

within the last few days I have had one sent me for trial from South America—a powder made from another local herb, whose properties I had reason to suspect of being antagonistic to those of the drug, and we can at least try it. If it succeeds, we shall have discovered a new cure for the most terrible form of poisoning yet known to medical science.”

“How lucky you were here!” Bertha cried delighted.

“Yes,” Harry said. “If the experiment is successful it will indeed be lucky. It will save not only your dog’s life, which to me, of course, is no small matter, but innumerable human lives as well, I trust, in the future.”

Bertha blushed as her eyes met his. Harry wrapped the dog carefully up in the shawl, and saying hastily that the treatment must be tried at once if it was to be tried at all, went off as quickly as he could to his own surgery.

II.

TO Harry Prior’s immense delight, the antidote acted with almost as marvellous rapidity as the poison itself had done. Scarcely had he injected the new solution into the wound, and washed it well with the untried powder, when the stiffened limbs began to relax once more as if by magic, and the tightened breath to come and go in the poor creature’s limbs with greater freedom. Harry laid the dog in a basket by the kitchen fire, gave it some warm milk to drink, and continued the treatment with assiduous care for a few hours.

Before nine o’clock Tay had recovered the use of his limbs as usual, and was barking loudly to return to his mistress.

At that moment Harry Prior’s heart was full to overflowing. Human nature, indeed, is strangely compounded. He had made a great medical discovery. It would relieve in future an immense mass of human suffering. It would prevent, in all probability, the commission of hideous crimes. It would perhaps prove of immense use to medicine generally. But Harry Prior thought first of none of these things just then, dear as they would have been to his heart at other times. Nor did he think either of the honour, credit, position, and wealth, which such a discovery might possibly bestow upon him. No; he thought first that it was Bertha Woolrych’s dog he had cured, and that Bertha Woolrych would be grateful for his services.

He carried the dog round carefully to the house once more, and was shown into the room where the family were sitting. Bertha was delighted at her pet’s recovery, and full of gratitude for Harry’s care and skill exerted in curing him. Harry, too, felt somewhat flushed by this time with the joy of his unexpected success. “It’s a great triumph,” he said warmly to Sir Arthur. “You know, curari has always hitherto been looked upon as incurable.”

“I know it,” Sir Arthur responded curtly, “I—I’ve always known it, ever since the famous Lichfield case. It was the stuff, you know, that Lichfield used to commit his terrible crime with—the Erith murder, as people called it.”