

THE TREASURE OF FRANCHARD.

BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

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CHAPTER I.

HEY had sent for the doctor from Bourron before six. About eight some villagers came round for the performance and were told how matters stood. It seemed a liberty for a mountebank to fall ill like real people, and they made off in duodecim.

By ten Madame Tentailion was gravely alarmed, and had sent down the street for Doctor Desprez.

The Doctor was at work over his manuscripts in one corner of the little dining-room, and his wife was asleep over the fire in another, when the messenger arrived.

"Sapristi!" said the Doctor, "you should have sent for me before. It was a case for hurry." And he followed the messenger as he was, in his slippers and skull-cap.

The inn was not thirty yards away, but the messenger did not stop there; he went in at one door and out by another into the court, and then led the way by a flight of steps beside the stable, to the left where the mountebank lay sick. If Doctor Desprez were to live a thousand years, he would never forget his arrival in that room; for not only was the scene picturesque, but the moment made a date in his existence. We reckon our lives, I hardly know why, from the date of our first sorry appearance in society, as if from a first humiliation; for no actor can come upon the stage with a worse grace. Not to go further back, which would be judged too curious, there are subsequently many moving and decisive accidents in the lives of all which would make as logical a period as this of birth. And here, for instance, Doctor Desprez, a man past forty, who had made what is called a failure in life, and was moreover married, found himself at a new point of departure when he opened the door of the left above Tentailion's stable.

It was a large place, lighted only by a single candle set upon the floor. The mountebank lay on his back upon a pallet; a large man, with a Quixotic nose inflamed with drinking, Madame Tentailion stooped over him, applying a hot water and mustard embrocation to his feet; and on a chair close by sat a little fellow of eleven or twelve, with his feet dangling. These three were the

his with the same inquiring, melancholy gaze.

At last the Doctor hit on the solution at a leap. He remembered the look now. The little fellow, although he was as straight as a dart, had the eyes that go usually with a crooked back; he was not at all deformed, and yet a deformed person seemed to be looking at you from below his brows. The Doctor drew a long breath, he was so much relieved to find a theory (for he loved theories) and to explain away his interest.

For all that, he despatched the invalid with unusual haste, and, still kneeling with one knee on the floor, turned a little round and looked the boy over at his leisure. The boy was not in the least put out, but looked placidly back at the Doctor.

"Is this your father?" asked Desprez.

"Oh, no," returned the boy; "my master."

"Are you fond of him?" continued the Doctor.

"No, sir," said the boy.

Madame Tentailion and Desprez exchanged expressive glances.

"That is bad, my man," resumed the latter, with a shade of sternness. "Every one should be fond of the dying, or conceal their sentiments; and your master here is dying. If I have watched a bird a little while stealing my cherries, I have a thought of disappointment when he flies away over my garden wall, and I see him steer for the forest and vanish. How much more a creature such as this, so strong, so astute, so richly endowed with faculties! When I think that, in a few hours, the speech will be silenced, the breath extinct, and even the shadow vanished from the wall, I who never saw him, this lady who knew him only as a guest, are touched with some affection."

The boy was silent for a little, and appeared to be reflecting.

"You did not know him," he replied at last. "He was a bad man."

"He is a little pagan," said the landlady. "For that matter, they are all the same, these mountebanks, tumblers, artists, and what not. They have no interior."

But the Doctor was still scrutinizing the little pagan, his eyebrows knotted and uplifted.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Jean-Marie," said the lad.

Desprez leaped upon him with one of his sudden flashes of excitement,

trellis; now he would draw all sorts of fancies on the path with the end of his cane; now he would go down and watch the river running endlessly past the timber landing-place at which he moored his boat. There was no time, he used to say, for making theories like the early morning. "I rise earlier than any one else in the village," he once boasted. "It is a fair consequence that I know more and wish to do less with my knowledge."

The doctor was a connoisseur of sunrises, and loved a good theatrical effect to usher in the day. He had a theory of dew, by which he could predict the weather. Indeed, most things served him to that end; the sound of the bells from all the neighboring villages, the smell of the forest, the visits and the behavior of both birds and fishes, the look of the plants in his garden, the disposition of cloud, the color of the light, and last, although not least, the arsenal of meteorological instruments in a louvre-boarded hutch upon the lawn. Ever since he had settled at Metz, he had been growing more and more into the local meteorologist, the unpaid champion of the local climate. He thought at first there was no place so healthful in the arrondissement. By the end of the second year, he protested there was none so wholesome in the whole department. And for some time before he met Jean-Marie he had been prepared to challenge all France and the better part of Europe for a rival to his chosen spot.

"Doctor," he would say—"doctor is a foul word. It should not be used to ladies. It implies disease. I remark it, as a flaw in our civilization that we have not the proper horror of disease. Now I, for my part, have washed my hands of it; I have renounced my laureation; I am no doctor; I am only a worshipper of the true goddess Hygieia. Ah, believe me, it is she who has the cures. And here, in this exiguous hamlet, has she placed her shrine; here she dwells and lavishes her gifts; here I walk with her in the early morning and she shows me how strong she has made the peasants, how fruitful she has made the fields, how the trees grow up tall and come under her eyes, and the fishes in the river become clear and agile at her presence.—Rheumatism!" he would cry, on some malapropos interruption. "O, yes. I believe we do have a little rheumatism. That could hardly be avoided, you know, on a river. And of course the place stands a little low; and the meadows are marshy, there's no doubt. But my dear sir, look at Bourron! Bourron stands high. Bourron is close to the forest; plenty of ozone there, you would say. Well, compared with Metz, Bourron is a perfect chamblee."

The morning after he had been summoned to the dying mountebank, the Doctor visited the wharf at the tail of his garden, and had a long look at the running water. This he called prayer; but whether his adorations were addressed to the goddess Hygieia or some more orthodox deity, never plainly appeared. For he had uttered doubtful oracles, sometimes declaring that a river was a type of bodily health, sometimes extolling it as a great moral preacher, continually preaching peace, continuity, and diligence to man's tormented spirits. After he had watched a mile or so of the clear water running by before his eyes, seen a fish or two come to the surface with a gleam of silver, and sufficiently admired the long shadows of the trees falling half across the river from the opposite bank with patches of moving sunlight in between, he strolled once more up the garden and through his house into the street, feeling cool and renovated.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

AFTER TWENTY YEARS.

Mira Bascom Found She Was Still Beautiful.

He did not call on her that first evening, though he walked past the gate four times, unaware of the fact that behind one of those slanting shutters a pale woman stood watching him pass and repass, says Lippincott's. The nun in her self-elected cell had made use of means of communication with the world, in the shape generally of Jimmy the choreboy. She knew whose was the tall figure on the sidewalk. She stood at the window when she could no longer see him; she heard his slow footsteps go by for the last time and die away. Half an hour later she went upstairs to her bedroom. Between its two windows hung a long, old-fashioned mirror, with carved candelabra on either side. She lighted the three candles in each. The mirror showed a tall, slim figure, a face as colorless as an anemone, an abundance of auburn hair carefully arranged. Mira Bascom studied this reflection closely. Then she unlocked a black-walnut chest which stood in a corner and lifted out its contents till she came to a mass of pale muslin, which diffused an odor of lavender as she shook it out. It was a white gown with lilac sprigs, made with the full skirts and sleeves of a bygone fashion. She put it on, fastened the belt of lilac ribbon, which still fitted exactly, and, standing again before the mirror, loosened slightly the bands of her beautiful wavy hair and pulled it into little curls about her face. It was a vision of youth which looked back at her from the glass. Not a thread of gray showed in the hair; the fine lines about the placid eyes were invisible. The skin had the dead whiteness of things kept from the sun. But as she gazed a delicate flush overspread her face, her red-brown eyes lit up till their color matched her hair; she smiled in startled triumph. She was still beautiful.

Then a swift change came over her. She blew out all but one of the candles, and turning her back on the mirror, took off her gown with cold, shaking fingers.

TALMAGE'S SERMON,

"THE BREAD QUESTION" LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From the Text "And the Ravens Brought Him Bread and Flesh in the Morning, and Bread and Flesh in the Evening"—1. Kings 17:6.



HE ornithology of the Bible is a very interesting study. The stork which knoweth her appointed time. The common sparrow teaching the lesson of God's providence. The ostriches of the desert, by careless incubation, illustrating the recklessness of parents who do not take enough pains with their children. The eagle symbolizes riches which take wings and fly away. The pelican emblemizing solitude. The bat, a flake of the darkness. The night hawk, the ossifrage, the cuckoo, the lapwing, the osprey, by the command of God in Leviticus, flung out of the world's bill of fare.

I would like to have been with Audubon as he went through the woods, with gun and pencil, bringing down and sketching the fowls of heaven, his unfolded portfolio thrilling all Christendom. What wonderful creatures of God the birds are! Some of them, this morning, like the songs of heaven let loose, bursting through the gates of heaven. Consider their feathers, which are clothing and conveyance at the same time; the nine vertebrae of the neck, the three eyelids to each eye, the third eyelid an extra curtain for graduating the light of the sun. Some of these birds scavengers and some of them orchestra. Thank God for quail's whistle, and lark's carol, and the twitter of the wren, called by the ancients the king of birds, because when the fowls of heaven went into a contest as to who should fly the highest, and the eagle swung nearest the sun, a wren on the back of the eagle, after the eagle was exhausted, sprang up much higher, and so was called by the ancients the king of birds. Consider those of them that have golden crowns and crests, showing them to be feathered imperials. And listen to the humming bird's serenade in the car of the honeysuckle. Look at the belted kingfisher, striking like a dart from the sky to water. Listen to the voice of the owl, giving the key-note to all croakers. And behold the condor among the Andes, battling with the reindeer. I do not know whether an aquarium or aviary is the best altar from which to worship God.

There is an incident in my text that baffles all the ornithological wonders of the world. The grain crop had been cut off. Famine was in the land. In a cave by the brook of Cherith sat a minister of God, Elijah, waiting for something to eat. Why did he not go to the neighbors? There were no neighbors; it was a wilderness. Why did he not pick some of the berries? There were none. If there had been they would have been dried up. Seated a mile or so of the clear water running by before his eyes, seen a fish or two come to the surface with a gleam of silver, and sufficiently admired the long shadows of the trees falling half across the river from the opposite bank with patches of moving sunlight in between, he strolled once more up the garden and through his house into the street, feeling cool and renovated.

They whirr around about the prophet's head, and then they come on fluttering wing and pause on the level of his lips, and one of the ravens brings bread, and another raven brings meat, and after they have discharged their tiny cargo they wheel past, and others come, until after awhile the prophet has enough, and these black servants of the wilderness table are gone. For six months, and some say a whole year, morning and evening, a breakfast and a supper bell sounded as these ravens rang out on the air their "cruck! cruck!" Guess where they got the food from. The old rabbins say they got it from the kitchen of King Ahab. Others say that the ravens got their food from pious Obadiah, who was in the habit of feeding the persecuted. Some say that the ravens brought their food to their young in the trees, and that Elijah had only to climb up and get it. Some say that the whole story is improbable; for these were carnivorous birds, and the food they carried was the torn flesh of living beasts, and therefore ceremonially unclean; or it was carrion, and would not have been fit for the prophet. Some say they were not ravens at all, but that the word translated "ravens" in my text ought to have been translated "Arabs;" so it would have read: "The Arabs brought bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening." Anything but admit the Bible to be true.

How away at this miracle until all the miracle is gone. God on with the depleting process, but know, my brother, that you are robbing only one man—and that is yourself—of one of the most comforting, beautiful, pathetic and triumphant lessons in all the ages. I can tell you who these purveyors were—they were ravens. I can tell you who freighted them with provisions—God. I can tell you who launched them—God. I can tell you who taught them which way to fly—God. I can tell you who told them at what cave to swoop—God. I can tell you who introduced raven to prophet and prophet to raven—God. There is one passage I will whisper in your ear, for I would not want to utter it aloud, lest some one should drop down under its power—"If any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book, God shall take

away his part out of the book of life and out of the Holy City."

While, then, we watch the ravens feeding Elijah, let the swift dove of God's spirit sweep down the sky with divine food, and on outspread wing pause at the lip of every soul hungering for comfort.

On the banks of what rivers have been the great battles of the world? While you are looking over the map of the world to answer that, I will tell you that the great conflict to-day is on the Potomac, on the Hudson, on the Mississippi, on the Thames, on the Savannah, on the Rhine, on the Nile, on the Ganges, on the Hoang-Ho. It is a battle that has been going on for six thousand years. The troops engaged in it are sixteen hundred millions, and those who have fallen by the way are vaster in number than those who march. It is a battle for bread.

Sentimentalists sit in a cushioned chair, in their pictured study, with their slippered feet on a damask ottoman, and say that this world is a great scene of avarice and greed. It does not seem so to me. If it were not for the absolute necessities of the cases, nine-tenths of the stores, factories, shops, banking houses of the land would be closed to-morrow. Who is that man delving in the Colorado hills? or toiling in a New England factory? or going through a roll of bills in the bank? or measuring a fabric on the counter? He is a champion sent forth in behalf of some home-circle that has to be cared for, in behalf of some church of God that has to be supported, in behalf of some asylum of mercy that has to be sustained. Who is that woman bending over the sewing machine, or carrying the bundle, or sweeping the room, or mending the garment, or sweltering at the wash-tub? That is Deborah, one of the Lord's heroines, battling against Amalekith want, which comes down with iron chariot to crush her and hers. The great question with the vast majority of people to-day is not "home rule," but whether there shall be any home to rule; not one of tariff, but whether there shall be anything to tax. The great question with the vast majority of people is, "How shall I support my family? How shall I meet my notes? How shall I pay my rent? How shall I give food, clothing and education to those who are dependent upon me?" Oh, if God would help me to-day to assist you in the solution of that problem the happiest man in this house would be your preacher! I have gone out on a cold morning with expert sportsmen to hunt for pigeons; I have gone out on the meadows to hunt for quail; I have gone out on the marsh to hunt for reed birds; but to-day I am out for ravens.

Notice, in the first place in the story of my text, that these winged caterers came to Elijah direct from God.

"I have commanded the ravens that they feed thee," we find God saying in an adjoining passage. They did not come out of some other cave. They did not just happen to alight there. God freighted them. God launched them, and God told them by what cave to swoop. That is the same God that is going to supply you. He is your Father. You would have to make an elaborate calculation before you could tell me how many pounds of food and how many yards of clothing would be necessary for you and your family; but God knows without any calculation. You have a plate at His table, and you are going to be waited upon, unless you act like a naughty child, and kick, and scramble, and pound saucily the plate and try to upset things.

God is infinite in resource. When the city of Rochelle was besieged and the inhabitants were dying of the famine the tides washed up on the beach as never before and as never since, enough shellfish to feed the whole city. God is good. There is no mistake about that. History tells us that in 1555 in England there was a great drought. The crops failed; but in Essex, on the rocks, in a place where they had neither sown nor cultured, a great crop of peas grew until they filled a hundred measures; and there were blossoming vines enough, promising as much more.

But why go so far? I can give you a family incident. Some generations back there was a great drought in Connecticut, New England. The water disappeared from the hills, and the farmers living on the hills drove their cattle toward the valleys, and had them supplied at the wells and fountains of the neighbors. But these after awhile began to fail, and the neighbors said to Mr. Birdseye, of whom I shall speak, "You must not send your flocks and herds down here any more; our wells are giving out." Mr. Birdseye, the old Christian man, gathered his family at the altar, and with his family he gathered the slaves of the household—for bondage was then in vogue in Connecticut—and on their knees before God they cried for water; and the family story is, that there was weeping and great sobbing at that altar that the family might not perish for lack of water, and that the herds and flocks might not perish.

The family rose from the altar. Mr. Birdseye, the old man, took his staff and walked out over the hills, and in a place where he had been scores of times, without noticing anything particular, he saw the ground was very dark, and he took his staff and turned up the ground, and water started; and he beckoned to his servants, and they came and brought pails and buckets until all the family and all the flocks and the herds were cared for; and then they made troughs reaching from that place down to the house and barn, and the water flowed, and it is a living fountain to-day.

Now I call that old grandfather Elijah, and I call that brook that began to roll then, and is rolling still, the brook Cherith; and the lesson to me, and to all who hear it, is, when you are in great stress of circum-

stances, pray and dig, dig and pray, and pray and dig. How does that passage go? "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving kindness shall not fall." If your merchandise, if your mechanism, if your husbandry fail, look out for ravens. If you have in your dependancy put God on trial and condemned Him as guilty of cruelty. I move to-day for a new trial. If the biography of your life is ever written, I will tell you what the first chapter, and the middle chapter, and the last chapter will be about, if it is written accurately. The first chapter about mercy, the middle chapter about mercy, the last chapter about mercy. The mercy that hovered over your cradle. The mercy that will hover over your grave. The mercy that will cover all between.

Again, this story of the text impresses me that relief came to this prophet with the most unexpected and with seemingly impossible conveyance. If it had been a robin-redbreast, or a musical lark, or a meek turtle-dove, or a sublime albatross that had brought the food to Elijah, it would not have been so surprising. But, no. It was a bird so fierce and inauspicate that we have fashioned one of our most forceful and repulsive words out of it—ravenous. That bird has a passion for picking out the eyes of men and of animals. It loves to maul the sick and the dying. It swallows with voracious glee everything it can put its beak on; and yet all the food Elijah gets for six months or a year is from ravens. So your supply is going to come from an unexpected source.

You think some great-hearted, generous man will come along and give you his name on the back of your note, or he will go security for you in some great enterprise. No, he will not. God will open the heart of some Shylock toward you. Your relief will come from the most unexpected quarter. The providence which seemed ominous will be to you more than that which seemed auspicious. It will not be a chaffinch with breast and wing dashed with white and brown and chestnut; it will be a black raven.

Here is where we all make our mistake, and that is in regard to the color of God's providence. A white providence comes to us, and we say, "Oh, it is mercy!" Then a black providence comes toward us, and we say, "Oh, that is disaster!" The white providence comes to you, and you have great business success, and you have a hundred thousand dollars, and you get proud, and you begin to feel that the prayer, "Give me this day my daily bread," is inappropriate for you, for you have made provision for a hundred years. Then a black providence comes and it sweeps everything away, and then you begin to pray, and you begin to feel your dependence, and begin to be humble before God, and you cry out for treasures in heaven. The black providence brought you salvation. The white providence brought you ruin. That which seemed to be harsh and fierce and dissonant was your greatest mercy. It was a raven. There was a child born in your house. All your friends congratulated you. The other children of the family stood amazed looking at the new-comer, and asked a great many questions, genealogical and chronological. You said—and you said truthfully—that a white angel flew through the room and left the little one there. That little one stood with its two feet in the very sanctuary of your affection, and with its two hands it took hold of the altar of your soul. But one day there came one of the three scourges of children—scarlet fever, or croup, or diphtheria—and all that bright scene vanished. The chattering, the strange questions, the pulling at the dresses as you crossed the floor—all ceased.

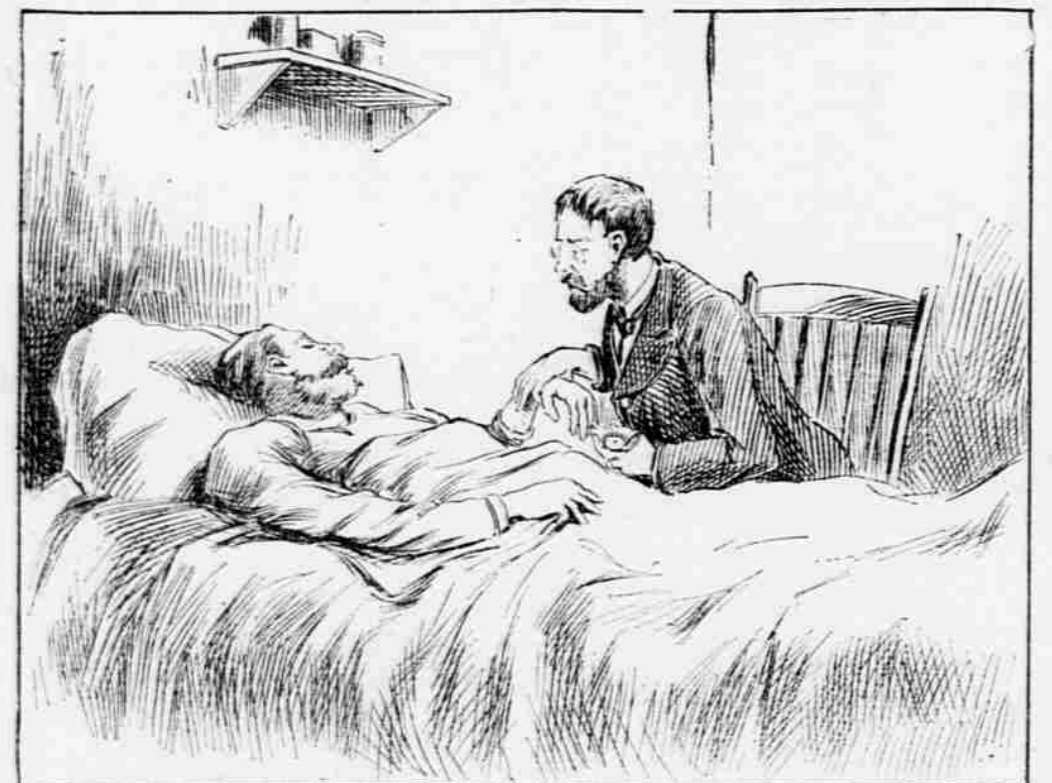
Mrs. Jane Pithey, of Chicago, a well-known Christian woman, was left by her husband a widow with one half dollar and a cottage. She was palsied, and had a mother ninety years of age to support. The widowed soul every day asked God for all that was needed in the household, and the servant even was astonished at the precision with which God answered the prayers of that woman, item by item, item by item. One day, rising from the family altar, the servant said, "You have not asked for coal, and the coal is out."

Then they stood and prayed for the coal. One hour after that the servant threw open the door and said, "The coal has come." A generous man, whose name I could give you, had sent—as never before and never since—a supply of coal. You cannot understand it. I do. Ravens! Ravens!

Japanese in Hawaii. The little republic of Hawaii is embarrassed by an extraordinary influx of Japanese immigrants, stimulated by immigration societies working with the encouragement if not actually as agents of the government of Japan. The Japanese in the islands already are more numerous than the people of any other nationality, except the native Hawaiians. Various forms of restriction imposed by the Hawaiian government were evaded by the immigrants, until at last the government forbade the landing of a ship load of Japanese, and ordered them sent back. Japan claims the privileges of free immigration under an old treaty, and appears to be using them to carry out a plan of virtual colonization.

A Gentle Hint. "Nice dog! Have you taught him any tricks since I was here last?" "Oh, yes. He will fetch your hat if you whistle," said she sweetly.—Dublin World.

A Good Word for Johnny. Mamma—Sh, Johnny! You must not interrupt papa in the middle of a sentence. Papa—He doesn't. He never lets me get as far as that.—New York Tribune.



FELT HIS PULSE.

only occupants, except the shadows. But the shadows were a company in themselves; the extent of the room exaggerated them to a gigantic size, and from the low position of the candle the light struck upward and produced deformed foreshortenings. The mountebank's profile was enlarged upon the wall in caricature, and it was strange to see his nose shorten and lengthen as the flame was blown about by draughts. As for Madame Tentailion, her shadow was no more than a gross hump of shoulders, with now and again a hemisphere of head. The chair legs were spindled out as long as stilts, and the boy sat perched atop of them.

It was the boy who took the Doctor's fancy. He had a great arched skull, the forehead and the hands of a musician, and a pair of haunting eyes. It was not merely that these eyes were large, or steady, or the softest ruddy brown. There was a look in them, besides, which thrilled the Doctor, and made him half uneasy. He was sure he had seen such a look before, and yet he could not remember how or where. It was as if this boy, who was quite a stranger to him, had the eyes of an old friend or an old enemy. And the boy would give him no peace; he seemed profoundly indifferent to what was going on, or rather abstracted from it in a superior contemplation, beating gently with his feet against the bars of the chair, and holding his hands folded on his lap. But, for all that, his eyes kept following the Doctor about the room with a thoughtful fixity of gaze. Desprez could not tell whether he was fascinating the boy, or the boy was fascinating him. He busied himself over the sick man; he put questions, he felt his pulse, he jested, he grew a little hot and swore; and still, whenever he looked round, there were the brown eyes waiting for

and felt his head all over from an ethnological point of view.

"Celtic, Celtic!" he said.

"Celtic!" cried Madame Tentailion, who had perhaps confounded the word with hydrocephalous. "Poor lad! is it dangerous?"

"That depends," returned the Doctor, grimly. "And then once more addressing the boy: 'And what do you do for your living, Jean-Marie?' he inquired.

"I tumble," was the answer.

"So! Tumble?" repeated Desprez.

"Probably healthful. I hazard the guess, Madame Tentailion, that tumbling is a healthful way of life. And have you never done anything else but tumble?"

"Before I learned that, I used to steal," answered Jean-Marie gravely.

"Upon my word!" cried the Doctor.

"You are a nice little man for your age. Madame, when my confere comes from Bourron, you will communicate my unfavorable opinion. I leave the case in his hands; but of course, on any alarming symptom, above all if there should be a sign of rally, do not hesitate to knock me up. I am a doctor no longer, I thank God; but I have been one. Good night, Madame. Good sleep to you, Jean-Marie."

CHAPTER II.

DOCTOR DESPREZ always rose early. Before the smoke arose, before the first cart rattled over the bridge to the day's labor in the fields, he was to be found wandering in his garden. Now he would pick a bunch of grapes; now he would eat a big pear under the