

# The TRUANT SOUL

by Victor Rousseau

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## "HE'S A BEAST"

SYNOPSIS.—Nurses in the Southern hospital at Avonmouth are angered by the insolent treatment accorded them by Dr. John Lancaster, head of the institution, and there is a general feeling of unrest, into which Joan Wentworth, probationary nurse, is drawn. Doctor Lancaster is performing a difficult operation, for which he has won fame. Joan, with other nurses, is in attendance.

### CHAPTER I—Continued

"That scalpel—quick!" he cried. Joan started and stretched out her hands toward the tray, which gleamed afar off, elusively through a black cloud.

"The one I handed you. Don't stare at me like a fool!"

Joan bent over the tray, putting out one hand to the table to support herself. She was conscious that everything was suspended and that everyone was watching her. In the interminable interval she heard the patient's gasping sighs, as if he was breathing the last wisps of life away.

She fingered the instruments in the tray feebly and nervously, and her hands seemed numb and useless. Her fingers closed on something and brought it out. Then Lancaster's hand closed over hers, tore it away, and flung it back with a splash. Joan's hand dropped to her side, paralyzed by the painful pressure. The next instant Lancaster had the scalpel and whirled swiftly back toward the table, upsetting the bicarbonate, which lapped over the patient's feet.

The moments went by like hours. At last Joan became aware, through the sudden unraveling of the suspense, that the crux of the operation was over. Her head grew clear again. She saw the assistant surgeons unfastening the artery clamps. The head nurse rose to her feet, not looking at the patient. Joan realized that she was crying, and her strong, epicene face looked grotesque in grief. The orderly came up, and together they placed the patient on the stretcher. And suddenly Joan knew that the man was dead.

As the stretcher was wheeled out of the theater Lancaster turned toward his visitors.

"A very successful piece of work," he said. "It's a pity the poor fellow will never know how much I have done for him."

Joan felt the visiting surgeons' disgust at the execrable jest. Lancaster seemed to sense it, too.

"Unfortunately," he continued, "the best of surgeons is not proof against the stupidity of a nurse."

And he turned upon Joan fiercely. "What is your name?" he demanded.

"Miss Wentworth, Doctor Lancaster."

"Well, you're no use here. You're wasting your time. You've killed a man this morning," he bellowed. "If I can't have women about me with rational heads on their shoulders I'll get a gang of Chinese chop suey men. Get out and earn your living as a stenographer or saleslady. That's all your talents are fit for, Miss Wentworth!"

Joan looked at him in amazement. At his first words, at his tone, she had felt the shock of anger in her heart gather itself and leap to meet his own. But his rage frightened her, her head ached, and she was sick from the fumes which still penetrated the theater. She tried to answer him, but could not utter a word and broke into tears instead, sobbing in complete nervous abandonment.

Lancaster turned from her with a wry face. "Well, gentlemen," he said, with an affectation of jovialness, "better luck next time. I'm sorry the operation was not successful, but, after all, the patient's life is not the principal thing. The method was correct, you see, but I did not reckon on an incompetent assistant."

"It's at the blame on the anesthetic, Doctor Lancaster," said a white-bearded surgeon, with chivalrous intent. "With a nephritis history operator's useless. Better let them die peacefully."

"I did not quite grasp the technical innovation you spoke of, Doctor Lancaster," said another. "To my mind it was the original Leonard operation, except that—"

"Why did you divide the arterial coats below the site of the aneurism?" queried a third.

Lancaster led them from the theater, expostulating and explaining. The dark-haired girl lingered with the sponges. The assistant surgeons had already gone hurriedly out. Joan put her tray away. She still was unable to control her sobs.

Suddenly Lancaster reappeared, furious after the cross-examination to which he had been subjected. He came straight toward Joan with a face of malice. Unconscious of her pitiful aspect as a child might have been, she raised her streaming face and looked at him.

"You had so right to speak to me like that, whatever I did," she said.

"Whatever you did? Whatever you failed to do? What do you think you are here for?" he stormed.

He stared at her, turned away, hesitated, and then came back.

"That's just the way with you women," he cried. "You lost that case for me. And now you are thinking

about your dignity. You shouldn't have taken up a nurse's vocation. You women don't know what you can do and what you can't till you find yourselves in a post of responsibility, and then you fall down. What made you take up nursing, anyway? Thought our style of caps becoming, I suppose."

"I've done my best to qualify. I've never been blamed before."

"Well, you've made a big mistake," said Lancaster. "That's all. A—very—big—mistake," he added, emphasizing each word with a nod. "And my work and patients' lives are too important to allow mistakes to happen. You're too pretty to be a nurse, anyway," he added in a lower tone.

"You don't need to tell me that, Doctor Lancaster!" cried Joan furiously. He made a gesture of mock despair.

"That's right; get on your high horse again!" he said. "Just remember that I'm at the head of the Southern hospital, and what I say goes, that's all."

He swung upon his heel and went out of the room, leaving her gripping the table fiercely in her humiliation. The dark-haired girl, who had been fussing in a corner, came up to her.

"He's a beast!" she exclaimed passionately. "He hates women—decent women. My! if he'd dared to speak that way to me I'd have told him what I thought of him, right in the middle of the operation. I don't care for anybody when my temper's up. I could tell you a few things I've heard about him if I were minded to. Do you know he went on a five years' spree once?"

"I don't care what he did!" cried Joan passionately.

"Well, I guess you could make it your business to know," answered the other. "A girl's got to fight her way, the same as a man. He threw up his job and just went away for five years, drinking and living with tramps, and then had the nerve to come back as if nothing had happened. I got it from a girl that used to be friendly with him. He's—"

She broke off abruptly as the orderly appeared with his rubber broom and bucket.

"What are you going to do about it?" inquired the girl in a low voice. "I



She Made Her Way Toward the Hospital Entrance.

reckon you don't want to forfeit your diploma any more than the rest of us. Listen! You go and see him."

"Never!" said Joan.

"Don't be a fool, Miss Wentworth! You go and see him at his house. It's what anyone would do in your place. Fool him by making him think he can do what he likes with you; play with him and hold him off by hook or crook until you're graduated, and then laugh at him. I'd do it if I had to. My! if you heard some of the stories that are going round—"

The head nurse beckoned at the door. "The lady superintendent wants to see you at once, Miss Wentworth," she said. "You're to go right into her office."

She looked at Joan resentfully. Her face was quite composed again, but her eyes were reddened. She knew that Lancaster had been at fault, but she had seen Joan's blunder, too. Miss Synons was one of those women who can acquire the faculty of a man's strength without losing their own sex. She was a tower of strength toward weakness, but she had no pity for a lapse of duty.

Joan walked the dreary length of the corridor to the lady superintendent's room. The white-haired woman was seated at her desk, pretending to be making up her accounts and composing herself for the interview.

"Miss Wentworth!" she began, turning round in her chair as Joan appeared at the door. "You have made Doctor Lancaster very angry. He said you are totally inefficient. What was it that happened this morning?"

"The ether made me faint and I couldn't see the instruments for a moment, and Doctor Lancaster happened to want a scalpel quickly," answered Joan.

"Well, it's a great pity," said the other, "because it was your first day and we had to get somebody to take Miss Martin's place and I selected you because I relied on you particularly. Anyway, you are suspended."

Joan looked at her stupefied. "You mean—that I am to leave the hospital and lose my diploma?" she asked.

"I don't know yet," answered the lady superintendent evasively. "I suppose Doctor Lancaster will decide that later after he has laid the matter before the board at their next meeting and looked over your record. Anyway, Miss Wentworth, you may as well take a holiday for a week or so until you hear from us."

She turned back to her books while Joan, after looking at her for a moment in silence, turned and went into the corridor. She made her way toward the hospital entrance. And the great wooden arch, through which she had passed hundreds of times without noticing it, suddenly became vivid with detail; the hospital, which had been a part of her unconscious life, looked strange and new to her.

### Chapter II

Joan had a room in a nurses' boarding house a few minutes' walk away. She walked mechanically homeward, hardly even yet realizing the magnitude of the blow which had befallen her. Avonmouth lay almost deserted in the moonlight glare. The shuttered houses, gay with striped awnings, looked down on the white, dusty streets. The little park that contained the Confederate monument was bright with geraniums, but the grass was parched and withered, and the feeble efforts of an automatic sprinkler seemed almost instantly absorbed by the thirsty ground.

Joan made her way toward an overhanging tree brushed away a prickly caterpillar from a seat beneath it, and sat down. She was trying to estimate the magnitude of the catastrophe that had happened to her, to free herself from the stupefied wonder and passionate resentment that held her. Two hours before life had seemed reasonably bright; now its entire course was changed. For she did not doubt that the lady superintendent had been trying to soften the news of her dismissal.

Her mind ran back to the beginning of all things for her—her father's death. That had happened ten years before, and the mortgage on the estate, ruined after the war, had grown like a spreading sore, eating away field after field, until it swallowed everything except nine hundred dollars. After the enforced sale, Mrs. Wentworth and her daughter had gone to Avonmouth for the sole reason that the mother remembered a wealthy godmother there, distantly related, whose activities she hoped to enlist on behalf of her daughter. It was characteristic of her that she should not have known the woman had died six years previously.

Still, Avonmouth was the nearest large town in which a girl, dung on the world untrained, might hope to support two people. Joan had long before wanted to be a nurse. She decided to attempt to enter a hospital; but now her mother's slow, mortal illness kept her nursing her at home. Six months after their arrival Mrs. Wentworth died. What remained of their nine hundred dollars after the doctor's and funeral expenses had been paid would suffice for Joan's merest needs until she had graduated from the Southern hospital. But the physician who attended Mrs. Wentworth in her last illness had secured the girl a position as a probationer, and Joan was as happy as she could expect to be. Since that date he had moved away, and Joan was altogether alone.

At home they had known hardly anyone, for the whole region was in that condition of resettlement that began in the seventies and is still proceeding. Their friends had scattered to the north and west; their letters had long since ceased. Prosperity, stalking through the nation, had left a little ridge of poverty between the swaths of its progress through the foothills of the back country. In Avonmouth Mrs. Wentworth's illness, and afterward, the hospital work, had kept the girl both from making friends and from the realization of her need of them. Her whole mind was set upon obtaining that diploma which would mean an assured living, and before her eyes was ever the spectacle of such poverty as she had known at home among others and had seen approaching her mother. After she graduated, perhaps, life might begin to unfold before her eyes. But even this she realized only vaguely; she lived altogether in the moment.

It's plain that Joan is a nice girl, but Dr. Lancaster seems to be no good, either as surgeon or man.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Cuckoo Superstitions

There are numerous superstitions associated with the hearing of the cuckoo's first call. In the maritime highlands and Hebrides if the cuckoo is first heard by one who has not broken his fast some misfortune is expected. Indeed, besides the danger, it is considered a reproach to one to have heard the cuckoo while hungry, says the Detroit News.

In France to hear the cuckoo for the first time fasting is to make the hearer "an idle do-nothing for the rest of the year" or "to numb his limbs" for the same period. There is a similar belief in certain parts of the west of England. In Northumberland one is told, if walking on a hard road when the cuckoo first calls, that the ensuing season will be full of calamity. To be on soft ground is a lucky omen.

There are 95 different kinds of Brussels sprouts, 120 kinds of lettuce and 194 varieties of carrots.

### MAKING GOOD IN A SMALL TOWN

Real Stories About Real Girls

By MRS. HARLAND H. ALLEN

(©, 1924, Western Newspaper Union.)

### GROWING CATS FOR CASH

THOSE aristocrats of catdom, the Persian, Angora and Siamese cats, are good means for making money.

A natural love for the dumb beauties, a willingness to treat them as if they had brains and feelings; and just a little capital with which to buy a lady puss—those are the only requirements any girl needs for a fair start in the business of raising them.

"The cat raiser's main considerations," says a girl who specializes in the breeding of the Siamese variety, "are care as to selection of foundation stock, which must be free and healthy, care as to cleanliness and care as to feeding."

"I give my animals fresh raw beef twice a day, with the heaviest feed in the morning. I see that they have access to plenty of water at all times. I give a patent cat-food every other day, and milk not more than three times a week. And I see that both cats and kittens have plenty of sunlight and exercise."

Every queen (the kennel term for female) deserves a good comfortable bed, where she can stretch out comfortably, and can lie down when nursing her kittens. Catnip, to be eaten or rolled in at will, is a nice luxury in the cat world. If there are more than one queen, they should be fed separately, or the ones which eat most slowly will lose out on the food, and their offspring may suffer. If the grower can afford to own her own male cat, she will not be troubled by rats or strange cats.

There will be at least eight kittens a year from each female. When a cat's babies number only four, she can rear them herself. But when there are six, the grower will have to search her neighborhood for a common cat, whose kittens are the same age as her own cat's babies.

The Siamese or "Royal Cat of Siam" is probably most difficult of all to get, and most expensive. But it is both beautiful and intelligent, and a Siamese mother cat with her kittens will attract attention anywhere. At birth, the kittens are pure white and look like baby cats of lowly birth; but after a time, their faces, ears, legs, feet and pads and tail become dark chocolate, the body always remaining white.

When the kittens are a cute age, the best advertisement they can have will be exhibition with their mother in the home-town drug store windows, and the druggist will be benefited by the trade-attracting novelty. The grower may dispose of her pets to pet stock stores, as well as to private individuals. Both playful kits and proud queens practically sell themselves.

### THE COOK CASHES IN

MOST everybody likes to eat. "And," says a girl who has capitalized her knowledge of that fact, "the woman who's a 'tip-top cook' can always be independent."

"That natural womanly ability to transfer raw 'groceries' into luscious edibles can be used to enliven cash," she declares. "I inclined pie-ward at the start, and I am still known as the 'pie lady.' But there is no reason why one couldn't branch off if one cared to."

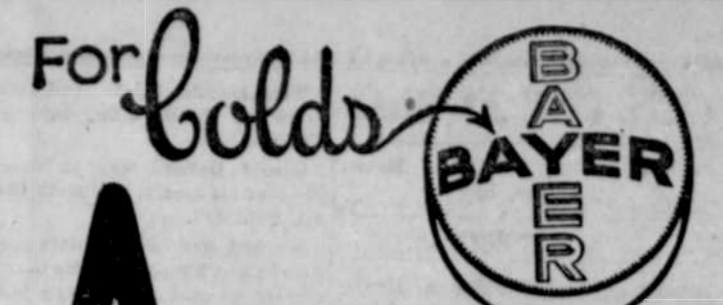
All the "tip-top" cook needs in order to succeed in this 'homely' line is: her own kitchen as a workshop; probably a few more utensils than she is accustomed to using, and sufficient ingredients, preferably purchased at wholesale, for the concoctions she has in mind. Add one small boy to make deliveries, and she is prepared to fill many orders.

Jellies and preserved fruits are one popular choice of the commercial cook. The woman who decides on them as her forte might refer to her home workshop, in advertising, as a "Jelly Kitchen." Marmalades and candied fruits make good accompaniments for the jellies and preserves.

Crackers, cookies, doughnuts and cakes are other "best sellers," and make good specialties, either together or separately. The cake-concentrator is found quite often, but she should take care not to let mediocrity claim her cakes, for the inclination of the cake-maker is sometimes to let originality go by the board. She should try the "filled" cakes or "Washington pies," almost always a success with something toothsome between the layers. Loaf cake should be enriched in being. Fruit cake is salable, but pork cake, eggless, is economical and is more palatable than a dry butter and egg fruit cake. Fancy cakes, plain cakes with fancy frostings, for birthdays, birthdays and, above all, weddings, will keep the cake-lady busy.

A bit more out of the ordinary than jellies, cakes, pies, candies, cookies, doughnuts, and the like, are hot tamales—but they're an excellent specialty, easy to make and easy to sell.

The pet "trick of the trade" for the cook to practice is keeping the preparation of her concoctions down to relatively small quantities. Preparation in huge quantities will lose the products that much-acclaimed "home taste." Such phrases as "personally cooked," "home cooked" and "like mother used to make" will spell success for the tip-top cook.



# ASPIRIN

SAY "BAYER ASPIRIN" —Genuine

Unless you see the "Bayer Cross" on tablets you are not getting the genuine Bayer Aspirin proved safe by millions and prescribed by physicians 24 years for

- Colds Headache Neuralgia Lumbago
- Pain Toothache Neuritis Rheumatism

Safe Accept only "Bayer" package which contains proven directions. Handy "Bayer" boxes of 12 tablets. Also bottles of 24 and 100—Druggists.

Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticester of Salicylicacid

**Ants Eat Farm House**  
State entomologists of Illinois are investigating the destruction by white ants of a two-story farm house at Morris, Ill. In removing stucco it was discovered the ants had completely honeycombed the woodwork of the structure, starting at the foundation and going to the roof. This often happens in tropical countries.—Scientific American.

**Real "Infant Industry"**  
Australia has one cotton-spinning mill, equipped with about 20,000 spindles, which is operated on an average of 20 hours daily throughout the year. It is located at Wentworthville, about 26 miles from Sydney, and has been running slightly more than a year. Its output of yarn is sold to a small weaving mill and a hosiery plant in Sydney.

**Cuticura Soap for the Complexion.**  
Nothing better than Cuticura Soap daily and Ointment now and then as needed to make the complexion clear, scalp clean and hands soft and white. Add to this the fascinating, fragrant Cuticura Talcum, and you have the Cuticura Toilet Trio.—Advertisement.

**Concerning Pet Names**  
The pet name for Mary is Polly, and although this may seem rather a jump, it is a curious fact that the M initial is often changed to a P. Maggie, from Margaret, becomes Peg or Peggy, while the pet name for Martha is either Matty or Patty. Pet names seem to know no law.

**Boschee's Syrup**  
Allays irritation, soothes and heals throat and lung inflammation. The constant irritation of a cough keeps the delicate mucus membrane of the throat and lungs in a congested condition, which BOSCHEE'S SYRUP gently and quickly heals. For this reason it has been a favorite household remedy for colds, coughs, bronchitis and especially for lung troubles in millions of homes all over the world for the last fifty-eight years, enabling the patient to obtain a good night's rest, free from coughing with easy expectoration in the morning. You can buy BOSCHEE'S SYRUP wherever medicines are sold.—Adv.

**Precaution**  
First Actress—I asked the manager whether I ought to walk off or dance off after my song.  
Second Actress—And what did he say?  
First Actress—He said run like blazes!

**Too Much Sound**  
First Hospital Patient—Here, what do you mean by waking me out of a sound sleep?  
Second Ditto—Because, old chap, it was such a distressing sound.—Stray Stories.

Have you ever stopped to reason why it is that so many products that are extensively advertised all at once drop out of sight and are soon forgotten? The reason is plain—the article did not fulfill the promises of the manufacturer. This applies more particularly to a medicine. A medicinal preparation that has real curative value almost sells itself, as like an endless chain system the remedy is recommended by those who have been benefited to those who are in need of it.

A prominent druggist says, "Take for example Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, a preparation I have sold for many years and never hesitate to recommend, for in almost every case it shows excellent results, as many of my customers testify. No other kidney remedy has so large a sale."

According to sworn statements and verified testimony of thousands who have used the preparation, the success of Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root is due to the fact, so many people claim, that it fulfills almost every wish in overcoming kidney, liver and bladder ailments, corrects urinary troubles and neutralizes the uric acid which causes rheumatism.

You may receive a sample bottle of Swamp-Root by parcel post. Address Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., and enclose ten cents; also mention this paper. Large and medium size bottles for sale at all drug stores.—Advertisement.

Most headaches due to lack of internal cleanliness

WHEN you are constipated, poisons form in the accumulated food waste and are carried to all parts of the body. Headaches follow. Biliousness, insomnia, lack of energy, all result from constipation, which if unchecked will lead to serious results.

**Avoid Laxatives—Say Doctors**  
A noted authority says that laxatives and cathartics do not overcome constipation, but by their continued use tend only to aggravate the condition.

Medical science has found in **lubrication** a means of overcoming constipation. The gentle lubricant, Nujol, penetrates and softens the hard food waste and thus hastens its passage through and out of the body. Thus, Nujol brings internal cleanliness.

Nujol is used in leading hospitals and is prescribed by physicians throughout the world. Nujol is not a medicine or laxative, and cannot gripe. Like pure water, it is harmless.

Take Nujol regularly and adopt this habit of internal cleanliness. For sale by all druggists.

