

baby, and we all hope you will cure her,' and three children signed their names and the last of the name was a mere baby scrawl.

From the number of letters arriving by every mail the doctor learned that the 'Alleytown' baby had become the one object of public concern. He fretted in his office, and wondered why this responsibility had been put upon him. In this uneasiness, he wandered over to 'Alleytown' to see if directions were being followed.

In 'Alleytown' the small wooden houses are huddled end to end, two houses on one building lot. One house fronts on a 'street,' which is usually muddy and unpaved. The rear house meets the narrow alley, and the alley is made to do service as a street. Doctor Fielding picked his way along this dismal chute, through droves of romping children.

The hot smell of boiling dinners blew from the open doors and windows. The ground between the squat houses was black and cindery. Women peeked out at him from behind the painted curtains. A thought came to him that supposing the baby could see, what was there to look at but the unpainted huts and the dreary smoke-wall of the factories?

He found Mrs. Levenska on duty. The inner room was closed and darkened. She sat at the crib, fanning the baby. He gave his finger to the baby, and talked with Mrs. Levenska for a few minutes. After all, there was nothing to be done for a while. He went back home to be annoyed by new letters which called down blessings on him.

He did not go to 'Alleytown' again until it came time for him to look at the baby's eyes. He knelt beside the crib, and put his head down close to the baby's face. After arising, he put out his finger and allowed the baby to hold it.

'I'll tell you, Mrs. Levenska,' he said, 'you might leave them off for an hour or so, but don't let any more light into the room. Take them off for an hour or two to-morrow. Next day, that's Tuesday, put on all the bandages very carefully, and bring her to my office—Tuesday, ten o'clock.'

On the way out he met a bearded man in blue overalls talking to three bareheaded women. The man was Mary's father. One of the women followed him, hesitatingly, and asked, 'How's the baby?'

'We must wait awhile,' replied the doctor. He nodded pleasantly at the ragged boys who jumped out of his way, and stared at him as he hurried through 'Alleytown.' They observed that he seemed to be in good humor.

As soon as he reached home he told his wife that the baby would be brought over on Tuesday.

'I've been thinking,' he added, 'I want you and the matron to be here. Supposing the baby can see well enough to distinguish the larger objects in the room, I wonder if she could tell which was which—if you and the matron were here, too. You understand that she was born blindfolded, as you might say. We cut away the blindfold, and we hope—I say we hope—that the eyes are all right. It's pretty hard to say what's going to happen. Of course, even if she is able to see, she will have no impression of distance at first, and I'm not sure that she will be able to distinguish one object from another. You have the matron come over.'

From the moment the doctor spoke these words, Mrs. Fielding knew that he was confident of his case.

She and the matron sat at the window on Tuesday morning and waited. The doctor had warned them to ask no more questions.

'Why, there's a carriage,' said Mrs. Fielding.

'She's coming in a carriage,' said the doctor. 'Pull down all the blinds.'

At the front door he lifted the baby from Mrs. Levenska's arms and asked, 'How has she been?'

'Oh, still, sir.'

'That's good. Now I'm going to put her in this chair in the corner. You three women sit over there. Keep away! I'll take care of her.'

The shades being drawn, there was a mild and filtered light in the little room. Doctor Fielding put the baby in the soft pocket of a big chair, and laid a bright-colored rattle in her lap, within easy reach. He shook his finger at the women, and slowly unwound the bandages.

As the last one was removed, the baby gave a simper of pain, winked rapidly, and covered her head as if to avoid the sudden light. She remained crouched against the light for several moments, and Doctor Fielding still shook his finger at the three women, who sat, pale and tremulous, biting their lips.

While the baby was thus bent forward, one hand was seen to move falteringly toward the bright-colored toy. Then the baby took hold of it.

There was another wait in dead silence, and the doctor whispered, 'Mary, Mary.'

The baby slowly lifted her face to the light, and the lids moved convulsively. Then there was a cry of yearning, and the baby held both arms toward her mother.

Mrs. Levenska, unnatural mother! She did not rush to her child. She screamed and slipped forward to her knees, her face in her hands. Mrs. Fielding, forgetting all promises to her husband, fell into the matron's arms and began to sob. The matron put a handkerchief to her eyes and wept quietly.

As for the doctor, he maintained that there were no tears in his eyes. His wife tells that he carried Mary up and down the room, blubbing mildly, and saying over and over, 'All right, little girl, you see as well as anybody's baby.'

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### OR PROFIT VERSUS PRINCIPLE

(By M. A. Paull, (Mrs. John Ripley) in 'Alliance News.')

#### CHAPTER VII.—THE BOYS AND THEIR MOTHER.

The dreaded paragraph, not very differently worded from that which Mr. Lawrence had drawn up in his mind on the morning he was taken ill, did appear in due time in the 'Anyborough Weekly Chronicle,' for there had not been anyone to call at the office and request the editor to withhold it. And the licensed victuallers had declared it was 'nuts' for them, and had well and thoroughly exhibited it to their best customers, and in their bar parlors; and the beer-shop keepers, and drink-selling grocers, all of them 'birds of a feather,' had plumed themselves on their respectable alliance with the rector and the minister.

But there was also another paragraph respecting Mr. Lawrence that same week in the local paper, which had not been previously arranged in any busy brain, and it ran as follows:—'We regret to learn that the Rev. Albert Lawrence, the popular and genial Wesleyan Superintendent, is seriously ill of brain fever. We are sure his family and the Connexion will have the sympathy of their fellow-townsmen.'

Mr. Lawrence's illness silenced for the time a great many voices that were ready to denounce him, but there were low mutterings even now that threatened an approaching storm. Some waited to see how near he was to the eternal silence, before they spoke. Others, who would have been overwhelmed with grief had no circumstance happened to lessen their respect, regarded this illness as nothing less than a judgment on him, for his wilful deception and shameless conduct.

It is quite certain that no one else was so much to be pitied as his wife. There was no secret between them now. The doctor's questions on the morning her husband's illness began had made her recall the hour before his illness manifested itself. Was it possible there was anything in the paper which affected him?

When he was comfortably in bed, and she was installed as his nurse, giving over to Muriel the care of the family, she looked about in the sitting-room for the paper which he had not read to her. It was nowhere to be found. She guessed, with painful misgivings, that he must have hidden it purposely. Curiosity and pain were blended now in her mind. She must have that particular newspaper. She returned to his room. He was dozing, and she could not ask him for it. It must be in his pocket. She looked and found it. She was too good a nurse to expose her sick husband to the rustling, crackling noise of folding and unfolding the large pages of a daily paper, so she laid it down on the dressing table, conscious that she would rather peruse it openly in his presence when he was awake, than seem to do it surreptitiously. But as she laid it down, the advertisement of the 'Rara Avis Brewery Co.' caught her eye, and the long list of shareholders. How was it she had never guessed this before? She knew it all now, even before she read the names of the rector and her husband. No wonder he had broken down, poor, poor Albert! She might have felt a religious indignation against him if he had been well; but wifely pity, tender compassion for all he must have suffered, conquered every other emotion now.