

THE HIDDEN HAND.

(Continued from 1st page.)

middle of November his "occupation was gone."

We said that his office was in the most respectable locality in the city; it was, in fact, on the ground floor of a first-class hotel.

It happened that one night, near the close of winter, Traverse lay awake on his soft bedstead, turning over in his mind how he should contrive to make both ends meet at the conclusion of the present term, and feeling as near despondency as it was possible for his buoyant and God-trusting soul to be, when there came a loud ringing at his office-bell.

This reminded him of the stirring days and nights of the preceding autumn. He started up at once to answer the summons.

"Who's there?"

"Is Doctor Rocke in?"

"Yes, what's wanted?"

"A gentleman, sir, in the house here, sir, taken very bad, wants the doctor directly, room number 555."

"Very well, I will be with the gentleman immediately," answered Traverse, plunging his head into a basin of cold water and drying it hastily.

In five minutes Traverse was in the office of the hotel, inquiring for a waiter to show him up into 555.

One was ordered to attend him, who led the way up several flights of stairs, and around divers galleries, until he opened a door and ushered the doctor immediately into the sick room.

There was a little, old, dried-up Frenchman in a blue night-cap, extended on a bed in the middle of the room, and covered with a white counterpane that clung close to his rigid form as to a corpse.

And there was a little, old, dried-up Frenchwoman in a brown merino gown and a high-crowned muslin cap, who hopped and chattered about the bed like a frightened magpie.

"Où! Monsieur le Docteur!" she screamed, jumping at Traverse in a way to make him start back; "Où, Monsieur le Docteur! I am vera happy you to see! Vada mon frere! Behold my brother! He is ill! he is vera ill! he is dead! he is vera dead!"

"I hope not," said Traverse, approaching the bed.

"Vada! Behold! Mon Dieu, he is vera still! he is vera cold! he is vera dead! what can you, mon frere, my brother to save?"

"Be composed, Madam, if you please, and allow me to examine my patient," said Traverse taking the wrist of the sick man.

"Ma foi! I know not what you speak to me. What can you my brother save?"

"Much, I hope, Madam, you must leave me to examine my patient and not interrupt me," said Traverse, passing his hand over the naked chest of the sick man.

"Mon Dieu! I know not 'exam' and 'interrupt' and I know what can you mon frere to save?"

"If you don't hush parley-voing, the doctor can't nothing, hum," said the waiter, in a respectful tone.

Traverse found his patient in a bad condition—in a stupor, if not in a state of positive insensibility. The surface of his body was cold as ice and apparently without the least vitality. If he was not, as his sister had expressed it, "very dead," he was certainly "next to it."

By close questioning, and by putting his questions in various forms, the doctor learned from the chattering little magpie of a Frenchwoman that the patient had been ill for nine days; that he had been under the care of Monsieur le Docteur Cartiere; that there had been a consultation of physicians; that they had prescribed for him and given him over; that le Docteur Cartiere still attended him, but was at this instant in attendance as accoucheur to a lady in extreme danger, whom he could not leave; but Docteur Cartiere had directed them, in his unavoidable absence, to call in the skillful, talented, and soon to be illustrious young Docteur Rocke, who was also near at hand.

The heart of Traverse thrilled with joy. The Lord had remembered him. His best skill spent upon the poor and needy who could make him no return, but whose lives he had succeeded in saving, had reached the ears of the celebrated Dr. C., who had with the unobtrusive magnanimity of real genius, quietly recommended him to his own patrons.

Oh! well, he would do his very best, not only to advance his own professional interests, and to please his mother and Clara, but also to do honor to the magnanimous Doctor C.'s recommendation.

Here, too, was an opportunity of putting in practice his favorite theory; but first of all, it was necessary to be informed of the preceding mode of treatment and its results.

So he further questioned the little, restless magpie, and by ingeniously framed inquiries, succeeded in gaining from her the necessary knowledge of his patient's antecedents. He examined all the medicines that had been used, and informed himself of their effects upon the disease. But the most serious difficulty of all, seemed to be, the impossibility of raising vital action upon the cold, dead skin.

The chattering little woman informed him that the patient had been covered with blisters that would not, "pull," that would not "declinate," that would not, what you call it—"draw."

Traverse could easily believe this,

for not only the skin, but the very flesh of the old Frenchman seemed bloodless and lifeless.

Now for his theory! what would kill a healthy man with perfect circulation, might save the life of this dying one, whose whole surface, inch deep, seemed already dead.

"Put him in a bath of mustard-water, as hot as you can bear your own hand in, and continue to raise the temperature slowly, watching the effect, for about five minutes. I will go down and prepare a cordial-draught to be taken the moment he gets back to bed," said Doctor Rocke, who immediately left the room.

His directions were all but too well obeyed. The bathing tub was quickly brought into the chamber and filled with water, as hot as the nurse could bear her hand in. Then the invalid was hastily invested in a slight bathing gown and lifted by two servants and laid in the hot bath.

"Now, bring quickly, water boiling," said the little, old woman, imperatively. And when a large copper kettle full was forthcoming, she took it and began to pour a stream of hissing, bubbling water in at the foot of the bath.

The skin of the torpid patient had been reddening for a few seconds, so as to prove that its sensibility was returning, and now when the stream from the kettle began to mix with the already very hot bath, and to raise its temperature almost to boiling, suddenly there was heard a cry from the bath, and the patient, with the agility of youth and health, skipped out of the tub and into his bed, kicking vigorously, and exclaiming:

"Brigades! assassins! you have scalded my legs to death!"

"Glory be to the Lord! he's saved!" cried one of the waiters, a devout Irishman.

"Ciel! he speaks! he moves! he lives! *mon frere!*" cried the little Frenchwoman, going to him.

"Ah, murders! handts! you've scalded me to death! I'll have you all before the commissaire!"

"He scolds! he threatens! he swears! he gets well! *mon frere!*" cried the old woman, busying herself to change his clothes and put on his flannel night-gown. They then tucked him up warmly in bed, and put bottles of hot water all around, to keep up this newly stimulation circulation.

At that moment Dr. Rocke came in, put his hand into the bath-tub, and could scarcely repress a cry of pain and of horror—the water scalded his fingers! what could it have done to the sick man!

"Good heaven, Madam! I did not tell you to par-boil your patient!" exclaimed Traverse, speaking to the old woman. Traverse was shocked to find how perilous his orders had been executed.

"Ah, bien, Monsieur! he lives! he does well! *Voilà mon frere!*" exclaimed the little old woman.

"It was true! the accidental 'boiling bath,' as it might also be called, had effected what perhaps no other means in the world could—a restored circulation.

The disease was broken up, and the convalescence of the patient was rapid. And as Traverse kept his own secret concerning the accidental high temperature of that bath, which every one considered a fearful and a successful experiment, the fame of Dr. Rocke spread over the whole city and country.

He would soon have made a fortune in New Orleans, had not the hand of destiny beckoned him elsewhere. It happened thus:

The old Frenchman whose life Traverse had partly by accident and partly by design succeeded in saving, comprehended perfectly well how narrow his escape from death had been, and attributed his restoration solely to the genius, skill, and boldness of his young physician, and was grateful accordingly with all a Frenchman's noisy non-observation.

He called Traverse his friend, his deliverer, his son!

One day, as soon as he found himself strong enough to think of pursuing his journey, he called his "son" into the room and explained to him that he, Doctor Pierre St. Jean, was the proprietor of a private Insane Asylum, very exclusive, very quiet, very aristocratic, indeed, receiving none but patients of the highest rank; that this retreat was situated on the wooded banks of a charming lake in one of the most healthy and beautiful neighborhoods of East Feliciana; that he had originally come down to the city to engage the services of some young physician of talent as his assistant, and finally, that he would be delighted, enraptured, if "his deliverer, his friend, his son," would accept the post.

Now, Traverse particularly wished to study the various phases of mental derangement, a department of his professional education that had hitherto been opened to him only through books.

He explained this to his old friend, the French physician, who immediately went off in ecstatic exclamations of joy as, "Good! Great! Grand!" and "I shall now repay my good child, my dear son, for his so excellent skill."

The terms of the engagement were soon arranged, and Traverse prepared to accompany his new friend to his "beautiful retreat," the private mad-house. But first Traverse wrote to his mother and Clara in Virginia, and also to Herbert Grevson in Mexico, to apprise them of his good fortune.

(To be Continued.)

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THOMAS C. WATKINS

Hamilton, May 20th, 1882