

well proportioned, and so graceful in every movement, that no one thought of calling her tall. A quantity of rich brown hair, arranged in shining braids, formed a fitting coronet for her queenly head. Her eyes were large, and of a liquid brown; and she had the sweetest mouth I ever saw. In her luxuriantly furnished room, wrapped in the soft folds of her crimson morning-dress, her small white hands sparkling with gems, with all her beautiful surroundings, she looked to me, fresh from my poverty-stricken home, like a princess in a fairy tale. On the hearth-rug, in front of the blazing fire, sat a boy, eight or nine years old, busily whittling. He looked up from his work as I entered the room, and I saw that, with his mother's broad, open forehead, and clear brown eyes, he was yet undeniably homely. His hair was as rough as a lion's mane, his skin freckled, and his mouth large; and, when he ran to his mother for some advice about the miniature boat he was constructing, his great red knuckles contrasted strongly with her little delicate hand. He seemed very frank and confiding, and, before I was half an hour in the house, came to me to hem the sails for his ship. So we were good friends directly. His brother Philip I met on the stairs, when I went to my dinner. He stopped to let me pass, and stared at me with a pair of bold, handsome eyes, till I was glad to drop my own.

Mr. Barry was out of town, and, the first two or three weeks of my stay under his roof, I saw little of him; for his business, of which he only carried on a branch in the quiet country village where he resided, kept him much of the time in the neighboring city. He was a tall, erect man; his florid face unwrinkled, and with not a gray hair to mark his fifty winters; a little pompous in manner, but looking and appearing just what he was—the prosperous merchant.

One morning, when I had been with his wife two or three weeks, he stopped, hat in hand, at the door of her room.

"Clara," he said, "I believe I will step into Dr. Sharpe's office, and ask him to call round to-day. I think you have tried old Dr. Burton long enough; and they say this new doctor is very skilful. I understand he left a large practice in the city, and came out here, where he would not be obliged to work so hard. I should like to see if he can help you."

"Very well," said the lady, languidly. "Do as you please about it; but I have no idea he can do anything for me. I feel completely discouraged."

"Nonsense! You will be all right again. Now, don't worry. Tell him all your symptoms, and just how you feel. He has had great experience, and, I have no doubt, will understand your case at once."

"Lizzie, don't go away when he comes," said Mrs. Barry. "Take your work and sit

with me. The thought of seeing a new doctor makes me nervous."

I accordingly settled myself comfortably by the window, but almost immediately was called away by an urgent request for my help in the dining-room, from Katie, the second girl, who was disabled by a lame hand.

Before I finished, Sam ran in saying, "The doctor has come, Lizzie, and mother wants you up-stairs."

"I have very little strength, doctor," Mrs. Barry was saying when I entered the room; "the least exertion wearies me, and my sleep does me no good. I feel as tired in the morning as at night."

Dr. Sharpe ran his fingers through his stiff gray hair, making it stand out from his head in all directions. He was a little man, very learned and very pompous.

"The symptoms you describe, my dear madam," he replied, "are produced, no doubt, by a general prostration of the nervous system. The nervous system," said Dr. Sharpe, raising his voice, and looking all round, as though addressing quite an assembly, "that wonderful collection of medullary cords, originating from the brain and spinal marrow, and distributed upon the organs of sense, the viscera, vessels, muscles, and every part of this organism of ours, that is endowed with sensibility, has its own great law, and is governed thereby. We will call it a law of expenditure and supply. Among the delicate tissues of which this part of the body is composed, there is a constant waste going on, while fresh nervous force is supplied day by day to balance the expenditure. In a perfectly healthy, unfluctuating state of vital action, the supply greatly exceeds the expenditure; while in a less favorable condition of the system we shall find the expenditure exceeding the supply. Now, what is to be done? Food being the natural element—"

"But I have no appetite, doctor."

"Precisely, madam, because there is an abnormal state of the system, and every part of the sensitive organism suffers. The delicate lining of the mucous membrane of the stomach becomes irritated, the gastric juices vitiated, consequently anorexia, or loss of appetite, follows. The liver—What is the liver?" said Dr. Sharpe, turning round suddenly, and glaring fiercely at me through his spectacles.

I was so overwhelmed at the magnitude and extent of the question, that in my trepidation I upset my work-basket, and was too busy collecting my scattered utensils to reply.

"The liver," he resumed, keeping his eye sternly on me, "is an organ whose functions are closely connected with the very citadel of life. Look at the position it occupies, under the diaphragm, in the right hypochondrium, its smaller portion occupying part of the epigastric region. What does it do? It takes up any new matter which can be made