

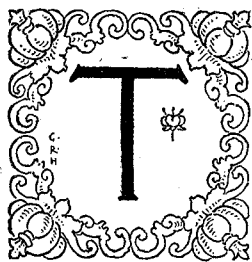
THE FAITH DOCTOR.¹

BY EDWARD EGGLESTON,

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XVII.

A FAITH CURE.



THE next day the cold wave had begun to let go a little, and there were omens of a coming storm. The forenoon Phillida gave to domestic industry of one sort and another, but in the afternoon she put on her overshoes against icy pavements, and set out for a visit to Wilhelmina Schulenberg, remembering how lonesome the invalid must be in wintry weather. There were few loiterers on the sidewalks on such a day, but Phillida was pretty sure of a recognition from somebody by the time she reached Avenue A, for her sympathetic kindness had made friends for her beyond those with whom she came into immediate contact as a Sunday-school teacher.

"O Miss Callender," said a thinly clad girl of thirteen, with chattering teeth, and arms folded against her body for warmth, rocking from one foot to the other, as she stood in the door of a tenement house, "this is hard weather for poor folks, ain't it?" And then, unable longer to face the penetrating rawness of the east wind, she turned and ran up the stairs.

Phillida's meditations as she walked were occupied with what Mrs. Frankland had said the day before. She reflected that if she herself only possessed the necessary faith she might bring healing to many suffering people. Why not to Wilhelmina? With this thought there came a drawing back—that instinctive resistance of human nature to anything out of the conventional and mediocre; a resistance that in a time of excitement often saves us from absurdity at the expense of reducing us to commonplace. But in Phillida this conservatism was counteracted by a quick imagination in alliance with a passion for moral excellence, both warmed by the fire of youth; and in all ventures youth counts for much.

"Dat is coot; you gomes to see Mina wunst more already," said Mrs. Schulenberg, whom Phillida encountered on the second flight of

stairs, descending with a market-basket on her arm. She was not the strong-framed peasant, but of lighter build and somewhat finer fiber than the average immigrant, and her dark hair and eyes seemed to point to South Germany as her place of origin.

"Wilhelmina she so badly veels to-day," added Mrs. Schulenberg. "I don' know,"—and she shook her head ominously,— "I was mos' afraid to leef her all py herself already. She is with bein' zick zo tired. She dalk dreadful dis mornin' already; I don' know." And the mother went on down the stairs shaking her head dolefully, while Phillida climbed up to the Schulenberg apartment and entered without knocking, going straight over to the couch where the emaciated girl lay, and kissing her.

Wilhelmina embraced her while Phillida pushed back the hair from the pale, hard forehead with something like a shudder, for it was only skin and skull. In the presence of sympathy Wilhelmina's mood of melancholy desperation relaxed, and she began to shed tears.

"O Miss Callender, you have from black thoughts saved me to-day," she said in a sobbing voice, speaking with a slight German accent. "If I could only die. Here I drag down the whole family already. I make them sorry. Poor Rudolph, he might be somebody if away off he would go wunst; but no, he will not leave me. It is such a nice girl he love; I can see that he love her. But he will say nothing at all. He feel so he must not anyway leave his poor sister; and I hate myself and my life that for all my family is unfortunate. Black thoughts will come. If, now, I was only dead; if I could only find some way myself to put out of the way wunst, for Rudolph it would be better, and after a while the house would not any more so sorry be. Last night I thought much about it; but when falling asleep I saw you plain come in the door and shake your head, and I say, Miss Callender think it wicked. She will not let me. But I am so wicked and unfortunate."

Here the frail form was shaken by hysterical weeping that cut off speech. Phillida shed tears also, and one of them dropped on the emaciated hand of Wilhelmina. Phillida

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quickly wiped it away with her handkerchief, but another took its place.

"Let it be, Miss Callender," sobbed Wilhelmina; "it will surely make me not so wicked."

She looked up wistfully at Phillida and essayed to speak; then she turned her eyes away, while she said:

"If now, Miss Callender, you would—but but may be you will think that it is wicked also."

"Speak freely, dear," said Phillida, softly; "it will do you good to tell me all—all that is in your heart."

"If you would only pray that I might die, then it would be granted already, maybe. I am such a curse, a dreadful curse, to this house."

"No, no; you must n't say that. Your sickness is a great misfortune to your family, but it is not your fault. It is a greater misfortune to you. Why should you pray to die? Why not pray to get well?"

"That is too hard, Miss Callender. If now I had but a little while been sick. But I am so long. I cannot ever get well. Oh, the medicines I have took, the pills and the sarsaparillas and the medicine of the German doctor! And then the American doctor he burnt my back. No; I can't get well anymore. It is better as I die. Pray that I die. Will you not?"

"But if God can make you die he can make you well. One is no harder than the other for him."

"No, no; not if I was but a little while sick. But you see it is years since I was sick."

This illogical ground of skepticism Phillida set herself to combat. She read from Wilhelmina's sheepskin-bound Testament, printed in parallel columns in English and German, the story of the miracle at the Pool of Bethesda, the story of the woman that touched the hem of the garment of Jesus, and of other cures told in the New Testament with a pathos and dignity not to be found in similar modern recitals.

Then Phillida, her soul full of hope, talked to Mina of the power of faith, going over the ground traversed by Mrs. Frankland. She read the eleventh of Hebrews, and her face was transformed by the earnestness of her own belief as she advanced. Call it mesmerism, or what you will, she achieved this by degrees, that Wilhelmina thought as she thought, and felt as she felt. The poor girl with shaken nerves and enfeebled vitality saw a vision of health. She watched Phillida closely, and listened eagerly to her words, for to her they were words of life.

"Now, Mina, if you believe, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, all things are possible."

The girl closed her eyes a moment, then she opened them with her face radiant.

"Miss Callender, I do believe."

Already her face was changing under the powerful influence of the newly awakened hope. She folded her hands peacefully, and closed her eyes, whispering:

"Pray, Miss Callender; pray!"

Phillida laid down the Bible and solemnly knelt by the invalid, taking hold of one of her hands. It would have been impossible to listen to the prayer of one so passionately sincere and so believably devout without falling into sympathy with it. To the bed-ridden and long-despairing Wilhelmina it made God seem something other than she had ever thought him. An hour before she could have believed that God might be persuaded to take her life in answer to prayer, but not that he could be brought to restore her. The moment that Phillida began to pray, a new God appeared to her mind—Phillida's God. Wilhelmina followed the action of Phillida's mind as a hypnotized subject does that of the dominant agent: as Phillida believed, so she believed; Phillida's confidence became hers, and the weak nerves tingled all the way from the nerve-centers with new life.

"Now, Wilhelmina," said Phillida at length, slowly rising from her knees and looking steadily into her eyes, "the good Lord will make you whole. Rise up and sit upon the bed, believing with all your heart."

In a sort of ecstasy the invalid set to work to obey. There was a hideous trick of legerdemain in the last generation, by which an encoffined skeleton was made to struggle to its feet. Something like this took place as Mina's feeble arms were brought into the most violent effort to assist her to rise. But a powerful emotion, a tremendous hope, stimulated the languid nerves; the almost disused muscles were galvanized into power; and Wilhelmina succeeded at length in sitting upright without support for the first time in years. When she perceived this actually accomplished she cried out: "O God! I am getting well!"

Wilhelmina's mother had come to the top of the stairs just as Phillida had begun to pray. She paused without the door and listened to the prayer and to what followed. She now burst into the room to see her daughter sitting up on the side of her couch; and then there were embraces and tears, and ejaculations of praise to God in German and in broken English.

"Sit there, Mina, and believe with all your heart," said Phillida, who was exteriorly the calmest of the three; "I will come back soon."

Wilhelmina did as she was bidden. The shock of excitement thus prolonged was overcoming the sluggishness of her nerves. The mother could not refrain from calling in a neighbor who was passing by the open door, and

the news of Mina's partial restoration spread through the building. When Phillida got back from the Diet Kitchen with some savory food, the doorway was blocked; but the people stood out of her way with as much awe as they would had she worn an aureole, and she passed in and put the food before Wilhelmina, who ate with a relish she hardly remembered to have known before. The spectators dropped back into the passageway, and Phillida gently closed the door.

"Now, Wilhelmina, lie down and rest. To-morrow you will walk a little. Keep on believing with all your heart."

Having seen the patient, who was fatigued with unwonted exertion, sleeping quietly, Phillida returned home. She said nothing of her experiences of the day, but Millard, who called in the evening, found her more abstracted and less satisfactory than ever. For her mind continually reverted to her patient.

XVIII.

FAITH-DOCTOR AND LOVER.

THE next day, though a great snow-storm had burst upon the city before noon, Phillida made haste after luncheon to work her way first to the Diet Kitchen and then to the Schlenberg tenement. When she got within the shelter of the doorway of the tenement house she was well-nigh exhausted, and it was half a minute before she could begin the arduous climbing of the stairs.

"I thought you would not come," said Wilhelmina with something like a cry of joy. "I have found it hard to keep on believing, but still I have believed and prayed. I was afraid if till to-morrow you waited the black thoughts would come back again. Do you think I can sit up wunst more already?"

"If you have faith; if you believe."

Under less excitement than that of the day before, Mina found it hard to get up; but at length she succeeded. Then she ate the appetizing food that Phillida set before her. Meantime the mother, deeply affected, took her market-basket and went out, lest somehow her presence should be a drawback to her daughter's recovery.

While the feeble Wilhelmina was eating, Phillida drew the only fairly comfortable chair in the room near to the stove, and, taking from a bed some covering, she spread it over the back and seat of the chair. Then, when the meal was completed, she read from the Acts of the Apostles of the man healed at the gate of the temple by Simon Peter. With the book open in her hand, as she sat, she offered a brief fervent prayer.

"Now, Wilhelmina, doubt nothing," she

said. "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

The invalid had again caught the infection of Phillida's faith, and with a strong effort, helping herself by putting her hand on Phillida's shoulder, she brought herself at length to her feet, where she stood a moment, tottering as though about to fall.

"Walk to the chair, dear, nothing wavering," commanded Phillida, and Mina, with much trembling, let go of Phillida's shoulder, and with sadly unsteady steps tottered forward far enough to lay hold of the back of the chair, and at length succeeded, with much ado, in sitting down without assistance. For years she had believed herself forever beyond hope of taking a step. She leaned back against the pillow placed behind her by Phillida, and wept for very joy.

"But, Miss Callender," she said after a while, "the man you read about in the Bible was made all well at once, and he walked and leaped; but I —"

"Perhaps our faith is n't strong enough," said Phillida. "Maybe it is better for us that you should get well slowly, like the man that Jesus cured of blindness, who, when he first saw men, thought they looked like walking trees. Let us be thankful for what we have, and not complain."

In a few weeks Wilhelmina's mental stimulation and graduated physical exercise had made her able to sit up nearly all day, to walk feebly about the house, and even to render some assistance in such affairs as could be attended to while sitting. The recovery, though it went no farther, was remarkable enough to attract much attention, and the fame of it spread far and wide among the people in the eastern avenues and those connected with the Mission.

This new development of Phillida's life increased her isolation. She could not speak to her family about her faith-cures, nor to Mrs. Hilbrough, and she did not like to confide even in Mrs. Frankland, who would, she felt sure, make too much of the matter. Most of all, it was not in her power to bring herself to say anything to Millard about it. The latter felt, during the three or four weeks that followed the treatment of Wilhelmina, that the veil between him and the inner life of Phillida was growing more opaque. He found no ground to quarrel with Phillida; she was cordial, affectionate, and dutiful towards him, but he felt, with a quickness of intuition characteristic of him, that there was some new cause of constraint between them.

"Phillida," he said one evening, a month after Phillida's work as a faith-doctor had begun, "I wish you would tell me more about your mission work."

"I don't like to speak of that," she replied. "It is too much like boasting of what I am doing." She had no sooner said this than she regretted it; her fierce conscience rose up and charged her with uncandid speech. But how could she be candid?

"I don't like to think," said Millard, "that so large a part of your life—a part that lies so near to your heart—should be shut out from me. I can't do your kind of work. But I can admire it. Won't you tell me about it?"

Phillida felt a keen pang. Had it been a question of her ordinary work in the months that were past she might easily have spoken of it. But this faith-healing would be dangerous ground with Millard. She knew in her heart that it would be better to tell him frankly about it, and face the result. But with him there she could not get courage to bring on an immediate conflict between the affection that was so dear and the work that was so sacred to her.

"Charley," she said slowly, holding on to her left hand as though for safety, "I'm afraid I was not very—very candid in the answer I gave you just now."

"Oh, don't say anything, or tell me anything, dear, that gives you pain," he said with quick delicacy; "and something about this does pain you."

Phillida spoke now in a lower tone, looking down at her hands as she said, with evident effort: "Because you are so good, I must try to be honest with you. There are reasons why I hesitate to tell—to tell—you all about what I am doing. At least this evening, though I know I ought to, and I will—I will—if you insist on it."

"No, dear; no. I will not hear it now."

"But I will tell you all some time. It's nothing *very* bad, Charley. At least I don't think it is."

"It could n't be, I'm sure. Nothing bad could exist about you"; and he took her hand in his. "Don't say any more to-night. You are nervous and tired. But some other time, when you feel like it, speak freely. It won't do for us not to open our hearts and lives to one another. If we fail to live openly and truthfully, our little boat will go ashore, Phillida dear—will be wrecked or stranded before we know it."

His voice was full of pleading. How could she refuse to tell him all? But by all the love she felt for him, sitting there in front of her, with his left hand on his knee, looking in her face, and speaking in such an honest, manly way, she was restrained from exposing to him a phase of her life that would seem folly to him while it was a very holy of holies to her. The alternative was cruel.

"Another time, Charley, I mean to tell you all," she said; and she knew when she said it that procrastination would not better the matter, and in the silence that ensued she was just about to change her resolve and unfold the whole matter at once.

But Millard said: "Don't trouble yourself. I'm sorry I have hurt you. Remember that I trust you implicitly. If you feel a delicacy in speaking to me about anything, let it go."

The conversation after this turned on indifferent matters; but it remained constrained, and Millard took his leave early.

XIX.

PROOF POSITIVE.

THE more Millard thought of the mysterious reserve of Phillida, the more he was disturbed by it, and the next Sunday but one he set out at an earlier hour than usual to go to Avenue C, not this time with a comfortable feeling that his visit would be a source of cheer to his aunt, but rather hoping that her quiet spirit might somehow relieve the soreness of his heart. It chanced that on this fine winter Sunday he found her alone, except for the one-year-old little girl.

"I let the children all go to Sunday-school," she said, "except baby, and father has gone to his meeting, you know."

"His meeting? I did not know that he had any," said Millard.

"W'y, yes, Charley; I thought you knew. Henry always had peculiar views," she said, laughing gently, as was her wont, at her husband's oddities. "He has especially disliked preachers and doctors. Lately he has got the notion that the churches did not believe the Bible literally enough. There were two Swedes and one Swiss in his shop who agreed with him. From reading the Bible in their way and reading other books and papers they have adopted what is called Christian Science. They have found some other men and women who believe as they do, and a kind of a Christian Science woman doctor who talks to them a little,—a good enough woman in her way, I suppose,—and they think that by faith, or rather by declaring that there is no such thing as a real disease, and believing themselves well, they can cure all diseases."

"All except old age and hunger?" queried Millard.

The aunt smiled, and went on. "But father and his woman doctor or preacher don't agree with your Miss Callender. They say her cures are all right as far as they go, but that she is only a babe, unable to take strong meat. The Christian Science woman in Fourteenth street, now, they say, knows all about it, and works

her cures scientifically, and not blindly as Miss Callender does."

This allusion to cures by Phillida set Millard into a whirl of feeling. That she had been doing something calculated to make her the subject of talk brought a rush of indignant feeling, but all his training as a man of society and as a man of business inclined him to a prudent silence under excitement. He turned his derby hat around and around, examining the crown by touch, and then, reversing it, he scrutinized the address of the hatter who did not make it. Though he had come all the way to Avenue C to make a confidante of his aunt, he now found it impossible to do so. She had rejoiced so much in his betrothal to her friend, how could he let her see how far apart he and Phillida had drifted? For some minutes he managed to talk with her about her own family matters, and then turned back to Phillida again.

"Tell me, Aunt Hannah, all you know about Miss Callender's cures. I don't like to ask her, because she and I disagree so widely on some things that we do not like to talk about them."

His aunt saw that Charley was profoundly disturbed. She therefore began with some caution, as treading on unknown ground, in talking with him about Phillida.

"I don't know what to think about these things, Charley. But in anything I say you must understand that I love Miss Callender almost as much as you do, and if anybody can cure by faith she can. In fact, she has had wonderful success in some cures. Besides, she's no money-maker, like the woman doctor in Fourteenth street, who takes pay for praying over you, and rubbing your head, maybe. You know about the cure of Wilhelmina Schulenberg, of course?"

"No; not fully. We have n't liked to talk about it. Wilhelmina is the poor creature that has been in bed so long."

This mere fencing was to cover the fact that Millard had not heard anything of the miracle in Wilhelmina's case. But seeing his aunt look at him inquiringly, he added:

"Is she quite cured, do you think — this Miss Schulenberg?"

"No; but she can sit up and walk about. She got better day after day under Miss Callender's praying, but lately, I think, she is at a standstill. Well, that was the first, and it made a great talk. And I don't see but that it is very remarkable. Everybody in the tenement house was wild about it, and Miss Callender soon came to be pointed at by the children on the street as 'the woman doctor that can make you well by praying over you.' Then there was the wife of the crockery-store man in Avenue A. She had hysterical fits, or

something of the sort, and she got well after Miss Callender visited her three or four times. And another woman thought her arm was paralyzed, but Miss Callender made her believe, and she got so she could use it. But old Mr. Greenlander, the picture-frame maker in Twentieth street, did n't get any better. In fact, he never pretended to believe that he would."

"What was the matter with him?" asked Millard, his lips compressed and his brows contracted.

"Oh, he had a cataract over his eye. He's gone up to the Eye and Ear Hospital to have it taken off. I don't suppose faith could be expected to remove that."

"It does n't seem to work in surgical cases," said Millard.

"But several people with nervous troubles and kind of breakdowns have got better or got well, and naturally they are sounding the praises of Miss Callender's faith," added his aunt.

"Do you think Phillida likes all this talk about her?"

"No. This talk about her is like hot coals to her feet. She suffers dreadfully. She said last Sunday that she wondered if Christ did not shrink from the talk of the crowds that followed him more than he did from crucifixion itself. She is wonderful, and I don't wonder the people believe that she can work miracles. If anybody can in these days, she is the one."

Millard said nothing for a time; he picked at the lining of his hat, and then put it down on the table and looked out of the window. His irritation against Phillida had by this time turned into affectionate pity for herself-imposed suffering—a pity rendered bitter by his inability to relieve her.

"Do you think that Phillida begins to suspect that perhaps she has made a mistake?" he asked after a while.

"No. I'm not so sure she has. No doctor cures in all cases, and even Christ could n't heal the people in Nazareth who had n't much faith."

"She will make herself a byword in the streets," said Millard in a tone that revealed to his aunt his shame and anguish.

"Charley," said Mrs. Martin, "don't let yourself worry too much about Miss Callender. She is young yet. She may be wrong or she may be right. I don't say but she goes too far. She's a house plant, you know. She has seen very little of the world. If she was like other girls she would just take up with the ways of other people and not make a stir. But she has set out to do what she thinks is right at all hazards. Presently she will get her lesson, and some of her oddities will disappear, but she'll never be just like common folks. Mind my words,

Charley, she 's got the making of a splendid woman if you 'll only give her time to get ripe."

"I believe that with all my heart," said Millard, with a sigh.

"I tell you, Charley, I do believe that her prayers have a great effect, for the Bible teaches that. Besides, she don't talk any of the nonsense of father's Christian Science woman. I can understand what Phillida 's about. But Miss what 's-her-name, in Fourteenth street, can't explain to save her life, so 's you can understand, how she cures people, or what she 's about, except to earn money in some way easier than hard work. There comes your uncle, loaded to the muzzle for a dispute," said Aunt Hannah, laughing mischievously as she heard her husband's step on the stairs.

Uncle Martin greeted Charley with zest. It was no fun to talk to his wife, who never could be drawn into a discussion, but who held her husband's vagaries in check as far as possible by little touches of gentle ridicule. But Mr. Martin was sure that he could overwhelm Charley Millard, even though he might not convince him. So when he had said, "How-are-yeh, and glad to see yeh, Charley, and hope yer well, and how 's things with you?" he sat down, and presently opened his battery.

"You see, Charley, our Miss Bowyer, the Christian Science healer, is well-posted about medicine and the Bible. She says that the world is just about to change. Sin and misery are at the bottom of sickness, and all are going to be done away with by spirit power. God and the angel world are rolling away the rock from the sepulchre, and the sleeping spirit of man is coming forth. People are getting more susceptible to magnetic and psy—psy-co-what-you-may-call-it influences. This is bringing out new diseases that the old doctors are only able to look at with dumb amazement."

Here Uncle Martin turned his thumbs outward with a flourish, and the air of a lad who has solved a problem on a blackboard. At the same time he dropped his head forward and gazed at Charley, who was not even amused.

"What are her proofs?" demanded Millard, wearily.

"Proofs?" said Uncle Martin, with a sniff, as he reared his head again. "Proofs a plenty. You just come around and hear her explain once about the vermic, —I can't say the word, —the twistifying motion of the stomach and what happens when the nerve-force gets a set-back and this motion kind of winds itself upwards instead of downwards, and the nerve-force all flies to the head. Proofs?" Here Uncle Martin paused, ill at ease. "Just notice the cases. The proof is in the trying of it. The cures are wonderful. You first get the patient

into a state where you can make him think as you do. Then you will that he shall forget all about his diseases. You make him feel well, and you 've done it."

"I suppose you could cure him by forgetfulness easily enough. I saw an old soldier with one leg yesterday; he was drunk in the street. And he had forgotten entirely that one leg was gone. But he did n't seem to walk any better."

"That don't count, Charley, and you 're only making fun. You see there is a philosophy in this, and you ought to hear it from somebody that can explain it."

"I 'd like to find somebody who could," said Charley.

"Well, now, how 's this? Miss Bowyer — she 's a kind of a preacher as well as a doctor — she says that God is good, and therefore he could n't create evil. You see? Well, now, God created everything that is, so there cannot be any evil. At least it can 't have any real, independent — what-you-may-call-it existence. You see, Charley?"

"Yes; what of it?"

"Well, then, sickness and sin are evil. But this argument proves that they don't really exist at all. They 're only magic-lantern shadows, so to speak. You see? Convince the patient that he is well, and he *is* well." Here Uncle Martin, having pointed out the easy road to universal health, looked in solemn triumph from under his brows.

"Yes," said Millard, "that 's just an awfully good scheme. But if you work your argument backwards it will prove that as evil exists there is n't any good God. But if it 's true that sin and disease have no real existence, we 'll do away with hanging and electrocution, as they call it, and just send for Miss Bowyer to convince a murderer that murder is an evil, and so it can't have any real independent existence in a universe made by a good God."

"Well, Charley, you make fun of serious things. You might as well make fun of the miracles in the Bible."

"Now," said Millard, "are the cures wrought by Christian Science miracles, or are they founded on philosophy?"

"They 're both, Charley. It 's what they call the psy-co-what-you-may-call-it mode of cure. But it 's all the same as the miracles of the Bible," said Uncle Martin.

"Oh, it is?" said Millard, gaily, for this tilt had raised his spirits. "Now the miracles in the Bible are straightout miracles. Nobody went around in that day to explain the vermicular motion of the stomach or the upward action of nerve-force, or the psychopathic value of animal magnetism. Some of the Bible miracles would stump a body to believe, if they

were anywhere else but in the Bible; but you just believe in them as miracles by walking right straight up to them, looking the difficulty in the eye, and taking them as they are because you ought to." Here Charley saw his aunt laughing gently at his frank way of stating the processes of his own mind. Smiling in response, he added: "You believe them, or at least I do, because I can't have my religion without them. But your Christian psychopaths bring a lot of talk about a science, and they don't seem to know just whether God is working the miracle or they are doing it by magnetism, or mind-cure, or psychopathy, or whether the disease is n't a sort of plaguey humbug anyhow, and the patient a fool who has to be undeceived."

"W'y, you see, Charley, we know more nowadays, and we understand all about somnambulism and hyp-what-you-may-call-it, and we understand just how the miracles in the Bible were worked. God works by law—don't you see?"

"The apostles did not seem to understand it?" asked Charley.

"No; they were mere faith-doctors, like Miss Callender, for instance, doing their works in a blind sort of way."

"The apostles will be mere rushlights when you get your Christian Science well a-going," said Charley, seriously. Then he rose to leave, having no heart to await the return of the children.

"Of course," said Uncle Martin, "the world is undergoing a change, Charley. A great change. Selfishness and disease shall vanish away, and the truth of science and Christianity prevail." Uncle Martin was now standing, and swinging his hands horizontally in outward gestures, with his elbows against his sides.

"Well, I wish to goodness there was some chance of realizing your hopes," said Charley, conciliatorily. "I must go. Good-by, Uncle Martin; good-by, Aunt Hannah."

Uncle Martin said good-by, and come again, Charley, and always glad to see you, you know, and good luck to you. And Millard went down the stairs and bent his steps homeward. As the exhilaration produced by his baiting of Uncle Martin's philosophy died away, his heart sank with sorrowful thoughts of Phillida and her sufferings, and with indignant and mortifying thoughts of how she would inevitably be associated in people's minds with mercenary quacks and disciples of a sham science.

He would go to see her at once. The defeat of Uncle Martin had given him courage. He would turn the same battery on Phillida. No; not the same. He could not ridicule her. She was never quite ridiculous. Her plane of motive was so high that his banter would be a

desecration. It was not in his heart to add to the asperity of her martyrdom by any light words. But perhaps he could find some way to bring her to a more reasonable course.

It was distinctly out of his way to cross Tompkins Square again, but in his present mood there was a satisfaction to him in taking a turn through the square, which was associated in his mind with a time when his dawning affection for Phillida was dimmed by no clouds of separation. Excitement pushed him forward, and a fine figure he was as he strode forward with eager and elastic steps, his head erect and his little cane balanced in his fingers. In the middle of the square his meditation was cut short in a way most unwelcome in his present frame of mind.

"It is Mr. Millard, is n't it?" he heard some one say, and, turning, he saw before him Wilhelmina Schulenberg, not now seated helpless in the chair he had given her, but hanging on the arm of her faithful Rudolph.

"How do you do, Miss Schulenberg?" said Millard, examining her with curiosity.

"You see I am able to walk wunst again," she said. "It is to Miss Callender and her prayers that I owe it already."

"But you are not quite strong," said Millard. "Do you get better?"

"Not so much now. It is my faith is weak. If I only could believe already, it would all to me be possible, Mr. Millard. But it is something to walk on my feet, is n't it, Mr. Millard?"

"Indeed it is, Miss Schulenberg. It must make your good brother glad."

Rudolph received this polite indirect compliment a little foolishly, but appreciation from a fine gentleman did him good, and after Charley had gone he was profuse in his praises of "Miss Callender's man," as he called him.

XX.

DIVISIONS.

MILLARD went no further through the square, but turned toward Tenth street, and through that to Second Avenue, and so uptownward. But how should he argue with Phillida? He had seen an indisputable example of the virtue of her prayers. Though he could not believe in the miraculous character of the cure, how should he explain it? That Wilhelmina had been shamming was incredible, that her ailments were not imaginary was proven by the fact of her recovery being but partial. To deny the abstract possibility of such a cure seemed illogical from his own standpoint. Even the tepid rector of St. Matthias had occasionally homilized in a vague way about the efficacy of faith and the power of prayer, but he

seemed to think that this potency was for the most part a matter of ancient history, for his illustrations were rarely drawn from anything more modern than the lives of the Church fathers, and of the female relatives of the Church fathers, such as Saint Monica. Millard could not see any ground on which he could deny the reality of the miracle in the Schulenberg case, but his common sense was that of a man of worldly experience, a common sense which stubbornly refuses to believe in the phenomenal or extraordinary, even when unable to formulate a single reason for incredulity.

After an internal debate he decided not to call on Phillida this afternoon. It might lead to a scene, a scene might bring on a catastrophe. But, as fortune would have it, Phillida was on her return from the Mission, and her path coincided with his, so that he encountered her in Tenth street. He walked home with her, asking after her health and talking commonplaces to avoid conversation. He went in—there was no easy way to avoid it, had he desired. She set him a chair, and drew up the shades, and then took her seat near him.

"I've been at Aunt Martin's to-day," he said.

"Have you?" she asked with a sort of trepidation in her voice.

"Yes." Then after a pause he edged up to what he wished to say by adding: "I had a curious talk with Uncle Martin, who has got his head full of the greatest jumble of scientific terms which he cannot remember, and nonsense about what he calls Christian Science. He says he learned it from Miss Bowyer, a Christian Science talker. Do you know her?"

"No; I have only heard of her from Mr. Martin, and I don't think I ought to judge her by what is reported of her teaching. Maybe it is not so bad. One does n't like to be judged at second-hand," she said, looking at him with a quick glance.

"Especially when Uncle Martin is the reporter," he replied.

Meantime Phillida's eyes were inquiring whether he had heard anything about her present course of action.

"I saw Wilhelmina Schulenberg in Tompkins Square to-day," he said, still approaching the inevitable, sideways.

"Did you?" she asked almost in a whisper. "Was she walking?"

"Yes. Why did you not tell me she was better?"

Phillida looked down. At this moment her reserve with her lover in a matter so personal to herself seemed to her extremely reprehensible.

"I—I was a coward, Charley," she said with a kind of ferocity of remorse. This self-accusation on her part made him unhappy.

"You?" he said. "You are no coward. You are a brave woman." He leaned over and lightly kissed her cheek as he finished speaking.

"I knew that my course would seem foolish to you, and I could n't bear that you should know. I was afraid it would mortify you."

"You have suffered much yourself, my dear."

She nodded her head, the tears brimming in her eyes at this unexpected sign of sympathy.

"And borne it bravely all alone. And all for a mistake—a cruel mistake."

Millard had not meant to say so much, but his feelings had slipped away from him. However, he softened his words by his action, for he drew out his handkerchief and gently wiped away a tear that had paused a moment in its descent down her cheek.

"How can you say it is a mistake?" she asked. "You saw Wilhelmina yourself."

"Yes; but it is all a misunderstanding, dear. It's all wrong, I tell you. You have n't seen much of life, and you'll be better able to judge when you are older." Here he paused, for of arguments he had none to offer.

"I don't want to see anything of life if a knowledge of the world is to rob me of what is more precious than life itself." Her voice was now firm and resolute, and her tears had ceased.

Millard was angry at he knew not what—at whatever thing human or supernatural had bound this burden of misbelief upon so noble a soul as Phillida's. He got up and paced the floor a moment, and then looked out of the window, saying from time to time in response to deprecatory or defensive words of hers, "I tell you, dear, it's a cruel mistake." Now and then he felt an impulse to scold Phillida herself; but his affectionate pity held him back. His irritation had the satisfaction of finding an object on which to vent itself at length when Phillida said:

"If Mrs. Frankland would admit men to her readings, Charley, I'm sure that if you could only hear her explain the Bible—"

"No, thank you," said Millard, tartly. "Mrs. Frankland is eloquent, but she has imposed on you and done you a great deal of harm. Why, Phillida, you are as much superior to that woman as the sky is—" Millard was about to say, "as the sky is to a mud-puddle," but nothing is so fatal to offhand vigor of denunciation as the confirmed habit of properness. Charley's preference for measured and refined speech got the better of his wrath barely in time, and, after arresting himself a moment, he finished the sentence with more justness as he made a lit-

tle wave with his right hand—"as the sky is to a scene-painter's illusion."

Then he went on: "But Mrs. Frankland is persuasive and eloquent, and you are too sincere to make allowance for the dash of exaggeration in her words. You won't find her at a mission in Mackerelville. She is dressed in purple by presents from the people who hear her, and Mrs. Hilbrough tells me that Mrs. Benthuisen has just given her a check of a thousand dollars to go to Europe with."

"Why should n't they do such things for her? They hardly know what to do with their money, and they ought to be grateful to her," said Phillida with heat. "Charley, I don't like to have you talk so about so good a woman. I know her and love her. You don't know her, and your words seem to me harsh and unjust."

"Well, then forgive me, dear. I forgot that she is your friend. That's the best thing I ever knew about her."

Saying this, he put on his hat and went out lest he should give way again to his now rising indignation against Mrs. Frankland, who, as the real author of Phillida's trouble, in his judgment deserved severer words than he had yet applied to her. But when he had opened the front door he turned back suddenly, distressed that his call had only added to the troubles of Phillida. She sat there, immovable, where he had left her; he crossed the room, bent over her, and kissed her cheek.

"Forgive me, darling; I spoke hastily."

This tenderness overcame Phillida, and she fell to weeping. When she raised her head a moment later Charley had gone, and the full confession she had intended must be deferred.

To a man who has accepted as of divine authority all the conventions of society, hardly anything that could befall a young woman would be more dreadful than to become a subject of notoriety. His present interview with Phillida had thoroughly aroused Millard, and he was resolved to save her from herself by any means within his reach. Again the alternative of an early marriage presented itself. He might hasten the wedding, and then take Phillida to Europe, where the sight of a religious life quite different from her own would tend to widen her views and weaken the ardor of her enthusiasm. He wondered what would be the effect upon her, for instance, of the stack of crutches built up in monumental fashion in one of the chapels of the Church of St. Germain des Près at Paris—the offerings of cripples restored by a Roman Catholic faith-cure. But he reflected that the wedding could be hardly got ready before Lent, and a marriage in Lent was repugnant to him not only as a Churchman but even more as a man known

for sworn fealty to the canons of fashionable society, which are more inexorable than ecclesiastical usages, since there is no one high and mighty enough to grant a dispensation from them. It had long been understood that the wedding should take place some time after Easter, and it seemed best not to disturb that arrangement. What he wanted now was some means of checking the mortifying career of Phillida as a faith-doctor.

XXI.

MRS. HILBROUGH'S INFORMATION.

CASTING about in his thoughts for an ally, he hit upon Mrs. Hilbrough. In her he would find an old friend of Phillida's who was pretty sure to be free from brain-fogs. He quickly took a resolution to see her. It was too late in the afternoon to walk uptown. On a fine Sunday like this the street cars would not have strap-room left, and the elevated trains would be in a state of extreme compression long before they reached Fourteenth street. He took the best-looking cab he could find in Union Square as the least of inconveniences; and just as the slant sun, descending upon the Jersey lowlands, had set all the windows on the uptown side of the cross streets in a ruddy glow, he alighted at the Hilbrough door, paid his cabman a full day's wages, after the manner of New York, and sent up his card to Mrs. Hilbrough with a message that he hoped it would not incommode her to see him, since he had some inquiries to make. Mrs. Hilbrough descended promptly, and there took place the usual preliminary parley on the subject of the fine day, a parley carried on by Millard with as little knowledge of what he was saying as an automaton has. Then begging her pardon for disturbing her on Sunday afternoon, he asked her:

"Have you heard anything about Miss Calender's course as a faith-healer?"

Mrs. Hilbrough took a moment to think before replying. Here was a direct, even abrupt, approach to a matter of delicacy. There was a complete lack of the diplomatic obliquity to be expected in such a case. This was not like Millard, and though his exterior was calm and suave enough from mere force of habit, she quickly formed an opinion of his condition of internal ebullition from his precipitancy.

"I did not hear anything about it until Thursday, two weeks ago, and I only learned certainly about it yesterday," she replied, resting as non-committal as possible until the drift of Millard's inquiry should be disclosed.

"May I ask from whom?" He was now sitting bolt upright, and his words were uttered without any of that pleasing deference of manner that usually characterized his speech.

"From Mrs. Maginnis — Mrs. California Maginnis," she added for the sake of explicitness and with an impulse to relax the tension of Millard's mind by playfulness.

"Mrs. Maginnis?" he said with something like a start. "How does Mrs. Maginnis know anything about what takes place in Mackerelville?"

"It was n't the Mackerelville case, but one a good deal nearer home, that she was interested in," said Mrs. Hilbrough. "It's too warm here," she added, seeing him wipe his brow with his handkerchief. She put her hand to the bell, but withdrew it without ringing, and then crossed the room and closed the register.

Millard proceeded in a straightforward, businesslike voice, "Tell me, please, what Mrs. Maginnis had to do with Miss Callender's faith-cures?"

"Her relation to them came about through Mrs. Frankland."

"No doubt," said Millard; "I expected to find her clever hand in it."

The mordant tone in which this was said disconcerted Mrs. Hilbrough. She felt that she was in danger of becoming an accomplice in a lovers' quarrel that might prove disastrous to the pretty romance that had begun in her own house. She paused and said:

"I beg pardon, Mr. Millard, but I ought hardly to discuss this with you, if you make it a matter of feeling between you and Phillida. She is my friend —"

"Mrs. Hilbrough," he interrupted, taking a softer tone than before, and leaning forward and resting his left hand on his knee, and again wiping his forehead with his handkerchief, "my whole destiny is involved in the welfare of Phillida Callender. I have n't quarreled with her, but I would like to show her that this faith-curing is a mistake and likely to make her ridiculous. You said that Mrs. Frankland —"

"Mrs. Frankland," said Mrs. Hilbrough, "through somebody connected with the Mackerelville Mission got hold of the story of the cure of a poor German girl somewhere down about what they call Tompkins Square. Is that the name of a square? Well, on Thursday, two weeks ago, when Phillida was not present, Mrs. Frankland told this story —"

"Trotted it out as a fine illustration of faith," broke in Millard, with something between a smile and a sneer, adding, "with Phillida's name attached."

"No, she did n't give the name; she spoke of her as a noble Christian young woman, the daughter of a devoted missionary to the heathen, which made me suspect Phillida. She also alluded to her as a person accustomed to attend these meetings, and again as 'my very

dear friend,' and 'my beloved young friend.' Mrs. Maginnis listened eagerly, and longed to know who this was, for she had a little girl troubled with Saint Vitus's dance. She had just been to see Dr. Legammon, the specialist."

"Who always begins his treatment by scaring a patient half to death, I believe, especially if he has money," said Millard, who, in his present biting mood, found a grim satisfaction even in snapping at Dr. Legammon's heels.

"He told Mrs. Maginnis that it was an aggravated case of chorea, and that severe treatment would be necessary," continued Mrs. Hilbrough. "There must be eyeglasses, and an operation by an oculist, and perhaps electricity, and it would require nearly a year to cure the child even under Dr. Legammon; and he did n't even give her much assurance that her child would get well at all. He especially excited Mrs. Maginnis's apprehension by saying, 'We must be hopeful, my dear madam.' Mrs. Maginnis, you know, is strung away up above concert-pitch, and this melancholy encouragement threw her into despair, and came near to making her a fit patient to the doctor's specialistic attentions in a private retreat. She could n't bring herself to have the eyes operated on, or even to have electricity applied. It was just after this first visit to the doctor, while Mrs. Maginnis was in despondency and her usual indecision, that she heard Mrs. Frankland's address in which the cure of the poor girl in the tenement-house was told as an illustration of the power of prayer."

"Mrs. Frankland worked up all the details with striking effect, no doubt," said Millard, with an expression of disgust.

"Well, you know Mrs. Frankland can't help being eloquent. Everybody present was deeply affected as she pictured the scene. As soon as the meeting closed, Mrs. Maginnis, all in a sputter of excitement, I fancy, sailed up to Mrs. Frankland, and laid her troubles before her, and wondered if Mrs. Frankland could n't get her young friend to pray for her daughter Hilda. Phillida, by solicitation of Mrs. Frankland, visited the Maginnises every day for a week. They sent their carriage for her every afternoon, I believe. At the end of a week 'the motions disappeared,' as Mrs. Maginnis expressed it."

"I believe it is n't uncommon for children to get well of Saint Vitus's dance," said Millard.

"You could n't make Mrs. Maginnis believe that. She regards it as one of the most remarkable cures of a wholly incurable ailment ever heard of. The day after Phillida's last visit she sent her a check for three hundred dollars for her services."

"Sent her money?" said Millard, reddening.

ing, and contracting his brows. "Did Phillida take it?" This last was spoken in a low-keyed monotone.

"Has n't she told you a word about it?"

"Not a word," said Millard, with eyes cast down.

"She sent back the check by the next postman, saying merely that it was 'respectfully declined.'"

"And Mrs. Maginnis?" asked Millard, his face lighting up.

"Did n't understand," said Mrs. Hilbrough. "These brutally rich people think that cash will pay for everything, you know. Mrs. Maginnis concluded that she had offered too little."

"It was little enough," said Millard, "considering her wealth and the nature of the service she believed to have been rendered to her child."

"She thought so herself, on reflection," said Mrs. Hilbrough. "She also had grace enough to remember that she might have been a little more delicate in her way of tendering the money. She likes to do things royally, so she despatched her footman to Mrs. Callender with a note inclosing a check for a thousand dollars, asking the mother to use it for the benefit of her daughter. Mrs. Callender took the check to Mrs. Gouverneur, and asked her, as having some acquaintance with Mrs. Maginnis, to explain that Phillida could not accept any pay for religious services or neighborly kindness. Mrs. Gouverneur"—here Mrs. Hilbrough smiled—"saw the ghosts of her grandfathers looking on, I suppose. She couched her note to Mrs. Maginnis in rather chilling terms, and Mrs. Maginnis understood at last that she had probably given offense. She went to Mrs. Frankland, who referred her to me, as Phillida's friend, and she called here yesterday in a flutter of hysterical importance to get me to apologize, and to ask me what she *could* do."

Millard was almost amused at this turn in the affair, but his smile had a tang of bitterness.

"She explained that she had not understood that Miss Callender was that kind of person," said Mrs. Hilbrough. "She had always supposed that ministers and missionaries and their families expected presents. When she was a little girl her father used to send a whole hog to each minister in the village every fall when he killed his pigs. But it seemed Miss Callender and her mother held themselves above presents. Were they 'people of wealth'? That is her favorite phrase. I told her that they were one of the best old families in the city, without much property but with a great deal of pride, and that they were very admirable people. 'You know, these very old and famous families hold themselves rather above the rest of us,

no matter how rich we may get to be,' I said, maliciously.

"This seemed almost to subdue her. She said that she supposed people would expect her to do something at such a time. It was always expected that 'people of wealth' should show themselves grateful. What could she do that would not offend such touchy people?"

"I suggested that Hilda should buy some article, not too expensive, for a love token for Miss Callender. 'Treat her as you would if she were Mrs. Van Horne's daughter,' I said, 'and she will be content.' 'I don't want to seem mean,' she replied, 'and I did n't think so pious a girl would carry her head so high. Now, Mrs. Hilbrough, do you think a Christian girl like Miss Callender ought to be so proud?' 'Would you like to take money for a friendly service?' I asked. 'Oh, no! But then I—you see, my circumstances are different; however, I will do just what you say.' I warned her when she left that the present must not be too costly, and that Hilda ought to take it in person. She was still a little puzzled. 'I did n't suppose people in their circumstances would feel that way,' she said in a half-subdued voice, 'but I'll do just as you say, Mrs. Hilbrough.'"

This action of Phillida's was a solace to Millard's pride. But one grain of sugar will not perceptibly sweeten the bitterness of a decoction of gentian, and this overflow into uptown circles of Phillida's reputation as a faith-doctor made the matter extremely humiliating.

When Mrs. Hilbrough had finished her recital Millard sat a minute absorbed in thought. It occurred to him that if he had not spoken so impetuously to Phillida and then left her so abruptly he might have had this story in her own version, and thus have spared himself the imprudence and indecorum of discussing Phillida with Mrs. Hilbrough. But he could not refrain from making the request he had had in mind when he came, and which alone could explain and justify to Mrs. Hilbrough his confidence.

"I came here to-day on an impulse," he said. "Knowing your friendliness for Phillida, and counting on your kindness myself, I thought perhaps you might bring your influence to bear—to—to—what shall I say?—to modify Phillida's zeal and render her a little less sure of her vocation to pursue a course that must make her talked about in a way that is certain to vulgarize her name."

Mrs. Hilbrough shook her head. She was flattered by Millard's confidence, but she saw the difficulty of the task he had set for her.

"Count on me for anything I can do, but that is something that I suppose no one can accomplish. What Phillida thinks right she

will do if she were to be thrown to the wild beasts for it."

"Yes, yes; that is her great superiority," he added, with mingled admiration and despondency.

"You, who have more influence than any one else," said Mrs. Hilbrough, "have talked with her. I suppose her mother has said what could be said, and Agatha must have been a perfect thorn in the flesh to her since the matter became known at home."

"Yes," said Millard, ruefully; "she must have suffered a great deal, poor child!"

"I don't suppose Mrs. Gouverneur let her off cheaply," continued Mrs. Hilbrough. "She must have made Phillida feel that she was overthrowing the statues of her great-grandfathers, and she no doubt urged the unhappiness she would cause you."

Millard saw at this moment the origin of Phillida's sensitiveness in talking with him.

"I don't care for myself, but I wish to heaven that I could shelter her a little from the ridicule she will suffer." He was leaning forward with his hand on his knee and his eyes cast down.

Mrs. Hilbrough felt herself moved at sight of so much feeling in one not wont to show his emotions to others.

"I will see if anything can be done, Mr. Millard; but I am afraid not. I'll ask Phillida here to lunch some day this week."

The winter sunshine had all gone, the lights in the streets were winning on the fast-fading twilight, and Mrs. Hilbrough's reception-room was growing dusk when Millard slowly, as one whose purposes are benumbed, rose to leave. Once in the street, he walked first toward one avenue and then toward the other. He thought to go to his apartment, but he shrank from loneliness; he would go to dinner at a neighboring restaurant; then he turned toward his club; and then he formed the bold resolution to make himself welcome, as he had before, at Mrs. Callender's Sunday-evening tea-table. But reflecting on the unlucky outcome of his interview with Phillida, he gave this up, and after some further irresolution dined at a table by himself in the club. He had small appetite for food, for human fellowship he had none at all, and he soon sought solitude in his apartment.

XXII.

WINTER STRAWBERRIES.

KNOWING that Phillida was a precipice inaccessible on the side of what she esteemed her duty, Mrs. Hilbrough was almost sorry that she had promised to attempt any persuasions. But she despatched a note early Tuesday morning, begging Phillida's company at lunch-

eon, assigning the trivial reason, for want of a better, that she had got some winter-grown strawberries and wished a friend to enjoy them with her. Phillida, fatigued with the heart-breaking struggle between love and duty, and almost ready sometimes to give over and take the easier path, thought to find an hour's intermission from her inward turmoil over Mrs. Hilbrough's hothouse berries. The Hilbrough children were fond of Phillida, and luncheon was a meal at which they made a point of disregarding the bondage of the new family position. They seasoned their meal with the animal spirits of youth, and, despite the fact that the costly winter berries were rather sour, the lunch proved exceedingly agreeable to Phillida. The spontaneous violence which healthy children do to etiquette often proves a relish. But when the Hilbrough children had bolted their strawberries, scraped the last remainder of the sugar and cream from the saucers, and left the table in a hurry, there came an audible pause, and Mrs. Hilbrough approached the subject of Phillida's faith-healing in a characteristically tactful way by giving an account of Mrs. Maginnis's call, and by approving Phillida's determination not to take money. "It was a laudable pride, Mrs. Hilbrough said.

"I cannot call it pride altogether," said Phillida, with the innate veracity of her nature asserting itself in a struggle to be exactly sincere. "If I were to take pay for praying for a person, I'd be no better than Simon, who tried to buy the gift of the Holy Ghost from Saint Paul. I could n't bring myself to take money."

"And if you did, my dear, it would mortify your family, who have a right to be proud, and then there is Mr. Millard, who, I suppose, would feel that it would be a lasting disgrace." These words were spoken in a relaxed and indifferent tone, as though it was an accidental commonplace of the subject that Mrs. Hilbrough was settling.

Phillida said nothing. Here she was face to face with the old agony. If her faith-healing were only a matter of her own suffering she need not hesitate; she would take the cross with all her heart. But Mrs. Hilbrough's words reminded her again that her sense of duty forced her to bind Charley Millard for the torture. A duty so rude to her feelings as the half-publicity of it made faith-healing, ought to be a duty beyond question, but here was the obligation she owed her lover running adverse to her high aspirations. The questions for decision became complex, and she wavered.

"Your first duty is to him, of course," continued Mrs. Hilbrough, as she rose from the table, but still in an indifferent tone, as though

what she said were a principle admitted beforehand. This arrow, she knew, went straight to the weakest point in Phillida's defense. But divining that her words gave pain, she changed the subject, and they talked again of indifferent matters as they passed out of the room together. But when Phillida began her preparations for leaving, Mrs. Hilbrough ventured a practical suggestion.

"I suppose you'll forgive an old friend for advising you, Phillida dear, but you and Mr. Millard ought to get married pretty soon. I don't believe in long courtships. Mr. Millard is an admirable person, and you'll make a noble wife."

"We have long intended to have the wedding next spring. But as to my making a noble wife, I am not sure about that," returned Phillida. "I am engaged with my work, and I shall be more and more talked about in a way that will give Charley a great deal of suffering. It's a pity—"

She was going to say that it was a pity that Charley had not chosen some one who would not be a source of humiliation to him, but she could not complete the sentence. The vision of Millard married to another was too much even for her self-sacrifice. After a moment's pause she reverted to Mrs. Hilbrough's remark, made at the table, which had penetrated to her conscience.

"You said a while ago that my first duty is to Charley. But if I am wrong in trying to heal the sick by the exercise of faith, why have I been given success in some cases? If I refused requests of that kind would I not be like the man who put his hand to the plow and looked back? You don't know how hard it is to decide these things. I do look back, and it almost breaks my heart. Sometimes I say, 'Why can't I be a woman? Why am I not free to enjoy life as other women do? But then the poor and the sick and the wicked, are they to be left without any one to care for them? There are but few that know how to be patient with them and help them by close sympathy and forbearance. How can I give up my poor?'"

Her face was flushed, and she was in a tremor when she ceased speaking. Her old friend saw that Phillida had laid bare her whole heart. Mrs. Hilbrough was deeply touched at this exhibition of courage and at Phillida's evident suffering, and, besides, she knew that it was not best to debate where she wished to influence. She only said:

"It will grow clearer to you, dear, as time goes on. Mr. Millard would suffer anything—I believe he would die for you."

Phillida was a little startled at this assumption of Mrs. Hilbrough's that she knew the

exact state of Millard's feelings regarding herself.

"Have you seen him lately?" she asked.

"Yes; he called here after four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, and he spoke most affectionately of you. I'm sorry you must go so soon. Come and spend a day with me some time, and I'll have Mr. Millard take dinner with us."

As Phillida rode downtown in the street car she reasoned that Charley must have gone straight to Mrs. Hilbrough's after his conversation with her. When she remembered the agitation in which he had left her, she could not doubt that he went uptown on purpose to speak with Mrs. Hilbrough of his relations with herself, and she felt a resentment that Millard should discuss the matter with a third person. He had no doubt got Mrs. Maginnis's story from Mrs. Hilbrough, and for this she partly reproached her own lack of frankness. She presently asked herself what Charley's call on Mrs. Hilbrough had to do with the luncheon to which she had just been invited? The more she thought of it, the more she felt that there had been a plan to influence her. She did not like to be the subject of one of Mrs. Hilbrough's clever maneuvers at the suggestion of her lover. The old question rose again whether she and Charley could go on in this way; whether it might not be her duty to release him from an engagement that could only make him miserable.

He called that evening while the Callenders were at six o'clock dinner. He was in evening dress, on the way to dine at the house of a friend, and he went straight to the Callender basement dining-room, where he chatted as much with Mrs. Callender and Agatha as with Phillida, who on her part could not show her displeasure before the others, for lovers' quarrels are too precious to be shared with the nearest friend. He left before the dinner was over, so that Phillida did not have a moment alone with him. The next evening she expected him to call, but he only sent her a bunch of callas.

That night Phillida sat by the fire sewing after her mother and Agatha were asleep. During the past two days she had wrought herself up to a considerable pitch of indignation against Millard for trying to influence her through Mrs. Hilbrough, but resentment was not congenial to her. Millard's effort to change her purposes at least indicated an undiminished affection. The bunch of flowers on the table was a silent pleader. If he did wrong in going to Mrs. Hilbrough for advice, might it not be her own fault? Why had she not been more patient with him on Sunday afternoon? The callas were so white, they reminded her of

Charley, she thought, for they were clean, innocent, and of graceful mien. After all, here was one vastly dearer to her than those for whom she labored and prayed—one whose heart and happiness lay in her very palm. Might she not soften her line of action somewhat for his sake?

But conscience turned the glass, and she remembered Wilhelmina, and thought of the happiness of little Hilda Maginnis and her mother. Was it nothing that God had endowed her with this beneficent power? How could she shrink from the blessedness of dispensing the divine mercy? Her imagination took flame at the vision of a life of usefulness and devotion to those who were suffering.

Then she raised her head and there were the white flowers. She felt an impulse to kiss her hand in good night to them as she rose from

her chair, but such an act would have seemed foolish to one of her temperament.

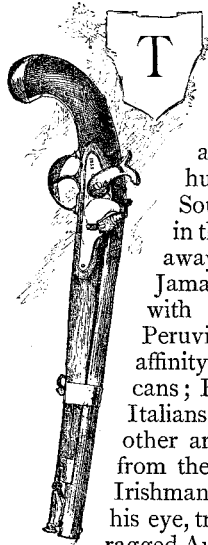
She went to bed in doubt and got up in perplexity. She could not help looking forward to Mrs. Frankland's Bible-reading that afternoon with expectation that some message would be providentially sent for her guidance. The spirit perplexed is ever superstitious. Since so many important decisions in life must be made blindly, one does not wonder that primitive men settled dark questions by studying the stars, by interpreting the flight of birds, the whimsical zigzags of the lightning bolt, or the turning of the beak of a fowl this way or that in picking corn. The human mind bewildered is ever looking for crevices in the great mystery that inwraps the visible universe, and ever hoping that some struggling beam from beyond may point to the best path.

Edward Eggleston.

(To be continued.)

A MINER'S SUNDAY IN COLOMA.

(FROM THE WRITER'S CALIFORNIA JOURNAL, 1849-50.)



THE principal street of Coloma was alive with crowds of moving men, passing and repassing, laughing, talking, and all appearing in the best of humor: Negroes from the Southern States swaggering in the expansive feeling of run-away freedom; mulattoes from Jamaica trudging arm-in-arm with Kanakas from Hawaii; Peruvians and Chilians claiming affinity with the swarthier Mexicans; Frenchmen, Germans, and Italians fraternizing with one another and with the cockney fresh from the purlieu of St. Giles; an Irishman, with the dewdrop still in his eye, tracing relationship with the ragged Australian; Yankees from the Penobscot chatting and bargaining with the genial Oregonians; a few Celestials scattered here and there, their pigtailed and conical hats recalling the strange pictures that took my boyish fancy while studying the geography of the East; last of all, a few Indians, the only indigenous creatures among all these exotics, lost, swallowed up—out of place like

“rari nantes in gurgite vasto.”

It was a scene that no other country could ever imitate. Antipodes of color, race, religion,

language, government, condition, size, capability, strength and morals were there, within that small village in the mountains of California, all impressed with but one purpose,—impelled with but one desire.

A group of half a dozen Indians especially attracted my attention. They were strutting about in all the glory of newly acquired habiliments; but with this distinction—that one suit of clothes was sufficient to dress the whole crowd. The largest and best-looking Indian had appropriated the hat and boots, and without other apparel walked about as proudly as any city clerk. Another was lost in an immense pair of pantaloons. A third sported nothing but a white shirt with ruffled bosom. A fourth flaunted a blue swallow-tailed coat, bespangled with immense brass buttons. A fifth was decked with a flashy vest; while the sixth had nothing but a red bandana, which was carefully wrapped around his neck. Thus what would scarcely serve one white man just as effectually accommodated six Indians.

The street was one continuous din. Thimble-riggers, French monte dealers, or string-game tricksters were shouting aloud at every corner: “Six ounces, gentlemen, no one can tell where the little joker is!” or “Bet on the jack, the jack’s the winning card! Three ounces no man can turn up the jack!” or “Here’s the place to git your money back! The veritable string game! Here it goes! Three, six, twelve ounces no one can put his finger in the loop!” But