

"One word more," I said. That five hundred and fifty dollar note is due next week. Shall you be ready with your portion of the money?"

"Don't be in the least alarmed. I have already spoken to Mr. Masterman and told him I should require a few hundred dollars, and he has promised I should have all I require."

"I am glad of it. You will not, on any account, disappoint me?"

And thus the conference ended.

*To be continued.*

## THE DOCTOR AND SOPHY.

*From the German of Otilie Wildermuth.*

IT was a fine flourishing village, in the Swabian lowlands, to which the father of our heroine had retired many years before, and where he occupied himself with the farming of his estates. He was a well-educated and even accomplished man, wrote poetry and leading articles in the weekly paper, and was—not because he did this, but notwithstanding that he did it—a thoroughly sensible man, who kept himself well up to the spirit of the age, without being in anywise carried away by it. It was principally for his wife's sake that he had so early given up his profession, and settled down on the ancestral estates where she had been born and bred. Although she was quite fitted, intellectually, to be his companion, still her whole heart and soul was in her farm, her hemp and potato fields, her stately farm-yard, and her gardens, in which she grew the finest vegetables, the largest quantity of cabbages for the winter store, and always produced lettuce a fortnight before Mrs. Elfner of the parsonage.

Sophy was her only daughter, light of foot and light of heart, now and then, it is true, rather shy and awkward; but from her dark eyes shone such a fresh and living spirit, that it was readily excused. Still she was not all that she ought to be; and the mayor's Mathilda, and Pauline the vicar's daughter, from the neighbouring town, often talked very seriously about Sophy's want of cultivation. She had not read any of Schiller's works, and had scarcely so much as heard of Goethe, although they were in her father's library; and when Mathilda wanted to lend her Frederica Bremer's last work, she said, "Well, you know I have really so much to do during the day, that I don't care to read in the evenings besides." Even her mother, though she could scarcely boast of a very classical education herself, was troubled about this total indifference to her mental improvement, on account of which Sophy was so very much behind the demands of the age, and thought it would be well to send the girl for a year to Stuttgart. But her father saw this wild rose unfold itself, and climb unrestrained round its home, with incomprehensible indifference; and the childlike freshness of the girl, who was at the same time an obedient and diligent child, was the joy of his heart—now feeding the birds, now comforting the screaming children of the neighbours, whose mothers were out in the fields—or sporting with them on the village green, while cousin Clara was laboriously practising duets with the schoolmaster, or reading novels, with sundry yawns and stretches.

Clara, the squire's niece, had been early left an orphan, and found a home under his roof. She had a fine full figure, and fair hair and complexion, and though but a year or two older than Sophy, was much more cultivated. She had been two years at Stuttgart, and had learnt dancing and embroidery, dressmaking and millinery, and had also heard a course of lectures on literature, of which she still had certain undefined recollections. She dressed herself well, worked samplers, and caricatured flowers; and in society, when she was not exactly able to join in the conversation, she at any rate gave herself airs that looked as though she knew much better than any one else, and did not care to give others the benefit of her superior wisdom; so that all the world thought it quite natural that the young medical man who had lately settled in the nearest market-town, and had been engaged as family doctor by the squire, should

pay particular attention to Clara, more especially as she was supposed to be an heiress. He had not, indeed, as far as was known, expressly paid court to her; but still, he was to be found the livelong day at the Hall. Never before had every slight indisposition of any member of the household received such a thorough and lengthened course of treatment.

A splint, which Clara had got in her finger, required a week's attendance, and the good mamma was obliged to have a wart on her nose removed with caustics and compresses, whose existence she had long ago forgotten, and which had long ceased to derogate from her beauty; and once Kate, the old housemaid, told with fits of laughter, how the doctor now thought she must have a sprain, because she had got her foot slightly bruised.

The neighbourhood was so rich in medical men, that it was not to be wondered at that the doctor, notwithstanding his well-known ability, should devote so much time to this one household. He was tired of playing at chess with his druggist for half a day at a time, and bewailing the healthiness of the population; and it was most likely on account of this want of practice that he kept his intentions about Clara so long in the background. Clara, who had an excessively quiet heart (if she had indeed a heart at all), was very well contented to pass for the doctor's adored one, but did not further trouble herself about the matter.

The doctor, a cheerful and enjoying companion, was always welcomed by young and old at the Hall; and even Sophy, who could seldom be prevailed upon to take part tamely and quietly in cultivated society; let herself be seen when he was there, and occasionally made remarks which were even more sensible than cousin Clara's airs; so that her mother thought that if it ever came to the point with the doctor and Clara, they must send her over to them for a time; the doctor would best be able to make something of her.

It was a most remarkable occurrence when one day Sophy herself looked pale, and complained of a headache after a sleigh drive, in which the doctor had driven Clara, who could no longer find room in the squire's old sleigh.

Notwithstanding her extreme unwillingness to allow it, her mother sent for the doctor, who, as might be supposed, did not make lighter of this than of former illnesses in the house; he thought of all kinds of serious turns that it might take, and ordered all kinds of remedies and preventives. The mother would not let herself be hindered from sitting up with Sophy, who, however, slept like a top, and awoke fresh and rosy in the morning. But her mother positively forbade her getting up till the doctor had seen her. He came early in the morning, and notwithstanding the minutest examination, found but few symptoms of illness—"Only her pulse is rather quick, and this high colour in her face seems to me rather serious; I think, at any rate, we had better apply six leeches." So poor Sophy had to atone for her deep blushing on the entrance of the young doctor, by the bites of half-a-dozen leeches.

One evening, not long after Sophy had so luckily recovered from this dangerous illness, the young doctor came in an especially happy state of mind, to tell his friends of his having at last got an appointment he had long coveted, with a very remunerative salary. They congratulated him heartily on his good luck; the squire was only sorry to lose such an agreeable neighbour. The mother thought, "How vexatious that Clara would go to the Casino to-day, when the doctor would most likely have wished to have made her an offer," and pondered in her mind whether she should have the people work at the Hall for Clara's outfit, or send everything out to be done.

Sophy had escaped away unobserved, most likely because she thought it would be proper to congratulate the doctor, and did not know how to do so; and it was not till he was preparing to depart, after having lingered much longer than was proper, that she turned up. She lighted him down stairs, and then the still hesitating visitor begged her to show him her young hares

(Sophy always had a little menagerie). Although it was rather late, Sophy good-naturedly complied, and went down with him to the little room where she kept them. The mother thought it was not quite suitable, but the squire only laughed, and told her to let them alone.

Not long afterwards they heard the doctor shut the front door and gallop away as fast as he could, although he had come on foot. But Sophy rushed up stairs with cheeks hot and glowing, and dashed into the room.

"What is it? What is the matter? What has happened to you?" asked the squire.

"Oh, such a thing never happened to me in all my life!" screamed Sophy.

"Well, what then?" asked her mother.

"The doctor wants to marry me!" Sophy burst out, and began to cry, because she did not know what to do.

"Well, that is a nice fellow," said the squire, pretending to be very angry, "talking of marriage to an innocent child, and making it weep such bitter tears. I will tell him directly what I think of it. I will write him such a letter that he won't stick up in his looking-glass," and off he went to his room in a great rage.

He had not been there very long when Sophy came in: she had already dried up her tears.

"Father," she began, very timidly, "I think you should not exactly send an express messenger to the doctor: it—it—"

"Why? Why not? you poor injured child!"

"It—it would cost too much," said Sophy, in the greatest embarrassment.

"Oh you careful child!" laughed the delighted squire. "What a good housewife you will make! Well, well, we will leave it for the present, until we can tell the doctor face to face that one must not talk of marriage to children of seventeen."

"Yes, but grandmamma was only sixteen, said Sophy, and she took to her heels as fast as she could.

Well, the doctor came again, and they talked over the matter face to face, and he did not order Sophy any more leeches, though her face had a still deeper crimson hue than before.

The marriage was very properly delayed a little, but there was a merry betrothing feast before the doctor left. Clara was of course very much astonished, but still she contrived to bear the loss of her lover with dignity and resignation; she made a pretty bridesmaid, and soon after comforted herself by the side of a long-legged conveyancer.

I don't know if the doctor got Sophy to read Schiller and Goethe; but this I do know, that she never regretted the unheard-of event which happened to her in her rabbit-room, and that she never repented having spared that messenger's fee.

## FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

"A story! a story! please do tell us a story, Aunt Eunice, its raining, so hard; we can't go out, and were tired playing at party,—do, please Auntie, a real, true, story." So clamoured the little ones, one dark and rainy afternoon in November—such a day as calls to mind those words of Longfellow's:

"The day is cold and dark and dreary,  
It rains, and the wind is never weary,  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust, the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary."

Such a day as makes it pleasant to draw the easy chair up to the warm grate fire; and to watch the rosy, beaming faces of the little ones clustered round it. Bright, happy faces—sorrow has not set its seal there yet; sin has not marred and defaced the curves of the sweet childlike mouth, nor dimmed the joyous, sparkling eye! Oh, childhood, happy childhood! what would not many of us give to be back, once more, around the old hearth-stone!

But all this time the little ones are becoming impatient, and little Frank climbs up into my lap, and he nestles the bright, curly head close in and whispers, "It is quiet—quiet now," while Alison, grave and sedate, speaks up from her corner, "Tell us about when you were a little