

A DOCTOR'S MISSION

BY EMILY THORNTON

Author of "ROY RUSSELL'S RULE,"
"GLENROY," "THE FASHIONABLE MOTHER," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

We will now return to look a little into the welfare of Mrs. Nevergall and her sorrowful niece, after they had reached the home of their relative, Mr. Charles Rogers, in Charles street, Liverpool, and hidden the handsome young physician farwell, who had cared for them both so tenderly during their passage across the Atlantic.

It need only be said, in reference to that farwell, that the tears rushed to the hazel eyes of Ethel as she saw him disappear in the distance, and a great and lonely void seemed suddenly to have dropped into her heart.

She knew not why she had taken such a deep interest in this grave and often pre-occupied stranger, but from the first word of kindness he had spoken to her, the first glance into his earnest eyes, she had felt towards him as she had never done towards any person of the opposite sex before.

But now it was all over, he had gone, and henceforward she could but learn to do without him. For a day or so it had almost seemed an impossibility, but with the rapid failure of her aunt's strength her thoughts were forced into another channel, and her own lonely feelings had to be pushed aside for the more momentous and important one of their impending separation.

The third week was drawing to a close, and the young girl had thrown herself upon her knees by the bedside of the invalid to catch the last words that she had to speak in her ear. At her request, she had been left alone with her child, and now, with her hand in hers, she murmured:

"Ethel, darling, I feel that I have but a few hours more to be with you, as my strength is fast waning; but while I may, I wish to tell you what I thought might be kept from your ears until your twenty-first birthday; but as I shall not be with you then, I must impart to you now an important secret, and give into your charge some documents not to be opened until that day. My dear, will you take these papers, and promise me that you will not break their seal until that time arrives?"

"I will, dearest aunt; rest assured I will do exactly as you wish."

"The papers I speak of, then, are in my trunk, inside a small wallet. Take charge of them immediately, and be sure to not tell to them at the time I mention. Now, I must tell you a fact that I have withheld from your knowledge for the best of reasons, and in order to keep a solemn pledge of secrecy given to your father when a babe. I took you, as you are aware, when a child of a few weeks old, as my own had died, as well as my husband's sister, who was your dear mother."

"You were so young, and to be so entirely ours until your twenty-first birthday, that all thought it best to call you by our own name. I now tell you, for the first time what has been kept secret. Your father still lives, but for various reasons did not wish to claim you or be known to you until that time. I have informed him of my husband's death, my failing health, and of my return to England. I have also given him Cousin Rogers' address, who will tell him where you can be found when that date arrives."

"I will only add that there is nothing to be ashamed of in your birth. You are a true gentleman, and when twenty-one will come into possession of property sufficient for your support; but this fact is not to be generally known. Four months will elapse before that time comes, and I can leave only enough to bury me and purchase suitable mourning apparel for yourself."

"I dare not leave you without a protector and guardian, and as our present host is poor and has a struggle to provide for his own six children and wife, I have written to my brother, Sir Reginald Glendenning, asking him to take charge of you. I told him unless he did, you would be obliged to earn your own living, and I hated to send you out into the world alone for such a purpose. I asked him if you could not be of use to some way to him, until the fifth of October, when you would be otherwise provided for. This letter must be sent after my interment. Let him be notified of my death and invited to my funeral; then, after all is over and your mourning garments are made, send him the letter."

"Now, my love, I wish you to promise me that you will go to him if he sends for you, and assist him in whatever capacity he offers, even though it may be distasteful. Will you do this for your dying aunt, Ethel, my child?"

"I surely will," was the low reply, sobbed out almost with a wail; "but I cannot think of your dying. O, aunt! I have loved you so, how can I live without you?"

"As thy day, so shall thy strength be; as I can say. God will comfort you, and in a few more months your father will claim and protect you. But what is this? I cannot see! I am growing numb—cold! Ethel—Ethel—I am dying!"

She spoke no more, and as Mr. and Mrs. Rogers hastened back to the room at Ethel's hurried call, they saw that she was indeed breathing her last.

Ethel mourned, as one with such a loving heart would naturally do, over her great loss, but amid all her grief she remembered distinctly every direction she had received from those loved, dying lips. The package spoken of was hidden instantly amid her own possessions, and a message dispatched to the baronet.

The next day a telegraphic dispatch summoned the young girl immediately to the presence of the baronet, saying "that he was ill, and needed her at once." An hour later saw her seated in a railway train on her way to the Hall. Poor girl; she little knew what awaited her there!

CHAPTER VIII.

"Has she come?" asked Sir Reginald

Glendenning of Lady Constance, as he distinctly heard a carriage stop before the door, and his own coachman's voice speaking to the horses.

"She has; shall she be brought directly to your presence?"

"Yes; and see to it that no one enters this room until they are summoned, as I wish to see this girl alone. Do you hear? Alone! entirely alone!" replied the baronet.

Lady Constance withdrew, and very soon reopened the door to usher in and present to her sick husband Ethel Nevergall, his sister's adopted niece, then instantly retired, closing the door behind her. Very beautiful looked the young girl as she stood by the side of the bed, her heavy crape veil thrown back, revealing her sad, sweet face and large, plying eyes.

"Oh, sir!" said she, after an eager, yet half-haughty greeting, "I grieve to see you so helpless! Have you just been injured?"

"Yes; this morning I was thrown from my horse, and am to lie here helpless for months. I sent for you then, in answer to a letter received a few moments before the accident from my sister, written before her death. In that she asks me to give you a home for four months in return for any service I may wish rendered. I sent, because I need assistance immediately of a very peculiar nature. Are you willing to undertake it, at a fair salary?"

"Probably. I can tell better when I hear what the duties will be."

"Before I tell you that, I wish you to hand me the small Bible you see upon that table."

With wondering eyes, Ethel handed him the book.

"The duties to be performed are of a purely confidential nature. No human being must know what I tell you. Wife, nephew, niece, man servant, nor maid servant must ever know that you do more than read to and amuse me, write my letters, and attend to my daily business affairs. The true duties will be performed in half an hour each evening, alone. Will you swear on this book to keep my secret?"

"I will swear, if you will assure me that these duties can be done with a pure conscience, and that they are perfectly proper for me to do."

"I assure you you can do them with perfect propriety. Will you take the oath?"

"I will," came from the lips of the trembling girl, reluctantly, it must be confessed, but still came, because of the promise given to her dying aunt that she would not refuse his offer.

"Then kiss that book, and repeat after me these words: 'I, Ethel Nevergall, swear I will tell no person the nature of my nightly duties, and that I will perform them to the best of my ability.'"

Again Ethel shuddered, yet did as he required; and, after kissing the book, repeated the words.

"Sit down, and come very close, so you can hear, while I whisper the secret. Now," he continued, "listen to me intently. I have in my possession a very rare animal, one entirely unknown. It is the property of a friend, and I am secretly taking care of it for him. He is absent now abroad, searching for more wonders to add to a collection. On his return he is going to exhibit it, and expects to realize a fortune by doing so, which I am to share. Now, although wealthy, I love money, and always have; therefore, I take every care of this creature, in order to obtain more gold. No human being, save myself and its owner, is aware of its existence. It is hidden in a ruined part of this house—in fact, in a ruined part of the existence of which no one knows but myself, and in close connection with, but not in, a place we call 'The Haunted Tower.' What I wish you to do is this: I myself have always said this, and I am sure, for if it possesses some of their nature, and if he is not attended to he will starve. About ten every evening you are to do this for me."

"A basket is always standing in a certain place in the ruined part. A person I pay well comes every evening, under a promise of secrecy, and puts food in it. You must get this basket, go through a long, covered corridor that connects this tower to the main building and opens directly into a small hall, or passageway near your room, and the door from your room is hidden by a wardrobe."

"Open it, and pass through, taking a knife of a peculiar shape that you will find in a bookcase drawer in your room, together with plenty of candles and matches for your use, also there; and to this drawer I will give you the key."

"You will find several of these knives put there, for fear one might accidentally get broken. Take one, with a lighted candle, I say, go down the passage to the tower, then count on the wall from the door that leads up the tower stairs, backward, three panels, into a seeming crack that you will see there insert the knife point, and then turn it around three times, when the panels will fly apart, revealing a small opening, where a set of revolving iron shelves will be seen."

"On these place the food. Water is in the room, where the creature can help himself, as he wishes it. Keep and restore the basket to its place; also be sure and keep the knife. Push then the shelves, and they will turn slowly around, and come back to you with the plate empty."

"After this, replace the panel and return to your room silently. That will be all for about two or three weeks, when I shall add a small service, such as placing a light of a certain nature in the tower, and winding up a little machinery. Will you do all this?" asked he, eagerly.

"Yes," half-moaned the poor girl, whose soul shrank in horror from the task; "if you assure me I will not be harmed by the beast."

"You never will. He is chained to a heavy iron bolt; besides, this room he is in has no windows or doors, being light-

ed from the ceiling, and there is no mode of reaching him, save by those shelves. I could not; you can never even see him, or be seen by him. When my friend returns, and wants him, we will unchain the iron shelves, and so take him hence. "Will you stay now, as he must be seen to this very night?" asked Sir Reginald, after a pause. "You can send for your trunk when you wish. I will pay you twenty pounds a month."

"I will stay."

"Then please ring the bell you see yonder, as I must inform my wife."

The bell brought a footman, who took the desired message, and Lady Constance soon appeared.

"Miss Nevergall is to remain. She is to be my amanuensis, reader, and assist you and the nurse generally, in my care. I wish the room next this prepared for her immediate use."

"Why that one? It will not be wise to put her there."

"Wise or not, there she goes, so have it in readiness."

CHAPTER IX.

In about an hour a servant maid entered, to say that the room was in readiness. Taking up her bonnet and wraps, the young girl passed through the front hall into the room adjoining, which she found exceedingly beautiful. It had evidently always been exclusively a guest chamber, and so richly was it furnished, that she guessed at once why Lady Constance had objected to its daily use.

As soon as the maid had withdrawn, Ethel commenced an examination of the implements Sir Reginald had mentioned. The bookcase he had spoken of she knew had been carried thither from the library for her use since her arrival. The drawer to which he had given her a key of a peculiar shape was a secret one, found, as he had whispered, behind the books, and remembering his directions, she proceeded to open it, after carefully locking her door.

There lay the three singularly shaped, large knives, with long, sharp-pointed blades, there, also, was a chain candlestick, with three or four dozen wax candles. Matches were in a large tin box, ready for constant and instant use.

Refastening the drawer, and replacing the books, the young girl proceeded to the wardrobe on the opposite side of the room, and unlocking it, she saw at the back a door bolted on her side, which gave her an immediate feeling of security.

Softly drawing the bolt, she looked out into a small passage that led merely from her own room to a similar door inside a wardrobe she had seen in the baronet's.

These two rooms communicated with this little passageway from the inhabited part of the house, and these alone. Directly opposite her door was a smaller one, which she at once knew must lead to the Haunted Tower, and deserted rooms, belonging to this singular old mansion.

Retreating to her own apartment through the wardrobe, Ethel bathed her face and hands, smoothed her hair, and once more turned towards the room of the invalid.

At the threshold, however, she met old Mrs. Fredon, the nurse, who had been in the family for years, who whispered that the baronet had fallen asleep, therefore, she might walk around the grounds if she chose.

Feeling that the fresh air would revive her shrinking spirit, Ethel tripped down the broad staircase and stepped upon the piazza. As she did so, she almost ran against a gentleman just entering. Raising her eyes to apologize, she found herself face to face with Dr. Elfenstein, the kind friend that she had parted with a few weeks before. He was as much astounded as herself it seemed, at her unexpected appearance.

"Is it possible that this can be Miss Nevergall?"

"It is, indeed; but I can scarcely believe this my friend, Dr. Elfenstein. How is it we meet in this unexpected place and manner?"

"I was about calling on my patient, Sir Reginald Glendenning, when, instead of being received by a servant, Miss Nevergall comes flying towards me. How is it you are here? I see by your black robes that your aunt must have passed away! But come out upon the piazza, as you were about to do, and tell me of yourself."

"Passing from the door to the shadow of the trained vines, followed by the physician, the young girl related the occurrences of the last few weeks.

"Did I understand that you were to remain here some time?"

"Yes; I am to be Sir Reginald's secretary, amanuensis and reader. For this, and helping to amuse him, I am to receive a good salary, and will have a home for the summer."

(To be continued.)

Money in Railroad.

A New York boulevard car was going north one day recently when, with a sudden jar, the current was thrown off and the passengers were bumped rudely together. The car came to a standstill. The motorman, says the New York Times, threw open the front door and ran back to the conductor on the rear platform.

They exchanged a few words; then both ran through the car to the front platform. Every passenger sat mute with surprise. Suddenly the car started, and then backed. Then it started again, and once more backed. Then it stopped. Off jumped motorman and conductor, and as the astonished passengers looked out of the windows they saw the two men down on their hands and knees, trying to crawl under the car. Presently, with an exclamation of delight, the motorman, covered with mud and grime, slowly emerged. Entering the car and holding up for inspection a ten-dollar bill, he said:

"Excuse me, passengers, for jarring you and keeping you waiting; but I came near running over this ten-dollar bill, and I hated to do it and leave it for the motorman on the car behind me."

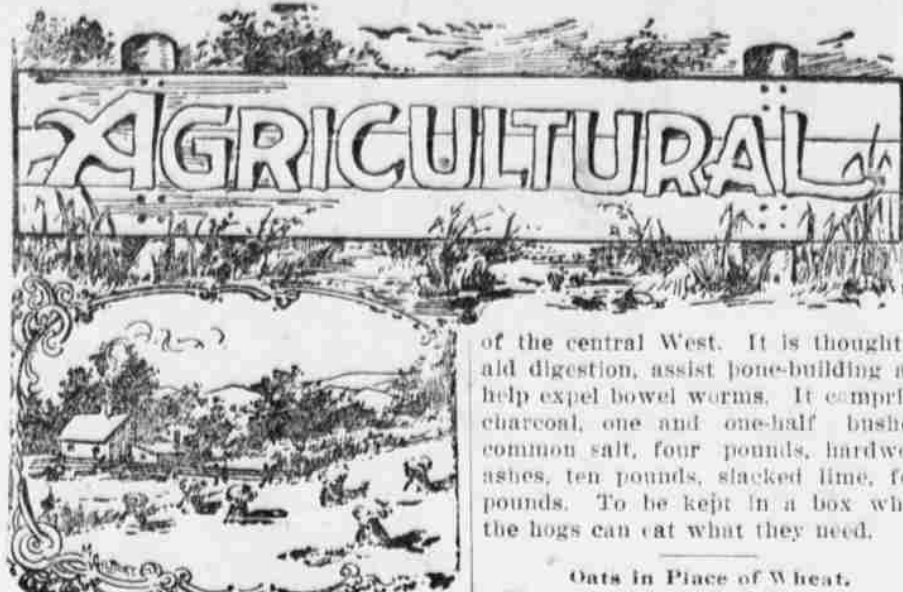
The Mean Thing.

Patience—And she said he fell at her feet.

Patrice—Oh, well, if he fell anywhere in the room it would be near her feet.—Yonkers Statesman.

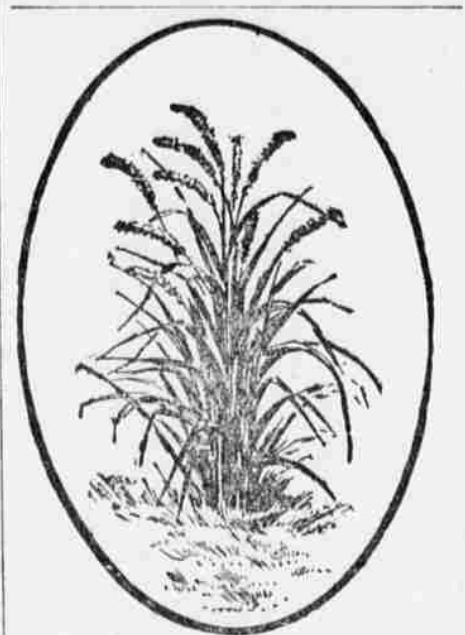
Suicide in Russia.

Fully 2,500 persons commit suicide in Russia every year.



Hungarian Millet.

In sections where the hay crop is short, one of the best and quickest catch crops is Hungarian millet. The seed is comparatively cheap, ranging from \$2 to \$2.25 a bushel, and the crop does well on any good soil. In many localities farmers make a good business of sowing Hungarian millet for a hay crop on any ground from which a crop can be taken by the middle of August. If the crop was a cultivated one, but little preparation of the soil is necessary. Shallow plowing and a thorough harrowing will probably be sufficient in most cases. It is generally considered that this millet crop is worth all it costs to get it, and it is particularly valuable for cattle, or the grain may be saved and fed to poultry during the winter. One of the most



A LATE MILLET CROP.

successful poultrymen in the country has millet as a part of his winter ration for the laying hens, sowing it on the ground from which early potatoes have been harvested.

Go in to the Fair.

Put on your newest calico, an' comb the young 'uns' hair, An' jump into the wagon—fer we're goin' to the fair; An' we'll make the finest showin' o' all the people there Fer Jenny'll be the finest gal a-goin' to the fair!

We've got a yoke of oxen that weigh a hundred ton, An' a mule that in a century wuz never known to run! An' two live alligators, an' rattlesnakes to spare— But Jenny'll be the finest gal a-goin' to the fair!

Oh, jump into the wagon!—the road is smooth an' wide An' the crisp wind's kinder sayin', "It's a mornin' fer a ride!" I'm holdin' o' the ribbons! an' won't the people stare! Fer Jenny—she's the finest gal a-goin' to the fair!

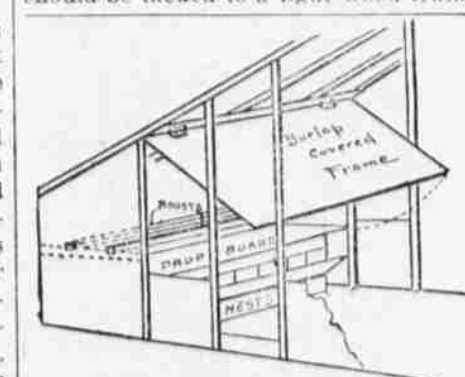
Now, don't the ol' wheels rattle! we're kiverin' the ground! The white sun's jest a-tyin', an' the trees air goin' round! An' Jenny, with her eyes o' blue an' sunny, flowin' hair— The finest an' the sweetest gal a-goin' to the fair!

—Atlanta Constitution.

A Warm Roosting Pen.

In a bulletin issued by the Canadian Department of Agriculture, giving much valuable information for the benefit of Dominion poultry men, the following description and accompanying illustration of warm-roosting quarters for winter are worthy of special attention:

The burlap curtain, which can be lowered in front of the fowls at night, should be tacked to a light wood frame



CONVENIENT AND COMFORTABLE.

and hinged to the roof of the house directly above the front edge of the drop board. This burlap-covered frame should extend across the pen and should fall an inch or so below the drop board. When not required in front of the fowls the frame should be hooked to the roof of the house. This frame when lowered, together with the board sides of the roosting quarters, form the warm-roosting pen. The fowls will generate sufficient heat to keep themselves comfortable during a cold night.

Tanks for Swine.

The following is a favorite mixture among some of the large hog-raisers

OLD FAVORITES

My Lodging Is on the Cold Ground.

My lodging is on the cold ground,
And hard, very hard, is my fare;
But that which grieves me more, love,
Is the coldness of my dear.
Yet still he cried, "Turn, love, to me—
I pray thee, love, turn to me—
For thou art the only girl, love,
That is adored by me."

II.

With a garland of straw I will crown thee, love;
I'll marry thee with a rush ring;
Thy frozen heart shall melt with love,
So merrily I will sing.
Yet still he cried, "Turn, love, to me—
I pray thee, love, turn to me—
For thou art the only girl, love,
That is adored by me."

III.

But if thou wilt harden thy heart, love,
And be deaf to my pitiful moan,
O, I must endure the smart, love,
And tumble in straw all alone.
Yet still he cried, "Turn, love, to me—
I pray thee, love, turn to me—
For thou art the only girl, love,
That is adored by me."

The Graves of a Household.

They grew in beauty, side by side,
They filled one house with glees;
Their graves are severed, far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight
Where are those dreamers now!

One 'midst the forest of the West,
By a dark stream is laid—
The Indian knows his place of rest
Far in the cedar shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one—
He lies where pearls lie deep,
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are
Dressed
Above the noble slain:
He wraps his colors round his breast,
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one—o'er her the myrtle showers
It leaves by soft winds fanned;
She faded 'midst Italian flowers—
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest, who played
Beneath the same green tree;
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent knee!

They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song and hearth—
Alas! for love, if thou were all,
And naught beyond, oh, Earth!
—Mrs. Hemans.

SURGERY IN GERMANY.

American Practitioner Would Be Out of Place Over There.

A young surgeon who went to Germany four years ago to complete his studies in pathology, recently returned to this country. He makes this interesting comment on national differences in the profession, says the World's Work:

"It's science over there; here it's the business of healing. Here one gets the elementary things in college, learns more in hospital and in general practice, and turns the knowledge into money. The average American practitioner would be out of place over there. With them it's study, study, study from the time they receive their degree until they die. At the hospitals or meeting places, they talk nothing but shop. I have known a group of German doctors to leave their dinner half eaten to visit a case under discussion. They are the worst possible practitioners, for they are interested only in technique. I knew a man who went to a German physician with a pain in his leg. That doctor spent an hour each day for five days studying it, and after that time he knew all there was to know about that pain, but he didn't stop it. In this country we would have treated it and thought no more about it except to congratulate the patient in a few days on getting well. They don't care for the patient. He is only a specimen. I heard a doctor say perfectly mechanically that he hoped a certain patient would die so that he might learn some fact from the autopsy."

They call American surgeons copyists. Wherever the charge is true, it is merely that Americans turn to practical service the theories they study. But undoubtedly the Germans are doing a great work. One man, it is reckoned, has added thirty thousand years to human life by his discoveries. There is no commercial end for them to gain, so that their aim, for their science, must be their only aim."

The difference aptly illustrates the general difference between our "practical" ways and the ways of German learning.

Trying Not to Grieve Papa.

"There, Georgie, you not only broke mamma's pretty dish but you told her a story about it, which is much more naughty. Papa will be so grieved when I tell him."

"Will he feel awful bad 'cause I did it, mamma?"

"Yes."

"I'm so sorry. I know what I'll do, mamma. I'll tell him you did it."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Out in the Weather.

Church—They say the new moon is a "wet" one.

Gotham—Well, I don't see how it can be anything else if it has been left outdoors.—Yonkers Statesman.

The world soon sees a man who wins his laurels and then quits.