answered; "I know nothing at all. They are gone away. The poor good people were in debt, and their creditors are as hard as stone. They are gone, and I have no means to carry on the establishment. The school is finished."

"But I am to stay here twelve months," I cried, in dismay, "and Minima was to stay four years. The money has been paid to them for it. What is to become of us?"

"I cannot say, mademoiselle; I am desolated myself," she replied, with a fresh burst of tears; "all is finished here. If you have no money enough to take you back to England, you must write to your friends. I am going to return to Bordeaux. I detest Normandy; it is so cold and triste."

"But what is to be done with the other pupils?" I inquired.

"The English pupil goes with me to Paris," she answered; "she has her friends there. The French domestics are not far from their own homes, and they return to-day by the omnibus to Granville. It is a misfortune without parallel, mademoiselle—a misfortune without a parallel."

To crown all, she was going to start immediately by the omnibus to Falaise, and on by rail to Paris, not waiting for the storm to burst. She kissed me on both cheeks, bade me adieu, and was gone, leaving me in utter darkness, before I fairly comprehended the rapid French in which she conveyed her intention. I had seen my last of Monsieur and Madame Perrier, and of Mademoiselle Morel.

All I had to do was to see to myself and Minima. I carried our breakfast back with me, when I returned to Minima.

"I wish I'd been born a boy," she said plaintively; "they can get their own living sooner than girls, and better. How soon do you think I could get my own living? I could be a little nursemaid, you know; and I'd eat very little."

"What makes you talk about getting your living?" I asked.

"How pale you look!" she answered, nodding her little head; "why, I heard something of what mademoiselle said. You're very poor, aren't you, Aunt Nelly?"

speaking, and stood before us bare headed, and bowing 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-bois. 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. Will you, then, go with us to Ville-en-bois?—and to-morrow we will send you on to Granville."

He spoke very slowly and distinctly, with a clear, cordial voice, which filled me with confidence. I could hardly distinguish his features, but his hair was silvery white, and shone in the gloom, as he still stood bare-headed before me, though the rain was falling fast.

"Take care of us, monsieur," I replied, putting my hand in his; "we will go with you."

"Make haste, then, my children," he said cheerfully; "the rain will hurt you. Let me lift the mignonette! Bah! How little she is. Now, madame, permit me."

There was a seat in the back, which we reached by climbing over the front bench, assisted by the driver. There we were well sheltered from the driving wind and rain, with our feet resting upon a sack of potatoes, and the two strange figures of the Norman peasant in his cure in his hat and cassock, filling up the front of the car before us.

"They are not Frenchwomen, Monsieur le Cure," observed the driver, after a short pause.

"No, no, my good Jean," was the cure's answer; "by their tongue I should say they are English. Englishwomen are extremely intrepid, and voyage about all the world quite alone, like this. It is only a marvel to me that we have never encountered one of them before to-day."

"Monsieur," I interrupted, feeling almost guilty in having listened so far, "I understand French very well, though I speak it badly."

"Fardon, madame!" he replied, "I hope you will not be grieved by the foolish words we have been speaking one to the other."

After that all was still again for some time, except the tinkling of the bells, and the pad-pad of the horse's feet upon the steep and rugged road. By and by a village clock striking echoed faintly down the valley; and the cure turned round and addressed me again.

"There is my village, madame," he said, stretching forth his hand to point it out; "it is very small, and my parish contains but four hundred and twenty-two souls, some of them very little ones. They all know me, and regard me as a father. They love me, though I have some rebel souls."

We entered a narrow and roughly paved village street. The houses, as I saw afterwards, were all huddled together, with a small church at the point farthest from the entrance; and the road ended at its porch, as if there were no other place in the world beyond it.

We drove at last into a square court yard, paved with pebbles. Almost before the horse could stop I saw a stream of light shining from an open door across a causeway, and the voice of a woman, whom I could not see, spoke eagerly as soon as the horse's hoofs had ceased to scrape upon the pebbles.

(To be continued.)

**A Warning to Preachers.**

"I thought it would be easy enough to convert the lay people of the town, but 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. It was somewhat disquieting at first, but I soon warmed up to the subject and forgot him. What happened has always been a warning to me against very loud preaching—I waked him up. My vehemence so disturbed him that he arose, walked unsteadily up the aisle, and stopped in front of the pulpit. I was dreadfully embarrassed, I remember, but I retained sufficient presence of mind to take what I thought was an efficient and brilliant means of bridging over the gap, for, of course, I had stopped preaching when he stood still and looked at me. Leaning over the pulpit I remarked suavely: 'I perceive that my good brother is ill. Will some—'

"Before any one could move, however, he lifted his head, and, fixing his blinking eyes upon me, remarked in perfectly distinct tones heard throughout the church: 'I sh'd think such preachin' 'ud make everybody ill!'"—Cyrus Townsend Brady, in New Lippincott.

**Chance for a Castle.**

The following advertisement appears in a London paper: "A rock built cranelated castle, buffeted by the Atlantic surge, at one of the most romantic and dreaded points of our ironbound coast, in full view of the death stone; shipwrecks frequent, corpses common; three reception and seven bedrooms; every modern convenience; 10 s. a week.—Address," etc.

"Persons in need of a castle and who are fond of shipwrecks and corpses should not overlook this opportunity."—Pittsburg Commercial Gazette.

**The Chief Cost.**

Askit—And so you have given up your summer trip to Wetspot-by-the-sea?

Tellit—Yes. I had to. I had money enough for expenses, but not enough for tips.—Baltimore American.

**Tuberculosis in Paris.**

Of the 46,988 deaths which occurred in Paris in 1898, as many as 12,314 are attributed to tuberculosis, or more than one-fourth.

## LITTLE THINGS CAUSE DEATH



**T**HE different manners by which people meet death are peculiar. When an engine boiler blows up without scratching the engineer, and when the prick from a needle causes death in a few days, one has reason to wonder.

Bianche Young, of Wabash, Ind., was the victim of a needle point. In sewing she struck the point deep in her finger, but continued with her work. The poisonous fabrics caused the injured member to swell terribly. Blood poison developed and she died in agony.

Edgar P. Seeger, a Chicago traveling man, carelessly picked a pimple, which appeared on his face, with a pin at Ithaca, N. Y., and died shortly from blood poison.

Within a week the dentist's chair cost three lives in more or less direct way. At Sioux City, Iowa, the filling of a tooth caused a stroke of apoplexy to Dr. Adelaide E. Kilbourne, and she died as she was leaving the chair. At Loyal, Wis., an aching tooth drove Kimball J. Berry to a dentist. It was a molar, far back in the jaw, and was so firmly rooted that in the pulling of it the jaw bone was fractured. Blood poison set in, killing the patient in a few days. In Chicago the other day Miss Mamie Ferry, of Oak Park, died from fear of the dentist's chair, to which she was going.

Little Barbara Bothman, of Jackson, Miss., was the victim of the acorn. She complained of pains in her side and was obliged to submit to an operation. In the appendix the acorn was found, much enlarged from the heat and moisture. The child swallowed it at play. She died from the operation.

Lloyd Rogers, of Galesburg, Ill., got a grain of corn in his trachea and was seized with a violent fit of coughing from which he died.

## MESSENGER GIRLS IN LONDON.

**Managers Say They Give Better Service than Boys.**

There is a new kind of messenger boy in London. The new messenger boy does not smoke cigarettes, or loiter, or swear, or fight. The new messenger boy is always neat and tidy, never impudent or unruly. This is because the new messenger boy is a girl. Reuter's Telegraph Company, in London, has lately tried the experiment of employing girls as well as boys for messenger work. The experiment has been more than successful, and twenty-four girls are now in the employ of Reuter's, and more are being engaged all the time.

five to ten colonies. Hitherto it has been supposed that there is never more than one male in a single herd, but there now seems to be abundant proof that each herd contains seals of only one sex. Thus, in one bay there will be five or six herds of males and in another five or six herds of females.

Professor Chun, who has studied the seals thoroughly in their native haunts, says that for a long time after the animals return to the Kerguelen in the autumn they do not take any food, but remain torpid in beds which they form until they have shed their old hair and put on a new coat. During the winter he saw several seals killed, and not a particle of food was found in their stomachs.

Mr. Hall, on the other hand, says that the seals during this period feed once a day, going down to the water to obtain a supply of fish. In any case, it is certain that these animals can live without food for a long time since they have under their skin a layer of fat which is fifteen centimeters in thickness.

**He Enjoyed It.**

At a large banquet two of the expected guests were unable to be present. The order of seating happened to be such that a particularly jovial and companionable gentleman sat with one of the vacant chairs on each side of him. The empty chairs and first course of oysters were left in place for some time, in case the expected guests arrived. The solitary gentleman, therefore, could move neither to the right nor to the left, but amiably beamed throughout the repast, seemingly none the worse for his enforced isolation. After the banquet some one innocently asked him:

"How did you enjoy yourself, old chap?"

"First rate," he replied briskly enough. "I sat next to a couple of fellows who weren't there."

## GIANTS AMONG THE SEALS.

**Habits of an Interesting Group of Amphibians of the South Pacific.**

Professor C. Chun, a German scientist, has begun making a study of the sea elephants, the gigantic seals found in many portions of the South Pacific ocean. He has been assisted in his work by Robert Hall, a learned naturalist, and the two investigators have gleaned many new facts relative to their habits and life.

These interesting seals are only found in the southern sea, and mainly in the vicinity of the Kerguelen Islands, where they go in August for the purpose of pairing. They remain there until February or March. During the winter they are very dull and apathetic, but as spring approaches they become more lively. Of human beings they are not in the least afraid. Mr. Hall says that he went several times through a herd of forty or fifty animals while they were dozing, and only a few were disturbed by him.

These seals live in communities, and in a single bay may often be seen from

Edward Fisher, of Rockford, Ill., was eating peanuts when one of them lodged in his windpipe, choking him to death.

Joseph Carter hit Edward Campbell over the heart with his fist in a friendly scuffle and he died instantly. This occurred in Baltimore.

In South Chicago the other day the axle of a baby carriage suddenly broke while Mrs. Mary Moran, of 8852 Buffalo avenue, was out wheeling her 11-months-old boy. The collapse was so sudden that the mother could not save the child, which was thrown to the pavement, fracturing its skull. Ordinarily, such an accident scarcely would make a healthy baby cry.

Charles H. Ormond, of Milwaukee, was treating a horse that was in agony and in leaning over the animal to adjust a rope around its hoof, the touch of the doctor's hand caused the nervous animal to strike out with its hoof, striking the man in the forehead, killing him almost instantly.

David Gregg, of Salt Lake City, almost bled to death the other evening without knowing it. He accidentally thrust both hands through a plate glass window, but did not mind it. Later he felt a stinging sensation in his hands and fainted. It was found that two arteries had been severed, one requiring nine stitches and the other six, before the flow of blood could be checked. In these last few days, however, no other cases of accidents has compared in fatalities to the accidents in the hunting fields. Scores of men have been killed or injured while deer hunting. When one also considers the large number of sick people who have taken poison for medicine in dark rooms the list of these peculiar fatalities will be greatly swelled.

RAISING MACARONI WHEATS.

Well Adapted to the Semi-Arid Plains of the West.

About 15,000,000 pounds of foreign macaroni are imported into this country each year, solely because, being made from true macaroni wheats, it is considered to be of better quality than our domestic macaroni, which is made almost entirely from bread wheats. Moreover, the imported macaroni sells at a much higher price. With the fact in view that all the cost of the imported product would be saved to this country if the farmers and millers would furnish our factories with the right kind of material, the department of agriculture has been making extensive investigations on the subject.

Macaroni wheats differ radically from the ordinary bread wheats, and in the field look more like barley than wheat. They are extremely resistant to drought and resist the attacks of leaf rust and smuts to an unusual degree. On the other hand, they will not withstand hard winters, and are usually grown as spring wheats. South of the 35th parallel they may be sown in late autumn.

In the case of macaroni wheats it is not only true that they can be grown in dry districts, but they must be grown there in order to produce the best quality of grain, and up to a minimum of about ten inches annual rainfall, the drier the better, provided the rain falls at the proper time and the soil is of the right kind.

The thorough establishment of this new wheat industry will be of the greatest benefit to agriculture in the semiarid plains. A million or more of acres can thus be given to profitable wheat raising which on account of drought have heretofore either been entirely idle or less profitably employed. In a few years' time the result ought to be an addition of thirty to fifty million bushels to the annual wheat production of the great plains alone. The agricultural area will be extended much farther westward and the necessity of irrigation will thereby be diminished correspondingly.

If the demand for seed is sufficient to justify it, farmers and grain dealers can unite in importing a large amount of seed at reduced cost. Such importations if attempted should be made either from the Azov sea region of Russia or the region east of the Volga river near the Siberian border. Russian macaroni wheats are the best in the world, as shown by numerous comparative tests and analyses and the fact that they are chiefly used in the foreign factories. In a number of chemical analyses made their gluten content is shown to be nearly 50 per cent greater than that of varieties from Algeria and Argentina. This is probably to be accounted for by the unusual humus content of the soil in the Russian region.

A careful study of the conditions in east and south Russia, says the Washington Star, shows that in both soil and climate they are remarkably similar to those of our great plains region.

## RECENT INVENTIONS.

Trees and shrubs can be supported without danger of binding by a new tie which is formed of a single piece of spring metal with one end curved to grasp the support and the other end surrounding the tree, the coil expanding as the tree grows.

To support candles on Christmas trees a new holder has been devised, consisting of a split tube fitted with a suspending hook and a spring gate at the upper end of the tube which shuts over the candle when nearly burned out to extinguish the flame and prevent the dripping of grease.

Medicated steam and hot-air baths can be taken by means of a new bath gown, which is composed of flexible material and provided with gathering strings to close the gown at the neck and wrists, the bottom portion being closed and large enough to receive the chair on which the bather sits.

A Michigan man has designed an identification tag which cannot be destroyed by fire or water, the outer casing being made of metal and carrying an asbestos tablet in which the name is stamped. The tablet is covered by a metal cap, and the tag can be attached to the body of an asbestos strap.

**Chinamen Are Emigrating.**

The Englishman writing about Chinamen emigrating to Calcutta from the Canton districts, and then finding wives among the lower classes of the Eurasian community, makes the remark "that the children of these marriages are generally educated on western lines, that is to say, they are taught to speak, read and write English, and are given a grounding in arithmetic and accounts."

"They are then apprenticed to their fathers' trades. This fact may partly account for the rapidity with which Chinamen are outstaying natives of India in the business of shoemaking and carpentry, which they have made their own in Calcutta." Burma opens out a great field for Chinese immigration, says the Mandalay Herald, and the only wonder is that the government does not sufficiently encourage Chinamen immigrating hither.

Down at Australasia Chinamen have flocked in shoals, some contracting marriages with European women, and from past experience have been found to be good factors and formidable rivals not only in commerce but in the several handicrafts of trade, so much so that their immigration into the colonies has been made prohibitive by taxes and other heavy obligations.—Lahore Tribune.

It is almost as easy to fall in love as it is to fall out again.