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How She was Cured.

"NOW I am going to tell you just what my husband said to me this morning, Doctor, word for word," and the invalid, Mrs. Stephens, lay back again on the sofa pillows, the very picture of misery. The family physician, who was called on an average to the Stephens mansion three hundred and sixty times a year, drew a chair close to the couch, and waited quietly for his patient to open her book of complaints.

"Last night, you see, Doctor, I had an ill turn, and he wanted to come for you; but when I got so that he dared to leave me, he concluded then we'd better let you sleep."

"Much obliged to him," said the Doctor, with a little sarcastic emphasis on the personal pronoun. "Last night was the first undisturbed night's rest I have enjoyed for a week."

Mrs. Stephens continued: "This spell was the same as I had the last time you were sent for, Doctor—"

"A slight nervous attack," broke in the physician, "nothing more."

"Well, it don't make any difference what you call it, it was mighty hard to bear; but let me tell you what my husband said first, Doctor, before we go into symptoms. When he was going down to breakfast, he says to me, 'Kate, what shall I send you up?'"

"Says I, 'I don't want anything in the world but a good, strong cup of tea. Tell Bridget to send it up in the little tea-pot.' I saw, Doctor, that he didn't move after I said this, so I turned and looked up at him, and such a picture of rage and disgust I never saw in my life. Finally, says he, 'Tea! tea! tea! its nothing but tea from morning till night. Kate,' says he, 'you are the color of a chinaman now. Why don't you order a good piece of beefsteak, and a slice of brown bread, and a cup of chocolate; that would be a sensible breakfast!'"

"But John," says I, "you forget that I am sick and have no appetite." I was all ready to cry, but I was determined that he shouldn't have the satisfaction of seeing the tears fall.

"Forget," says he; "forget!" I wish to Heaven I could forget! Its nothing but grunt and groan from one year's end to the other! I have lost all patience with you," says he. "When we lived in part of a house, and you did your own housework, you were as well and as happy as anybody, and no man ever had a pleasanter little home than John Stephens; but what have I now to leave, or come back to?" and this, Doctor, is what he ended up with—

"Kate," says he, "you are nothing more nor less than a drunkard! and in the sight of God, more culpable than most of the men who stagger through the streets; because the majority of those poor devils have some sort of an excuse for their conduct, and you haven't the slightest. You have a luxurious home, a husband doing his level best to make you happy—everything under the light of the sun to please you, and yet you will persist in swilling tea." Yes, Doctor, swilling was the word he used—boo! hoo! hoo! Oh dear me! to think I should ever have lived to have heard such dreadful language out of my husband's mouth; and then says he—and making me as miserable a wretch as walks the earth."

"Pretty plain talk," interrupted the Doctor, with a shrug of his broad shoulders.

"Oh yes," sobbed the victim, "and so awfully coarse and unkind. If I had had a spell, and died there before his very face, I don't believe he would have cared a snap of his finger. I tell you, Doctor Ellis, there is such a thing as a man's getting hardened."

"Evidently," replied the physician, with a laconicism absolutely painful. "But my husband has nothing in the world to trouble him but just my poor health; and I am sure I can't help that." This remark was more in answer to her companion's tone and manner, than the one single word that had accidentally escaped his lips, and this the Doctor felt.

"Anybody would think, by the way he goes on," continued the irate woman, "that I enjoyed myself with spasms, and cramps, and fainting fits. Anybody would think it was a pleasure to me to feel, every time I see a funeral procession, as if the hearse was going to stop at our door next. Oh yes! such a life is very enjoyable, very, indeed."

Doctor Ellis took no notice of these last words; the man's eyes grew luminous, and his whole face declared that he considered himself master of the situation; and if Mrs. Stephens had not been so entirely taken up with her own ailments, mental and physical, that honest countenance would have betrayed him.

"You say," he began, settling himself in the large easy chair, and assuming a strictly professional air, "that your husband has nothing to trouble him but your health; how do you know that, Mrs. Stephens?"

"How? why how do I know anything? By the evidence of my senses. Don't I know that John Stephens has a splendid business that looks after itself, a magnificent income, and money enough to live on the bare interest, as well as a family need to live, if he never entered his office again while he has breath?"

"But money isn't everything, Mrs. Stephens," proceeded the physician, with a calmness almost mephistophelian. "There are other troubles beside money troubles. How about health, madam?"

"Health?" repeated the lady with a smile, she intended to be sarcastic to the last degree. "Health? Doctor Ellis! Why, there isn't a healthier or a sounder man than my husband in the whole United States. He eats more in one meal than I do in three months."

"There is nothing the matter with your husband's stomach, Mrs. Stephens." Dr. Ellis shaded his face with his hand, and waited further developments. Mrs. Stephens mistook this attempt at forced concealment for emotion, and immediately assumed a sitting posture, brushed her hair away from her forehead, and looked piercingly into her companion's face.

"Why do you accent the word 'stomach' so strongly, Doctor Ellis?" she inquired in anxious tones. Mrs. Stephens was forgetting herself, and this the Doctor hailed as an excellent omen.

"Only that I might make you understand that a man's digestion could be most unexceptionable, and yet he be far from sound in other directions."

"Then you mean to tell me that my husband is sick?"

"I do."

"Perhaps you will go still further, and say dangerously?"

"If you desire it."

"Oh, Doctor Ellis, how cold and unfeeling you are! I should think you ought to know by this time,—and just here Mrs. Stephens broke down entirely, and sobbed as if her heart would break.

"Ought to know what, Mrs. Stephens?" inquired the Doctor, with uncalculated deliberation.

"You ought to know—to know—that my—my husband's health and life are of a good deal more consequence to me than my own."

"Ah, indeed," interrupted the physician, with an elevation of his bushy eyebrows, immensely suggestive of a contrary opinion, as well as several excellent reasons for said opinion.

"Doctor Ellis, will you be kind enough to tell me what's the matter with my husband?"

Mrs. Stephens was now on her feet—tears all wiped away, eyes flashing with resentful spirit, and only a little quiver of the lip, to show how deep a wound the kind heart in her bosom had sustained. There she stood, reproachful, defiant, determined, womanly. The Doctor was delighted, and such an honest face it was, that he carried round with him from door to door, from sunrise to sunset, every day in the year, that it was a mighty hard matter to keep it from an immediate betrayal of the whole purpose.

"Mrs. Stephens," said he, "you have no cause to be alarmed. If I can only get your co-operation in this business, I feel

certain that I shall be able to make a well man of your husband in a few months, at the longest; but, as true as I sit here before you, I cannot do this alone."

"Why have I not been informed of this before?" broke in Mrs. Stephens, imperiously.

"Who was there to inform you, madam? Your husband does not know his condition, and I should really like to be told when you have been sufficiently calm to hear all that was necessary for you to know?"

"But, Doctor Ellis, I should think you ought to have understood that my own health and comfort are nothing, compared to my husband's." Mrs. Stephens was weeping again. "There is no sacrifice I would not make for him."

"Curious creatures!" muttered the Doctor; "delightful bundles of contradictions! How the mischief should I know, Mrs. Stephens, how much you care for your husband? I am sure you have spent the last half hour complaining about him. Is that the way women generally testify their regard for their husbands?"

"Oh, don't, Doctor Ellis, please don't," pleaded the terrified woman. "I will never complain again—never—if you will only let me know what I can do for him. Do you know, Doctor, I had begun to think lately that something must be amiss with him, he was growing so irritable. Poor dear! how wicked and thoughtless I have been."

"This, then, is the trouble. I shall take it for granted, madam, that you know something about physiology, and can follow me without difficulty."

"Oh yes—yes, for mercy's sake, go on."

"Very well; I find that the pericardium?"

"The pericardium?" repeated Mr. Stephens.

"You know what that is, I suppose?"

Evidently Mrs. Stephens' anatomical knowledge was limited. She shook her head in despair. "Something about the heart, isn't it?" she asked at last.

"Yes, the pericardium is the membranous sac that holds the heart. Well, sometimes this sac—it is no matter about particulars, Mrs. Stephens," and Doctor Ellis suddenly came to a stand still.

"It is enough, though, for me to say that we are both passably anxious that this heart should remain where it belongs. Mr. Stephens must be amused. He wants the opera, the lecture, the social circle, entertaining books—a happy home—music. You play and sing, do you not, Mrs. Stephens?"

"Oh yes—I used to," and Mrs. Stephens' tones were so pitiful now that big Doctor Ellis really and truly was obliged to wipe both his eyes and his nose. Before he was aware, the lachrymal duct had got the upper hand. "Well, try it again; get a teacher, and go to practicing."

"But how am I going to manage my spasms?" sobbed the lady.

"Well, perhaps between us both—you using your will power, and thinking of your husband, going out with him, and taking care of him—and I doing my best in my way, we may be able to subdue them; but you must remember this madam—do not let Mr. Stephens have the faintest suspicion that you think anything is the matter with him; and above all don't treat him like an invalid. Just amuse him, and all that you know, just as you used to when you were first married."

Another series of sobs from Mrs. Stephens.

The Doctor arose to go. His patient had entirely forgotten that he had left no prescription.

"About tea, Doctor?" she asked, as he prepared to leave. "Do you think it very hurtful?"

"As an occasional tonic, I have no objection to tea; but as a daily beverage, madam, it is an invention of the devil. Good morning."

John Stephens sought his home that evening with a heavy heart. His wife he believed a confirmed invalid, or hypochondriac—it mattered little which; one was as bad as the other. His remonstrances and pleading had proved of no avail; and he was doubtful even whether his wife loved him. He opened the door softly with his latch-key. This had become habitual; seldom did the gentleman show himself to his wife until after the dinner bell had summoned the family to the dining-room.

A strain of music met and transfixed him on the very threshold. Abbot's beautiful song was being rendered, and his wife was the musician. He was just in time to hear—

"The eyes that cannot weep
Are the saddest eyes of all!"

For a full year this charming voice had been as silent as the grave.

"Company, perhaps," he muttered. Curiosity overcame him. He opened the parlor door and peeped in. There was Mrs. John Stephens, becomingly attired, all alone, and as enthusiastic over the fine rendition of a piece of music as he had ever seen her.

"What does this mean Kate?" he asked, with outstretched arms.

"That I have given up tea, and am going to try hard and be well! I guess my voice will all come back, John."

"I guess so," he replied, folding her tight to his heart.

Three months after this, the cure was so radical, that Doctor Ellis made a clean breast of the whole thing.

A RAT CATCHER.

THE reporter of the Baltimore American gives the following curious account of a professional rat-catcher in that city:

In a small two-story frame house on Cross street, near Johnson, there lives a man named James Reedy, a professional rat-catcher, and the only one in the city. Mr. Reedy is a bright looking Englishman, about forty-five years of age, and he has pursued his present calling for twenty-eight years—the last nine years being spent in this city, where he says he has met with great success in his business. On being questioned as to the manner in which he destroyed rats, he stated some very curious facts. After showing the reporter a varied collection of English birds, noticeable among which was a tame jackdaw, who kept up an incessant croaking during the whole interview, as if anxious to relate some very interesting story, Mr. Reedy stepped into the large yard that surrounds the dwelling, for the purpose of exhibiting his principal auxiliaries in the annihilation of rats, namely, the ferrets. These animals are from twelve to fifteen inches in length, with bright, sparkling eyes, with a slender body that can pass wherever a rat can. Their bodies are covered with dark fur, in color nearly approaching a brindle. They are perfectly docile, but their quick, wiry movements remind one very much of the common American weasel. Mr. Reedy has twelve ferrets, all of which he has imported from England, at a cost of from \$25 to \$50, according to their training. The oldest and best cost \$50, and was bought on the Boston Downs, last summer, by Mr. Reedy. This ferret is the only one that will obey the call of its owner, the others not being properly trained. It takes six months or over to train a young ferret so that it can be used in the business. The ferrets are kept in close, warm hutches, and fed twice each day with raw meat and milk, except when their owner intends using them, then they are not allowed food for twelve hours before they are put to work hunting rats. After leaving the ferret hutches and examining a coop containing a number of beautiful Albino rats, with fur as white as snow, and bright pink eyes, we arrived at a long row of dog kennels, the inhabitants of which all rushed out to the full length of their chains, and greeted us with a perfectly deafening chorus of howls, there being seventeen of those animals in and about the kennels.

With the exception of a fine pair of surly looking bull terriers, the whole collection consisted of Scotch and English black and tan terriers. These dogs are all fed three times a day, and have comfortable bedding placed in their kennels every evening. Mr. Reedy says that when he receives an order from some one to rid their places of rats, he charges them from \$5 to \$10, according to the magnitude of the undertaking, and then binds himself to not only make the place perfectly rat-proof, but also to keep it in that condition for one year. He then takes two of his best black and tan terriers, and an old sky terrier named "Blop." "Blop's" personal appearance is most miserable, as in addition to being minus one eye, and the larger portion of his caudal appendage, his whole head and body is covered with hundreds of scars and wounds, received in battle with the ferret rodents, that he takes such a delight in slaying. Yet, notwithstanding "Blop's" wretched personal appearance, his remaining eye sparkles with vim, his head is cocked knowingly on one side, and his diminutive remnant of a tail vibrates with joy whenever the magic word "rat" is mentioned.

With those three dogs, six ferrets, and a boy armed with a long piece of fine fishing net, Reedy repairs to the vermin-afflicted house. The principal holes are first stopped up with brick and tin, only two being left open; into one of these the ferrets are

put, and they at once begin their search. Reedy then leaves the boy and two dogs to watch the holes, while himself and "Blop" explore every room in the building. On entering a room, "Blop" smells carefully over the floor, and around the wainscoting and if there are no rats there, the room is left, and the man and dog pass on to another; but if there should be rats secreted between the floors or in the walls, "Blop" makes their presence known by whining and shaking his dilapidated tail in a fearfully agitated manner. Reedy immediately knocks on the floor, and gives a peculiar whistle, and a ferret is there in a moment, and the rat has decamped almost as soon. They are in this way driven from one room to another, and finally come out of the holes left open, and becoming entangled in the meshes of the net that has been placed across the middle of the room, they are speedily killed by the boy and the dogs. The ferrets are then taken out and fed, while the old holes are securely covered with tin. Reedy claims that although there may be dozens of rat holes in a house, there is always one hole the rats use in going out for water, and this hole is always the one before which the net is placed. He also states that there are never as many rats in the house as people suppose, and that it is very seldom that he finds more than twenty-five in one dwelling. After making his first visit, and killing all the rats, he returns once every month and examines the premises, in case others may have settled there during his absence. He states that no rat can hide from a ferret, and at the approach of the animal they will immediately hunt other quarters. Mr. Reedy states that he finds abundance of work in his line, both in the city and in the country, where he does great service by ridding the farmers' barns and grain-sheds of vermin. He also removes rats from ships and other vessels, but he states that in the latter cases the rats will take refuge in the bilge water in the hold, and the ferrets having an aversion to water, cannot be made to follow them, and in consequence of this fact, it is rather up-hill work.

In old militia times, Goffstown, Hillsborough county, N. H., was the rendezvous when the military of the surrounding country assembled annually for drill. It was an occasion which drew together young and old for many miles around, and its parades, sham fights, personal encounters, gambling, drinking, and uproariousness, made "Goffstown muster" a familiar name to all who ever dwelt in the central or southern portions of the State. Very early in the morning of one of those eventful days an aged couple living some miles away, started on foot for the parade-ground. To shorten the distance they took a short cut through the old burial-ground at Goffstown Center, from which they emerged as Sam W—— was passing along the highway. Sam was bound for the "muster," and had taken an early start so as to lose none of the fun. Arriving at the graveyard, Sam looked towards it and saw the old man and his wife coming over the stile. In the early dawn he could distinguish just enough to see that they were very old, and concluded at once that they were members of the silent tomb, awakened by the unusual stir. So waving them from him with his hands he shouted, "Go back, old man; go back! This isn't the general resurrection; it's only the Goffstown muster."

The Reading Eagle tells this: One of our colored fellow citizens is again in trouble. He has long admired a colored widow living in the next block above, but being afraid to come out boldly and reveal his passion, went to a white man of his acquaintance, the other day, and asked him to write the lady a letter asking her hand in marriage. The friend wrote, telling the woman, in a few brief lines, that the size of her feet was the talk of the neighborhood, and asking her if she couldn't pare them down a little. The name of the colored man was signed, and he was to call on her on Sunday night for an answer. A few days after, the writer of the letter met the negro limping along the street, and asked him what the widow said. The man showed him a bloodshot eye, a scratched nose, a lame leg, and a spot on the scalp where a handful of wool has been violently jerked out, and he answered in solemn tones, "She didn't say nuffin' an' I didn't stay dar mor'n a minute!"

A Blacksmith in an Ohio village, gives notice that "no horses will be shod here on Sunday, except sickness and death."