



OUR STORY TELLER

A TRIUMPH OF MEDICINE.

“DID you ever give a man the wrong medicine, Dr. Macpherson?” Macpherson shook his head. “I do not remember doing so. But I once gave a man an overdose of a drug for a sleeping draught, which nearly killed him. It was his own fault, though, as you will see when I tell you the story. It was when I was quite a young man, and soon after I started a practice of my own at Chelsea. I had taken a pretty large house there, as a doctor is bound to do if he wants to get on, and kept a couple of servants. On the night, however, when my adventure happened, both the girls were away. So that when a violent ring came at the front door bell about midnight, when I was just thinking of turning in, I had to go and answer it myself. When I opened the door I found that it was as I expected. A small boy, breathless with running, informed me that I was required at once at an address he gave me in a street about half an hour’s walk from my house. “What am I wanted for?” I asked, but the boy could not tell me. He had been passing the house, he said, when an old gentleman opened the door, gave him a half crown, and told him to run as hard as he could for the nearest doctor. “I put on my overcoat and started, carrying with me a few things on the chance that they might be necessary, including a strong soporific which I might have to use if I found my patient in great pain which I could not immediately relieve. “I had concluded that my services were made necessary by some accident, and used as much haste as possible, therefore, in getting to the address which the boy had given me. As I approached the house I was surprised to find it in complete darkness, and I could not help wondering whether I had been made the victim of a practical joke. I was prepared with an apology for my intrusion when I heard steps descending the stairs and coming along the hall in answer to my second ring. The door was opened by a genial-looking old gentleman in a flowered dressing gown, who carried a lamp in his hand, and whose first words set my mind at rest as far as my fears of a hoax were concerned. “Oh! you are the doctor, I suppose?” he said. “Will you walk upstairs, please?” “He was chatting all the while that he preceded me up the broad staircase in a voice that certainly did not show any anxiety. As he led the way into a room on the first floor at the back and placed the lamp on the table. I glanced around the place quickly, expecting to see some sign of the person I had come to attend. “The room was comfortably, almost handsomely, furnished as a sitting-room and contained a cheerful-looking fire, before which two armchairs were drawn up, with a small table between them, containing two glasses, a bottle of whisky and a siphon of soda water, besides a box of cigars. But there was no sign of a patient. “Take your great coat off and sit down,” said the old gentleman; “you can put your things on the table. I suppose you will not object to a glass of Scotch and a cherry? I can recommend the cheroots.” “He had seated himself in one of the armchairs as he spoke and was filling the glasses. “Pardon me,” I said, in considerable astonishment, “but had I not better see the patient before I do anything else?” “He looked up, as if surprised at my suggestion. “Oh, I am the patient,” he said, placidly. “I started in greater surprise than ever, for he looked quite a picture of health, and he smiled good-naturedly. “If you will sit down I will tell you what is the matter with me,” he said as placidly as before. “I do not like to see a man standing while I am sitting, and if you do not take your coat off you will catch cold when you go out again. You doctors never use your knowledge to take care of yourselves. That is better—as I obeyed wonderingly. “I am a victim of insomnia, he went on, after I had taken the other armchair; “I suffer terribly. You cannot tell what it is to stay awake all night long while the rest of the world is asleep. Not a soul to speak to, the one living person in a city of dead. I think that it will send me mad some day.” “Yes, it is a great affliction,” I said, shortly, not a little chagrined that I had been commended at that time of night to a consultation which could have been held at any time, but it can be cured in three days with healthy living.” “That does not help me to-night,”

“I must not forget your fee,” he said as he lay back again at full length on the couch. “Please go on. It is very soothing.” “I was getting desperately sleepy myself, and more than ever anxious to succeed and get away. “This won’t do,” he said quite anxiously. “If I go to sleep how on earth shall I know what I owe you?” “You can trust that to me,” I said, shortly, and continued the reading again, with what seemed like complete success, till at 2 o’clock my patient jumped up as lively as ever to present me with my fourth fee. “The want of success made me desperate, and I was already regretting deeply the promise which prevented me leaving the old gentleman to his fate, and getting home, when another thought suggested itself to me. “The sleeping draught which he had refused was lying on the table before me. He admitted having taken large quantities of every known drug, but this was a very strong one, and might affect him more than he expected, if I could get him to take it. He had refused so pointblank before that I did not ask his consent, but slipped it quietly into a glass while I was reading. “Perhaps another glass of whisky will help you,” I said, filling it up; “try drinking it straight off.” “It appeared to me to take effect very quickly, but I did not flatter myself on the point until my fee became due, when, finding that my patient did not stir, I rose softly, put on my hat and coat, and, turning down the lamp, felt my way downstairs in the dark, and let myself out of the house. “As I walked home I told myself that I had secured a desirable patient, and already given him some reason to have faith in my powers. The four half-sovereigns jingled pleasantly in my pocket, and I had still time left to get a good sleep before it was necessary to begin the day’s work. “But rest was not for me yet awhile. As I opened my own door with a latchkey a single glance at the hall was sufficient to put another complexion on the case, and I strode rapidly through the house, to find that it had been ransacked from top to bottom. “My old friend with the insomnia was simply the accomplice of a gang of burglars, who had taken this means of keeping me out of the way while his friends removed the greater part of my portable property. It seemed to me as if they must have taken it away in a furniture van. “I hurried off at once to the neighboring police station, and the inspector in charge looked serious. “It seems to me like the work of a gang that we have been hearing of for some time, but that we can’t get hold of,” he said. “Well, I think I can take you to a house where you will find one of the gang,” I said, and told him briefly of my patient. “The policeman smiled a superior smile. “He is one of the gang, without doubt, as well as the lad who brought his message, but you won’t find him at the house now. You will find that he has taken the room furnished for a day or two, and vanished the instant you left the place.” “I have no doubt that was the plan,” I said, “but I happened to give the gentleman a dose which, if he isn’t as used to drugs as he pretended, will keep him asleep for a week.” “And did you find him?” “Yes, exactly as I left him. I had some trouble bringing him around. As we thought, he was a notorious criminal, and his arrest led to that of the whole gang, and what was of more importance to me—the recovery of my furniture. It has often made me smile to think of my little sleeping draught effecting what the whole police force of the metropolis had been trying to do for months. I call it a triumph of medicine.”—Chicago Chronicle.

Yankee Enterprise. Among the letters which followed Emperor William to Sweden on the occasion of his recent trip along the picturesque coast and fjords of that country was a document bearing an American postmark. It was addressed to his majesty by a New York manufacturing firm. It seems that the writers had read in some American newspaper of a new lamp which had been tried in the presence of the Emperor at Berlin and had given the utmost satisfaction. In the letter they stated that they were ignorant of the name and address of the manufacturer or inventor of the lamp and that, as they knew it had been experimented with before his majesty, they concluded to ask him to be good enough to furnish them with the name and address of the Berlin house in question, and at the same time to forward an inclosed letter. The Emperor is reported to have been much amused by this bit of Yankee enterprise, and personally transmitted the letter to the Berlin firm.—Chicago Record.

How to Quiet Violent Horses. According to a recent discovery, it has been found that it is quite enough to touch the nostrils of a horse, simply passing the fingers along the sides of his nose, to stop the activity of his heart and respiration, and to stop consciousness in a measure. It is well known now that most of those men who succeed in quieting violent horses put their fingers to that part, and sometimes inside the nares. Merely touching these parts may produce the same effect; pressing hard has more effect. Visitor—Life must be very monotonous to you. Convict—Yes, sometimes. Visitor—When does it seem most tiresome to you? Convict—Just now, for instance.—Philadelphia Record. After a young woman gets to be 30 she stops calling attention to her birthday by giving parties. CHAPTER XVI. A day had passed—two—three—and Marsden had made no sign. Nora began to hope he was wise enough to perceive that it would not be for his own happiness to insist on marrying a girl who was so reluctant to be his wife. After some consideration, she wrote a sensible, dignified letter to Lady Dorrington, rebutting her accusations and assuring her that, so far from wishing to mar her brother’s prospects by holding him to his engagement, she had earnestly begged him to set her free. Christmas had gone by, to Bea’s infinite disappointment, without the presence of her favorite, Marsden. There was a pause in the little drama of their lives. This interval was first broken by a few lines from Winton to Mrs. L’Estrange, in which he asked her to fix an hour when she could see him, as he was in town for a short time, and if she adhered to her intention of returning to Brookdale early in January, it would be his only opportunity of wishing her good-by, as he hoped to complete his business and sail for India the end of the month. Nora accepted this note as notice to be out of the way, and felt truly grateful to Winton for sparing her the pain of an encounter. Mrs. L’Estrange began to form some idea of the truth. Though she liked Mark Winton, she thought Marsden would be a more suitable husband for Nora. He was bright and companionable, while Mark was older than his years, sobered too by a life of steady work and serious responsibility. Nora could not be so much attracted by a man too much in earnest for civil speeches or implied compliments, or any of the gallant trickery in which Marsden excelled—who differed from and argued with her as he would with a comrade of his own sex, and to crown all, had looks to boot of beyond a good figure and gentleman-like air. However, she made out very little from their tete-a-tete interview. Winton looked worn and gaunt, but seemed very glad to see her, and to find her alone. He spoke freely enough of his own affairs, of the division he had made of his uncle’s bequest with the deceased’s grandchild, and of his own approaching departure, of herself and her little daughter, in even a kinder tone than usual; but not until he rose to take leave, after refusing her invitation to dinner, did he mention Nora. Then he asked calmly—“And Miss L’Estrange? I hope she is well?” “Yes; very well.” “And when does the wedding take place?” “I am not quite sure.” “I thought it was fixed for the beginning of February?” “Yes; that was talked of; but we do not quite know yet.” “Are you pleased with the marriage?” he asked, looking at her very searchingly. “Certainly, I am. It is a good marriage, from a worldly point of view; and then Clifford Marsden is so utterly devoted to that I think dear Nora’s happiness is sure to be his first consideration.” “It ought to be,” very gravely. “But, Mrs. L’Estrange, Marsden’s financial position ought to be looked into carefully before the marriage takes place. Marsden of Evesleigh sounds like a grand alliance, but he is a good deal dipped, of course, he may have cleared himself, Miss L’Estrange has no guardian, I believe?” “No, Colonel L’Estrange, after making many wills, which he destroyed, finally died intestate; our good friend, Mr. Barton, the Colonel’s solicitor, has managed everything for us, and I have got into the habit of looking on Lord Dorrington as an informal guardian; but he cannot, or will not, interfere now, because he, or rather Lady Dorrington, is so displeased with the proposed marriage.” “Ha! I feared so. Lady Dorrington was, I think, anxious her brother should secure Mrs. Ruthven’s fortune. This must be a source of annoyance to Nora—must it not?” “Miss L’Estrange—who is, I suppose, attached to Marsden; he is a sort of fellow to please a girl’s fancy.” There was a tinge of bitterness in his tone. “Oh, yes, of course! But Nora is no sentimentalist, you know!” “I do. She is something better. Well, good-morning, Mrs. L’Estrange.” “We shall see you again, though? You will not go without saying good-by to Nora, and poor little Bea?” Winton hesitated. “I should like to shake hands with Miss L’Estrange once more,” he said slowly. “Ah! now, you must keep me posted up to your own and her doings—if you consider me her informal guardian I shall be pleased.” “You are very good—you always were good, Mark,” cried Mrs. L’Estrange, warmed out of formality. “But you are not going away forever! India is so accessible now; you can come to and fro, and—” “India is the best place for me,” he interrupted, somewhat grimly. “There I have work to do; here there are no ties to keep me! I shall come and say good-by before I start.” He shook hands cordially and left her. Mrs. L’Estrange hurried upstairs to report proceedings to Nora, who was pretending to read in her own room, where she was fond of retiring, finding the restraint even of her step-mother’s kindly presence irksome in her present overtaxed condition of mind—consumed as she was by perpetual anxiety respecting her own position, and intolerable regret for what she had lost by mere misapprehension, or, worse still, the deliberate misleading. “And Mr. Winton is to leave so soon?” she exclaimed, growing very white, as her step-mother ceased speaking. “Why does he hurry away?” “I cannot imagine! He seems anxious to get back to his work, and to think there is no place for him in England.” Nora was silent, and Mrs. L’Estrange continued to speak, repeating Winton’s kind words, volunteering to be Bea’s guardian. Suddenly she broke out, as if she had not heard what her step-mother had been saying: “It is cruel of Clifford to keep me waiting so long—so long—for his decision. If

tree!” she cried in joyous agitation. She had scarce uttered the words when a figure started up from the chair and Winton confronted her. Nora stood still and dumb, the open letter in her hand, feeling dazed and helpless in the crushing confusion which had so suddenly overwhelmed her. “Has Marsden then released you at your own request?” cried Winton, impetuously, and counting forward quickly, forgetting in the supreme excitement of the moment all conventionality; while to Nora it seemed equally natural to answer with an emphatic “Yes, oh, yes!” “Where is Helen? I thought she was here?” “So did I,” returned Winton, “but his self-possession and his reserve. I called to—to say good-by, and I trust you will forgive my inopportune presence, my unguarded, and I fear very presumptuous, question. My sincere interest in—in your welfare must be my excuse.” “You are very kind, I— Oh, where is Helen? I must go and look for her.” Before Winton could stop her, had he been so disposed, she had fled. Winton gazed after her, an expression of hope and joy gradually lighting up his somber face. She was free by her own desire. Life might be worth living yet! While he stood thinking, new and glowing views of much over which he had often puzzled suggesting themselves, the respectable Watson came in. “If you please, sir, Mrs. L’Estrange does not know when she will return.” “Ah!—well, perhaps,” he hesitated. He was dying for a few words with Nora, but it would be bad taste to intrude upon her now. “Perhaps,” he continued, “I may find Mrs. L’Estrange at home tomorrow. I should not like to leave without bidding her good-by.” He had nothing for it but to take his hat and depart. Nora, greatly surprised at Helen’s absence, could not compose herself to do anything. She wandered to and fro from room to room, sometimes sitting down to fall into vague reveries. She read and re-read Marsden’s letter, its passionate despair sobered and dimmed by her. What could have happened to make him give her up so happily? She was deeply grieved for him. She strove to compose a letter to him in her mind, but could not command her ideas; all she could do—and she was ashamed of the pleasure she had in doing it—was to inclose the two rings Marsden had given her in a neat packet and address them to the giver—later in the evening she would write. At last Mrs. L’Estrange returned, looking pale and tired. “Oh, Helen! Where—where have you been?” cried Nora, when her step-mother came into the room, now only partially lighted by the glow of a good fire. “You will hardly guess!—I have been with Lady Dorrington.” And she proceeded to describe the telegram and her interview. “I think Lady Dorrington is terribly afraid you are breaking your heart, Nora. She feels sure you have renounced Mr. Marsden in consequence of her letter, she is therefore quite pleased with you. But I have a wonderful piece of news. He has absolutely engaged himself to Mrs. Ruthven, and they are to be married soon.” “Then that, in some way, accounts for this letter?” said Nora, handing Clifford’s letter to Mrs. L’Estrange, who read it with surprise and regret. Many and varied were the conjectures of both as to what could possibly be the mysterious necessity which influenced Marsden; both coming reluctantly to the conclusion that money must be the root of the evil—which was certainly Nora’s good. (To be continued.)

THIS CLIMATE OF OURS. There is Never a Happy Medium Between Roasting and Freezing. Well, perhaps that little drop of thirty degrees that came between Saturday and Sunday didn’t cause a sensation! exclaims the New York Recorder. Who believed that it would ever be cold again? I know of one misguided woman who, with a red face and shedding perspiration at every pore, had staggered through the Saturday’s heat piling up and salting down—as it were—the winter clothes, and had, with the assistance of a hot handmaid, carried them to the tiptop floor and put them all away in an inaccessible place. Then she crawled down, had the grates taken out of the rooms and sent down cellar; had the iron frames put in their places, and planned a little out-of-town trip with hubby for Sunday. But when the cold awakening came on that morning this was what greeted her as she arose, shivering from her bed: “Say, what have you done with my thick tweed suit?” “Why, dearie, it’s packed with camphor up in the attic.” “For heaven’s sake, don’t tell me that! Well, I must put on my winter underwear again, then.” “Oh, I’m so sorry, but that’s all packed away up there, too.” “Oh, of course. That’s just like a woman!” “Why, George, you told me yourself yesterday that we wouldn’t have any more cold weather!” “How could I have said such a thing, I’m not dumb! Have a fire made in the dining room, then.” “But the grates are all packed away, too!” “Well, jumping jingo!” “There’s only the fire in the kitchen range.” “Well, you don’t expect me to go in there and sit in the dark, do you? Light the gas.” So the gas was lit, and kept lit pretty nearly all day, but it wasn’t really comfortable, for gas does smell gasy, you know. And how they wished for a climate where there was a medium state between linen dusters and fur overcoats. The Charm. In years ago when he had not the five-and-twenty cents, He watched the daily ball game through A knothole in the fence. He sits within the grand stand now And marvels much to know Why he sees not half of what he saw Through the knothole long ago. —Detroit Tribune.