

WRONG DIAGNOSIS

By Augustus Goodrich Sherwin.

"Then you pronounce me a perfectly well man?" spoke Richard Harper, hopefully.

"Sound as a nut, sir!" replied Doctor Thorpe, with emphasis.

"You have seen your colleague since he examined me?"

"I received his report today. Your various aches and pains are mere



"Doomed!" Fell From His Bloodless Lips.

surface troubles. He states that you have not the slightest trace of any organic disease, and are good for forty years yet."

Mr. Harper, wealthy merchant, who had worried himself into nervous prostration over a few twinges of dyspepsia, looked immensely relieved and gratified. When Doctor

Thorpe named the amount of his bill, he wrote a check for double the amount. When the physician was gone he actually indulged in a joyous jig step.

He sat in his comfortable armchair, actually blissful over the long term of life granted him by an eminent practitioner who charged fifty dollars for looking at a man's tongue. He indulged in great dreams of business, of pleasure. Mr. Harper was a widower, but his heart was wrapped up in Fay, his only child, young and beautiful. He felt remorseful over all the invalid whims and fancies of his recent illness, his dullness and bad temper. He would take her on a long pleasure trip, come back refreshed, and build up his business tenfold for the inattention of the past few months!

"Hello! What's this?" exclaimed Mr. Harper as he started to leave the room. He picked up an unsealed envelope. It was addressed to Dr. Thorpe and it bore the professional card of the expert he had consulted.

"Why, the doctor must have dropped this," reflected Mr. Harper. "Why, I wonder if it can be the opinion he just told me about? I'll take a glance at it and then return it to Doctor Thorpe by mail," and Mr. Harper took out the enclosure of the envelope.

"Diagnosis 31," it read. Ah! it was the written report of the expert, and—

"Doomed!" fell from the reader's bloodless lips as he perused the fatal lines and fell back utterly crushed. With distended, horror-haunted eyes his blurred senses took in the words:

"This patient cannot live beyond a year and only change of scene and absolute rest will carry him half of that time. I advise that he be kept in ignorance of his fate, as the knowledge might hasten his demise."

There followed an epitome of the various ailments that afflicted the patient. In his agitated, overwrought state Mr. Harper felt every one of the