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TOWANDA:

Saturday Morning, July 31, 1852.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

On the second of April, 1828, about 11 o'clock at night, I was comfortably seated in my favorite arm-chair, reposing my thoughts, which had been painfully exerted during a hard day's labor in the arduous duties of my profession, by retracing many of the scenes in which the last twenty-five years of my life had been passed.

The weather was cold for the season; a quantity of dingy London snow lay half melted on the ground, and a heavy sleet was falling fast—just the kind of a night to make one appreciate fire side comforts, and I was congratulating myself on the prospect of spending the night at home, not thinking, like any of my patients would summon me, when an impatient double knock at the street door put all my cozy anticipations to flight. My good-humor was, however, speedily restored by seeing my friend Col Delaware, enter my library. He was an especial favorite of mine, and deserved in general, and most deservedly; a brave and able officer often desperately wounded, he unites a feeling and simple heart, a strong, clear understanding, a handsome person, and a manly quiet manner, and, paramount above all those sterling traits of integrity and honor, which add the brightest jewel even to a diadem, and can make the lowest a gentleman of Nature's own creating. He was a man of few words, and generally undemonstrative, but having known him intimately for many years, I instantly saw that a heavy cloud hung over him, and as I invited him to take an arm-chair opposite to my own, I rather anxiously inquired after my godmother's little Cecil, alluding to his only child, a lovely boy of two years old.

"All is well; it is of his mother I am come to speak."

"Mrs Delaware!" I exclaimed "Thank God, surely I need not be grave enough to warrant the presumptuous dread in your countenance, for I saw her in carriage but two days since; I was not near enough to her certainly, but near enough to see she looked as lovely as ever."

"Nevertheless, my friend, she is dying," rejoined Col Delaware.

"Dying!—Good God! and we sit talking here: possession to her immediately, and you can explain the circumstances while we are on the road," I hurriedly ordered, while preparing to invest myself in my overcoat that is ever the companion of my rambles.

To my surprise, my visitor stirred not, but mournfully shaking his head, said, "Not so, my dear doctor, I cannot see her to night; whether we can engage for you ever to do so, I know not; for now she positively refuses to have any advice, asserting that her malady is beyond the reach of human art."

"Pish, nonsense! and you suffer her to injure herself physically and morally, by giving way to such fancies" said I, very crossly, throwing down my coat and plumping myself in my own chair—for I do so very seldom when those in whom I am interested do not do as I think they ought. Softening however as I looked more closely into my friend's face, I added, "At least, tell me all you know. Where is the seat of her complaint? how long has it been apparent? and what are its symptoms?"

"I can tell you," he replied, "that about a month since she began to waste away, losing both appetite and sleep, and also to a great degree the power of sleeping; she turns with disgust from all nourishment, and it is with the greatest difficulty she can be persuaded to swallow a few spoonfuls of any thing in the course of the day. That pure color you admired so much, now only appears in sudden flushes, and although I am aware that she is ill, yet she has been so reserved as to shed tears over her boy, and wrung my inner heart with almost convulsive agony. Since I was elected member of the House of Commons I have had a separate sleeping apartment, and as the late hours I am obliged to keep would disturb Clara, whose constitution, you know, like my own, though not sickly, is very delicate, for a long time she will scarcely suffer me to remain five minutes away from her; so that I could not have come to you at any other time but when she believes me engaged at the House. Above all things, she implores me not to acquaint you with her state."

"She is afraid I shall cure her, I suppose," I muttered to myself, feeling a little nettled at the want of confidence towards an old friend of her family who had known her from her birth. "All this seems very unsatisfactory, and I can come to no conclusion from it," I observed, after a minute's reflection. "The fact is, I must see her myself. I will be at your house to morrow about noon, I think. Don't be alarmed," I continued, perceiving by the words he was about to utter, "I will have my visit appear a purely accidental one."

He then rose to depart, and as I conducted him to the door I endeavored to cheer him by expressing the conviction I really felt, that he had, through the somewhat magnified evil; I then returned to my arm-chair to meditate on what had passed.

As I write this principally for the guidance of my young successors in the healing art, should they ever encounter a similar case, I must describe Clara Delaware. She was the only child of a young Spanish lady of high rank, who was found near the field of Albuhera by Colonel, then Captain Mortimer, entirely unprotected, having lost her father and two brothers in the engagement; she was only ten years of age, and her preserver sent her over to England, where she remained six years, under the care of his aunt. At the expiration of that time, Mortimer married her. After they had been united about a year, she died in giving birth to Clara. For eighteen years the sorrowing husband devoted himself to the care of the legacy his wife had left him; he then esteemed himself fortunate in being able to bestow her then on Colonel Delaware, to whom her heart was already given. His task being thus accomplished, two months after his daughter's marriage, his spirit fled to rejoin her whom he had loved so well. This was the first sorrow Clara had ever known, and so deeply did it affect her, that for months I despaired of saving her, and only the joy of becoming a parent herself effectually aroused her from the deep dejection her father's loss had plunged her into. She inherited her mother's almost Eastern style of beauty and acutely nervous temperament, her grace and softness, combined with a share of her father's English principles, and strong, faithful heart. Altogether, however, she was more like a daughter of the South than a native born Englishwoman. I am one of those who believe that a proportion of the maladies that effect humanity may be traced to mental causes; and to watch for the signs of these, and remove them if possible is a part of my system; and I have been rather more than usually fortunate, I still think my views are correct. In this case, I could not divest myself of the impression that the fair lady's disease owed a little to fancy: and, promising myself to investigate it very carefully on the morrow, I retired to rest.

Eleven o'clock on the following day found me at Colonel Delaware's door; and, taking the privilege of an old friend and doctor, I proceeded unannounced to her boudoir. The first glance showed me that there was real cause for anxiety; indeed, I could scarcely believe the attenuated form before me was that of one who, but a few short weeks before, had been so blooming a young woman. She was lying on a sofa; her magnificent Spanish eyes were slightly sunken, and surrounded by a dark circle, sure indication of extreme langüor; she had lost that rich, deep color, so beautiful when it mantles on the cheek of a dark eyed beauty; her cheek was now perfectly pale, of a wan ivory paleness; her hands, through the fine skin of which the blue veins were fearfully apparent hung listlessly, and seemed almost transparent; the roundness and *embonpoint* that had made her figure one of the most perfect that can be imagined, had quite disappeared yet she was, as usual, elegantly, almost artistically dressed, and every possible effort had been made to conceal the ravages illness had made upon her beauty. Even her beautiful long curls had been arranged so as to hide as much as possible the extreme emaciation of her throat and neck. I recognized in all this a moral determination to resist increasing illness, which I had often found to be a bad sign; altogether I was painfully surprised at her appearance.

As I am now arrived at that age which (too matter-of-fact to appreciate a graceful and flowery style) thinks the easiest and simplest manner the best, I will relate our conversation as they do the dialogues in children's school books, thereby avoiding the insufferable monotomy of "I observed," "she replied," "I rejoined," etc., etc. Assuming a cheerfulness I was far from feeling, I seated myself in a chair by her sofa, and silently taking possession of her wrist, appeared to consult the beatings of her pulse. Raising her eyelids, the lashes of which were so long and silky they were a marvel, in a composed voice she deliberately broke the silence that had reigned until then.

Mrs. Delaware—"Why, what brings you here, Doctor? Have you come at my husband's request?"

Doctor—"That is a very unkind question. I have not seen you for two months. I do not think that I have been so long without seeing you since you came into this world; now you ask me to score this visit against you, tho' I really think you greatly need my care."

Mrs. Delaware—"Why so? you see I am quite well."

Doctor—"Yes, I see that you have got a very beautiful dress. Nothing can be more coquettish than that little Frenchified cap. All that is very false, and you are very false, too, and are trying now to deceive me."

Mrs Delaware—"Indeed, I am suffering no pain anywhere"

Doctor—"Would you really wish to persuade me that you are in good health? Why, if I could be mistaken in the expression of your countenance, the sound of your voice, your painful respiration, uneven pulse, the pallor of your face, and your emaciation, speak to me in language not to be refuted. Now, I will venture to assert that for a month you have scarcely ate or slept"

Mrs. Delaware—"Oh, no, doctor, three weeks at the outside."

Doctor—"There, now, you have fairly avowed and confessed yourself to be ill."

Mrs. Delaware—"But is it not possible to lose both sleep and appetite without being ill? one can suffer, too, generally, without having any decided complaint."

Doctor—"Do you know that you distress me extremely! but, thank God, I still feel confident that I shall be able to restore you to health and happiness. I have not so blind a confidence in the drugs and remedies of my profession, but that I am truly rejoiced to perceive I shall have to treat you rather for a mental care than for corporeal indisposition—Forget that I am a doctor; look upon me as your old friend, your father's old friend, and tell me what is weighing so heavily on your mind! Perhaps I may be able to lighten the burthen for you."

Mrs. Delaware—"You are a kind friend, but you cannot restore me to sleep or appetite; I must bear my fate."

Doctor—"Your fate, madam! (nothing puts me out like a *soupcon* of romance:) you ought to be continually grateful for so happy a fate. The adored wife of one of the most distinguished, handsomest, and best men of the day, possessing a large fortune, mother of the most promising boy in these kingdoms."

Mrs. Delaware (interrupting me)—"And is it not a hard fate to break that noble husband's heart, to abandon my darling Cecil on the threshold of life? O, merciful God, it is indeed too cruel!"

At these words I began to fear my fair patient had listened too long to the honied words of some deceiver, who was striving to induce her to abandon her happy home, and all its virtuous joys, to embrace a life of misery and shame, but there was so much real anguish in her looks and voice at the idea of separation, that though most sincerely grieved, I was not much alarmed.

Doctor (gravely but kindly)—"God will exact no such sacrifice from you. He demands no severing of such sacred ties; in the twenty-five years during which I have been engaged in soothing and healing my fellow creatures, I have gained very much experience, and with it some power to advise; nor have I been so unobservant of the ways of the fashionable world as not to have marked the perils to which youth and beauty are exposed, even when guarded by a husband's watchful care; but believe me, Mrs.——

Mrs. Delaware (eagerly interrupting me)—"Stop, doctor; I blush for the mistake I have thoughtlessly led you into. To clear myself from the suspicion I have given rise to, I see I must confide to you the cause of my illness and depression; but before I do so, I must receive your solemn promise not to communicate what I may tell you to Colonel Delaware until after my death."

I readily gave the required promise, which indeed, cost me nothing, for I have invariably found, in all anxious and trying cases, husbands and mothers prove very troublesome confidants. Mrs. Delaware then related the following circumstances:

A month previously, she awoke rather earlier than usual; and not wishing to rise immediately, passed an hour in reading Letters on Animal Magnetism. She then laid the book aside and fell asleep; she was roused from her slumbers by her bed-room door opening, the clock on the mantle-piece striking ten at the same momen', and two men in black entering. Astonishment kept her silent as they advanced to the table in the center o the room. One, an old man, kept his hat on, and leaning one hand, (in which he held a rule and pencil) on the table, turned round to address his companion, who, hat in hand, appeared to be deferentially awaiting his orders, which consisted in minute directions respecting the making of a coffin—the length, breadth, thickness, lining, etc, being all accurately described. When he ceased speaking his subordinate asked what the inscription was to be The old man replied, speaking slowly and impressively—

"Clara Delaware, aged 21, deceased at mid night on the 10th of April, 1838."

At these words both, for the first time, looked earnestly at Clara, and slowly left the room. Shaking off in some degree the spell that had hitherto bound her, she rang her bell, and her maid immediately answered her summons, she found, to add to her consternation, that this maid had been sitting for the last three hours in the room through which these men must have passed. Finding, on further investigation, that no one in the house had seen her lugubrious visitors, she gave herself up to super natural terror; and conceiving that she had received a warning that she was to die at midnight on the 10th of April, 1838, she had lost her appetite and sleep and was, in fact, fast sinking under the impression that the hour indicated was fated to be her last.

At first I was quite rejoiced to find it was not worse; and rubbing my hands with even more apparent glee than I really felt, I asked her how she could possibly have allowed an uneasy dream, engendered, no doubt, by the mystic nature of the book she had been reading, to disturb her so much, adding a few jesting observations; but the mournful expression of her countenance checked me, and at last, taking it up seriously, I endeavored, by every argument that suggested itself to me, calling in the aid of religion, philosophy and common sense, to demolish the monster her imagination had raised In vain, I could not flatter myself that even for a moment her belief wavered.

When I arose to depart; whice I did promising myself to return again and again, when I had considered the case a little, she gave me a letter sealed with black, to deliver to her husband after death. Reflection aided considerably to the uneasiness I already felt. I saw in her altered form what dire havoc imagination had already made; and when the extreme nervous system was considered, there was but too much reason to apprehend the very worst might happen, unless her mind could be relieved from the present state of painful tension by some most satisfactory and conclusive means. Telling her husband his wife required amusement and change, and requesting him to procure her daily some friendly society, so that she could be as little alone as possible, I paid her myself long and frequent visits. All my spare time I employed in in searching books for anecdotes and arguments which I trusted might prove more convincing than my own.

Often in the night I congratulated myself on having found some new light wherein to place it, that would at once satisfy her. Still in vain; all my efforts failed in changing into hesitation the firm, fixed belief, so clearly to be read in her calm, mournful eyes. My prescriptions failed equally in improving her bodily health. I saw her waste almost as I watched her; I felt her pulse grow slower and weaker under my fingers, and the fatal night was fearfully near at hand. My anxiety rose almost to agony—indeed, I am persuaded that a fortnight of such suffering would have finished the doctor as well as the patient. All imaginary expedients I thought of and rejected—among others that of bribing two men to come forward and confess they had entered her apartment and acted the warning scene for lark or wager; but as she told me that their features were indelibly impressed upon her mind, I abandoned that.

The scheme on which I paused the longest, was that of giving her on the fatal night, a dose of laudanum, so that she should sleep over the dreaded hour; but her rapidly increasing weakness obliged me to relinquish that as too dangerous: and the nearer the day approached the more obvious it became that her constitution would not stand opium sleep and appetite without being ill? one can suffer, too, generally, without having any decided complaint."

Doctor—"Do you know that you distress me extremely! but, thank God, I still feel confident that I shall be able to restore you to health and happiness. I have not so blind a confidence in the drugs and remedies of my profession, but that I am truly rejoiced to perceive I shall have to treat you rather for a mental care than for corporeal indisposition—Forget that I am a doctor; look upon me as your old friend, your father's old friend, and tell me what is weighing so heavily on your mind! Perhaps I may be able to lighten the burthen for you."

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I asked the opinion of several of the most eminent men of the day; but (as I could not introduce any of them to her without at once proving to her how ill I thought of her, and which would have the most disastrous effect,) without seeing her and understanding her temperament, they could not conceive her danger, and thought she would get over it with a fright. Thrown thus upon my resources, with the life of this young creature, a wife and mother, depending on the wisdom of my treatment, I neglected most of my patients to devote myself to her, and spent all my evenings with her and her husband. Her manners were always most winning, but became daily more so: she spoke to us all with such an affectionate expression, it appeared almost as though she thought to secure our love for her memory, when she herself should be summoned away.

On the evening of the 9th of April, the evening but one before the dreadful night, she was suddenly seized with a violent fit of hysterics, succeeded by fainting fits. Col. Delaware, who for some time past had, with the usual blindness of affection, imagined that his wife was recovering, now, for the first time, as he knelt by the side of the bed to which he had carried her, perceived partly the imminence of her danger. I cheered him, poor fellow, as much as possible, and on seeing Mrs Delaware comparatively restored, I returned home; and after a night of most anxious consideration as to the means of getting my patient over the dreaded midnight hour, the remembrance of a play I had seen when a boy, flashed upon my mind, and I instantly determined to adopt the old stage trick of changing the clocks. My plan, though it presented some difficulties, was soon arranged in my mind, and I began for the first time for several days to entertain hope.

The next evening I confided to the Col. that his wife had a fixed idea that on the following night she would have an attack, similar to the one she had just recovered from, which would be the crisis of her malady, that I myself thought it not improbable the excited state of her nerves might actually produce what she dreaded, and I therefore wished to save her constitution that shock, by putting all the clocks and watches one hour behind the real time, on the following day.

He pledged himself to follow my directions most faithfully, and promised the most inviolable secrecy. The servants were made acquainted with just sufficient to ensure their co operation; and as they were sincerely attached to their young mistress, full reliance could be placed on their faithful execution of the orders entrusted to them.

The morning of the eventful 10th was, fortunately, as brilliant a day as can be well conceived; even smoky London became almost bright, and all things seemed to exult in the coming spring. I visited my patient in the morning, and found her as I expected, weaker and lower than the preceding evening. I promptly ordered carriage exercise; and as she always yielded to my suggestions it was settled that at three o'clock her husband should accompany her in a short country drive to get pure air.

While she was attiring for this purpose, her maid was awkward enough to break the chain to which her mistress' watch was attached, (being provided by me the means to do it,) and the watch was obliged to be left at home. During her absence the clock and watch was put back one hour; and I succeeded in getting the church clock in their immediate vicinity retarded that time. I will not recount the difficulties I met in accomplishing that part of my plan, nor the pompous refusals with which my earnest entreaties were first met—how the dignity of the parochial powers gradually softened into humanity when told that a Member of Parliament would not only feel deeply indebted to them, but make a liberal donation to their parochial funds—On re-entering her apartment, poor Clara eagerly resumed her watch, the damage having been repaired during her absence, and anxiously compared it with the clock on the chimney-piece—the hour both indicated was five. She also found on her table two notes from her two most intimate friends, inviting themselves to dine with her that day at six *alias* seven—in consequence of my having paid them a visit that morning, when confiding the consequences to them, I taught them all their own parts.

One was a Mrs. Wakefield, who had been the instructress of Mrs. Delaware's youth, and was still regarded by her with sincere affection; she was a calm self-possesed person of encouraging and maternal manners.

The other was an old maid, a Miss Holman, the most agreeable plain woman I ever knew, full of drollery and anecdote, but hiding a strong mind and excellent heart, light, careless, gay address.—She also had known our invalid from her birth, and a strong friendship existed between them. I had of course, invited myself to this momentous dinner of my own arrangement; moreover, had requested Colonel Delaware to bring home, to dinner, apparently by accident, the Rev. Wilfred Alderson, an old friend of the family, and a bright example of all a Christian pastor ought to be. There was an expression in his benign and reverend countinance of such complete internal conviction of the nature of his profession, and the truths he was called upon to inculcate, that inspired at once confidence and affection; and yet the unbeliever and the scoffer invariably shrunk from his calm, clear gaze. I had not forgotten to pay him a visit in my morning rounds; and I could not but hope the presence of such a man, the type of that is most cheering and consoling in our holy religion, would not be without its effect upon our poor sinking hostess.

When we descended to the dining room, which Mrs. Delaware reached with less difficulty than I apprehended—when I saw her in the full blaze of light all my terrors, in some degree smothered by the active exertions I had been making all day, returned full upon me. It was not only that she was wasted and pale, but her eyes drew back into her head, had a most painful expression; her lips were of a purple tinge, and nervous twitches passed frequently over her face. I glanced around to see if her friends were all conducting themselves according to orders, and observing a slight contraction in the features of the old maid, I frowned at her; and she, immediately taking the hint, with great self command, rattled off story after story, and *bon mot* until even a sort of half smile stole over poor Clara's face. A most painful smile it was, and nearly unmanned her husband, ignorant as he was of the worst; a severe look brought him into obedience again.

I shall never forget that dinner! All ate and drank but the hostess; but I truly believe not one of the party knew what they ate, and but little of what they said. We all felt it was a thing to be got over, and many were the anxious glances turned towards the object of our solicitude, who, unconscious that so many loving eyes were fearfully though covertly watching, kept continually glancing at the clock, and often compared it with her watch. I noticed that each time the clock struck her agitation increased, and this became worse as the evening advanced. A fine self playing organ in the room, which every body requested to hear again, aided my efforts to protract the dinner as long as possible; so that when we rose, it was half past eight—really half-past nine.

Mr. Alderson had requested that we might accompany the ladies after dinner, and not remain at the table after their departure: Miss Holman playfully entreated that instead of repairing to that, permitted, as a great indulgence, to spend the evening in Mrs. Delaware's pretty boudoir;—and as we all joined in the request, it was agreed to, and we accordingly repaired there I had been anxious to compass this little arrangement, because should it be needful to convey my patient to bed as her boudoir opened out of her bed room, it would be more convenient.

Scarcely were we established, however, when a little circumstance occurred, which I felt most indignant with myself for not having foreseen, though I scarcely know how I could have prevented it Little Cecil was brought in to receive his parents' last kiss for the day Those who can form any conception what a mother's feelings would be on beholding for the last time an only and idolized child, will easily fancy with what convulsive despair poor Clara strained her boy to her heart; and those who cannot, will not be rendered more feeling by any description I could give. I may say that we all endured martyrdom while this lasted; no one could speak, and all bowed their heads to conceal the emotion their utmost efforts could not entirely repress. At last I motioned to the maid to take the child away: and making a diversion by calling on Col. Delaware to help me bring forward the sofa, I insisted on my patient placing herself thereon, and I seated myself beside her; and, consulting her pulse from time to time, tried to draw her into conversation.

Half-past nine, and actually half-past ten, was now reached; another deadful hour to drag over; tea was brought, and the conversation became a little more easy; but my anxiety was becoming almost intolerable. Clara was fast becoming worse—every stroke of the clock seemed to bear off some of her remaining vitality: her hand, sometimes burning, had become cold as death.

Ten, half past ten, passed over, and now the dreadful moment for us—not her—was approached. Clenching my hand so that the nails entered the flesh, and biting my lips till the blood ran down, I awaited the first stroke of the real midnight hour. It passed: how great was the relief. He who read the hearts of those present alone can tell. Every countenance began to brighten, every voice began to lose its constrained tone, as the passing minutes made assurance doubly sure. Still I trembled for Clara.

I had intended to wait the half hour before I announced to her that her supposed prophecy was false; but when it reached a quarter past, she became so much worse—short, sharp spasms contracted her features, and her whole face assuming a violet hue—that, apprehending she would fall into convulsions, I dared no longer delay the announcement: so raising from my place, advanced to the table, and striking it loud enough to attract the attention of Clara, I exclaimed—

"Colonel, go and embrace your wife—she is saved. With one word I can effect an instant cure."

All rose at my words, and Clara fixed upon me a gaze of wonder and incredulity.

"Yes," I continued, "I hereby proclaim the vision which announced to Mrs. Delaware that she was to die this night at twelve o'clock, to be a false lying one; because at this moment she is living before us, and it is twenty minutes past twelve o'clock.

"You mistake, doctor; it is only eleven, not twelve," said she, as despair seemed again settling on her countenance.

"It is past twelve, I assure you. Pardon us, my dear Mrs. Delaware; but finding all reason powerless, your friends and I have put back one hour every watch and clock on which your eyes have rested."

I could now perceive a faint gleam of hope in her eyes as she breathlessly said, "but the church clock—I counted eleven myself not more than half an hour since."

"Ah," I replied, "that will be a bad business for the Colonel; not less than a hundred pounds presented to the parish will be deemed sufficient recompense by the high and mighty dignitaries of the parish. In half an hour we shall have the pleasure of hearing it chime one: Poor midnight has been much tatooed from this very quarter to-night."

I then produced a second watch, with which I had provided myself, indicating the true time, and also a note from one of the church wardens to the Colonel, expressing the satisfaction felt by himself and colleagues at being able to serve so distinguished a parishoner. Her friends and husband crowded round her, each multiplying proofs of the real truth.

Hiding her face in her hands, she instily rose and left the apartment. We all felt that she had gone to her child; and, at my request, no one followed her. She returned in a minute, with a face radient with smiles and tears, from which all sad faces were rapidly disappearing; and affectionately addressing us individually, in a few sweet low words, expressed her gratitude; and, I am proud to say, she had the most and sweetest words for her old friend, the doctor. Her husband, almost paralyzed by the sudden knowledge he had obtained of the imagined risk, seemed, soldier as he was, quite overcome; and it was well for us all when the venerable pastor, calling us all round, addressed a short prayer to Him whose merciful aid had been so frequently, though silently implored during the last few hours.

I then resumed my medical capacity; and as we had all so indifferently dined, I prescribed a supper, which immediately assented to; but Mrs. Delaware feared we might not fare as well as she could wish, the servants not having been warned: Begging her to be perfectly easy on that head, as I had taken the liberty to order the supper two days previously, the bell was rung for it; and a more joyous party never, I am sure sit down to enjoy themselves—Clara ate the wing of a chicken, and her bloom seemed rapidly returning. We kept it up right merrily until past three; and, remaining behind the last I stopped the thanks she longed to give me by pointing out the sin of indulging the imagination too much, showing her she had allowed a foolish dream to bring her within an inch of the grave—and, bidding her good night, I too, joyfully departed.

In a few days she was perfectly well, and has never had a similar attack. I have related this short incident to show my young successors that complaints arising from mental causes are the best combatted by the mind itself—a powerful organ of cure, too little thought of in these days of whimsical remedies and wonderful discoveries.

VALUE OF WIVES IN CHINA.—Not long since a young English merchant took his youthful wife with him to Hon-Kong, China, where the couple were visited by a wealthy Mandarin. The latter regarded the lady very attentively, and seemed to dwell with delight upon her movements. When she had at length left the apartment, he said to the husband, in broken English, (worse than broken China:)

"What give you for that wifey-wife yours?"

"Oh," replied the husband, laughing at the singular error of his visitor, "two thousand dollars"—This the merchant thought would appear to the Chinese rather a high figure; but he was mistaken.

"Well" said the Mandarin, taking out a book with an air of business, "s'pose you give her to me, I give you *five* thousand"

It is difficult to say whether the young merchant was more amazed than amused; but the grave and solemn air of the Chinaman convinced him that he was in sober earnest; and he was compelled, therefore, to refuse the offer with much placidity as he could assume. The Mandarin, however, continued to press his bargain:

"I give you *seven* thousand dollar" said he. "You *take* 'em?"

The merchant, who had no previous notion of the value of the commodity which he had taken out with him, was compelled at length, to inform his visitor that Englishmen were not in the habit of selling their wives after they were once in their possession—an assertion which the Chinaman was very slow to believe.

The merchant afterwards had a hearty laugh with his young and pretty wife, and told her that he had just discovered her full value, as he had that moment been offered $7000 for her: a very high figure 'as wives were going' in China at that time!

A GOOD SENTIMENT.—At the celebration in Winchester, Mass., on Monday the 5th inst., the following good sentiment was received with peals of laughter and applause;

Old bachelors—Unproductive consumers; scissors with but one blade; odd gloves; fractional quantities that are never found in the multiplication table: beaux without fiddles; single loves always in the singular number and objective case; unruly scholars who when orderdered to conjugate always decline; their only recommendation is that like the shakers, they take no pains, perpetuate to their own dismal fraternity; if there be any such in Winchester, may they speedily fall victims to a matrimonial epidemic, and thus became integral parts, whole numbers in our flourishing town.

As a striking comment upon the above, and as an encouragement to old bachelors, a lady was present bearing in her arms three promising infants born at one birth.

The young man who once saw the day when he wouldent associate with mechanics is now acting as book keeper to a manure wagon. Queer reverse of fortune that.

THE Rochester American perpetrates the following *pungent* allusion to the weather:

"Yesterday the mercury and sherry cobblers parted company and went in opposite directions, the former *up*—and the latter *down*. It was hot, some, if not summer."

Can it be possible that "a single *swallow*" made that summer.

A PRETTY IDEA.—We find the following gem in in a New York paper:

LOST.—Yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever.

[illegible] —three years [illegible] three years in the Penitentiary.