

# The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

## CHAPTER XXVIII.—(Continued.)

"My daughter," he said, "I bade you leave even your duty in my keeping. Now I summon you to fulfill it. Your duty lies yonder, by your husband's side in his agony of death."  
"I will go," I whispered, my lips scarcely moving to pronounce the words, so stiff and cold they felt.  
"Good!" he said, "you have chosen the better part. Come! The good God will protect you."

He drew my hand through his arm and led me to the low doorway.

The inner room, as I entered, was very dark with the overhanging eaves, and my eyes, contracted by the strong sunlight, could discern but little in the gloom. Tardif was kneeling beside a low bed, bathing my husband's forehead. He made way for me, and I felt him touch my hand with his lips as I took his place. Richard's face, sunken, haggard, dying, with filmy eyes, dawned gradually out of the dim twilight, line after line, until it lay sharp and distinct under my gaze. The poor, miserable face! the restless, dreary, dying eyes!

"Where is Olivia?" he muttered, in a hoarse and labored voice.

"I am here, Richard," I answered, falling on my knees where Tardif had been kneeling, and putting my hand in his; "look at me. I am Olivia."

"You are mine, you know," he said, his fingers closing round my wrist with a grasp as weak as a very young child's; "she is my wife, Monsieur le Cure."  
"Yes," I sobbed, "I am your wife, Richard."

"Do they hear it?" he asked, in a whisper.

"We hear it," answered Tardif.

great ceremony. They entered the house and came directly to the salon. I was making my escape by another door, when Monsieur Laurentie called to me.  
"Behold a friend for you, madame," he said, "a friend from England, Monsieur, this is my beloved English child."  
"You do not know who I am, my dear?" The English voice and words went straight to my heart.  
"No," I answered, "but you are come to me from Dr. Martin Dobree."  
"Very true," he said, "I am his friend's father—Dr. John Senior's father. Martin has sent me to you. He wished Miss Johanna Carey to accompany me, but we were afraid of the fever for her. I am an old physician, and feel at home with diseases and contagion. But we cannot allow you to remain in this unhealthy village; that is out of the question. I am come to carry you away, in spite of this old cure."

Monsieur Laurentie was listening eagerly, and watching Dr. Senior's lips, as if he could catch the meaning of his gaze by sight, if not by hearing.

"But where am I to go?" I asked. "I have no money, and cannot get any until I have written to Melbourne, and have an answer. I have no means of proving who I am."

"Leave all that to us, my dear girl," answered Dr. Senior, cordially. "I have already spoken of your affairs to an old friend of mine, who is an excellent lawyer. I am come to offer myself to you in place of your guardians on the other side of the world."

I moved a little nearer to Monsieur Laurentie, and put my hand through his arm. He folded his own thin, brown hand over it caressingly, and looked down

into my new sphere. It would have been difficult to resist the cordiality with which I was adopted into the household. Dr. Senior treated me as his daughter; Dr. John was as much at home with me as if I had been his sister. Minima, too, became perfectly reconciled to her new position.

I saw little of Martin. He had been afraid I should feel myself bound to him; and the very fact that he had once told me he loved me had made it more difficult to him to say so a second time. He would not have any love from me as a duty. If I did not love him, fully, with my whole heart, choosing him after knowing others with whom I could compare him, he would not receive any lesser gift from me.

"What will you do, Olivia?" asked Dr. John one day.

"What can I do?" I said.  
"Go to him," he urged; "he is alone. I saw him a moment ago, looking out at us from the drawing room window. God bless him! Olivia, my dear girl, go to him."

"Oh, Jack!" I cried, "I cannot."  
"I don't see why you cannot," he answered gaily. "You are trembling, and your face goes from white to red, and then white again; but you have not lost the use of your limbs, or your tongue. If you take my arm, it will not be very difficult to cross the lawn. Come; he is the best fellow living, and worth walking a dozen yards for."

I believe I should have run away, but I heard Minima's voice behind me, calling shrilly to Dr. John, and I could not bear to face him again. Taking my courage in both hands, I stepped quickly across the floor, for if I had hesitated long my heart would have failed me. Scarcely a moment had passed since Jack left me, and Martin had not turned his head, yet it seemed an age.

"Martin," I whispered, as I stood close behind him, "how could you be so foolish as to send Dr. John to me?"

We were married as soon as the season was over, when Martin's fashionable patients were all going away from town. Ours was a very quiet wedding, for I had no friends on my side, and Martin's cousin Julia could not come, for she had a baby very young, and Captain Carey could not leave them. Johanna Carey and Minima were my bridesmaids, and Jack was Martin's groomsman.

On our way home from Switzerland, in the early autumn, we went down from Paris to Falaize, and through Noireau to Ville-en-bois. The next stage of our homeward journey was Guernsey. Martin was welcomed with almost as much enthusiasm in St. Peter-port as I had been in little Ville-en-bois.

My eyes were dazzled with the sunshine, and dim with tears, when I first caught sight of the little cottage of Tardif, who was stretching out his nets on the stone causeway under the windows. Martin called to him, and he flung down his nets and ran to meet us.

"We are come to spend the day with you, Tardif," I cried, when he was within hearing of my voice.

"It will be a day from heaven," he said, taking off his fisherman's cap, and looking round at the blue sky with its sun-flecked clouds, and the sea with its scattered islets.

It was like a day from heaven. We wandered about the cliffs, visiting every spot which was most memorable to either of us, and Tardif rowed us in his boat past the entrance of the Goulet Caves. He was very quiet, but he listened to our free talk together, for I could not think of good old Tardif as any stranger; and he seemed to watch us both, with a faithful, quiet look upon his face. Sometimes I fancied he did not hear what we were saying, and again his eyes would brighten with a sudden gleam, as if his whole soul and heart shone through them upon us. It was the last day of our holiday, for in the morning we should return to London and to work; but it was such a perfect day as I had never known before.

"You are quite happy, Mrs. Martin Dobree?" said Tardif to me, when we were parting from him.  
"I did not know I could ever be so happy," I answered.  
We saw him to the last moment standing on the cliff, and waving his hat to us high above his head. Now and then there came a shout across the water. Before we were quite beyond earshot, we heard Tardif's voice calling amid the splashing of the waves:  
"God be with you, my friends. Adieu, manzelle!"

(The end.)

**Consumption Can Be Cured.**  
Reading aloud is recommended by physicians as a benefit to persons affected with any chest complaint.  
The recommendation is made because in all cases of lung trouble it is important for the sufferer to indulge in exercise by which the chest is in part filled by and emptied of air, for the exercise is strengthening to the throat, lungs and muscles of the chest. Reading aloud can be practiced by all, and can be a pleasure and profit to both reader and hearers. In this treatment it is recommended that the reading be deliberate, without being allowed to drag, that the enunciation be clear, the body be held in an easy, unstrained, upright position, so that the chest shall have free play, and that the breathing be as deep as possible, without undue effort.

**Regarded as an Evil in Austria.**  
As a result of a report submitted to the Austrian council of agriculture, setting forth that suits cannot be brought to recover losses in transactions for the future delivery of grain, the council has unanimously declared itself in favor of prohibiting altogether transactions in grain for future delivery. This information is conveyed in a communication to the State Department from United States Consul Warner at Leipzig, Germany. Mr. Warner states that the council has petitioned the government to use its influence to suppress this practice altogether in Austro-Hungary.

**Chances Increased.**  
A boy baby a month old can expect but 42 years of life. If, however, he lives to 5 years his chances of living have increased to 51 years and 6 months.

**Regulation of Price of Medicine.**  
The price of medicine in Prussia is regulated by the state.

## GROWTH OF OUR POSTAL SYSTEM.



ON the 26th of July, 1775, nearly a year before the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress, then in session at Philadelphia, passed a resolution creating a Postoffice Department, and appointing Benjamin Franklin Postmaster General with a salary of \$1,000 a year. This is the position, greatly magnified in importance, to which President Roosevelt has called Henry C. Payne.

In 1789, when the federal constitution went into effect, the number of post-offices in the thirteen States then comprising the Union was only 75. The prevailing method of carrying the mails was by horse and rider. The rates of postage were, for a single letter sent any distance under sixty miles, 7 1/2; over sixty miles and under 100, 11 1/2; over 100 miles and under 200, 14 1/2 cents, with proportionate additional charges for greater distances, and double rates for double letters, triple rates for triple letters, etc.

A letter had to be written on a single sheet, containing the superscription—envelopes were not permitted. A double letter was a letter containing two sheets, and very additional sheet increased the charge for postage. The cost of sending a single letter by packet to Europe was 22 1/2 cents. The standard of value in which postage rates were computed at that time was the pennyweight of silver, rated at five-ninths of a dollar, which accounts for the decimals in the rates given above, as for the purpose of convenience comparison they have been translated into the terms of money now current.

The entire postal revenue of the country for the first full year after the adoption of the constitution—1790—was \$37,935, which would not look large now in comparison with the receipts at the post-office of Chicago or New York for a single day. The disbursements of the Postoffice Department for the year 1790 were \$32,140. The receipts of the Chicago postoffice for the month of November last were \$1,100,000.

There have been times when the postal rates were higher than they were at the

outset of the government. By the act of 1799 it cost 8 cents to send a single letter less than forty miles. To send it any distance not less than 300 nor more than 500 miles cost 25 cents. To these rates there was an addition of 50 per cent in 1814—a war measure—which lasted only two years. But as early as 1810 there had been a drop to 1 cent for local letters.

In 1863, when free delivery in large cities was instituted, the rate on drop letters was raised to 2 cents. In 1872 the rate on drop letters was lowered to 1 cent in cities without the free delivery system. The great reduction to 3 cents on all letters not weighing more than one-half an ounce, to all distances within 3,000 miles, was made in 1851, and the first grand recognition of books and other printed matter as a separate class to be carried at special rates was made in the following year, though it was not till long after that the pound rate for newspapers and periodicals, of which such shameless advantage has been taken in recent years, was established.

The reduction of letter postage to 2 cents per half ounce was made in 1883, and in 1885 the unit of weight for letters was raised to one ounce. It was in the latter year that the rate on newspapers and periodicals was reduced to 1 cent per pound. In 1887 the free-delivery system was extended to places of 10,000 population or \$10,000 annual postal revenue. The most far-reaching postal innovation since that has been the establishment of the rural free delivery system, which is a recent memory, and the limit of which is not yet discernible.

The Postmaster General was not a member of the President's cabinet until Jackson's time. When that change occurred the number of postoffices was about 6,000, the annual revenue of the department \$1,500,000, and the annual expenditure about \$1,300,000. To-day there are upward of 75,688 postoffices in the United States. The extent of post routes, which was 1,785 miles in 1790, is now 600,000. The revenue of the department has risen to \$111,631,193, and the expenditure to \$115,554,920.

## MIRACLES OF HEALING PERFORMED BY A RUSSIAN PRIEST.

It's a queer story they tell in Russia about Father Ivan, or John of Cronstadt, a miracle-working priest of the Greek church, who, it is alleged, makes the lame walk, cures consumption, and makes the paralyzed whole. Father John has just come into new prominence by reason of a gift of 1,000,000 rubles (about \$750,000), from some unknown friend.

"Sain Ivan," as the people call him, is the most Christ-like person one can imagine walking this earth. When, at the coronation of the present czar, he was seen in the procession that conducted his majesty from the chapel to



JOHN OF CRONSTADT.

the palace, the ten thousands of foreigners present remarked the striking similarity with one accord, while the Russians, overcome, fell on their knees and worshipped him. On that supreme occasion the good priest wore a chasuble of spun gold, but without the cross and pillar designed to be emblematical of the Saviour's sufferings. His head was uncovered, and his long hair fell in graceful curls upon his shoulders. Ordinarily he wears the stately robes of the Russian higher clergy, resembling those of a Roman Catholic bishop, while his breast is adorned by a massive cross of pure gold set with precious stones, which the late Emperor Alexander presented

him with on his death bed. But the show of grandeur is all outwardly; like the good Shepherd, John is simplicity itself in bearing and demeanor.

Father Ivan is the son of an Archangel peasant. He understands the Russians as Russians understand him. The people's sufferings are his own, he says, and his purpose in life to alleviate pain and promote happiness.

On this principle rests his reputation as a miracle worker, and because of his success on these lines he is called a saint. But he claims no supernatural gifts for himself—no mysticism enters into his ministry as physician of body or soul. Asked for an explanation of some of his miracles now on everybody's lips, he answered: "Love, my son; nothing but love. Yes, and patience, too, and perhaps also the gift to put myself into my brother's place. When I find a man or woman all down-trodden and despised, and painful to look upon and, apparently, criminal in deed and intent, I forget about how things ought to be. I feel with my heart, reckon with his circumstances. I make his profit or loss accounts my own, and thus we understand each other without humbling confessions on his part, without presumption on mine." The saint's latest miracle that set the world wondering is the remarkable cure of a paralytic.

## He Knew the Fact.

A convict at a French penal settlement who was undergoing a life sentence desired to marry a female convict, such marriages being of common occurrence. The governor of the colony offered no objection, but the priest proceeded to cross-examine the prisoner.

"Did you not marry in France?" he asked.  
"Yes."  
"And your wife is dead?"  
"She is."  
"Have you any document to show that she is dead?"  
"No."  
"Then I must decline to marry you. You must produce some proof that your wife is dead."

There was a pause, and the bride-prospective looked at the would-be groom.  
Finally he said: "I can prove that my former wife is dead."  
"How will you do so?"  
"I was sent here for killing her."  
The bride accepted him, notwithstanding—Edinburgh Scotchman.

Coal is cheaper in China than anywhere in the world.

## THE RIFLE AND AX.

What a Story They Can Tell of the Development of the West.

The settlement of the West will always be a subject of deep interest to Americans. In the Century the matter is interestingly handled in the first of a series of articles which will deal with the upbuilding of that great empire and a graphic pen picture is given of that restless pioneer who turned his face toward the setting sun.

Let us picture, says the writer, this first restless American, this west-bound man. We must remember that there had been two or three full American generations to produce him, this man who first dared turn away from the seaboard and set his face toward the dark and mysterious mountains and forests which then encompassed the least remote land fairly to be called the West. Two generations had produced a man different from the old world type. Free air and good food had given him abundant brawn. He was tall, with Anak in his frame. Little fat cloyed the free play of his muscles, and there belonged to him the heritage of that courage which comes of good heart and lungs. He was a splendid man to have for an ancestor, this tall and florid athlete who never heard of athletics. His face was thin and aquiline, his look high and confident, his eyes blue, his speech reserved.

This was our American, discontented to dwell longer by the sea. He had two tools, the ax and the rifle. With the one he built, with the other he fought and lived. Early America saw the invention of the small-bore rifle because there was need for that invention. It required no such long range in those forest days, and it gave the greatest possible amount of results for its expenditure. Its charge was tiny, its powder compact and easily carried by the man who must economize in every ounce of transported goods; and yet its powers were wonderful. Our early American could plant that little round pellet in just such a spot as he liked of game animal or red-skinned enemy, and the deadly effect of no projectile known to man has ever surpassed this one, if each be weighed by the test of economic expenditure. This long, small-bore tube was one of the early agents of American civilization. The conditions of the daily life of the time demanded great skill in the use of this typical arm, and the accuracy of the early riflemen of the West has probably never been surpassed in popular average by any people of the world. Driving a nail and snuffing a candle with a rifle bullet were common forms of the amusement which was derived from the practice of arms.

When the American settler had got as far West as the plains he needed arms of greater range, and then he made them; but the first two generations of the west-bound had the buckskin bandoleer, with its little bullets, its little molds for making them, its little worm, which served to clean the interior of the barrel with a wisp of flax, its tiny flask of precious powder, its extra flint or so. The American rifle and the American ax—what a history might be written of these alone! They were the sole warrant for the departure of the outbound man from all those associations which had held him to his home. He took some sweet girl from her own family, some mother or grandmother of you or me, and he took his good ax and rifle, and he put his little store on raft or pack-horse, and so he started out; and God prospered him. In his time he was a stanch, industrious man, a good hunter, a sturdy chopper, a faithful lover of his friends, and a stern hater of his foes.

## CHICKENS SNORE AND SNEEZE.

Make an Audible Sound in Breathing When Asleep.

"You never heard a chicken snore or sneeze?" asked the poultry raiser who has a big farm of fancy chickens over in Maryland. "Well, you ought to learn something about chickens. Just go in to a chicken house any night and you will hear chickens breathing heavily in deep sleep. In different parts of the house you will hear chickens actually snoring, making a noise loud enough to locate the birds that are guilty of this reprehensible conduct."

"Whether the near-by chickens object to this barbarous habit I don't know, but there is never much noise in a chicken house in the early part of the night. If there is a particularly loud noise around the house a rooster will wake up and give a warning to the slumbering fowls, but in a few minutes all of them will settle down to as sound a sleep as before. You may take a sleeping chicken off a roost in the night and if you hold it a few minutes the chances are that it will go soundly to sleep in your hands."

"Yes, chickens sneeze when they are taking a bad cold," continued the poultry raiser, according to the Washington Star. "When I hear one sneeze I always give it a small piece of camphor to drive out the cold, and the chicken is soon well. Chickens cough and have colds, catarrh and diphtheria just like people."

## A Fear.

"So you think that this concentration of wealth is the inevitable outgrowth of our civilization?"  
"I do," answered the man who thinks for a living.

"And you must admit that the ultimate result of such a condition would be to put all the money under the control of one individual?"  
"Yes."

"Well, it seems terrible to think of."  
"What does?"  
"The possibility of J. Pierpont Morgan's getting out of temper some day and making up his mind to discharge the entire human race."—Washington Star.



"I CAME UPON A GRAVE."

A strange, spasmodic smile flitted across his ghastly face, a look of triumph and success. His fingers tightened over my hand, and I left it passively in their grasp.

"Mine!" he murmured.  
"Olivia," he said, after a long pause, and in a stronger voice, "you always spoke the truth to me. This priest and his follower have been trying to frighten me into repentance, as if I were an old woman. They say I am near dying. Tell me, is it true?"

"Richard," I said, "it is true."  
His lips closed after a cry, and seemed as if they would never open again. He shut his eyes wearily. Feebly and fitfully came his gasps for breath, and he moaned at times. But still his fingers held me fast, though the slightest effort of mine would have set me free. I left my hand in his cold grasp, and spoke to him whenever he moaned.

There was long silence. I could hear the chirping of the sparrows in the thatched roof. Monsieur Laurentie and Tardif stood at the foot of the bed, looking down upon us both, but I only saw their shadows falling across me. My eyes were fastened upon the face I should soon see no more. The little light there was seemed to be fading away from it, leaving it all dark and blank.

"Olivia!" he cried, once again, in a tone of mingled anger and entreaty.  
"I am here," I answered, laying my other hand upon his, which was at last relaxing its hold and falling away helplessly. But where was he? Where was the voice which half a minute ago called Olivia? Where was the life gone that had grasped my hand? He had not heard my answer, or felt my touch upon his cold fingers.

Tardif lifted me gently from my place beside him, and carried me away into the open air, under the overshadowing eaves.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

The unbroken monotony of Ville-en-bois closed over me again. A week has glided by—a full week. I am seated at the window of the salon, gasping in a breath of fresh air—such a cool, balmy breeze as blows over the summer sea to the cliffs of Sark. Monsieur Laurentie, under the shelter of a huge red umbrella, is choosing the ripest cluster of grapes for our supper this evening. All the street is as still as at midnight. Suddenly there breaks upon us the harsh, metallic clang of wheel-horse hoofs upon the stony roadway—the cracking of a postillion's whip—the clatter of an approaching carriage.

Pierre, who has been basking idly under the window, jumps to his feet, shouting, "It is Monsieur the Bishop!" Minima claps her hands and cries, "The Prince, Aunt Nelly, the Prince!"

Monsieur Laurentie walks slowly down to the gate, his cotton umbrella spread over him like a giant fungus. It is certainly not the Prince; for an elderly, white-haired man, older than Monsieur Laurentie, but with a more imposing and stately presence, steps out of the carriage, and they salute one another with

at me, with something like tears glistening in his eyes.

"Is it all settled?" he asked, "is monsieur come to rob me of my English daughter? She will go away now to her own island, and forget Ville-en-bois and her poor old French father?"

"Never! never!" I answered vehemently, "I shall not forget you as long as I live. Besides, I mean to come back very often; every year if I can. I almost wish I could stay here altogether; but you know that is impossible, monsieur. Is it not quite impossible?"

"Quite impossible!" he repeated, somewhat sadly, "madame is too rich now; she will have many good friends."

"Not one better than you," I said, "not one more dear than you. Yes, I am rich; and I have been planning something to do for Ville-en-bois. Would you like the church enlarged and beautified, Monsieur le Cure?"

"It is large enough and fine enough already," he answered.

"Shall I put some painted windows and marble images into it?" I asked.

"No, no, madame," he replied, "let it remain as it is during my short lifetime."

"I thought so," I said, "but I believe I have discovered what Monsieur le Cure would approve. It is truly English. There is no sentiment, no romance about it. Cannot you guess what it is, my wise and learned monsieur?"

"No, no, madame," he answered, smiling in spite of his sadness.

"Listen, dear monsieur," I continued; "if this village is unhealthy for me, it is unhealthy for you and your people. Dr. Martin told Tardif there would always be fever here, as long as there are no drains and no pure water. Very well; now I am rich I shall have it drained, precisely like the best English towns; and there shall be a fountain in the middle of the village, where all the people can go to draw good water. I shall come back next year to see how it has been done. There is my secret plan for Ville-en-bois."

The next morning I took a last solitary walk till I came upon a grave. It was my farewell to the wrecked romance of my married life. Monsieur Laurentie accompanied us on our journey, as far as the cross at the entrance to the valley. He parted with us there; and when I stood up in the carriage to look back once more at him, I saw his black-robed figure kneeling on the white steps of the Calvary, and the sun shining upon his silvery head.

For the third time I landed in England. When I set foot upon its shores first, I was worse than friendless, with foes of my own household surrounding me; the second time I was utterly alone, in daily terror, in poverty, with a dreary lifelong future stretching before me. Now every want of mine was anticipated, every step directed, as if I were a child again, and my father himself was caring for me. How many friends, good and tried and true, could I count! All the rough paths were made smooth for me. I soon learned to laugh at the dismay which had filled me upon my entrance