

## The Doctor's Secret: OR THE TWO APOTHECARIES.

SOME years ago there lived in a country town near Canterbury, a private gentleman named Turner. He had an only son, who, having attained the age of fifteen, was very desirous of qualifying himself to follow the profession of an apothecary and surgeon. Accordingly his father had him bound to an eminent surgeon of the same place, whose name was Stevens. The young man was so attentive to his business, that, before he was out of his time, he was universally allowed to be as great a proficient in medicine as his master.

His apprenticeship being concluded, the friends and acquaintances of young Mr. Turner came to make merry and spend the evening with him, as was at that time customary; and among the rest, his father, who, entering into conversation with Mr. Stevens, relative to his son's capacity and inclinations for his profession, at last thus addressed him:

"Sir, I should grieve to find anything left undone that might prevent or lessen his qualification to his art."

The apothecary said:  
"Sir, I believe him to be as capable in it as myself, barring that he cannot have had so much experience, I have neglected no part of his instruction, and have communicated all I know except a single point which is a secret I discovered myself, and having experienced its truth and value, I am not willing to impart it to any one, without an adequate compensation."

Mr. Turner was unwilling that his son should be deficient in any point which might be wanting to complete him for the profession, and therefore demanded the price of his secret.

"Sir," answered Mr. Stevens, "if your son makes a proper use of it, it may bring in thousands. I look upon it as infallible, and to a man of prudence, and in great practice, it may be invaluable; but as your son has served his time with me, and has behaved well, and attended diligently to his business, I will make him master of this useful and excellent nostrum for thirty guineas."

After a little consideration, and debating matters with his son, Mr. Stevens agreed to make it twenty guineas, which were paid immediately, and he gave in return a slip of paper, on which seven words were written, being the recipe of his great and precious nostrum.

The old gentleman after reading the recipe, burst into a violent passion, saying he had been defrauded, and had parted with his money without an equivalent, and that he would appeal to the laws for redress. The surgeon, being in possession of the money, remained quiet, and permitted him to vent his rage at leisure; when this had somewhat subsided, he said calmly, to Mr. Turner:

"Why, sir, although you now make so slight of this secret, because you know it, yet, insignificant as it may appear to you, it has put many hundred pounds into my pocket, and if your son will always bear it in mind, and make proper use of it, he may turn it to as good an account as I have done."

Still this did not satisfy Mr. Turner. At length, his son interposed, and said to his father:

"Do not, sir, make yourself uneasy about the purchase of this seeming trifle; my master has treated me honorably and kindly during the whole of my apprenticeship, and I have no reason to suppose he wishes to impose on either of us.—You do not understand our business; there are secrets in all trades; and I have no doubt but I shall, as Mr. Stevens says, profit greatly by this valuable arcanum, so that I beg you will be contented, and leave the rest to me. I shall take care that the money shall not be thrown away."

By this interposition of the son, his father became at last easy, and when the company broke up took him home.

A few days after, he wanted his son to set up business for himself immediately, in opposition to his old master, whom he still considered as having cheated him.—The young gentleman, however, had a mind to travel, and endeavored to convince his father how necessary it was to go to Paris for further experience in the practice of surgery, and that, in that city, surgeons had the opportunities of perfecting themselves in their profession. At length the old gentleman, however, reluctantly gave his consent, and his son set out for Paris.

After his arrival there he attended the hospitals during a year, and then contin-

ued his travels through Italy and Germany. After having thus employed seven or eight years, and being greatly improved in his person, learning and professional skill, in both physic and surgery, he returned to England, with the resolution to travel all over it in the character of a mountebank doctor, which profession at that time was in great esteem, both in Italy and in Germany.

This he accordingly began to do with great success and applause, and having completed his tour in about a year, he at last contrived to arrive at the little town where he had served his time. His long absence made such an alteration in his person and features, that he was under no apprehensions of being known; so that assuming the name of Baron de Retourgnac, and announcing himself as a famous foreign physician, on his travels throughout Europe, he advertised that he proposed remaining some time in Canterbury and its vicinity. Accordingly he began by making a figure with his carriage and his servants, and in a short time acquired great reputation as well as acquiescence from a number of cures which he performed.

It so happened that whilst he was mounted on his stage, in this town, attended by his servants, who dealt out his medicines to his nameous purchasers, his old master Stevens, approached as near as he could, in order to hear the learned doctor harangue.

As soon as the doctor saw him he knew him, and a pleasant fancy that moment striking him, he began to address the spectators as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is notorious that the medical practitioners and professors in this country almost entirely neglect the study of those sciences which do not immediately relate to physic; so that they remain unacquainted with so many curious facts and observations which tend to elucidate numberless cases in their professional line. These observations are generally known to the most celebrated physicians on the Continent, and are of the utmost consequence to thousands of people who are afflicted with grievous disorders and maladies. When I was at Rome, I learned of a very eminent Italian professor, a certain arcanum, nostrum, or secret, which for real use and value, can scarcely be paralleled in the known world, and which I have often experienced, without ever having been deceived, it is an art of such a nature, that millions of good are to be compared to its intrinsic value, and which, I am bold to say, no one beside myself to day in England has the least knowledge or conception of."

"You may observe, ladies and gentlemen, that it is a maxim among the learned—that the texture or combination of parts of the blood be already formed in a particular state, which is vulgarly called a vicious habit of the body, it is incapable of contracting or receiving certain malignancies which effect or distemper it, and which malignancies will prevail in a greater or less degree, and become more or less virulent, according to its vitiated state; all which I grant to be true. But I have now further to observe, that, the face is a palpable index to the mind, wherein we may read tokens of the inward passions, so there are likewise certain signs to be observed in the face only, wherein we may perceive many prognostics and symptoms of various approaching diseases, which are then breeding and engendering in the blood, and which, by thus being discovered, that if they are skillfully attacked in time, that is, before they get to their height and gain the mastery, may, by proper methods, be easily removed; and if they are not so easily found out and treated, they may, and often do occasion the death of the patient. This, ladies, and gentlemen, is the art and mystery which I studied, and, if I can discover among the vast concourse of people who surround me, any such person whose present necessity requires my assistance, and by whom I may prove the truth of what I have been advancing, I will instantly point him out publicly before you all."

So, having spent some time in surveying the throng, and affecting a very grave and penetrating look, he pitched upon his old master, and pointing to him:

"There," said he, "is the gentleman who I am certain, that he will really, without any assistance, in ten days time, be no longer living, and no other person in this kingdom except myself, can possibly administer anything that will cure him. And so well do I know the nature and cause of the distemper which is now invading his animal fluids, that I would have you, gentlemen, particularly notice that I assure you, at seven or eight o'clock this evening, he will be seized with lowness of spirits, restless all

night, to-morrow he loses his appetite, then a fever will succeed, after which it will fall upon his nerves, and in a short time it will carry him off."

"Thus, sir, be pleased to remember," continued he, addressing himself to the apothecary, "that I have told you the different stages and changes of your new disorder, and seek the best advice and assistance you may, you will find all I have advanced to be exactly true."

Here the people were all amazed at this strange prognostication of the foreign mountebank upon their own town doctor, and were impatient for its issue. The learned orator, having finished all he had intended to say upon the subject, immediately proceeded in his harangue on other matters.

The poor apothecary could think of nothing out what the stranger had prophesied concerning his approaching illness. He went home directly, and related to his wife all he had heard. And some little time after, the good woman, perceiving her husband pausing, melancholy, and apparently concerned at it, could not help sympathizing a little with him, saying:

"My dear, I am sorry to see you so grave, but I hope you do not feel the disease coming on you already. I should think you are the best judge whether the doctor could perceive any symptoms of illness in you; but if I might advise you, you should for prevention and security, take something, which you may think serviceable directly."

"Ay," replied the husband, "but he also told me that nobody but himself could tell what to give me that would do any good; and therefore it I find myself attacked according to his prediction, it will be in vain for me to attempt any remedy, from my own prescription or from any person but himself."

From this moment he began to be very uneasy in mind, and consequently his disorder commenced, and, about seven or eight o'clock was the time the doctor had fixed for his lowness of spirits to begin, he was very impatient to see what alteration would appear at that time, and very soon after he was so extremely ill that he could not sit up any longer, so that to bed he went; and his distemper increasing the next day, as Dr. de Retourgnac had foretold, his appetite was wholly lost, and the news of his illness spread over the whole town, to the credit and honor of the mountebank baron; and, although Mr. Stevens was very unwilling to send for him, fearing that it might tend to lessen his own reputation in future, yet he was persuaded that all the medicine in the world without his assistance, would be unavailing.

So that on the next day, a fever ensuing, (which was inevitable with a man of such notions,) by the advice of his wife and some friends, he at last sent for Dr. de Retourgnac, who being come, took no notice of ever having seen his patient before, felt his pulse, asked such questions as he thought proper, told that his disease was of a very dangerous nature, that he had not found any physician in England who knew how to manage it properly, but still had hopes of being able to recover him in a few days, as he had been called in time; that, if he cured him, he would have forty guineas for his medicine and attendance; and that, if he did not succeed he was willing to forfeit a thousand.

To these terms the apothecary gladly consented, and the doctor went home to prepare something to relieve him. We may suppose any simple thing would do; for the cure was to be effected, not by the medicine, but by the physician.

From this moment he began to amend apace, so that, the cure was effected, in four or five days, and the doctor not only received his stipulated reward, but was extolled in an extraordinary manner.

After Mr. Stevens was quite well again, he was very anxious to know by what rule or method an approaching distemper could be found out, and how a cure was to be worked. He thought, if he could by any means obtain this secret, he should be happy, and then be able to vie with any of his competitors in England.—So, after he had made a proposal to the doctor for the purchase of the secret, and had taken a great deal of pains about it, he at last agreed with him to be taught this occult science for a hundred guineas. And which to his great joy the bargain was struck and the money paid, the mountebank baron gave him a paper, neatly folded and sealed, which, as he said, contained the whole art and mystery.

The apothecary, with his great impatience, broke the seal, and to his great surprise, found the paper contained nothing but the identical nostrum in his own hand writing which he had formerly sold

to Mr. Turner, being only—"Conceit can kill! and conceit can cure!"

He remained sometime as if stunned, till the doctor burst into a fit of laughter, and discovering himself asked him whether he did not approve of the secret. The apothecary was obliged to be satisfied, finding by his own documents he had been diseased and restored. And Monsieur le Baron Retourgnac, now Dr. Turner, by following his master's advice when his father purchased the secret, not only recovered the principal, but four times as much in addition, beside his fee, and had the pleasure of returning the compliment to his old master, properly trying this most excellent nostrum, and experimentally proving it to be infallible.

### A Tough Goose Story.

THERE once lived in one of the little towns, not many miles from Conway, New Hampshire, an eccentric individual by the name of Foss, whose fame as a story teller was known for miles around.

My house was situated in a glen some six miles distant from the stage road.—Between Conway and where I lived was a pond of six miles in circumference. It so happened one time early in the spring that I had been out late, and coming home I discovered a flock of geese as they were just alighting in the pond.—Rising early the next morning, I built the fire in the fire place, and taking down the old shooting iron, I started to the pond to try my luck. Arriving on the shore, I found to my sorrow that they were out of gun shot, and to fire at that distance would be to sheer folly. While I stood contemplating what to do, a fox came down to the water's edge and stood snuffing the air. My first thought was to shoot him, but on reflecting I concluded to see what he would do. The fox in the meantime entered the water and was swimming for the geese, which were huddled together about half a mile from the shore. After swimming within a few yards of them, he suddenly disappeared and in a few moments a goose was drawn under water, when Reynard returned on his homeward passage and landed his burden on shore, then returning again he brought another, until finally he got the whole flock; and when he brought the last one I shot him. When I came to pick up the geese, I found I had got fifty good nice ones, which I lugged home, together with the fox and my gun. The old woman had not got breakfast ready then."

"But, Mr. Foss, the fox, to capture the geese, had to swim out half a mile and back, thus making a mile for each goose; consequently the fox swam fifty miles, and as the geese averaged six pounds apiece, it made the sum of three hundred pounds, to say nothing of the fox and gun; the thing was impossible."

"Impossible or not, every word of it is true," exclaimed the old man, "and I can prove it by there'n a dozen of my neighbors, to each of whom I sold feathers enough to fill a bed."

### Freezing His Dog.

The following good story is told of Mr. Lincoln. He was called to an out-of-the-way place to attend to some legal business in the midst of a cold winter. His client was an old Kentucky hunter who kept a number of dogs. The hunter met him very cordially but remarked that he was sorry he could give him no better accommodations, as his house was a one-story log hut. After supper, Lincoln was put to bed in the loft, where he could distinguish everything going on below. About midnight an enormous hound began to howl, and pretty soon Lincoln heard the wife's voice saying: "Get up, Dick, and stop that dog's noise. He'll wake Mr. Lincoln." The old man turned uneasily in his bed and muttered incoherently: "Oh, shut up, Peg, Lincoln can sleep's well's we can." Soon the dog howled again and the woman repeated her former request, attending it with some lively punches, until the old man was worried into rising, though very regretfully. He went into the yard with no clothing on except his shirt and was gone some time. Peggy's curiosity was aroused to know the cause of his absence, and finally, after many preliminary moves and exclamations, she arose herself and stepped out of the house in the same undressed condition. Lincoln peeped between the logs and saw the old man holding the hound by the ears. He was hailed by the loving spouse with, "Why, what in goodness gracious sake are you doing?" The hunter's response was short and direct. "I'm holding this d—d dog 'til he freezes to death, so that he won't keep Lincoln awake any longer."

### The Misfortunes of Smith.

A YOUNG Irish woman, not of very prepossessing appearance, met on the Jersey boat last week a young man, whom she claimed as her long lost husband. As this young man, whose name was William Smith, had never been married, he had a nervous dread of women, and when he found he was claimed, body and soul, by a lady, with her face on one side and an upper range of prominent teeth, he remembered he had a friend in the engine room of the boat whom he had not seen lately, and to the recess thereof he speedily dived. This did not baffle or take off the scent of the female pretender. When he left the ferry house the girl he had left behind him was there to greet him. He found that to convince a woman against her will was more than he was equal to. All that he could say, either in the way of chaff or sober, earnest talk, left her of the same opinion still. As they created a disturbance in the streets, and the woman's pertinency only increased instead of diminished, the officer on post was obliged to take the pair before Justice Hogan at the Tombs Police Court.

At the time of their arrival the Justice was engaged with a case in the Examination Room, and Mr. Charles Wall, the chief clerk, with characteristic chivalry towards the fair sex, took the pair and the policeman into the sergeant's room of the court. There the young woman was asked if her husband had any marks upon him by which he could be identified, and she replied that on his arm she remembered seeing a "scratch" or "blister." Upon hearing this Mr. Smith pulled off his coat, bared his arms, and, evidently enjoying the novelty of his position, stretched them out as witnesses that he was not the lawful rib of the deceived damsel before him.

"You're the man, though!" exclaimed Mrs. Simpson. "You married me about two years ago, and left me three weeks after we were married. I am sure you're the man."

By this time the justice had assumed the judicial chair. Mrs. Simpson told her story. Mr. Smith said he was never married in his life, gave his name and address, and the history of his life, and with evident truthfulness.

This only increased the lady's positiveness, and she gave an address in Front street, where they boarded at the time they were married.

Justice Hegan said: I think you're mistaken, madam; but if you will go with the policeman and the man to the boarding-house, perhaps they will identify him, and you can come back and give me the result.

In about half an hour they returned. Mr. Smith was not known at the boarding house, and could not be recognized as the gentleman who married this opinionated lady. Mr. Smith was released, but Mrs. Simpson went away convinced that she had been defrauded by the Justice out of a lawful husband.

A gentleman traveling in Ireland hired a pure native as a servant, who he thought could give him information of the country. Observing a beautiful residence at some distance, the following colloquy ensued.

"Patrick, who lives there?"

"It's Mr. Fitzgerald, that's dead, sir."

"What did he die of?"

"He died of a Thursday, sir."

"How long has he been dead, Patrick?"

"If he had lived till next Thursday, sir, he'd been dead a year."

The gentleman thinking Pat's wits were wool-gathering asked:

"Have you taken anything to drink, to-day, Patrick?"

"Nary dhrap."

"Will you take a little?"

"I will, sir."

"Well, what shall it be? Will you take raw liquor, or will you have grog, or shall I make you a toddy?"

"If yer honor please, I will take the raw liquor first, then I can be a drinking the grog while you are making the toddy."

"Why don't you wear your ring, my dear?" said a father in a ball-room to his daughter.

"Because, papa, it hurts me when any one squeezes my hand."

"What business have you to have your hand squeezed?"

"Certainly none; but still, you know, papa, one would like to keep it in squeezable order."