

Discovery

A. Campbell, '40

The first shades of evening were filling the room, but Dr. Philip Gordon still gazed from his study window, lost in reflection. His thin weary features proclaimed study and anxiety; at the age of thirty his hair was already turning gray.

The door opened to admit a brisk young woman bearing a packet of letters. She looked much younger than her husband; at the age of thirty, she was still the embodiment of youth, freshness, and beauty.

"Here's the mail; see what it brings today."

"You open it, Helen," he said.

"Here's a letter from that medicine company — the last one you were to hear from. Here's what it says: 'At present we do not consider it advisable to issue a patent or undertake the manufacture of the remedy you have discovered.'"

"That was our last chance," he said wearily. "If I had got that we should have been able to pay off a few of those bills — at least to pay the rent. But now it is no use. I can't go on this way."

"But, Phil, you are too pessimistic; you give up too easily. There must be some other way," said his wife hopefully. "Why not go to the country? The farmers take to new medicines like bees to honey. Besides, we could live so much more cheaply, and it would be so healthy and —"

"That's impossible. I can't leave my practice here, bad as it is. And I'd die in a month in the country," protested the doctor impatiently. He was not in a mood for listening to her wild schemes.

"Well, we'll see; something has to be done."

The little village of Dumont was all excitement; people were hurrying along the street toward the vacant lot where a crowd had already gathered in front of a raised platform. Close by was a large tent, on the side of which was painted in large red letters "Doctor Cheroot, Indian Herb Doctor."

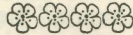
"There he is," shouted a youngster, as a tall, bronzed Indian rode up and dismounted from his pony. With a firm, vigorous step he ascended the platform and, holding aloft a small bottle, began: "Ladies and gentlemen, I

have in my hand a bottle of my famous medicine; the medicine that is taking Canada by storm, that is used daily by thousands. Made from herbs gathered in the foothills of the Rockies, it was used for centuries by the Indians. I am the first to bring it to the white man. 'Nervum' never fails; try a bottle tonight. The regular price is forty cents, but for tonight, and tonight alone, the price will be only thirty-five cents."

After the evening's work was done, and the crowd had dispersed, the doctor returned to his tent, sat down, and gave himself up to the enjoyment of a cigar. He counted the sales money, smiling with satisfaction.

"A few more weeks of this and we'll be on easy street," he said to his wife who sat on the shadows of the tent.

"I certainly hope so, Phil," she replied, "I am sick and tired of this outfit I'm in. I'm sick of the whole business. Hunt around and see if you have an aspirin, will you. I'm a nervous wreck."



Wilt thou seal up the avenues of ill?
Pay every debt as if God owed the bill!

—Emerson.

Dreams are but interludes, which fancy makes;
When monarch reason sleeps, this mimic wakes.

—Dryden.

