

## A ROMANCE OF BILLY-GOAT HILL

"Is Number Seventeen prepared for the operation?" he heard some one ask, and at the same moment Aunt 'Tella's fingers closed on his like a vise.

Then the big doctor, who had brought him there, appeared at the foot of his bed.

"Ah, Mrs. Queerington!" he was saying, "the very sight of you ought to hearten up these youngsters. But you are still paler than I like to see you. Been overdoing again?"

She shook her head. "I'm all right, but what about your patient?"

The doctor stroked his chin and appeared to be interested in the ceiling. "Some rather grave complications. Very anemic. Very little to work on. Possibly an even chance. However —" he shrugged his broad shoulders. "Has he any people?"

"No, except this foster-aunt who supports him. Myrtella!"

But Myrtella had turned her back at sight of the doctor, and refused to look up.

Chick narrowly watching the two speakers at the foot of the bed, and trying vainly to understand what they were saying about him, was relieved when Dr. Wyeth handed Miss Lady a book and said lightly:

"You see that I, like everybody else, have fallen a victim to 'Khalil Samad.' I understand it is already in its tenth edition. Young Morley has a