would not stir from the coach until she waked, or her friends came.

She grew quieter presently, and took away the handkerchief from a mouth that smiled though it still quivered; then reaction began, and her tired nerves brought her languor and finally repose. Boyle watched the shadows thicken around her long lashes until they lay softly on the faint flush that sleep was bringing to her cheek; her delicate lips parted, and her quick breath at last came with the regularity of slumber.

So she slept, and he, sitting opposite her, dreamed—the old dream that comes to most good men and true once in their lives. He scarcely moved until the dawn lightened with opal the dreary plain, bringing back the horizon and day, when he woke from his dream with a sigh, and then a laugh. Then he listened for the sound of distant hoofs, and hearing them, crept noiselessly from the coach. A compact body of horsemen were bearing down upon it. He rose quickly to meet them, and throwing up his hand, brought them to a halt at some distance from the coach. They spread out, resolving themselves into a dozen troopers and a smart young cadet-like officer.

"If you are seeking Miss Cantire," he said in a quiet business-like tone, "she is quite safe in the coach and asleep. She knows nothing yet of what has happened, and believes it is you who have taken everything away for security against an Indian attack. She has had a pretty rough night—what with her fatigue and her alarm at the wolves—and I thought it best to keep the truth from her as long as possible, and I would advise you to break it to her gently." He then briefly told the story of their experiences, omitting only his own personal encounter with the Indian. A new pride, which was perhaps the result of his vigil, prevented him.

The young officer glanced at him with as much courtesy as might be afforded to a civilian intruding upon active military operations. "I am sure Major Cantire will be greatly obliged to you when he knows it," he said politely, "and as we intend to harness up and take the coach back to Sage Wood station immediately, you will have an opportunity of telling him."

"I am not going back by the coach to Sage Wood," said Boyle quietly. "I have already lost twelve hours of my time—as well as my trunk—on this picnic, and I reckon the least Major Cantire con do is to let me take one of your horses to the next station in time to catch the down coach. I can do it, if I set out at once."

Boyle heard his name, with the familiar prefix of "Dicky," given to the officer by a commissary sergeant, whom he recognized as having met at the agency, and the words "Chicago drummer" added, while a perceptible smile went thruout the group. "Very well, sir," said the officer, with a familiarity a shade less respectful than his previous formal manner. "You can take the horse, as I believe the Indians have already made free with your samples. Give him a mount, sergeant."

The two men walked towards the coach. Boyle lingered a moment at the window to show him the figure of Miss Cantire still peacefully slumbering among her pile of cushions, and then turned quietly away. A moment later he was galloping on one of the trooper's horses across the empty plain.

Miss Cantire awoke presently to the sound of a familiar voice and the sight of figures that she knew. But the young officer's first words of explanation—a guarded account of the pursuit of the Indians and the recapture of the arms, suppressing the killing of Foster and the mail agent—brought a change to her brightened face and a wrinkle to her pretty brow.

"But Mr. Boyle said nothing of this to me," she said, sitting up. "Where is he?"

"Already on his way to the next station on one of our horses! Wanted to catch the down stage and get a new box of samples, I fancy, as the braves had rigged themselves out with his laces and ribbons. Said he'd lost time enough on this picnic," returned the young officer, with a laugh. "Smart business chap; but I hope he didn't bore you?"

Miss Cantire felt her cheek flush, and bit her lip. "I found him most kind and considerate, Mr. Ashford," she said coldly. "He may have thought the escort could have joined the coach a little earlier, and saved all this; but he was too much of a gentleman to say anything about it to me," she added dryly, with a slight elevation of her aquiline nose.

Nevertheless Boyle's last words stung her deeply. To hurry off, too, without saying "good-by," or even asking how she slept! No doubt he had lost time, and was tired of her company, and thought more of his precious samples than of her! After all, it was like him to rush off for an order!

She was half inclined to call the young officer back and tell him how Boyle had criticised her costume on the road. But Mr. Ashford was at that time entirely preoccupied with his men around a ledge of rock and bushes some yards from the coach, yet not so far away but that she could hear what they said. "I'll swear there was a no dead Injin here when we came yesterday! We searched the whole place—by daylight too—for any sign. The Injin was killed in his tracks by some one last night. It's like Dick Boyle, lieutenant, to have done it, and like him to have said nothin' to frighten the young lady. He knows when to keep his mouth shut—and when to open it."

Miss Cantire sank back in her corner as the officer turned and approached the coach. The incident of the past night flashed back upon her—Mr. Boyle's long absence, his flushed face, twisted necktie, and enforced cheerfulness. She was shocked, amazed, discomfited—and admiring! And this hero had been sitting opposite to her, silent all the rest of the night!

"Did Mr. Boyle say anything of an Indian attack last night?" asked Ashford. "Did you hear anything?"

"Only the wolves howling," said Miss Cantire. "Mr. Boyle was away twice." She was strangely reticent—in complimentary imitation of her missing hero.

"There's a dead Indian here who has been killed," began Ashford.

"Oh, please don't say anything more, Mr. Ashford," interrupted the young lady, "but let us get away from this horrid place at once. Do get the horses in. I can't stand it."

But the horses were already harnessed and mounted, postilion-wise, by the troopers. The vehicle was ready to start when Miss Cantire called "Stop!"

When Ashford presented himself at the door, the young lady was upon her hands and knees, searching the bottom of the coach. "Oh, dear! I've lost something. I must have dropped it on the road," she said breathlessly, with pink cheeks. "You must positively wait and let me go back and find it. I won't be long. You know there's 'no hurry.'"

Mr. Ashford stared as Miss Cantire skipped like a school-girl from the coach and ran down the trail by which she and Boyle had approached the coach the night before. She had not gone far before she came upon the withered flowers he had thrown away at her command. "It must be about here," she murmured. Suddenly she uttered a cry of delight, and picked up the business card that Boyle had shown her. Then she looked furtively around her, and, selecting a sprig of myrtle among the cast-off flowers, concealed it in her mantle and ran back, glowing, to the coach. "Thank you! All right, I've found it," she called to Ashford, with a dazzling smile, and leaped inside.

The coach drove on, and Miss Cantire, alone in its recesses, drew the myrtle from her mantle and folding it carefully in her handkerchief, placed it in her reticule. Then she drew out the card, read its dryly practical information over and over again, examined the soiled edges, brushed them daintily, and held it for a moment, with eyes that saw not, motionless in her hand. Then she raised it slowly to her lips, rolled it into a spiral, and, loosening a hook and eye, thrust it gently into her bosom.

And Dick Boyle, galloping away to the distant station, did not know that the first step towards a realization of his foolish dream had been taken!

OUR CLEVER DOCTOR

By Lucy Hardy

IT was a bleak winter's evening on Dartmoor, and as Horace Thorold stood by his fire drawing on his gloves and listening for the sound of his gig coming round to the door, the young doctor was inclined to wonder—as many another country Esculapius has done before him—why it is is that patients in outlying districts always seem to select the worst nights for entering and leaving the world and requisitioning the services of a medical man.

Horace Thorold had only taken up his residence in Devon some six months previously, when an old uncle, of whom he had known very little, had died, and bequeathed all his small property, including his medical practice to the nephew who, it seemed, had unwittingly pleased him by following the old man's own profession.

Horace, who was struggling in London in the somewhat hopeless attempt to build up a practice for himself (having no capital wherewith to purchase one), had decided that his wisest course would be to settle down, at least for a time, in his uncle's place; and had accordingly taken possession of the quaint yet cosy old house upon the moor, with its antiquated furniture, and stepped into his uncle's shoes, as he phrased it, as regards the practice. Old Thorold's was certainly an "extensive connection" in one sense, as it embraced all the scattered farmsteads and houses within riding distance. The old man had been popular with his patients, and his nephew, who was both clever and painstaking, more than inherited his kinsman's good repute.

The wintry blast rattled outside, and Horace drew back the curtain and opened the window for a moment to see if snow had yet begun to fall. As he did so a figure suddenly dashed into the room, then turned round, closed and fastened the window, and dropped the curtain over it.

"Hallo!" cried Horace at this abrupt intrusion. But the man who had thus unexpectedly effected an entrance did not seem to heed him; with a low cry of satisfaction he crossed the apartment and crouched over the blazing fire.

"I say, my friend, you make yourself at home here," cried Horace, startled for the moment; but reassured the next, as he contrasted the slight and meagre form before him with his own stalwart proportions. "I could chuck the fellow out with one hand if he means mischief," Horace thought to himself.

The figure turned and lifted a haggard face of entreaty.

"Save me," it said in low, hoarse tones.

"Save you? Oh!" as Horace noted the visitor's dress, with the "broad arrows" stamped upon it, "I see; you've broken out of Princetown, eh?"

The visitor nodded. "Yesterday," the man said in the same choked voice, "and—I've been out on the moor ever since. They're after me now. Hide me! Save me!" And he crouched over the fire again.

The miserable aspect of the creature before him aroused Horace's instincts as a professional healer.

"Here," he said, pouring out a cup of hot coffee (the remains of his own meal were upon the table), "drink this, and eat a bit of bread, and then you'll be better able to speak."

It was pitiable to see the wolfish hunger with which the man dispatched the provisions. But the food and warmth brought some color to his wasted cheeks, and his voice was calmer and firmer as he said, gratefully:

"Thank you, sir. I was almost dead when I came in. But better be dead than in that place yonder."

"Well, you'll have to go back there, you know," said Horace, hardening his heart with a sense of duty.

The man wrung his wasted hands with a gesture of despair.

"No, no, no!" he cried. "Oh, sir, take pity upon me! I am an innocent man!"

"I never knew of the crime I was accused of," said the man; and there was a truthful ring in his voice. "But I suppose no one will believe this as the jury didn't," and he bent again over the fire.

Horace looked at his visitor critically. He was a young man of about 25, certainly without the "criminal expression" stamped on so many countenances among the convicts. He had an honest, open face, and refined features, and yet—well, appearances are often deceitful.

The sound of wheels was heard outside.

"Don't—don't give me up!" cried the man, catching at Horace's hand in an attitude of despair. And the young doctor's heart was not proof against the piteous appeal.

"I'm a fool and worse," he said to himself; "but, anyway, I can take time to think the matter over. Look here," he added aloud, turning to his visitor, "I daresay you're lying to me, and anyway, I've no right to shelter a convict from justice. But if you like to remain until I come back—I'm called out to see a sick person—well, you may do so."

"But if they track me here?" cried the man.

Horace hesitated a moment, then walked to the wall by the fireplace and pressed upon an ornament in the ancient oak-panelled wainscotting which lined the apartment. A panel sprang open and showed a deep recess behind. Horace had recently accidentally discovered this concealed cupboard and had not yet mentioned it even to his old housekeeper.

"If you hear anyone coming, you can get in there," he said. "The door will shut if you pull it, and there are ventilation holes above. But remember," and Horace strove to speak sternly, "I'm not going to have a hand in compounding a felony. You'll have to give yourself up when I come back; at least—"

But at that moment the gig dashed up to the door, and Horace's visitor vanished into the cupboard just as old Martha, the young doctor's housekeeper and factotum, entered to say that "Roger was awaiting."

As he drove rapidly away the young doctor reviewed his adventure. It went against his kindly instincts to deliver up the wretched man, and yet duty must be done.

"The poor wretch looked half dead. It won't hurt to let him have a warm and a sleep," reflected the young doctor. "And if he gives himself up, as I must see that he does to-morrow of course, maybe it will go easier with him than if he was caught by the warders." And then Horace began to think of the patient whom he was going to see.

Halting at length at one of those lonely farmsteads which dot Dartmoor here and there, Horace was ushered into a bedroom where lay a young woman, who had been a pretty girl once before she grew so pale and thin. Horace had been attending her for some weeks, and was much interested in the case. Without any organic disease the girl was certainly wasting away; and the conviction that some mental trouble was at the root of her illness was growing stronger in Horace's mind every time he visited her. This evening he spoke out openly upon the subject.

"Had your daughter received any shock? Has she any trouble upon her mind" he asked as he quitted the sick-room.

Mrs. Fry, the comely buxom farmer's wife, fingered her apronstrings for a moment.

"I think—maybe—it was them guns a-going which set Ellen off so bad with the spasms to-day," she said.

"What guns? Oh, you mean the ones fired from Princetown to give notice that a convict had escaped. I heard them myself; but why should this affect your daughter?"

Mrs. Fry hesitated a moment.

"It's a story none of us cares to talk about," she said, "and father—he thinks 'tis a disgrace to Ellen to feel as she do. But I suppose I'd better tell you the truth, sir, as you ask about it. Yes, Ellen she have something on her mind, poor lass, and she's never held up her head, so to speak, since Charlie Lovell was took."

A few questions brought out the whole tale. Ellen Fry had gone upon a visit the year previously to some relations in London. While there, she had become engaged to an apparently most respectable young man, a clerk in the counting house of a large shop. The young man's present means were fair, his prospects of advance excellent; Ellen had brought her lover back with her to introduce him to her parents, who were greatly pleased with him—and all went smoothly; the wedding day was fixed, the wedding clothes bought, when, just a week before the date fixed for the marriage, came the tidings that the bridegroom had been arrested upon a charge of "forgery and embezzlement."

This accusation seemed so impossible that Ellen and her parents confidently expected that further investigation would completely clear young Lovell; but, alas! the result of the trial was otherwise. The frauds, which were very ingeniously planned, and which had extended over some time, were somewhat difficult to unravel; but it seemed at last clear that only Charles Lovell, or one fellow-clerk, could have been responsible for them.

"Folks did say afterwards as Charlie had been a fool not to have engaged a sharper lawyer, as the other man did; but Charlie, he seemed so certain sure—being quite innocent, as he said he was—that the truth would come out at the trial—that he didn't particular trouble about his defense."

"Do you think the young man was guilty?" asked Horace.

Mrs. Fry again fell back upon her apronstrings.

"Well, sir, I hardly know what to say. The jury thought he was, any way, and they ought to ha' known. But there was one person"—and here a note of grievance stole into the good woman's voice—"as I don't believe judge, nor jury, nor anyone in all England, would ha' made think him guilty, and that was Ellen. Clean contrary the girl was, as her father said."

"Well, she would naturally believe in her lover," said Horace.

"It's an unlucky business that he ever was her lover," said Mrs. Fry, in the same injured tone. "Many and many a good match that girl might ha' made, and to come to this at last! For, as her father says, whether Charlie did it or didn't, 'tis much the same now; he's got his five years' penal servitude, and ain't a fit husband for any respectable girl. But, if you'll believe it, sir, Ellen vows she'll marry him as soon as he comes out of his time; and I'm afraid she'll do it, too, for she's obstinate—like her father—when she takes an idea in her head, for all she looks so quiet. Why," and here Mrs. Fry cautiously lowered her voice, "father don't know it, and I hope and pray he never may, for it's fine and angry he'd be if he did, but since Charlie was brought to Princetown, Ellen has been to see him—she wheedled round Jim—that's her brother, he's ten year older than Ellen, and makes a fair fool of her, he do—well, the gril made Jim take her over to Princetown one visiting day, and she got a sight of Charlie, and I believe 'twas the seeing him so dreadful altered in his looks (Jim said he wouldn't ha' known him) that's made Ellen as bad as she is."

It was a sad, pathetic little story. Horace began to wonder if he held any clue to it; he drove home deep in thought.

"And it's glad enough I am to see you back, sir," cried old Martha, who was watching at the door. "There've been a pretty set-out since you was gone, and I declare I'm all of a shake still. You'd scarce drove off before a couple of men with guns, prison warders they said they was, knocked at the door and said they was after a convict, as they believed they'd seen cut in thru your window. I said you was out, but I begged 'em for mercy's sake to come in and look all over the house, I being a lone woman in it, you and Roger both away. The men was very civil, and they looked well everywhere—I will say that for them—under the beds and into the cupboards; for, as I said: 'Oh, gentlemen, whatever will become of me if there's one of them savages lurking about the house?'"

"Did they find anyone?" asked Horace.

"No, sir, they said they supposed, if the man had slipped in unbeknown, he had just slipped out again; I told 'em you'd only just gone out, and, of course, the man wouldn't have stayed to face you, knowing as you'd give him up quick enough."

Did Horace's conscience give him an uneasy twinge?

"Well, I needn't keep you up any longer, Martha," said the young man, entering the parlor, where a com-