

Proposing to the Wrong Girl.

I WAS a young surgeon, just free from college and walking the hospitals, when I got my first practice in the little town of Dunfield. Dr. Thompson, of the place, was an old friend of my father's, and it was arranged that I should assist him, with an ultimate view to the whole practice. It was a good look-out for a young man just beginning life. Above all as my friends vehemently prophesied, "Thompson can't possibly live another ten years you know." So with many pleasant dreams about dead men's shoes and other cheerful subjects, I moved myself and dry goods and chattels to W-shire.

Most naturally I had a good deal of curiosity as to my new friend's patients. Mine was a sociable temperament; and as I had about two hundred and fifty pounds a year of my own, in addition to what Dr. Thompson was to give me, I fancied I was already in a position to have a little home and a wife of my own, provided of course that I could find some really nice girl who suited my taste and liked me. I had a sort of grand feeling that the medical profession ought to be obliged to me for entering it.

"It isn't as if I were a fellow who had quite to earn his daily bread," was a remark I made to my bosom friend, Charlie Somers.

I arrived at Dunfield in the early part of May. It was settled that at the first I was to live at Dr. Thompson's, whom I found to be a cheery old fellow, and his wife a most kind, motherly soul. They had no children, and the household was quite well ordered. The practice, too, was very good.

The town had its squire, Sir William Crowhurst. His wife, Lady Crowhurst, was the grandee of the place; and by good fortune, their two little girls were my first patients being conveniently seized with a mild touch of measles soon after my arrival, and when the doctor happened to be laid up with lumbago. This of course gave me a good start, and was the best introduction I could wish for to the other swells of the town, such as the clergyman and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Perkins who had seven children, of whom one or the other was always ailing; Mr. Gordon, the lawyer, who had also a wife and two grown-up daughters; and many others.

It is true there was a rival doctor in the place—there always are rival medical men in a small town—but then "he hadn't even a stray dog to experimentize upon," as an old Thompson chucklingly told me. Mr. Snares was his unlucky name. As, however, I can only mention one or two of these people again in my story, I will not weary you with a lot of dramatic personae, who will never be accounted for; else the postmaster, chemist, dissenting minister, school-master, and others, are all well worth being described, each in his or her own peculiar way.

About three weeks after my arrival Thompson showed me a note from Mrs. Gordon, saying that her daughter had a bad cough—would one of us come to see her?

"Now, Mr. Gwynne," said the doctor, "here's a chance to distinguish yourself. Lawyer Gordon is a smart man and making no end of money. Mrs. Gordon is a great one for being on the sick list. Unfortunately, she doesn't like me, because she suspected me once of sending her bread pills and water mixture when her imaginary illness drove me beyond bounds, so that lean and hungry Snares was called in; but he injured his cause by persisting to remain for lunch, which Mrs. Gordon thought very impertinent on first acquaintance; and so it was. Now my firm belief is that this cough is more than half to decide if you will do, or if she must send to Colchester for Dr. Sims, which will of course cost her a great deal more. They are good patients—too good to lose; so go and do your best for us. On no account be sparing of grave shakes of the head and plenty of medicine, though it may be as innocent as you like, provided it be judiciously nasty."

"All right, sir," was my reply; "I'll go at once;" and as I spoke I rose from my seat and proceeded up stairs to put on a clean collar and a better tie, trying to think I wasn't a bit nervous. But I was; for when I was a young man I was very nervous and never could, to save my life, give a repartee answer or get out of a mess neatly. I pushed my hair up and then patted it down again; it would not look as curly as I fondly fancied it did whenever I took the precaution of wetting it well over night and brush it up against the grain.

"Come, come, Gwynne, make haste," at last sounded from below.

I ran down to obey the doctor's call, and soon after proceeded up the town to Mrs. Gordon's. After I had conversed with that lady for a few minutes—that is to say she talked and I listened—she ushered me into a morning-room to see my patient.

"We are quite anxious about dear

Hetty," she said; "she's had a bad cough for some time past, and our home remedies seem to be of no avail."

The two girls rose as I entered and returned my very nervous bow. I saw that one was tall and graceful, with a mass of black hair, loosely drawn from off her face, large, black eyes, a clear complexion and regular features; a grand beauty, I thought. The other was different, evidently two or three years younger, with sunny, chestnut hair, that tossed in loose waves down her back, blue eyes, a little pouting mouth, a most bewitching nez retousse, and a short, slight figure. A more complete contrast could hardly exist between the two sisters. The dark one looked about twenty, the little one about eighteen. As I said, I bowed nervously and coughed two or three times, because I did not know quite what to say.

"This is our dear invalid," said Mrs. Gordon, patting the youngest on the shoulder.

"Oh, we'll soon cure her, Mrs. Gordon," I said, with alarming cheerfulness, and coughed again.

"Physician, cure thyself," I heard the invalid remark in a mischievous undertone.

"Oh, I've no cough, thanks only a little tickling," I said, stupidly, as though the whisper had been for me.

However, I plucked up courage and proceeded to make my professional inquiries, which were diversely answered; the mother making the case out to be 'very bad,' 'quite serious,' and suggesting the south of France; the daughter quizzing every thing and turning it all into a joke. I wound up my visit by again remarking as I shook hands, "You've got a nasty cough, Miss Gordon, but we'll soon cure you."

"Pert little thing!" I mentally ejaculated as I left the house. "The dark one seems nice. How beautiful she is!"

After this I paid many more professional visits at the Gordon's, and soon found myself on a very pleasant, familiar footing at their house. So from professional, I began to make friendly visits, and often joined the girls, in leisure half hours, at a game of croquet or archery, or would take them for a quiet row on the river on warm summer days. Had I been a cheeky fellow, very likely I might have become far more intimate than I was—might have called them Alice and Hetty, as everybody else in the house did. But I was far too nervous and too shy, and so to me they were always the "Misses Gordon."

When the autumn tints were beginning to appear in the woods of Dunfield, I discovered that I loved Alice, the dark one, and that if she would like to live on three hundred a year, in a snug little house of her own, I should like it too; but I dared not tell her. I could laugh and joke with Hetty, but with Alice I was always shy and nervous.

Time went on. I perceived that with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon I was a favorite. I could see that Hetty, too, liked me, and I hoped that Alice did; but she was so quiet and matronly I could not judge so well.

When Christmas approached there was a good deal of sickness about and I could not go home, as I had intended; so Mrs. Gordon kindly begged me to come and dine with them.

"Go, go, my dear fellow," said friendly Dr. Thompson, when I demurred at leaving them. "Go and enjoy yourself, and look out for the mistletoe." So I gladly accepted the invitation.

On Christmas eve I met the girls out walking, and they kindly said they were glad I was coming.

"Cousin Willie is coming too," cried Hetty, and she glanced slyly at Alice.

"Who is Cousin Willie?" I asked, wishing I might mix a pill for him.

"Oh, he's our only cousin and papa's ward," was the reply. "He always comes at Christmas."

"I'll come early," I said, making a mighty effort, "as I want to speak to Mr. Gordon."

"Oh do—come as early as you can," said Hetty.

"Old Thompson wants me to look out for the mistletoe," I said foolishly, by the way of saying something.

"Oh we've got plenty of that ready—eh, Alice?" said Hetty.

"How tiresome you are, Hetty!" said Alice, warmly and blushing a painful crimson.

Well, it was silly of Hetty; and before me, too! But I was so glad to see the blush that I did not notice the little show of temper. Between you and me, reader, she had once or twice before shown she had a temper.

I went home, pondering on the way what I should do. I could not dine there with my heart bursting with its secret and feeling it might explode at any moment. Then there was Cousin Willie, too. If he should pay my beautiful Alice any attention, I might not be able to control my feelings. So I determined to write to her, ask my fate, and go before dinner for my answer. If I were accepted, have a merry Christ-

mas; if rejected, go home, and—and—well, nearly die of a broken heart.

I was delighted with the idea, and almost ran home to put it into execution. But how easy to get pen, ink and paper! how difficult to write! I tore up letter after letter; again and again I tried, but the hopelessness of expressing my feelings was great. Should I leave it and go and say my say in person? No, no, I could not do that. My tongue would cleave to my mouth; the very thought seemed to deprive me of all power of articulation. Here goes I said at last—I will write it off at once and I won't read it over.

"My dear"—Here I was at a full stop already. How was I to begin? If I were doing it personally, I might try the effect of "Alice," spoken in a low, deep tone, but it looks so cool on paper. Therefore I began again: "My dear Miss Gordon"—I can't remember the words, though no doubt my wife does, but I know my letter was very tender, and I hope very earnest and impressive.

I was once more puzzled how to end my epistle, but at last decided on—

"Believe me, dear, dear Miss Gordon, waiting in trembling hope and fear, yours in life, and death, yours only and forever,

PHILIP GWYNNE."

This I dispatched to Miss Gordon, enclosing a note to the young lady's papa, to be delivered at her discretion. You may believe I scarcely closed my eyes all that night.

Next day, Christmas day, I was too busy to attend church; but I got clear about four o'clock, and hastily dressing myself, started for Mr. Gordon's. He met me warmly.

"Come in here, my dear fellow," said he; "I can't tell you how pleased she is—my wife, I mean. And I am quite satisfied as to money and worldly affairs. Quite. Old Thompson's is a good practice. We must have a settlement you know; but that'll be all right. Rather you have her than an earl. God bless you! I am proud to call you son. I've spoken to her. She loves you, my boy—loves you dearly, she says, and has done so long. And now that you are one of the family, I may as well tell you a secret. My youngest daughter is engaged too. Yes, Alice and my nephew are going to make a match of it. Don't look so astonished. She'll make him a good wife; for though she is a year younger than dear Hetty, she looks older, you know, and is more steady and sedate. But Hetty's a dear girl, and will, I'm sure make you happy. Don't speak, don't speak! There, I'll send her in," and off the lawyer bolted in his usual jerky way before I could speak a word.

"Was I mad! Was I dreaming? Alice the younger—Alice engaged!—Hetty loving me dearly! Hetty coming to me! Ye powers what was it all about? How could I have been such a fool? A thousand hitherto unnoticed facts crowded on my brain, confirming the statement. How could I have trusted appearances so utterly, and taken her for the oldest without being certain? She engaged; and wild, merry, sweet Hetty loving me! It still would not enter my brain. What should I do? Get up and bolt and explain afterward?

I sprang up to obey my impulse. As I did so the door opened, and with down-cast eyes and rosy blushes Hetty came in. I rushed eagerly toward her and grasped her hands. I would confess all, I thought. "Hetty—" I began. She mistook my action, my words, for affection. She came nearer to me, responded to my warm clasp, and then, overcome by shyness, hid her pretty curly head on my shoulder. My embarrassment momentarily increased. "Oh Hetty, Hetty—" I began once more.

"Dear Philip," she whispered, in reply to what she deemed affection, "I am so happy, Philip."

What could I do? Tell her it was all a mistake, and thus blight the bright young life and heart for ever? In that one second I made a great decision. My chances of happiness had fled. I would sacrifice myself and marry her, and she should never know the truth.

God bless you Hetty; I will try and make you happy;" and I kissed the wild, teasing, merry girl, now so gentle, so winning, so sweet. I could not rudely break her heart.

She looked up, and then hid her face again on my shoulder, and clung to me to hide her emotion. Was it not possible to love her? Ought I not to be thankful? Had I married Alice—no, I mean proposed to her—I should have only been rejected, and gone away miserable; now I had a real, true heart to love me. Surely, surely in time I might return her affection.

"Can you be happy with me, Hetty?" I asked.

"Oh Philip, indeed I can," she replied.

"I always feared you laughed at me," I said.

"I only laughed to hide my feelings," said Hetty.

"I am not rich, Hetty," I continued. "I will be a careful little wife, Philip," she said.

"I am not worthy of you," I said. "Yes you are," she exclaimed; "I am not worthy of you."

There was no escape for me. She wouldn't see me in my worst light. She would love me.

We sat down side by side. She prattled to me how Alice and Willie had long loved each other, but that it had never been a settled thing until now, for his position had not been such that he could marry.

"And Alice is so glad for me," went on Hetty, little thinking what my feelings were. She says you're just the kind of a man she would like for a brother. You know it would not do for us both to want you for a husband—eh, Philip?"

"No, dearest," I stammered, "it would not."

I could not talk to her, but she seemed not to mind my silence. We sat hand in hand, dreaming, thinking. Inwardly I was repeating my letter to Charley Somers, telling him all about my love for Alice. Now I must hasten to tell him it was Hetty I meant. Oh dear! what a wild whirl my poor brain was in.

At last, to my great relief, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon entered. Mrs. Gordon shook me warmly by the hand and said, "Dear Mr. Gwynne, there is no one I would rather give my wild young birdie to than you. Alice though younger, is so quiet and steady, she is far more capable of acting for herself; but you'll always be kind and tender to Hetty, won't you?"

"Of course he will—of course he will!" cried Mr. Gordon, "Come Gwynne, and wash your hands."

Deeply grateful for the chance (not that my hands were dirty, but because I felt I should burst out crying or do something equally absurd if I stopped there), I followed him.

"What time do you dine, Mr. Gordon?" I asked.

"Six," he replied. "It is now a quarter-past five."

"Ah, I shall just have time," I said. "I find I have forgotten to leave orders about a certain medicine. If you'll allow me, I'll just run down to the surgery, for it will not do to be careless about physic."

"Certainly not, certainly not," said Mr. Gordon; though very excusable under the circumstances; make haste, six sharp."

I almost ran off. I let myself in with the latch-key. Oh joy, it was empty.—I sank into a chair and paused to think. What should I do? The only time for escape was now. Should I send up a note to say I was suddenly called out, and see what to-morrow would do?—Should I pack up my things, throw my profession to the winds, and bolt?—They were not tempting alternatives. I almost did the first. But was I not a mean coward?—was I not going to act unworthy a gentleman? After plighting my troth, receiving her shy kisses, could I now explain! And yet, was it right to marry one sister, loving the other? Why had they not seen I loved Alice, and told me at once my case was hopeless? Why did not I open my eyes and see that, contrary to appearances, she was the younger? No use to ask that now.

My duty was clear, my course plain. I smoothed my tumbled hair, bathed my hot temples in cold water, and determined to be a man and no coward. I would act my part and trust to time to make it natural to me.

So I retraced my steps, and entered the Gordons' drawing-room just as the clock struck six. I was of course introduced to Cousin Willie. He was a tall, fair-bearded fellow, looked and spoke like a gentleman, and seemed very fond of Alice, and she of him. Somehow I felt better when I saw them together.—After all, Hetty was just as pretty with her wavy, glossy hair, her bright eyes, with their new softened expression, and that shy smile around her rosy mouth. I declare I found myself comparing them to my little one's advantage, and felt quite proud as I led her to the dining-room.

What need I say more? Day by day my lot grew sunnier, my little Hetty grew dearer and dearer to me. I never knew her otherwise than bright and good-tempered; while Alice—but I must not tell tales—Alice is a dear girl and I am very fond of her, and of my nephews and nieces; but all my heart and my love is my own merry Hetty's.

We have now been married some years and little ones patter about our home; and as I write my own sweet wife leans over my shoulder and reads how out of my mistake grew my life's best and truest happiness; and she says mischievously—

"My dear old Phil, what a happy old man you are, although you had to get married through a provoking mistake."

Why suffer sleepless nights, with a distressing cough, while a quarter of a dollar invested in "Sellers' Cough Syrup" will give instant relief.

SELLERS'

COUGH

SYRUP!

50 Years Before the Public!

Pronounced by all to be the most Pleasant and efficacious remedy now in use, for the cure of Coughs, Colds, Croup, Hoarseness, Tickling sensation of the Throat, Whooping Cough, etc. Over a million bottles sold within the last few years. It gives relief wherever used, and has the power to impart benefit that cannot be had from the cough mixtures now in use. Sold by all Druggists at 25 cents per bottle.

SELLERS' LIVER PILLS

are also highly recommended for curing liver complaint, constipation, sick-headaches, fever and ague, and all diseases of the stomach and liver. Sold by all by all Druggists at 25 cents per box.

R. E. SELLERS & CO., Pittsburg, Pa.

J. M. GIRVIN.

J. H. GIRVIN

J. M. GIRVIN & SON,
FLOUR, GRAIN, SEED & PRODUCE
Commission Merchants,
No. 64 South Gay, St.,
BALTIMORE, MD.

We will pay strict attention to the sale of all kinds of Country Produce and remit the amounts promptly.

J. M. GIRVIN & SON.

MUSSER & ALLEN

CENTRAL STORE

NEWPORT, PENN'A.

Now offer the public

A RARE AND ELEGANT ASSORTMENT OF

DRESS GOODS

Consisting of all shades suitable for the season

BLACK ALPACCAS

AND

Mourning Goods

A SPECIALITY.

BLEACHED AND UNBLEACHED

MUSLINS,

AT VARIOUS PRICES.

AN ENDLESS SELECTION OF PRINTS!

We sell and do keep a good quality of

SUGARS, COFFEES & SYRUPS

And everything under the head of

GROCERIES!

Machine needles and oil for all makes of Machines.

To be convinced that our goods are

CHEAP AS THE CHEAPEST,

IS TO CALL AND EXAMINE STOCK.

No trouble to show goods.

Don't forget the

CENTRAL STORE,

Newport, Perry County, Pa.

DRUGS.

DRUGS.

JACOB STRICKLER,

(Successor to Dr. M. B. Strickler)

PHARMACIST,
NEW BLOOMFIELD, PENN'A.

HAVING succeeded the late firm of Dr. M. B. Strickler in the Drug Business at his Store-room, on MAIN STREET, two doors East of the Big Spring, I will endeavor to make it in every way worthy the patronage of the public. Personal and strict attention AT ALL TIMES given to the compounding and dispensing of Physicians' prescriptions, so as to insure accuracy and guard against accidents.

BEAR IN MIND

that my stock has been recently selected and care taken to have everything of the BEST QUALITY. The public may rest assured that ALL medicines that leave my store shall be as represented—PURE and UNADULTERATED.

I HAVE CONSTANTLY ON HAND

HAIR OIL and POMADES.
HAIR, TOOTH and NAIL-BRUSHES.
SURGEONS' TOILET, and
CARRIAGE SPONGES.
PUFF BOXES, TOILET POWDERS,
CASTILE and FANCY SOAPS.

PERFUMERY OF ALL KINDS,

Together with Fresh and Genuine Patent Medicines of every description.

ALSO,

Segars, Tobacco, School Books, &c.

ORANGES, LEMONS & BANANAS,

In season.

Pure Wines and Liquors for Medicinal Purposes.

Terms, Strictly Cash.

By strict attention to business, I hope to merit the confidence and favor of the public.

JACOB STRICKLER, Ph. G.

April 22, 1879.