

The Sealed Locket

(Continued.)

Everything being arranged, Arthur Tremont, with a heavy heart, started for California to spend his winter in the temperate climate of the Pacific coast, while Mrs. Desmond took up her two-fold duties of nurse and mother, a task far from light with the three little ones to care for. Still there was peace and contentment in her heart, more deep than she had known for many days. It was a great deal to know there was one true soul in the world who read her heart aright; who had faith in her as a woman, and trusted her as friend. Nevertheless, the strain on her constitution was heavy; the two babies to nurse was no light task, and to this was added the care of her home and the boy of two years old. Bravely she persevered and kept up well. She made but few friends, seldom went anywhere or saw anyone, but lived alone with her children in peace and quietness as far as the world was concerned, and the insinuations of the virtuous scandal-mongers and feminine Judases of Briarton gradually found fewer listeners, till at last they almost forgot to talk of her, being able by careful watch and faithful misinterpretation of appearances to find fresh fields for their virtuous cant and hypocritical back-biting.

And as their listeners tired of hearing more against the well-behaved widow they naturally sought more interesting victims.

So the winter wore away and Briarton was once more agog with gushing maidens in their pretty spring costumes. Two or three times had the widow received short letters from the Doctor enquiring after the health and welfare of the children and asking if she needed any more money for their care and maintenance. Each time she had replied that his little ones were doing well and growing finely, and that she was greatly attached to them. She had added in one letter that her own little girl seemed not to be very strong and gave her more anxiety all the time. She seemed very delicate and was not nearly as strong as Nellie, and though two months the elder, any person would think hers was the younger of the two.

Shortly after this the Doctor wrote to Mrs. Desmond saying his health continued better in the western climate and that he had concluded to accept an offer of a partnership from another physician in the town where he had been staying if she could take care of the children for two or three years more. The Doctor had begun to wonder why he had received no reply to this, when a letter came from a friend in Briarton which rendered a surprising and painful explanation. It read as follows:

My Dear Dr. Tremont,
I find upon enquiry that you are probably uninformed of what happened in this town but a short time since in connection with your children and their devoted—governess—shall I say? I will try to give you all the particulars, but first let me assure you that your little ones are well and getting along nicely. I wish I could say the same of all. But to begin at the beginning: About three weeks ago there was an alarm of fire one night, and upon investigation it proved to be the house of Mrs. Desmond. It was about midnight; cold, blowing hard, and raining; a bad night I can assure you. They were asleep and all unconscious of their danger till aroused by the neighbors, when there was barely time for them to escape with their lives.

Mrs. Desmond sprang from their bed, and without time even to gather her clothes, caught up a blanket, and quickly throwing it around the two babies, rushed from the street with them in her arms, bidding the young man who had aroused her, bring the boy, at the same time nodding towards the crib where he lay.

In almost less time than it takes to tell it she reached the street in the cold storm, and at once ran to a neighbor's door with the two children. As she stepped inside, she turned to look for the young fellow whom she supposed to be following with your little boy, and to her horror discovered that he was not to be seen, having doubtless mistaken what she had said to him. Quickly laying the two helpless babes on the floor she flew back to her burning house, carrying the blanket with her. It was now a mass of flames, and none dared enter the roaring furnace. She attempted to do so but the crowd held her back. By this time the fire engine had arrived and began to play on the flames. Running to where a little pool of water had formed on the side of the street, she rolled her blanket in it, and wrapping it, dripping, about her scant-clad form, she again rushed for the burning building. Again one of the men detained her, but with an agonizing cry, she implored him to release her, saying, "I promised the Doctor to protect his child as though I were its mother, and what will a mother not dare for her own? God help me and I'll save him yet!" and with one desperate effort she broke from his grasp, and before anyone could realize her purpose she plunged into the smoking, blazing room. My God, Doctor! it was a sight of which I hope I never shall see the like. With the dripping blanket over and around her she crouched low and darted forward through the blinding smoke. The hissing tongues of flame sprang forward upon her as a monster eager for its prey, and then darted back again as though mad at being foiled by the wet blanket; then again they leaped forward to strike her, and again, baffled, recoiled; while the smoke rose in a solid wall before her.

"The hose! The hose!" shouts the captain. "Follow her with the hose, boys! Carefully now my men, carefully!" Deep and sonorous roll the tones from his speaking trumpet, and instantly the nozzle is swung around and the rushing jet of water crashes into the room above her head and the broken spray falls in a deluge

around her. "Carefully, my boys, carefully! Follow her with it, but for God's sake be careful not to strike her!" again rolls from the trumpet, while the stream rises and falls and swings from right to left, from left to right, above and around her, but never once does the steady hand of the man at the nozzle, slip or waver, nor the stream strike her as she hurries forward. All stand breathless and immovable as statues, with eyes staring as in a trance, at the slender, heroic figure, pressing steadily deeper into the seething hell of flame. Not a sound is heard save the roar of the fire, the quick throb of the engine, and the blood-freezing hiss of the angry flames as it bites and strikes in its mad fury at its death-enemy, the invading water. It is a thrilling and fearful war of the two elements, but gradually the flames give way and begin to retire from the conflict. And now a cry of despair breaks from the pent bosoms of the breathless crowd, for she has crossed the room, and entered the doorway of the bedroom. "Poor, poor child!" murmurs one, "So brave but so foolish; they will die together!" "A true woman and a true heroine!" whispers half a dozen voices in chorus. But see—again the crowd is hushed in smothered silence, and gazing spell-bound at that doorway, for there, crouching low and creeping slowly and painfully back to life and safety, folding closely to her bosom in the dripping blanket, her precious burden, for which she has played so desperate a part, comes that same heroic figure. "Tis a fearful battle with death, with the chances terribly against her. Slowly still, and more painfully now, she creeps on; her breath is beginning to fail, and comes only in great convulsive sobs; her face is biliated with the awful heat; sparks and cinders are falling upon her and burning deep in countless places; the steam from the wet and heated blanket seems to scald as a boiling caldron; her eyes are burning hot, blood-shot and blinded with heat and smoke; she can see no longer; blood is beginning to ooze from between her parched lips, yet still she struggles on. Then the stream from the engine plays in a cooling spray upon her and sustained her a little, as painfully she creeps blindly forward over the cinder-strewn and smoking floor. The giddy walls begin to rock and totter to and fro; the ceiling sags above her! Another moment and all is lost—but see she is not alone. One of the firemen is by her side. When she reappeared through the doorway and despair gave place to hope, he sprang forward, and plunged into the reeling ruins, to reach her now just as a falling door-casing strikes her on the head; with a groan she sinks forward, helpless and senseless, while a convulsive cry of horror breaks from the surging crowd. Then she is caught up in his arms and borne forth to safety, unless indeed, she has already sacrificed her life. The boy, at least, is safe; and as the throng realize that the fireman is bearing her forth in his strong arms, all their intense restrained emotion breaks forth in one long deep cheer which no pen can describe in its intensity, and a murmured "Thank God!" rises from the throats of hundreds.

And this noble woman is the one who has been many times mentioned with suspicion and gazed at askance! Now, when perhaps too late, all are anxious to do her honor.

I know, Doctor, that you will be truly thankful that after her heroic efforts in your behalf her life has thus far been spared, though I grieve to say it is still in danger. But after all it is sad to think that her own little child should not have been spared to her, but the poor little thing has died from the effects of that night's exposure to the cold and wet. The mother has had a violent fever and been in delirium ever since she came out of her swoon that night, so she knows nothing of what has happened yet, though her baby is dead and buried. Yours are doing well and are being well cared for, so you need give yourself no uneasiness on that account. Everything possible will be done for the poor noble woman. I shall write again soon and tell you how she is progressing.

Ever Yours faithfully,
J. A. HALLON.

As bends the oak beneath the blast, so swayed the heart of Dr. Tremont beneath the tempest of his conflicting emotions as he read this letter, the first intimation he had received of all that had happened. Thankful joy and deepest sorrow, admiration and pity, sympathy and wonderment, all clamoring for supremacy in his heart as he read on, one and then another alternately gaining precedence. Then as the thought of his little boy lying helpless in this crib, a prey to a most horrible death but for the heroism of a woman, settled before him, his cheek paled with contemplation of it; then a great sigh of gratitude towards the rescuer escaped his lips—his eyes moistened, and with bowed head he murmured brokenly: "God bless her noble soul, and, O Lord! why must she suffer thus as a recompense?"

Ah, why! How impatiently do we all repeat that question, "Why!" Demanding the why and wherefore for every petty ill from Him whose infinite wisdom is vast enough to people endless space with shining worlds as thickly as nature with daisies decks the meadows. Still are we loath to trust Him with one little "Why."
Then the one thought filled his mind; "My darlings are safe," and with that a great throb of joy filled his heart. We nearly all have a streak of brute selfishness about us that seems to be quite natural and, under some circumstances, even pardonable. The Doctor's first thought was to write a reply to his friend, thanking him for his kindness and asking him to kindly see that nothing was wanting that money could procure for the sufferer's comfort, to which end he enclosed a bank draft for one hundred dollars.

Then in the evening he wrote to the widow trusting consciousness would have returned before the letter should reach her. He wrote—"My dear Mrs. Desmond—

It is with emotions I cannot attempt to describe that I turn to my desk to write you this letter. I have just today received an account of the terrible misfortune that has overtaken you which is the first intimation I have had that anything unusual had happened.

My friend Hallon has written me all; your heroic rescue of my little boy; your subsequent bitter loss of your child, and the long and painful illness to yourself.

My heart is too full for words, and I can only breathe, May God bless and comfort you and give you the reward that is your due, which mortal is powerless to bestow!

All the truest sympathy and the gratitude of my heart is yours; yet I will not pretend that I can estimate the depth of your sorrow, though I can perhaps feel a throb of its intensity when I think what my own pain would have been but for your noble and heroic efforts. While my heart truly aches for you in your grief, I will not be so false to my manhood, nor so niggardly toward you, as to suggest that my sorrow can be compared to yours, or to try to conceal the selfishly human joy I feel at knowing my darlings are safe, thanks to you; though God knows my joy is deeply tempered with pain, and it seems only justice that it should have been my loss instead of yours. And, dear friend, rest assured He will know how to sustain you in the dark hour and comfort you in your sore need, and reward you for your heroic unselfishness that, really, I am almost unable to comprehend.

Oh I hope you may be far toward recovery before this reaches you! I believe you considered me your friend before, as I know I have ever meant to be, but now I must beg you to allow me by all ways in my power to be your true friend and help in any hour of need. Come to me at any time and demand any service I can render you, and, believe me, it will be ever my joy to help you, as a slight expression of the deep debt of gratitude I shall ever owe you.

Please let me know at once what you wish me to do with the two children; and I will either arrange to come home and take care of them or have them brought out here, if you wish to be relieved of them though I need not say how much I should prefer to have them in your charge still, if it be not asking you for still further sacrifice. Few friends, and true, are perhaps best; then may I not be yours? As soon as you are strong enough, write me a long, long letter—'twill ease the pain to talk to some one if you can—and tell me all. I shall be very anxious to hear from you, and when the night is dark and the world is cold and lonely—when your heart is sad, as well I know it often will be—remember that you still have a friend, and write to me from your heart as to a brother, counsellor, friend; and believe me ever, Your devoted servant,
ARTHUR TREMONT.

When this letter reached its destination, Mr. Desmond was sleeping quietly. Truant consciousness had returned to her home some days before, and strength gradually gained.

The doctor, who had just called to see her, said he thought she might as well be told when she awoke. "She must know some time and as well now as later, I suppose," he said in his gruff but kindly way. "I think she is strong enough to bear it safely, and the more strength, the more rebellion."

She had been kept under the delusion that the children were all well, but her anxious requests to see them was met with a firm refusal, pleading as a reason that she was not yet strong enough.

It was a bright, cheerful afternoon when she awoke on the day mentioned; and, after giving her a little nourishment, they handed her the letter, not knowing of the message it was to convey to the sufferer. In perplexed wonderment she began to read, then her face grew deathly in its pallor, her eyes dilated wildly, her breath came in quick, hard gasps, she half raised on her elbow as though to see it the clearer; then, as she realized its terrible import, the paper fell from her nerveless hand, and a shudder shook the wasted form as she cried brokenly "Tis false! It cannot be! My darling! My darling! Who dares say she is dead?" She started up with a sudden effort, and, fixing a gaze of feverish intensity on the face of the nurse, she cried in a tone hoarse and ghastly, "Tell me it is not true! Tell me my child is alive and well! Speak, for God's sake, speak, and tell me 'tis but a dream!" Then she read, with quick perception, in the face of the nurse, the truth, for which she vainly sought denial, and, with a great bitter cry of anguish, she sank back among the pillows, murmuring brokenly, "Why, Oh, why, have I been so deceived? It was cruel, it was wicked! O God! Is this my recompense?" she groaned. "Have I not suffered enough before? Didst Thou grant my prayer for strength to save his boy only to reward me thus? Oh, I would to God I had never awakened to this pain!" With one long, low, heart-broken wail of more than human anguish—a sound like the low wind moaning to the fretful surf—she turned and buried her face in the pillow to shut the light from her aching eyes that burned so in their quenchless, tearless agony.

To Be Continued.

A WONDERFUL DOLLHOUSE.
An imported dollhouse is about five feet in length and four feet in height; it has three stories, including one story in a French roof, and it contains eight rooms and two halls. Among the rooms there is a parlor, library, dining room, nursery and a kitchen, and there are also three bedrooms. The rooms are handsomely and completely furnished, and the whole house is lighted by electric lights. There are tiny incandescent electric lamps in every room. These are controlled by switches by means of which the lights may be turned on and off at pleasure. This dollhouse sells at \$125.

The Home

HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNTS.

Accounts in every household should be regularly kept, not an omission of the smallest article being permitted. They should be balanced at least every month; at the end of every week is better, says a correspondent in an exchange. Some methodical women fix on stated sums to be appropriated for different purposes—household, clothes, education of children and pin money, for the last sum is necessary to cover the many little incidentals, like car fare, the purchase of a magazine, charity contributions or club dues. Whatever the appropriation it is never exceeded. Want of arrangement means loss of time, which can never be regained. Order and punctuality are great economists of time, and cannot be too highly estimated. I cannot give unvarying rules, as circumstances deal largely with every woman's life, and the size of one's income is an important factor. But I can give general rules which will be of advantage to all.

It is very necessary for the mistress of a household to be informed of the prices and goodness of all articles in common use, and of the best places and times to purchase. She should know the comparative prices of provisions, that she may be able to substitute those that are most reasonable when they will answer as well as more costly ones. This applies to cases of small families which are often encumbered with unnecessary pieces of meat under the impression that it is cheaper to buy that way. Now, there is no cheapness when the family wears of that kind of meat long before it is consumed, is there? A smaller portion at a higher price would be better because when it ceased to be appreciated it became waste.

I do not intend this little talk to be taken by housekeepers alone, but by women wherever they may be. The unmarried woman who earns every dollar which keeps her body and soul in proper condition has just as much to do with the keeping of accounts as her married sister. I would not believe that until three years ago when I was persuaded to try it for six months. It was distasteful at first, this jotting down every little four cents I spent for thread, but I did it because I promised to make a faithful trial of the plan. In much less time than the allotted six months I became devoted to my account book and I must confess that it has been instrumental in keeping my expenditures down to proper limits. It has been of other value to me, for it enabled me to gauge the price of articles by what I had paid in the past. I know almost to a dollar what it costs to support me for a year at my present rate of living, and just where I could cut down my expenses if I found such a course necessary.

Another bit of advice I have to offer. Take a receipt or a written paper of some kind to show that money has been spent every time you make a purchase. The splendid system of our big stores provides such a paper with each purchase, but there are many other places where careless women get nothing for the money they pay. They settle house rent bills and pay room rent without taking a receipt and by great good luck have no trouble. Occasionally a case comes up where a receipt would save them lots of trouble and money and then they become more careful. And again keep those receipts until the law says that the bills could not be collected by dishonest or careless persons. They can be put away in big envelopes, marked with the proper year and will really take up but little room. If an occasion came up when one of those bits of paper was needed to prove one's honesty all the trouble of keeping the lot would be more than made up to you. Such occasions are more common than you think.

AN ORANGE CAKE.

To prepare an orange cake, separate the yolks and whites of four eggs. Beat the yolks thoroughly with a cup of granulated sugar and add the grated rind and juice of one Valencia orange. After this, sift a cup of pastry flour and a teaspoonful of baking-powder together three times. Whip the whites of three eggs to a stiff froth, using a wire whip, if possible. Add the sifted flour and baking-powder, whipping them lightly into the yolks with the whip, and then add the whites of the eggs. Mix rapidly and thoroughly, still using the wire whip, and bake the cake in two shallow jelly-cake pans. When the cakes are baked, let them cool. They should not bake too rapidly, or they will be hopelessly toughened, nor should they be beaten too long in mixing.

To make the icing put a cup of granulated sugar over the fire in a bright saucepan. Add five tablespoonfuls of water, and stir until it melts. Let the syrup boil until it begins to turn to a caramel. Do not stir it once, however, after it is melted and begins to boil hard. When it browns slightly, add two tablespoonfuls of water, but do not stir it in—simply lift the saucepan and allow the fresh water to melt into the caramelized syrup. Return the pan to the fire, and when it boils against a little of the syrup. If it is hard when a drop is rolled between the fingers and the thumb it requires more water; if it

is sticky it needs more boiling, but if it is a creamy ball it is ready. Pour the syrup in a stream when the proper stage is reached, over the white of an egg, beaten to a stiff froth, and continue beating until the syrup has cooled enough to be creamy. Pour it at once over one of the cakes. Grate the other peel from two red-hued Valencia oranges. Lay this grated peel aside while you peel the rind, white rind and the inner skin of the lobes from the pulp. Remove the seeds and cut the pulp into thin slices. Add to it the pulp of another orange prepared in the same way, and scatter the grated rind through all the pulp. Pour the pulp, with the juice that has run out, over the second cake, and place the one that has been covered with caramel icing over it.

SOME GOOD RECIPES.

Fricassee Chicken.—Take a spring chicken weighing four pounds. Put it in about two quarts of cold water and watch that the water does not boil away. When tender add a quarter of a pound of butter; salt to taste; make a thickening of a dessertspoonful of flour, mixed with a little cold water. Make a dumpling consisting of one pint of flour, one heaping teaspoonful of cream of tartar, one-half teaspoonful of soda and a little salt. Mix soft as possible to roll; have the dumpling the size of the kettle and make an incision in the center. Let it cook for twenty minutes to half an hour after putting it in before serving.

Creamed Potatoes.—One quart of potatoes, cold, boiled, one half pint cream or rich milk, one saltspoon of salt and pinch black pepper, one teaspoonful flour; cut potatoes in one-half inch squares; season them and put in stewing pan; add cream; on top of potatoes put the butter; and over all sift the flour; five minutes before you wish to serve them put stewpan on the stove; do not touch the potatoes until the cream begins to bubble at side, of pan, and then stir constantly till thick; serve at once on a hot dish.

Apple Fritters.—Try a dish of apple fritters before the apples are all gone. First pare and core four sour apples and slice them, sprinkle with sugar and the spice—cinnamon or nutmeg and make a soft batter of scant cup of sweet milk, two eggs, yolks and whites beaten separately, a pinch of salt, a tablespoonful of butter and a cup of flour, or sufficient to make a good batter, stirring in the whites of the eggs last. Sift a teaspoonful of baking powder with the flour. Coat the apple-slices should be a quarter of an inch thick, with the batter and fry in deep fat like doughnuts. Serve the apple with vanilla. Any other fruit as peaches, oranges or bananas can be used instead of apples, or the batter can be dropped by spoonfuls into the hot fat and served as plain fritters. At this season of the year a little lemon juice squeezed on the apple with the sugar improves the flavor.

Delicious Roast of Lamb.—A delicious roast of lamb is secured by par-boiling a carefully selected leg, with four or five small onions in the water. When it is put into the oven the onions, which are, of course, by this time softened and scattered over it. One might fear that the dish would be disagreeably permeated with onion, but it is not; rather there is obtained a fine delicate suggestion of the vegetable, mingled with the native flavor of the lamb, not quite devoid of any suggestion of wooliness. It should be basted often while it browns.

Baked Rice with Cheese.—Wash and pick over a teacup of rice. Drop into boiling water slightly salted; rather less than a quart of water. Boil without stirring, so that the grains will be distinct. When tender, have ready a buttered baking dish with a layer of grated crumbs on the bottom. Put in a layer of rice, then a smaller layer of grated cheese, until rice and cheese are used up. Then put on a layer of bread crumbs, and pour over it this mixture; One well-beaten egg one cup milk, two tablespoonfuls butter, one scant tablespoonful salt, one-fourth teaspoonful dry mustard, one pinch cayenne. Bake twenty minutes in quick oven.

CURING BY FRIGHT.
An English Physician Advocates a New Method of Treating Disease.
Dr. Michea, a leading English physician has advocated a most original method of treating diseases. He cures his patients by fright. He has observed that in certain cases a sudden shock or fright produced a healing effect upon the patient. He then carried his idea into effect by writing and sending to the patient anonymous letters, which contained everything uncomplimentary he could think of, and to which the bravest would not affix his name.

Excitement of the patient at receipt of such a letter and the concentration of his mind upon the problem of finding out the author of the abuse would cause a decided change and melancholy or hypochondria would soon take wings.

Dr. Michea has tried every sort of frightening methods, and according to his statement, the effect is always beneficial.

It is an acknowledged fact, he says, that rheumatic patients who have either witnessed or experienced a railroad accident begin to recover from their malady. Hysterical and epileptical cases are curable by this "fright" method, he asserts, while deaf and dumb persons have, in several instances, regained hearing and speech through the same means.

Of course, this cure can only be applied in nervous diseases. It would have quite the contrary effect were it to be applied to organic maladies.