

# DR. FALCONER'S TEMPTATION.

A SHORT STORY

(Continued.)

"A soldier!" cried Mary. "Oh, Richard, you must try if we can't do something for him. I never hear of an old soldier without thinking of my poor brother, Jack, who, you know, ran away and enlisted while I was quite a little girl, and how miserably he died in Africa. Oh, what a pet I used to be of poor Jack's! If we had heard of any one who had been good to him at last, how we should have blessed him! Do tell me all about this poor fellow, and let us see if we can devise any way of helping him."

"I am afraid he is pretty well past help," said Richard. "I left him unconscious, and I should not be in the least surprised if he should never come to himself again."

"But surely he can't be left to himself in an empty house, Richard! It would be a sin and a shame to leave anybody so. He must be got to the infirmary."

"He won't go. I have tried my best to make him, but he is obstinate."

"Then we must bring him here. We have more than one empty room, for the house is far too big for us. Do let me get a bed put up in one of them."

"Why, Mary, you know well enough we can't even keep ourselves! How are we to keep and feed a stranger as well?"

"Oh, we must, Richard!" she cried impulsively, her tender eyes filling with tears. "Think how forsaken and wretched he is! Suppose it were your brother—and he is your brother, even if he be what you call a stranger. We mustn't shut our door on him—I was a stranger, and ye took me not in—how could you bear to hear that?"

She ran lightly out of the room to give her orders and see them carried out, leaving Richard sitting conscience-stricken in his chair, all his subtle arguments scattered to the winds by a single word.

"Took him not in!" he echoed with a bitter laugh. "No, Lord, I didn't take him in! I knew a trick worth two of that; so I robbed and murdered him instead, and then swore lies about it at the inquest. And the best of it was that I did it all from the most exalted motives—to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number, at no expense except of the life of a wretched miser of whom the world would be well rid, who was only a burden to himself and a nuisance to everybody else! How clear it all was! but I dare not say it to Mary, and should hate her if she could listen to it for a second."

He lay back in his chair for a moment with closed eyes, a thousand old-world dreams and half-forgotten ideals and aspirations crowding back upon his memory and circling round the image of his wife as he had first seen and loved her. There were unaccounted tears in his eyes as he opened them to see her standing before him in that and cloak.

"Come, Richard," she cried, "you must take me to the place at once. There was some wine left, and I have it in this basket. I have told Alice to make up a bed in the back room and to have some hot soup ready in an hour. Now get your coat on and take me to the house. We shall need a fly to bring him here; but we can order that on the way."

Her bright, quick eagerness carried him along; in another minute they were passing through the streets and had hailed a crawling cab. Richard regarded his wife with a kind of dazed surprise. All the wan depression of her face, which had weighed upon his spirits for weeks, was gone, and a bright and almost joyous energy seemed to possess her that reminded him of the Mary of brighter days. He seemed awakened from a nightmare as he looked after her, and sprang lightly down to help her as the fly drew up in the wretched street before the empty house. Already the early evening was closing in, and it looked doubly desolate and forbidding in the twilight. "Why, surely there is no one living here!" she exclaimed; "he must indeed be in a wretched plight, poor fellow!"

Richard tried the door, but found it locked. He had no recollection of his departure from the house in the morning, but on putting his hand in his pocket he found the key, which he must have slipped into it on leaving. They entered the bare outer room, and he could hardly hear his wife's exclamation of "pl" and "diemay," his own heart was thumping so loudly with terror and suspense. Should they find him still alive? His hand shook as he laid it on the handle of the inner door, the lock rattled, and for a moment he recoiled as from a living thing. Nerving himself with an effort, he pushed open the door and went in. The room was precisely as he had left it in the morning; the patient lay in a profound sleep, breathing heavily, and bathed in a profuse perspiration. Richard bent over him and felt his pulse, then shook him sharply by the shoulder and called loudly on him to awake, but without rousing him in the least. Slapping his face with a wet handkerchief, raising him off the ground, produced no better effect. Taking the little bottle of wine from Mary's ready hand, Richard forced a few drops into his mouth.

They were allowed with a convulsive gulp, but made no change in the profound unconsciousness in which the patient lay.

"It's no use," he said at last. "He's too far gone to awake. And yet his pulse is very good, and if I had him at home there are one or two other things that I might try. So just tell the driver to come in and help me carry him to the fly."

He wrapped around him the rug he had sent the evening before, which was the only thing about him not in rags, and with the driver's assistance carried him out and propped him up in the fly. Before quitting the place Richard turned the bed over with his foot to be sure nothing of value was left behind. A heavy revolver, which proved to be loaded, rattled upon the floor, and as he stooped to pick it up a yellow gleam caught his eye among the rags. "What! more money!" he exclaimed, but on looking closer he found that it was only the gilt case of an old-fashioned, faded daguerreotype portrait. Nothing else was to be found, and slipping it into his pocket with the revolver, he returned to the cab, locking the door behind him as he left.

A few minutes' driving brought the party back to Richard's house, and with the assistance of the cabman, the still unconscious patient was carried up to one of the empty rooms, where a bed had been prepared to receive him. Mary was ready with hot soup and coffee, and felt a little disappointed when Richard turned her from the door. "No, no, Mary, it's no use trying to give it to him that way. Make a little very strong beef-tea; I will find a way to administer that. Send me up the bottle of Condy's fluid, and a glass and a jug of water."

Left to himself, he proceeded with a fierce anxiety, very different from his usual professional coolness, to take such measures as his knowledge dictated to awaken his patient from his stupor, and these not proving immediately successful, to sustain life, if possible, until the effect of the drug should pass off. It was late when, after having exhausted nearly every means known to him, he left him still lying unconscious, and went down-stairs. Mary had prepared a little supper for him, and was anxiously awaiting his appearance.

"A good, strong cup of tea for me, Mary."

"Why, Richard, you know tea at night always keeps you awake. You would not sleep a wink after it."

"That's what I want. I am going to sit up with my patient tonight, and before Alice goes to bed you had better tell her to light a fire in his room."

"Oh, Richard, mayn't I sit up along with you? I am sure I shall not close my eyes the whole time for thinking of you. I never can sleep when you are away from me at nights."

"All the more reason for you to be resting quietly in bed, then," said Richard, who had his own reasons for wishing to be alone with his patient in the event of his recovering consciousness.

When the household had retired, Richard sat down in an easy-chair beside the fire, having first made a careful examination of his patient, who moaned and muttered in his sleep as he turned him over to sound his heart. Reassured of these signs of reviving consciousness, he opened the latest works on "Poisons," on which he had recently expended a guinea which he could very ill spare, turned to the section on "Morphia," and settled himself in his chair to study it attentively.

About four hours later he was awakened from a deep sleep by a loud cry uttered near him. The book had fallen to the floor beside the chair; the fire had gone out, but the lamp was burning brightly. The sick man was sitting up in bed, from which he had thrown off the covering, and was wildly groping among the bed-clothes in search of something.

"Lost, lost!" he shrieked. "Ho! thieves! Police!"

Richard was at his side in a moment and caught him by the shoulder.

"Thank God, you are better!" he exclaimed. "But what are you looking for?"

"What, doctor, is it you? Where am I? What has been the matter with me? I feel as if I had slept for a hundred years!"

"You are in my house," said Richard, "and everything you have is safe. Now pull yourself together and let me have a look at you. Pupils normal, heart all right. Why, you are a miracle! Just swallow this cup of coffee; it's cold, but your throat must be like a chimney. Down with it!"

"More, more; I could drink up Est!" he cried, holding out the empty cup to be refilled.

"You must be a magician, doctor, to have brought me round so quickly. I'm accustomed to these attacks, as I told you, and the worst is always over in three days. But there is always sickness and prostration afterwards, and this time I positively feel better than I have done for years. I have had such a sound sleep as I thought I should never enjoy again. How did you do it, doctor?"

"Morphia!" said Richard grimly. "A

heroic dose; I saw you were pretty bad and it had to be either kill or cure. Till within five minutes ago I was greatly afraid it was going to be kill. You have slept about twenty hours."

"I can never thank you enough for your courage, for it has put new life into me. I must have been as sound as a church if you had removed me without my knowing it. But are you quite sure you left nothing behind, for I missed something just now that must not be lost on any account?"

"I know," said Richard quietly, but keenly watching the other's face as he spoke. "You had a belt around you with several thousand pounds' worth of money and jewels in it. You had also a loaded revolver, for the purpose, I presume, of defending your wealth. Don't be uneasy about them; I have them both safely under lock and key."

(To be Continued.)

## LIMITS OF MARRIAGEABLE AGE

When Couples May Be United According to Laws of Various Nations.

It makes considerable difference in the matrimonial advantages of a person where he may have been born or is a citizen. This remark applies with peculiar force to the minimum age which renders a union legal. It in a measure implies the consent of parents or guardians in all the instances cited, although once united the law sustains the marriage manqué dissent of the parents, etc. In Austria 14 years is looked upon as sufficient to entitle a person of either sex to take on the burdens of matrimony. Germany requires the male to be 18 and the female 16. In France and Belgium the man must be 16 and the woman 15. In Spain the intended husband must have passed the 14th year and the woman her 12th. The law in Hungary for Roman Catholics is that the man must be 14 years old and the woman 12; for Protestants the man must be 18 and the woman 15. In Greece the man must have seen at least 14 summers and the woman 12. In Russia and Saxony they are more sensible, and a youth must refrain from matrimony till he can count 18 years and a woman until she can count 16. In Switzerland men from the age of 14 and women from the age of 12 are allowed to marry. The Turkish law provides that any youth and maid who can walk properly and can understand the necessary religious services are allowed to be united for life.—Anaconda Standard.

## POINTS ON FOOD.

Coffee is to be cheaper. This is to be one of the results of the war. Nearly half of the world's coffee crop comes to the United States. We consume almost twelve pounds per annum for every one of our population, and spend on an average nearly \$90,000,000 a year for coffee. Two-thirds of the world's supply of coffee comes from Brazil, which places an export duty of 11 per cent upon the fragrant berry. The finest coffee in the world is grown in Porto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines, and under the stimulation of American enterprise these countries will, within a few years, be able to supply the world with coffee. What this means to the coffee consumer he can clearly understand.

After all that has been said about the large quantity of valuable food that is going to waste in the shape of edible mushrooms, recent investigations made by Prof. L. B. Mendel of Yale show that the nutritive value of the mushroom is not so very high after all. Science describes Prof. Mendel's experiment as follows: "Chemical analyses were combined with experiments in artificial digestion and special attention was given to the amount of available (digestible) proteid present. The latter was found to be not over 2 or 3 per cent in fresh mushrooms, which shows that the prevailing idea of the great nutritive value of mushrooms is not yet justified. They may be valuable as dietetic accessories, but they do not deserve the term 'vegetable beefsteak.' Their nitrogen is largely in the form of nonproteid bodies. The amount of fat, cholesterol, soluble carbohydrates, crude fiber and inorganic substances contained in them corresponds in general with that found in other vegetable foods, such as peas, corns and potatoes."

Rice bread is the staple food of the Chinese, Japanese and a large portion of the inhabitants of India. In Persia the bread is made from rice flour and milk; it is called "lawash." The Persian oven is built in the ground about the size of a barrel. The sides are smooth mason work. The fire is built at the bottom and kept burning until the wall or sides of the oven are thoroughly heated. Enough dough to form a sheet about one foot wide and about two feet long is thrown on the bench and rolled until about as thin as sole leather; then it is taken up and tossed and rolled from one arm to the other and flung on a board and slapped on the side of the oven. It takes only a few moments to bake, and when baked it is spread out to cool. This bread is cheap (1 cent a sheet); it is sweet and nourishing.

## Largest Room in the World.

The largest room in the world under one roof and unbroken by pillars is at St. Petersburg. It is 620 feet long by 150 in breadth. By daylight it is used for military displays, and a whole battalion can completely maneuver in it. By night 20,000 wax tapers give it a beautiful appearance. The roof is a single arch of iron.

If it is true that the smartest man makes the most munny, then the men who allow themselves to be skinned are fools. Does it take a very smart man to skin a lot of fools?

## TERRIBLY STRANGE.

### TARANTULA'S VICTIMS DANCE FOR THEIR LIVES.

Most Remarkable Phase of Life in Southern Italy—The Singhalese Devil Dancers Who Remove Evil Spirits—in Their Mind.



THE historic and once highly civilized little town of Brindisi, in southern Italy, is a wild place, in which the fields and commons abound with scorpions, vipers and tarantulas, which are daily killed by scores, but still multiply their race to the terror of the inhabitants. Whatever skeptics may say, the tarantula's bite does cause that terrible exhibition, or series of jumps and distortions, which give rise to the lovely and graceful dance.

A recent traveler writes from Brindisi: "I have seen a tarantula and can bear witness to it. It was when visiting the Puglie province a few years ago that I came across a tarantula dancer. Her eyes were staring wildly, as if she saw the tarantula still before her. Every second she would stretch forward her hands, then hurriedly clasp them together, as if to crush the horrible beast. The only means of healing from the bite, or sting, is dancing, and for this muscledans are engaged by the victims' family."

There is also a sacred well about thirty-six miles from Brindisi, dedicat-

ed to St. Paul, the protector of tarantula victims, and every year these poor creatures make a pilgrimage thither on St. Paul's day, which occurs at the end of June. The water of this well is supposed to cure the tarantula's sting. During the journey the victims are a prey to violent convulsions. Those who cannot undertake the journey perform the ceremony at home in a room hung with colored handkerchiefs or bits of colored rags, and they dance, jump and scream as long as their strength lasts.

Another traveler, who visited the sacred well, says: "Sometimes it takes several days to cure them. The girl I saw was a handsome peasant girl. Her hair, which was magnificent, fell over her like a cloak. She was sitting on a chair in front of the house, and was surrounded by a crowd of relatives and neighbors. I asked what was the matter, and was told 'It is a tarantula.' The girl's head was moving from side to side, as if listening to something. In fact, an organ was heard approaching. Little by little, as the organ drew nearer, the girl rose from her seat and began to dance wildly. Then, when her strength was spent, she gave one long, loud cry and fell as if dead in her mother's arms."

The following day she danced again, and for over twelve hours, without ceasing, excepting for short intervals. The musicians engaged to keep the girl company were paid 10 francs each for the day, and the family consisted only of poor peasants. "But how can you afford this?" I asked the father of the girl. "Well," he answered, "it must be done, otherwise our girl would die of the tarantula's poison. And you would not have us see our girl die before our eyes for the sake of a few francs? We must starve afterward, but our girl must have music to help her in her dance." I always think of this poor girl at the approach of St. Paul's day.

The real Singhalese devil dancers in Ceylon are ferocious and savage fellows. Their dances are revolting and horrible. But their profession is popular and affords a royal living for the men who go into it. There is a superstition among the Singhalese that when a man falls sick he is supposed to be afflicted by a devil. In order to rid him of the disease the devil dancers are called in to propitiate the demon. Two or more of them go by night to the sick man's house, in front of which a small, square inclosure, about six feet high, has been made of grasses and palm leaves. This answers the purpose

## ASCENDED GRAND TETON.

Hair-Raising Feat Accomplished at a Dizzy Elevation.

Two remarkable feats in mountain climbing have just been accomplished. In one case Mrs. Coburn, wife of the pastor of Trinity Episcopal church, Denver, Col., was the first woman to step foot on the top of Mount Evans, Colorado. In the other, the ascent of the Grand Teton, on the border line between Idaho and Wyoming, often attempted unsuccessfully and by many thought to be impossible, was accomplished by a party made up of the Rev. Frank S. Spalding, formerly of Denver and now of Erie, Pa., a son of Bishop John F. Spalding of the diocese of Colorado; W. O. Owen of Cheyenne, Wyo.; Frank S. Peterson of Jackson, Wyo.; and John Shive of Elk, Wyo. The ascent was exceedingly difficult and dangerous. It was by crawling upon their abdomens in one place over a ledge to insecure rock overlooking a precipice with a drop of 3,000 feet, that the summit of the Grand Teton was reached. The path in some places was so narrow that progress was made only by seeking out with the fingers crevices in which to secure a hold to drag the body along. The ascent rivals the most difficult feats of Alpine climbing.

The Grand Teton is the subject of hundreds of legends among the Indians, and is still a mysterious temple of the Great Spirit to them. It had always been regarded as folly to attempt to reach the summit.

## Washing Streets for Diamonds.

Perhaps the most interesting fact in connection with Kimberley, the diamond city, is the "street washing," which has been a recognized industry for some time past. With the exception of two or three of the principal thoroughfares, all the streets have been subjected to the washing process, and some of the debris washers have done very well. The "washing" consists of overhauling the earth for diamonds. At nearly every meeting of the borough council applications for permission to wash streets, or portions of streets, are received. The would-be washer has to obtain the consent of persons resident in the street or road, to put the latter into sound repair again, and pay title to the municipality in the shape of ten per cent on the gross funds. Last year £900 was paid to the municipality in this way, a good proportion of which represented commission on street funds. In the early days of the diamond fields the ground was washed in a very primitive style, many diamonds being thrown away in the debris, as it is called. This debris was subsequently used for street-making purposes, and now, years after, with better machinery at their disposal, people find it pays to "wash the streets." Many houses built on "maiden" debris are removed in order to wash the latter, and stones of comparatively large size are frequently found by the energetic debris washer, who literally works from morn till night, from sunrise till sunset.—Pearson's Weekly.

## The Duel in West Virginia.

In West Virginia a duel means something. Two citizens of Silterville, that state, had a grievance to settle, and the other day they met face to face on the street. Both drew guns and blazed away, and each received two shots from the other's weapon. Neither will live. Nor was that all the damage done. A crowd gathered to witness the affair, and five other persons received wounds, from the results of which two will die. With four fatally wounded and three more slightly damaged, we presume West Virginia honor is vindicated. In France the affairs would have been managed differently. The principals would have appointed seconds, who would have selected a quiet, unfrequented spot, to which the duellists would have repaired. An agreed number of paces would have been counted off, there would have been two quick reports, and the entire party would have pledged eternal friendship over a bird and a bottle, the only dead thing being the bird. If the object is to kill, the West Virginia method seems to be the most effective. But if the idea is merely to satisfy wounded honor in the most pleasant way, then the bird and bottle method of the delicious French is to be preferred.—Philadelphia North American.



A VICTIM.

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chicken sinks into a sort of trance, which is a sign that the devil has accepted the sacrifice, and is willing to pass from the man into the bird.

## Says Man Came from Apes.

At the meeting of the Cambridge congress of zoology in London last week Prof. Haeckel, in a paper on the present knowledge of the descent of man, declared that science has now established with absolute certainty that man descended through various stages of evolution from the lowest form of animal life during a period estimated at 1,000,000,000 years. After going deep into the scientific features of his investigations, Prof. Haeckel says that man is a primate, and that all primates, monkeys, apes and man, descended from one common stem.

When a man once thoroughly understands the ins and outs of a wheat corner he invariably stays out.



SINGHALESE DEVIL DANCER.