

DOCTOR "BOBBY'S" DILEMMA*

BY GORDON MUIR.

A STORY OF PERPLEXITY, INVESTIGATION AND REALIZATION.

Bobby Patterson—pardon, Robert Patterson, M.D., now—called on me in great perplexity. Bobby has always consulted me when in trouble, ever since he and I fought it out on the campus in the dear old days, when I went down to ignominious defeat. Bobby was shortly getting married, and a suitable bridal present was the perplexity. "How would a nice, pretty flying-machine do?" I queried, brightly. "You could try it out first, you know—and your fiancée looks well in black," I added, absent-mindedly. Bobby flicked his cigar impatiently. "Well, then, give her a nice ring, a brooch, a bracelet, anything of that sort," I opined, hopefully. "She could stock a small jewellery store to-morrow," snorted my M. D. "Why not give her a Player-piano?" I suggested. "Thought of that," quoth Bobby, gloomily. "I have tried several, and whereas they certainly give results—they don't give results that please me. Seems to me that one has got to be an expert to get human, instead of merely mechanical, effects. I have heard there was a perfect, sensitive, human-like Player, but it must be that they have to be brought from Europe, or some foreign country." Bobby, it might be remarked, was of musical temperament, but his music finished there; he could not play a note. "Bobby, Bobby," I groaned, "here are you, a leading Toronto physician, born in Muddy York, and yet you know not that the pioneers of self-playing instruments are even now under your optic. Know ye not, my unsophisticated youth, that right here in Toronto you will find the panacea for your ills? Why, Bobby," I continued, warming to the subject, "accompany me now down town, and visit an old haunt of mine, where we will witness all the transitional stages from the self-playing organ of fifteen years ago, to the perfect Player-piano of to-day."

We went, and there, surrounded by a delightfully musical atmosphere, I modestly expatiated, whilst Bobby imbibed wisdom. First of all our interest was directed to the "Bellolian," or self-playing organ of fifteen years ago, operated with music-rolls exactly as is the Player-piano of to-day. It was striking from the fact that the principles followed in the Player-pianos of to-day were fully anticipated in its construction. Here were the rows of little pneumatics and tier after tier of valves and air ducts, just as you see them in the modern

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