

The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

CHAPTER XXVIII.

I do not know why terror always strikes me dumb and motionless. I did not stir or speak, but looked steadily, with a fascinated gaze, into my husband's face—a worn, white, emaciated face, with eyes peering cruelly into mine. It was an awful look; one of dark triumph, of sneering, cunning exultation. Neither of us spoke.

He sank down on the seat beside me, with an air of exhaustion, yet with a low, fiendish laugh which sounded hideously loud in my ears. His fingers were still about my arm, but he had to wait to recover from the first shock of his success—for it had been a shock. His face was bathed with perspiration, and his breath came and went fitfully. I thought I could even hear the heavy throbbing of his heart.

"I've found you," he said, his hand tightening its hold—and at the first sound of his voice the spell which bound me snapped—"I've tracked you out at last to this cursed hole. The game is up, my little lady. By heaven! you'll repent of this. You are mine, and no man shall come between us."

"I don't understand you," I muttered. He had spoken in an undertone, and I could not raise my voice above a whisper, so parched and dry was my throat. "Understand!" he said, with a shrug of his shoulders. "I know all about Dr. Martin Dobree. You understand that well enough. I am here to take charge of you, to carry you home with me as my wife, and neither man nor woman can interfere with me in that. It will be best for you to come with me quietly."

"I will not go with you," I answered, in the same hoarse whisper; "I am liv-

ing here in the presbytery, and you cannot force me away. I will not go."

"The silly raving of an ignorant girl!" he sneered. "The law will compel you to return to me. I will take the law into my own hands, and compel you to go with me at once. If there is no conveyance to be hired in this confounded hole, we will walk down the road together, like two lovers, and wait for the omnibus. Come, Olivia."

Our voices had not risen much above their undertones yet, but these last words he spoke more loudly. Jean opened the door of the sacristy and looked out, and Pierre came down to the corner of the transept to see who was speaking. I lifted the hand Richard was not holding, and beckoned Jean.

"Jean," I said, in a low tone still, "this man is my enemy. Monsieur le Cure knows all about him; but he is not here. You must protect me."

"Certainly, madame," he replied, "Monsieur le Cure has the goodness to release madame."

"She is my wife," retorted Richard Foster.

"I have told all to Monsieur le Cure," I said.

"Monsieur le Cure is gone to England; it is necessary to wait till his return, Monsieur Englishman."

"Fool!" said Richard in a passion; "she is my wife, I tell you."

"Ah!" he replied phlegmatically, "but it is my affair to protect madame. There is no resource but to wait till Monsieur le Cure returns from his voyage. If madame does not say, 'This is my husband, how can I believe you?' She says, 'He is my enemy.' I cannot confide her to a stranger."

"I will not leave her," he exclaimed.

"Good! very good! Pardon, monsieur," responded Jean, laying his iron fingers upon the hand that held me, and loosening its grip as easily as if it had been the hand of a child. "Madame, you are free. Leave Monsieur le Englishman to me, and go away into the house, if you please."

I did not wait to hear any further altercation, but fled as quickly as I could into the presbytery. Up into my own chamber I ran, drew a heavy chest against the door and fell down trembling and nerveless upon the floor beside it.

But there was no time to lose in womanish terrors; my difficulty and danger were too great. Why should I not write to Tardif? He had promised to come to my help whenever and wherever I might summon him. I ran down to Mademoiselle Therese for the materials for a letter, and in a few minutes it was written, and on the way to Sark.

The night fell while I was still alone. Suddenly there was the noisy rattle of wheels over the rough pavement—the baying of dogs—an indistinct shout. A horrible dread took hold of me. Was it possible that he had returned, with some force which should drag me away from my refuge and give me up to him?

I heard hurried footsteps and joyous voices. A minute or two afterward, Minima beat against my barricaded door,

and shouted gleefully through the key-hole.

"Come down, Aunt Nelly," she cried; "Monsieur Lauretie is come home again!"

I felt as if some strong hand had lifted me out of a whirl of troubled waters and set me safely upon a rock. I ran down into the salon, where Monsieur Lauretie was seated, as tranquilly as if he had never been away, in his high-backed armchair, smiling quietly at Minima's gambols of delight. Jean stood just within the door, his hands behind his back, holding his white cotton cap in them; he had been making his report of the day's events. Monsieur held out his hand to me, and I ran to him, caught it in both of mine, bent down my face upon it, and burst into a passion of weeping, in spite of myself.

"Come, come, madame!" he said, his own voice faltering a little; "I am here, my child; behold me! There is no place for fear now; I am king in Ville-en-bois. Is it not so, my good Jean?"

"Monsieur le Cure, you are emperor," replied Jean.

"If that is the case," he continued, "madame is perfectly secure in my castle. You do not ask me what brings me back again so soon. But I will tell you, madame. At Noireau, the proprietor of the omnibus to Granville told me that an Englishman had gone that morning to visit my little parish. Good! We do not have that honor every day. I ask him to have the goodness to tell me the Englishman's name. It is written in the book at the bureau. Monsieur Fostere. I remember that name well, very well. That is the name of the husband of my little English daughter. Fostere! I see in a

and the sultry, breathless night, could only come back again!

I felt as if I had passed through an immeasurable spell, both of memory and anguish, before Monsieur Lauretie came, though he had responded to my summons immediately. I then told him in hurried, broken sentences, what Pierre had confessed to me. His face grew overcast and troubled, and he at once started for the factory. He returned after a long, long suspense.

"My child," he said, "monsieur is ill! attacked, I am afraid, by the fever. I shall remain with him all this day. You must bring us what we have need of, and leave it on the stone there, as it used to be."

"But cannot he be removed at once?" I asked.

"My dear," he answered, "what can I do? The village is free from sickness now; how can I run the risk of carrying the fever there again? It is too far to send monsieur to Noireau. Obey me, my child, and leave him to me and to God. Cannot you confide in me yet?"

"Yes," I said, weeping, "I trust you with all my heart."

"Go, then, and do what I bid you," he replied. "Tell my sister and Jean, tell all my people, that no one must intrude upon me, no one must come nearer this house than the appointed place. You must think of me as one absent, yet close at hand; that is the difference. I am here, in the path of my duty. Go, and fulfill yours."

For three days, morning after morning, whilst the dew lay still upon the grass, I went down, with a heavy and foreboding heart, to the place where I could watch the cottage, through the long sultry hours of the summer day.

Here in the open sunshine, with the hot walls of the mill casting its rays back again, the heat was intense; though the white cap I wore protected my head from it, my eyes were dazzled, and I felt ready to faint. No wonder if Monsieur Lauretie should have sunk under it, and the long strain upon his energies, which would have overtaken a younger and stronger man. I had passed the invisible line which his will had drawn about the place, and had half crossed the court, when I heard footsteps close behind me, and a large, brown, rough hand suddenly caught mine.

"Mam'zelle!" cried a voice I knew, "is this you?"

"Oh, Tardif! Tardif!" I exclaimed. I reeled, my head against him, and sobbed violently, whilst he surrounded me with his strong arm, and laid his hand upon my head, as if to assure me of his help and protection.

"Hush, hush! mam'zelle," he said. "It is Tardif, your friend, my little mam'zelle; your servant, you know. I am here. What shall I do for you? Is there any person in your house who frightens you, my poor little mam'zelle? Tell me what to do."

He had drawn me back into the green shade of the trees, and placed me upon the felled tree where I had been sitting before. I told him all quickly, briefly, all that had happened since I had written to him. I saw the tears start to his eyes.

"Thank God I am here," he said. "I lost no time, mam'zelle, after your letter reached me. I will save Monsieur le Cure; I will save them both, if I can. He is a good man, this cure, and he has no authority over me, and I will go this moment and force my way in, if the door is fastened. Adieu, my dear little mam'zelle."

He was gone before I could speak a word, striding with quick, energetic tread across the court. The closed door under the eaves opened readily. In an instant the white head of Monsieur Lauretie peered the casement, and I could hear the hum of an earnest altercation, although I could not catch a syllable of it. But presently Tardif appeared again in the doorway, waving his cap in token of having gained his point.

It seemed to me almost as if time had been standing still since that first morning when Monsieur Lauretie had left my side, and passed out of my sight to seek for my husband in the fever-smitten dwelling. Yet it was the tenth day after that when, as I took up my weary watch soon after day break, I saw him crossing the court again and coming towards me.

What had he to say? What could impel him to break through the strict rule which had interdicted all dangerous contact with himself? His face was pale, and his eyes were heavy as if with want of rest, but they looked into mine as if they could read my inmost soul.

(To be continued.)

Why We Need Hobbies.

Business is not inseparable from higher things. Men may be born grocers, but need not live only as grocers. Solon and Thales, wise men of the Greeks, were merchants; Plato peddled oil; Spinoza, the philosopher, mended spectacles. Linnaeus was a cobbler as well as a botanist. Shakespeare prided himself more upon his success as a stage manager than as a dramatist. Spenser was a sheriff. It might require a rather strong wrench of the imagination to imagine sheriffs of to-day writing another "Faerie Queen"—but why? Milton taught school, as have almost all great men. Walter Scott, the wizard of the North, was circuit clerk and practical man of affairs; Grote was a London banker, Ricardo a stock jobber and Sir Isaac Newton master of the English mint. Paul was a tent-maker and the Great Gentleman an apprentice at a carpenter's bench.

"I practice law simply to support myself," said one of the greatest of St. Louis attorneys—an attorney-at-law, not an attorney-at-politics—"but my real life is at home in my library." Thoroughly practical people need the help of hobbies to keep them from shriveling up.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

High-Prized Book.

The biggest price ever paid for a book was \$44,500, given for an original copy of the "Palterium," published by Faust in 1459. It was bought by Bernard Quaritch.

Tasmania's Mineral Wealth.

Tasmania, in proportion to its area, is the richest in Australasia's colonies in mineral wealth.

Love is the hot waftes and marriage is the cold biscuits.

BORN IN THE COUNTRY

NO BOY NEED EVER BE ASHAMED OF IT.

Daily Contact with Nature Gives Health, Happiness, Purity and Peace, and What Is There That Is More Worth Striving For?

No boy need ever regret that he was born in the country and reared on a farm, says former Secretary of Agriculture J. Sterling Morton in the Conservative. He may lack the keenness and polish of his city cousin. He may be embarrassed by his own awkwardness and feel that he is at a hopeless disadvantage in the race, but the country boy has the advantage of a wider range of practical ideas. From the very first his little services are in demand. He becomes at once a part of the force that is making for home comfort and prosperity and feels the independence of one who is helping to support himself and add to the general store.

The country boy is likely to regard his life as one of drudgery, and such it may be if he loses interest in his surroundings or is pressed with a continued round of duty.

There is something heroic in the country boy's struggle with the elements. Rain and snow and sleet only brace his courage. The garnering of the crops, the housing and feeding of the domestic animals, the gathering and preparation of the winter fuel, give a purpose and zest to his toil.

Then there is the long tramp, sometimes of miles, to the district school; lessons learned before and after long hours of labor. Is it any wonder there are keen wits developing all outside of graded systems and in defiance of pedagogical order? It is the intensity of purpose with which the mind acts under the influence of vigorous health and the conscious value of time that accounts for these results. So from the farms is being supplied a stream of active world workers—men not afraid to do their duty and bubbling over with energy and ambition.

From the little red schoolhouses come into our colleges and schools of higher grade aspiring youth. Some are seeking an education as a means of emancipation from the drudgery of labor. Others come with a true thirst for knowledge. They find their way into the professions and business world, but few go back to the farm.

What an ideal thing it would be for the young men trained in science and holding the key to nature's mysteries and beauties to go back to live, broad, cultured and quiet lives in the midst of the most delightful environment in which God has ever placed man!

Touch the country-bred boy, now the merchant prince or the successful professional man, and how responsive he becomes to every suggestion of rural life. The same cannot be said of boys reared in the midst of any other surroundings. It is the contact with nature that makes the indelible impression upon his life. No greater gain could come to the country at large than to promote the love and appreciation of rural life. Health, happiness, purity and peace are the natural inheritance of those who dwell surrounded by fresh air, beautiful scenes, bright skies and pure social influences.

QUEER WAYS OF THE MARTEN.

A Peculiar Habit That Has Saved the Animal from Extinction.

"The Hudson Bay marten, the little fur-bearer whose skin is ever popular and at times exceedingly valuable, is still plentiful in that region of fur-bearers," said W. B. Salmon, one time a trapper for the Hudson Bay Company, "but I believe it would have been virtually extinct there long ago if it were not for a habit it has of making periodical disappearances, of which I never heard any satisfactory explanation."

"These disappearances occur every ten years. Where the animals go no one knows. No dead ones are ever found, and no one has yet discovered any evidence of their migration to any other region. A few martens, of course, remain on their old feeding grounds, but during the season of the disappearance of their fellows none of them will touch the bait in a trap and consequently none is caught. The next year the martens are back again in their old haunts as numerous as ever, and for ten years more submit to being caught."

"The Hudson Bay martens seem to be the only ones of the species that have this strange habit. The Lake Superior martens don't waste any of their time in disappearing voluntarily, but are found at the old stand year in and year out, housing themselves in hollow trees in the deepest woods and making life a perpetual burden to birds, squirrels, rabbits and other small game on which they prey."

"The Lake Superior marten has one predilection of the palate in which he resembles the bear. That is a passion for honey. He will line a wild bee to its home with the precision of the most expert bee hunter, and the hidden sweets of that bee colony will have to be in a most inaccessible place if the marten doesn't soon revel in them. Like the male mink, the male marten has an overpowering love for his own offspring, but for the offspring of his fellow martens—such peculiar love, indeed, that if it wasn't for the instinct and shrewdness of the mother martens the race of martens would have been unknown long ago. The male marten is so fond of his young that he will ent them up whenever he happens to find them. The mother, therefore, bears her young in some secret hiding place, and keeps them hidden until they are half grown and able to defy the cannibalistic love of their sire. The female mink

exercises the same instinct with her progeny, for the father of them, as fond as he is of trout and other fish, will leave his fishing any time to dine on his interesting little family."—Boston Evening Transcript.

A HERO'S AFFLICTION.

Osborne Deignan, of Merrimac Fame, Now in an Insane Hospital.

Pathetic is the condition of Osborne Deignan, one of the heroes of the Merrimac episode in the Spanish-American war. When Hobson called for volunteers to go with him to attempt the sinking of the vessel in the mouth of Santiago harbor in order to "bottle up" the Spanish fleet, Deignan was the first to offer his services and the first to be selected. Following the sinking of the Merrimac, the capture of the daring party of American sailors and their subsequent release by the Spaniards, President McKinley was anxious to reward each of the young heroes. Deignan was personally complimented by the President and offered a cadetship in the Naval Academy at Annapolis, but it was found that he was ineligible. Then he was appointed a boatswain in the United States navy and his appointment as a warrant officer was made April 5 of this year.



HERO DEIGNAN.

He had served but a day or two when he was ordered on the sick list. After a serious illness it was found that his mind was affected, and recently he was taken to Ukiah, Cal., and placed in the Ukiah Hospital for the Insane. It is believed that his affliction is only temporary, and that his stay in the hospital will be short.

Wagner and His Dog Peps.

Richard Wagner, the composer, was devoted to dogs, and Peps had become Wagner's property during his stay at Riga. He had belonged in the first place, says Our Animal Friends, to an English merchant, but became passionately attached to Wagner and followed him everywhere, lying on his door-step at night. The original owner found it useless to attempt to keep him.

On the way to rehearsal the dog was in the habit of taking a daily bath in the canal. Being a Russian dog, it is recorded of him that he kept up this habit even in winter, provided he could find a hole in the ice.

Peps was one of the great composers' most famous dogs. Wagner always insisted that Peps helped him to compose "Tannhauser."

When at the piano singing, the dog, whose constant place was at his feet, would occasionally leap to the table, peer into his face and howl piteously. Then Wagner would address his eloquent critic with:

"What, it does not suit you?"

Then, shaking the animal's paw, he would say, paraphrasing Shakespeare:

"Well, I will do thy bidding gently."

Peps is frequently mentioned in his correspondence. If Wagner remained too long at his work Peps would remind him it was time to walk.

"I am done up, and must get into the open air," he writes once. "Peps won't leave me in peace any longer."

Edison and His "Annihilator."

One of the pranks of the youthful Edison, when his genius was just beginning to show itself, is described in Collier's Weekly. Probably the danger to human as well as insect life involved in his electric "annihilator" prevented its general adoption.

Edison's early wanderings brought him at 17 years of age to the Cincinnati office of the Western Union Telegraph Company, where his absorption in electricity and predictions of its future power confirmed the nickname of "Luny," which clung to him even until his fame was established.

"We have the craziest chap in our office," said the telegraph manager to the editor of the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette. "He does all sorts of queer things. I shouldn't be surprised if he turned out to be a genius some day. Let me tell you his last prank."

"We have been annoyed for some time by cockroaches. They infested the sink. They don't now. Luny fixed them. He just ran two parallel wires round the sink, and charged one with negative and the other with positive electricity. Bread-crumbs were then scattered, and when Mr. Cockroach appeared and put his little feet on the wires, ashes were all that were left to tell the tale."

In this cockroach annihilator was the germ of the incandescent light.

Not What He Intended to Say.

"My dear, do you suppose this Mrs. Sairy Grand, who is always roasting the men so unmercifully, is a mother?"

"I don't know. What of it?"

"Nothin', my love. Don't get huffy. All I wanted to say is that she'd make a Grand mother, all right."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Easiest Part of It.

"How have you managed to keep your cook so long?"

"Keep her! Great Scott! Can't get up courage to discharge her."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

A Query.

If the farmer who tills
Makes his living by tillage,
Does the doctor who pills
Make his living by pillage?

—Philadelphia Record.

Every time a man receives an express package he says the other man agreed to pay the charges.

A blessing in disguise usually has a hard time proving its identity.

FORTY-SECOND COUSINS.

According to the Professor It Is the Remotest Relationship.

He was professor of mathematics in one of our women's colleges, middle-aged, fond of a joke and given to reducing the things of common life to formulas, partly for the fun of it and partly to bring mathematical truths closer to the minds of his pupils. One day, just before the lecture began and as the professor came in, he overheard one of the girls say, with a sigh: "Oh, he's some forty-second cousin, I believe, and I suppose I must show him around."

"You should be careful," interjected the professor, with a fairly successful effort to appear solemn, "you should be more careful in your use of mathematical terms. Are you sure you are strictly accurate when you say 'forty-second cousin'?" He may be a closer degree of relationship."

"Why! He's no relation at all, if it comes to that," said the fair student.

"It is," resumed the professor, imperiously, "as you doubtless know already, a question of the powers of 2. We all have two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, sixteen great-great-grandparents, each figure being a power of 2 and in —N— generations consequently we have a grandparent with (N-1) greets in front of the title. It also obtains inversely. All who trace to the same parents are brothers or sisters, to the same grandparent are cousins, to the same great-grandparent are second cousins, to the N-G grandparent are (N plus 1) th cousins.

"The powers of 2, however, reach astounding figures rather quickly. We have 1,023 (9—great) grandparents each, for example. Going back twenty generations, we have each a little more than a million 19—great-grandparents, over a billion 29—great-grandparents, and in the forty-third generation we have each about 1,438,800,000 42—great-grandparents, and all who trace back to any one of those 1,438,800,000 are forty-second cousins.

"If you consider a moment, you will see that at each of these thousand billions is a progenitor, that there is little room in the world's population, as at present constituted, for the mob of cousins. There is a saving clause, however. This would only obtain if everybody was careful not to marry in the same line of descent."

"In practice we usually object to marrying cousins and some people draw the line on second cousins, but to make the above statement come true we should object to, say, forty-second cousins, which is impossible, practically. We cannot, in practice, draw the line on twentieth cousins, for example. If two twentieth cousins marry, it throws out one from the million of nineteen great-grandparents to be considered, and so with the other degrees. Probably in practice that is what we are always doing—when we marry. We are almost undoubtedly marrying at least a twenty-fifth cousin, and everybody in the world is at least a forty-second cousin and probably somewhat nearer in relationship."

"Gracious!" said the original offender, a blonde, by the way. "If I am born in St. Louis and a young man is born in Newton—at-at—well, about the same time—are we related?"

"Certainly," responded the professor, with a grin. "You are (N plus 1) th cousins, having descended from the same N-g grandparent, possibly along where N is less than 30 at least."

"Gee," said the tall brunette of the class, who had been listening, as she felt of her back hair and helped herself to a caramel, according to the Boston Herald, "he would be an n-g-grandparent all right."

A CHINESE STORY.

Public Frightened by Mysterious Chalk Marks Made by a Boy.

A strange state of mind evidently prevailed in Peking during the Boxer outrages outside the walls—outrages which were momentarily expected to be repeated within the city limits. Everybody was preparing for a catastrophe, and nobody could be sure why. It all seemed like a huge practical joke, which could not be taken seriously, and yet it was serious, and everybody knew it was. There was apparent peace, with a certainty of coming trouble. The foreigners were gathering in places of safety, and the compounds they had left remained unoccupied.

One incident curiously shows the combined lightness and frenzy of the public mind. On a certain evening a boy of about sixteen walked down a street, marking a door here and there with a circle of white chalk, before which he bowed solemnly.

Presently all the people came to their doors in a great state of excitement, and began to discuss the proceeding and debate as to what it might mean. The marked houses might belong to the friends or foes of the Boxers, the saved or lost.

Suddenly a man went up to the boy, seized him by the pigtail, and asked him what he meant. The bystanders were amazed at a courage which dared interfere with an emissary of the Boxers, and the boy himself tried to swagger a little, and brazen it out.

"What were you doing it for?" insisted the man. "Tell, or I take you to the police station."

Then the boy fell on his knees and owned that he was only doing it for a joke, to frighten the people. His success had exceeded his hopes.

Expensive.

Mr. Binwed—I'd like to have hold of the fellow who invented those long coats for women.

Mr. Nebb—Why? Great Scott! they cost twice as much as one half as long.—Boston Post.



"THIS MAN IS MY ENEMY."