STORIES FROM THE DIARY OF A DOCTOR.

THE STRANGE CASE OF CAPTAIN GASCOIGNE.

"There is no immediate danger," I said to Captain Gascoigne," but your father has evidently set his heart on something. He has a fixed idea—so fixed and persistent that his mind will turn to nothing else. Is it not possible," I continued abruptly, "to give him relief?"

"In short to do what he wishes?" said Captain Gascoigne. "No, that is impossible. The subject can't even be talked over," he continued. "Now, gentlemen," he added, looking from Lumsden to me, "I think dinner is ready."

We went into the dining-room and seated ourselves at the table. A huge log fire burned in the grate. The massively-furnished room looked the picture of winter comfort; nevertheless, I don't think any of us had much appetite—there was a sense of tragedy even in the very air. After dinner, as we were sitting over wine, Dr. Lumsden's conversation and mine turned upon medical matters; Captain Gascoigne, who had been silent and depressed during the meal, took up a copy of the Times and began to read. Dr. Lumsden asked me one or two questions with regard to recent discoveries in preventive medicines. We touched lightly on many subjects of interest to medical men like ourselves, and I did not suppose for a moment that Captain Gascoigne listened to a word of our conversation. He rose presently, and told us that he was going to find out how his father was now. When he returned to the room, I was telling Lumsden of one or two interesting cases which I had lately come across in my hospital practice.

"I am certain," I said, "that inoculation with attenuated virus is to be the future treatment of many of our great diseases."

Captain Gascoigne had come half across the room. When I said these words he stood as motionless as if something had turned him into stone. I raised my head, and our eyes suddenly met. I observed a startled, interested expression on his face. Quick as lightning an idea came to me. I turned my eyes away and continued, with vigour:—

"Such inoculation is, without doubt, the future treatment for consumption. Even granted that Dr. Koch's theory has failed, there is every reason to hope that in that direction the real cure lies. The new antitoxin treatment of diphtheria proves the same thing; even now there are not unknown cases where certain forms of cancer have been completely eradicated—in short, the poison eliminated from the body by means of inoculation."

"We medical men accept such theories very slowly," said Dr. Lumsden. "It will be many years before we can confidently employ them."

"Why not, if by so doing you can cure disease?" said Captain Gascoigne, abruptly.

We both looked at him when he spoke.

"Why not if you can cure disease?" he repeated.

"Why not?" repeated Dr. Lumsden—"because we doctors dare not run risks. Why, sir, we should be responsible for the deaths of our patients if we attempted to use means of cure which were not proven, in short, established by long precedent."

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "I can't attempt to argue with you. It is my firm belief, however, that the general run of medical practitioners are overcautious. I allude, of course, to cases which are supposed under the ordinary treatment to be hopeless. Surely if the patient wishes to try the chance of a comparatively immature discovery, it is allowable for him to do so?"

"Such a case is uncommon," I replied; "as a rule, the sick man prefers to go upon the beaten track—in other words, does not trouble himself about the treatment of his disease, leaving it entirely to his doctor."

"How have you found the patient, captain?" interrupted Dr. Lumsden.

"Asleep, but restless—the nurse thinks there is an increase of fever."

"I will go and see for myself," I said, rising.

My conversation with Lumsden was broken up, and was not again resumed. We both spent an anxious night with the patient, whose case was the reverse of satisfactory. As the hours flew on, the restless wanderings of mind seemed to increase rather than diminish. The fixed idea of an immediate marriage for his son was again and again alluded to by the sick man. He was restless when Captain Gascoigne went out of the room. When he was present he was even more restless, calling him to his side many times, and asking him in strained, irritable tones if the special license had been applied for, and if Helen—as he called her—was in the house.

Towards morning the delirious and excited state of the patient became so alarming that I felt certain that if nothing were done to relieve him, fresh hemorrhage of the brain would set in. I went out of the room, motioning Captain Gascoigne to follow me.

"I fear," I said, "that the evident anxiety from which your father is suffering in acting prejudicially. In short, unless something can be done to relieve him, I most modify the favorable opinion which I have already given you of his case. Unless his mind is immediately relieved, he may have another attack before many hours have gone by. Such an attack will be, in all probability, fatal."

I looked hard at the captain as I spoke. He had folded his arms, and stood very erect facing me.

"What do you propose?" he said, abruptly.

"You have evidently given him distress," I said. "Can you not reconsider the position?"

He gave a short, irritable laugh. "Good heavens, doctor," he exclaimed, "don't you suppose I am man enough to accede to my father's wish, if it were possible? Can you not see for yourself that the present state of affairs is agony to me?"

"I am certain of it," I replied. "I must not urge you futher. The fact is, Lumsden has told me something of your story. Only a very grave cause would make you refuse to fulfil your engagement with Miss Lynwood."

"You are right. The cause is very grave."

"You can't tell me what it is? It is possible that I might be able to counsel you."

"Thanks; but I am past counsel—the end is inevitable—unless, indeed,—but, no—I must not bring myself to entertain hope. The person now to be considered is my father. You say, doctor, that if his wish in this matter is not gratified, he will die?"

"It seems extremely like it," I said. "He has evidently set his heart on your marriage—in his present diseased state the longing to see you married has become a mania."

"There is nothing whatever for me to do then," he said, "but to lie to him."

"I would scarcely do that," I exclaimed.

"Yes you would, if you were me. I must pledge myself; he must be saved. Not another word—my mind is made up."

He left me before I could expostulate further, and returned to the sick room. The old man's arms were flung out over the bed clothes—he was muttering to himself and pulling feebly at the sheets.

Captain Gascoigne went and sat down by the bed—he laid one of his hands on his father's, holding it firmly down.

"Listen to me," he said, in a low voice. "I have reconsidered everything. I alter my determination not to marry. I swear now, before Heaven, that if I live I will marry Helen Lynwood."

"Do you mean it, Dick?" said Sir Robert.

"On my honour, yes, father; I have spoken."

"Good boy—good boy; this is a relief. That queer scruple about your health is laid to rest, then?"

"Quite, father. If I live, Helen shall be my wife."

"You never told me a lie yet, Dick—you are speaking the truth now?"

"On my honour," said the soldier.

He looked his father full in the eyes. The sick man gave a pleased smile and patted his son's hand.

"I believe you, Dick," he said; "I am quite satisfied—when can the marriage take place?"

"We need not fix a date to-night, need we?"

"No, no; I trust you, Dick."

"Perhaps, sir, you will try and sleep now—your mind being at rest."

"Yes, my mind is quite at rest," said the baronet—"Dick never told me a lie in his life—thank the Almighty for His goodness, I shall live to see my grandchildren about the old place—yes, I am sleepy—I don't want a composing draught—keep at my side, Dick, until I drop off. We'll have Helen here early in the morning—how happy she will be, poor little girl—I should like to see Helen as soon as I awake."

The patient kept on mumbling in a contented, soothed voice—all trace of irritation had left his voice and manner. In less than half an hour he was sound asleep. He slept well during the night, and in the morning was decidedly better—the anxious symptoms had abated, and I had every hope of his making a quick recovery.

One of his first inquiries were for Miss Lynwood.

"I am going to fetch her," said the captain.

I saw him drive off in the dog-cart. In about an hour and a half he returned with the young lady. I was standing by the patient's side when she came in. She was dressed in furs, and wore a small fur cap over her bright hair. The drive had brought a fresh colour to her cheeks—her eyes sparkled. She entered the room in the alert way which I had observed about her when I saw her for a moment on the previous day. She went straight up to the sick man and knelt down by his side.

"Well, dad," she said, "you see, it is all right."

"I marvelled at her tone—it was full of joy. Had Captain Gascoigne told her the truth? Or had he, by any chance, tried to deceive this beautiful girl, in order more effectually to aid his father's recovery? Watching her more closely, however, I saw that she was brave enough to play a difficult part.

"Yes, Helen, it is all right," said the baronet. "Dick is well, and has come to his senses. That illness of his turned out to be a false alarm—he had an attack of nerves, nothing more. We'll have a gay wedding in a few days, little girl."

"You must get well," she answered, patting his cheek. "Remember, nothing can be done until you are well."

"Bless you, child, I shall be well fast enough. Your face and Dick's would make any man well. Where is that nurse? Why doesn't she bring me food—I declare I'm as hungry as a hawk. Ah, doctor, you there?" continued the baronet, raising his eyes and fixing them on my face. "Remember, you didn't cure me. It was Dick's doing, not yours. Dick, bless him, has set the old man right."

I left the room abruptly. Captain Gascoigne met me on the landing.

"You play your part well," I said; "but what about the denoument?"

"I have considered everything," said the captain. "I shall keep my word. If I live I will marry."

I looked at him in astonishment. A glance showed me that he did not mean to confide further in me then, and I soon afterwards returned to town. Lumsden promised to write to report the patient's progress; and, much puzzled as to the ultimate issue of this queer story, I resumed my town work. I arrived in London early in the afternoon, and went immediately to visit some patients. When I returned to my own house it was dinner-time. The first person I met in the hall was Captain Gascoigne.

"Have you bad news?" I cried, in astonishment. "Is there a change for the worse?"

"No, no, nothing of the sort," was the reply. "My father mends rapidly. The fact is, I have come to see you on my own account. In short, I have made up my mind to consult you."

"I am right glad to hear it," I answered, heartily. "You must join me at dinner now, and afterwards we will go carefully into your case."

"I am anxious to catch the night mail back to Wolverton," said the captain; "but, doubtless, you can spare an hour to me after dinner, and that, I am sure, will be quite sufficient."

During the meal which followed, Captain Gascoigne was silent and distrait. I did not interrupt him with many remarks, but as soon as it was over we went straight to the point.

"Now," he said, "I will tell you what is up. I had made up my mind to carry my secret to the grave. The strange state of affairs at 'The Priory,' however has induced me to break this resolve. I have a double reason for confiding in you, Dr. Halifax. First, because of what occurred last night—second, in consequence of some words which you let drop in conversation with Dr. Lumsden. These words seemed very strange to me at the time, but the more I think over them, the more anxious I am to talk further with you on tthe subject. In short, they have inspired me with the ghost of a hope."

"What is the matter with you?" I said, abruptly. "W hat is your malady?"

The captain had been seated—he now stood up.

"Help me off with this coat, doctor, if you will," he said.

I removed it carefully, but notwithstanding all my precautions I saw him wince as I touched his right arm.

"You notice this hand," he said, holding out his right hand as he spoke; "you noticed it the other day when I was driving?"

"Yes," I replied; "it is much swollen."

"It is. That could be set down to gout or rheumatism, could it not?"

"It could," I answered; "it has, doubtless, another cause."

"It has, Dr. Halifax. You shall examine my terrible disease for yourself—but first let me tell you what ails me."

He leant against the mantelpiece as he spoke—his face was very white. One or two beads of perspiration stood prominently out on his forehead. When he began to speak he looked straight at me with a frown between his eyes.

"God knows I never meant to whine about this to anyone," he said; "I meant to take it as a man—it was the state of the old governor and Helen's grief and her wonderful bravery that upset me. Well, here's the case. You must know that my mother died of cancer—the thing was hushed up, but the fact remains she suffered horribly. I recollect her last days even now. I was a small boy at the time. The dread of cancer—of having inherited such a fearful disease has haunted me more or less all my life. Two or three years ago in India I had a bad fall from my horse. I came down with great weight upon my right shoulder. The stiffness and soreness remained for some time, and then they passed away. A year later the stiffness and soreness began to return—my shoulder-bone began to to thicken—I could only move it with difficulty. I consulted some doctors who set down the whole affection to rheumatism, and gave me ordinary liniments. The pain did not abate, but grew worse. The shoulder began to swell and soon afterwards the arm, right down, as you see, to my finger-tips. These painful symptoms set in about six months ago. I was expected home, and all the arrangements for my wedding were complete. I was seized, however, with forebodings. As soon as ever I landed in England, I went to see the well-known specialist for tumors, Sir John Parkes. He was not long in giving his verdict. It was concisive and conclusive. He said I was suffering from osteosarcoma of the shoulder—that the disease was advanced, that the removal of the entire arm and shoulder-bone might save my life, but the disease was in such a position involving the bones of the shoulder girdle, and having already invaded the glands, that the probabilities were almost certain that it would return. I had a bad quarter of an hour with the surgeon. I went away, spent the night in town, and quickly made up my mind how to act. I would break off my engagement and go from home to die. I shrank inexpressibly from my father or Miss Lynwood knowing the exact nature of my sufferings. It would be necessary to tell them that the state of my health forbade matrimony, but I firmly resolved that they should never know by what horrible disease I was to die. That is the case in brief, doctor."

(To be Continued.)

IS THE MOON INHABITED?

The Probabilities Are That It Is Not—It Has No Atmosphere.

It is impossible, of course, for us to know anything positively concerning the question whether the moon is or is not inhabited. However, the astronomers long since generally agreed that the probabilities are altogether against such a supposition. In coming to this unanimous conclusion the astronomers did not express themselves thus positively without making provisions for extraordinary conditions that might exist on the face of fair Luna. So in recording their disbelief in the idea that the shining planet is inhabited, they did so by saying: "If inhabited at all, it is certainly not peopled by beings similar to those existing on the surface of our globe." The strongest presumption against the existence of animal life on the moon is found in the fact that "our silvery sister world" has no atmosphere. If she has an atmosphere at all, and such is hardly likely, it is not of sufficient density to support animal life even in its lowest forms. The proof of the nonexistence of a lunar atmosphere is found in the fact that the planet viewed through a telescope shows no haze or dimness on the edge of its disk, and, secondly, when the moon intervenes between us and the more distant heavenly bodies there is not the least trace of refraction visible. The conclusion, therefore, is that the moon is without either an atmosphere or animal inhabitants.

Insult to Injury.

I could stand all his ill treatment, moaned the bruised and beaten wife.

I would say nothing about this awful bump he has raised on my head. But—

And here she sobbed as though her heart would break.

He has not got it on straight!

She signed the complaint.

DIGGING FOR KIDD'S GOLD.

A COMPANY WITH $60,000 CAPITAL ORGANIZED.

An Old Shaft, Into Which Some Confident Treasure Seekers Have Been Burrowing for Above a Century, is Now to Be Examined Thoroughly.

It seems odd that just at the dawn of the twentieth century a regularly incorporated company with a capital of $60,000 should be working night and day to recover the buried treasures of Capt. Kidd. Yet that is what the Oak Island Treasure Company is doing at Oak Island in Mahone Bay on the southeast coast of Nova Scotia. A score of men are digging away under the direction of a superintendent. The company does not claim that the treasure it is striving for was buried necessarily by Capt. Kidd, but that it was buried years ago by pirates.

Oak Island is scarcely a mile long and perhaps half a mile wide. It rises gradually from the water's edge until near the centre, at the highest point, it is [illegible] feet above the sea level. There is rather a sparse growth of scrubby oak at the eastern end. The formation of the island is hard clay. The only buildings to be seen are an old farmhouse and a little shanty occupied by the superintendent of the works. The "works" comprise three or four pits and a queer rig suggestive of the Southern cotton gin. A horse walks around in a circle harnessed to a pole. This pole connects with a primitive windlass. Thus are the barrels of dirt and mud, but so far no money, brought from the pits to the surface. Here is the story of the hidden treasure as told by Adam Tupper, the superintendent:

"Much fiction has been written concerning great sums of money and vast quantities of jewels buried by pirates some 200 years ago somewhere along the Atlantic coast. I deal only with facts as stated by men now living who had a hand in them or as told to them by men now dead.

"About the close of the last century this part of the country was very sparsely populated, and Oak Island was without an inhabitant. In 1795 three men—Smith, McGinnis, and Vaughn—visited the island, and while rambling over the eastern part of it, came to a spot of which the unusual and strange conditions at once attracted their attention. Vaughn himself, who was

ONLY A LAD OF 16

at this time, subsequently related these facts to Robert Creelman, who still lives at Upper Stewiacke, Nova Scotia, and who was afterward the manager of a company formed to recover the treasure. This spot had every appearance of having been cleared many years before. Red clover and other plants altogether foreign to the soil in its natural state were growing. Near the centre stood a large oak tree with marks and figures on its trunk. One of the lower and larger branches of this, the outer end of which had been sawed off, projected directly over the centre of a deep circular depression in the land about thirteen feet in diameter. These and other signs shortly after led the three men named to commence work.

"After an interval of six or seven years, accounts of the wonderful discoveries had spread over the province, and Dr. Lynds, a young physician of Truro, Nova Scotia, visited the island and interviewed Smith, Vaughn, and McGinnis. On his return to Truro a company was formed for the purpose of continuing the search. Work was at once resumed by this company, and the shaft was excavated to a depth of ninety-five feet. Marks were found every ten feet as before, and an iron bar was frequently used in taking soundings. The ninety-foot mark was a flat stone about three feet long and sixteen inches wide. On it marks or characters had been cut. Afterward it was placed in the jamb of a fireplace that Mr. Smith was building in his house, and while there was viewed by many people. Years afterward it was taken out of the chimney and removed to Halifax to have, if possible, the characters deciphered. One expert gave his reading of the inscription to be: "Ten feet below are two million pounds buried." I give his statement for what it is worth. It is not claimed that this is the correct interpretation, but it has never been disputed. Until the depth of ninety-five feet was reached no water had been encountered, neither had sand or gravel through which water could possibly filter been met. It was Saturday evening when this depth had been reached, and it was at this point that

A WOODEN PLATFORM

was struck, extending over the entire surface of the shaft, as revealed by the soundings.

"Until 1849 nothing was done in the direction of recovering the treasure, but in that year a new company was formed, and operations were resumed at the old stand. At this time two of the old diggers, namely, Dr. Lynds of Truro and Mr. Vaughn of Western Shore, were still alive, and gave the managers much valuable information regarding the old workings. Mr. Vaughn quickly located the site of the 'money pit,' which in the mean time had been filled up. Digging was commenced, and went on without interruption until the depth of eighty-six feet had been reached, when the water again put in appearance and the men were driven out of the pit.

"After an unsuccessful attempt to bail the water out work was suspended the men returned to their homes. Shortly after, men with boring apparatus of primitive description, used in prospecting for coal, were sent to the island. J. B. McCully of Truro, who is still living and can vouch for these facts, was manager. A platform was rigged in the 'money pit' thirty feet below the surface and just above the water. The boring started, the platform was struck at ninety-eight feet, just as the old diggers found it when sounding with the iron bar. After going through this platform, which was five inches thick, and proved to be spruce, the auger dropped twelve inches and then went through four inches of oak; then it went through twenty-two inches of metal in pieces, but the auger failed to take any of it in except three links, resembling an ancient watch chain. It then went through eight inches of oak, which was thought to be the bottom of the first box and the top of the next; then six inches of spruce; then into clay seven feet without striking anything else.

"In next boring the platform was struck as before at ninety-eight feet; passing through this, the auger fell about eighteen inches and came in contact with, as supposed, the

SIDE OF A CASK.

The flat chisel revolving close to the side of the cask gave it a jerky and irregular motion. On withdrawing the auger several splinters of oak, such as might come from the side of an oak stave, and a small quantity of a brown fibrous substance closely resembling the husk of a cocoanut were brought up. The distance between the upper and lower platforms was found to be six feet.

"Not satisfied with the result of the last boring, another crew, of which James Pitblado was foreman, was sent to make further investigations, with practically the same result as before. John Gammell of Upper Stewiacke, who was present at the boring and who was a large shareholder, stated that he saw Pitblado take something out of the auger, wash, and examine it closely, then put it in his pocket. When asked by Gammell to show what it was, he declined, and said he would show it at the meeting of directors on their return, but Pitblado failed to appear at the meeting. It was subsequently reported that Pitblado had made some revelations to the then manager of the Acadia Iron Works at Londonderry, Nova Scotia, which revelations led the manager to make a determined but unsuccessful effort to get possession of that part of the island where the treasure is believed to be. But as he was a few years later called to England, and Pitblado mean time had been accidentally killed in a gold mine, nothing further came of it.

"Work was not resumed until the following summer, 1850, when a new shaft was sunk at the west side of the 'money pit,' and about ten feet from it. This shaft was 109 feet deep, and was through the hardest kind of red clay. A tunnel was driven from the bottom in the direction of the 'money pit.' Just before reaching that point the water burst in and the workmen fled for their lives. In twenty minutes there was forty-five feet of water in the new pit. The sole object in view in sinking this shaft was to increase the bailing facilities, for which purpose preparations had been made, and bailing was resumed in both the new and old pits, each being equipped with two-horse gins. Work was carried on

NIGHT AND DAY

for about a week, but all in vain, the only difference being that with the doubled appliances the water could be kept at a lower level that formerly. About this time the discovery was made that the water was salt, and that it rose and fell in both shafts about eighteen inches, corresponding with the tides.

"It was considered extremely improbable that the flow of water came through a natural, it must be through an artificial one, having its inlet somewhere on the shore. In support of the theory that the water did not enter the 'money pit' through a natural channel, it was argued that had it done so the original diggers must have struck it, and, if they did, it is certain that the workmen would have been driven from the pit by the great flow of water, and the shaft would necessarily have been abandoned. This evidently was not the case, as there is ample evidence from the fact that the wooden platforms were carefully placed in position at the bottom of the shaft, as well as the fact that the shaft had been systematically filled up, with marks placed at every ten feet. Acting on this theory, a search was at once begun in order to find such an inlet.

"Smith's Cove, on the eastern end of the island and about thirty rods from the 'money pit,' was first examined by reason of its many natural advantages as a starting point for work of this kind, and from the fact that at about the centre of this cove it had always been noticed that at low tide water was running out of the sand. Investigations were begun at this point, and the result of a few minutes' shovelling proved beyond a doubt that they had struck the place they were looking for. After removing the sand and gravel covering the beach, they came to a covering or bed of a brown, fibrous plant the fibre very much resembling the husk of a cocoanut, and when compared with the plant that was bored out of the 'money pit,' no difference in the two could be detected. However, it was subsequently proved to be

A TROPICAL PLANT

in former times used as 'dunnage in stowing ship's cargo. The surface covered by this plant extended 145 feet along the shore line, and from a little above low to high water mark, and about two inches in thickness. Underlying this and to the same extent was about four or five inches of decayed eel grass, and under this was a compact mass of beach rocks free from sand or gravel.

"It was found impracticable to remove these rocks and make further investigations unless the tide was kept back. Accordingly a coffer dam was built around this part of the cove, including the boundaries, but an unusually high tide overflowed the top of the dam, and as it had not been constructed to resist pressure from the inside, when the tide receded it was carried away. Other pits were dug, but they, too, soon filled with water, and for the time the work was given up.

"Not long ago a young man found on the island a copper coin weighing an ounce and a half, dated 1317, on which were various strange devices. Some years ago a boatswain's stone whistle was also found on the island, of a very ancient pattern, but it was accidentally broken by the finder and was thrown away.

"It is perfectly evident that the great mistake thus far has been in attempting to 'bail out' the ocean through the various pits. Our company uses modern appliances for cutting off the flow of water through the tunnel at a point near the shore. We are getting on finely with the work, and from the present outlook it won't be many months before the secret of the 'money pit' is solved."

That is the story of Oak Island—one side of it. There is another side, a story of clairvoyants and divining rods being called in play to locate the mythical treasure. It's a story, too, of ironical smiles, scoffing, mean hints about some men making a good thing out of a hole in the ground, but it's just as well not to tell it. Only it is sad to think that the very people who hold this pessimistic, narrow view are among the old residents of Chester