

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen  
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo  
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm  
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller  
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka  
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis  
Baum Henry Nietzsche Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac  
Leslie Stockton Vatsyayana Crane  
Burroughs Verne  
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch  
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain  
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato  
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen  
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse Harte  
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# **The Faith Doctor A Story of New York**

Edward Eggleston

# Imprint

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THE  
FAITH DOCTOR

*A STORY OF NEW YORK*

BY  
EDWARD EGGLESTON  
AUTHOR OF THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER,  
ROXY, ETC.



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## PREFACE.

Though there is no life that I know more intimately and none that I have known for so long a period as that of New York, the present story is the first in which I have essayed to depict phases of the complex society of the metropolis. I use the word society in its general, not in its narrow sense, for in no country has the merely "society novel" less reason for being than in ours.

The prevailing interest in mind-cure, faith-cure, Christian science, and other sorts of aërial therapeutics has supplied a motive for this story, and it is only proper that I should feel a certain gratitude to the advocates of the new philosophy. But the primary purpose of this novel is artistic, not polemical. The book was not written to depreciate anybody's valued delusions, but to make a study of human nature under certain modern conditions. In one age men cure diseases by potable gold and strengthen their faith by a belief in witches, in another they substitute animal magnetism and adventism. Within the memory of those of us who are not yet old, the religious fervor of millenarianism and the imitation science of curative mesmerism gave way to spirit-rappings and clairvoyant medical treatment. Now spiritism in all its forms is passing into decay, only to [Pg 4] leave the field free to mind-doctors and faith-healers. There is nothing for it but to wait for the middle ages to pass; when modern times arrive, there will be more criticism and less credulity, let us hope.

The propositions put into the mouth of Miss Bowyer, though they sound like burlesque, are taken almost verbatim from the writings of those who claim to be expounders of Christian science. While Miss Bowyer was drawn more closely from an original than is usual in fictitious writing, I am well aware that there are professors of Christian science much superior to her. There are, indeed, souls who are the victims of their own generous enthusiasm; and it grieves me that, in treating the subject with fidelity and artistic truthfulness, I must give pain to many of the best—to some whose friendship I hold dear.

For the idea of a novel on the present theme I am indebted to an unpublished short story entitled *An Irregular Practitioner*, by Miss

Anne Steger Winston, which came under my eye three or four years ago. I secured the transfer to me of Miss Winston's rights in the subject, and, though I have not followed the lines of her story, it gives me pleasure to acknowledge my obligation to her for the suggestion of a motive without which this novel would not have had existence.

For the comfort of the reader, let me add that the name Phillida should be accented on the first syllable, and pronounced with the second vowel short.

Joshua's Rock on Lake George, *September, 1891.*



## THE FAITH DOCTOR.

### I.

## THE ORIGIN OF A MAN OF FASHION.

It was the opinion of a good many people that Charles Millard was "something of a dude." But such terms are merely relative; every fairly dressed man is a dude to somebody. There are communities in this free land of ours in which the wearing of a coat at dinner is a most disreputable mark of dudism.

That Charles Millard was accounted a dude was partly Nature's fault. If not handsome, he was at least fine-looking, and what connoisseurs in human exteriors call stylish. Put him into a shad-bellied drab and he would still have retained traces of dudishness; a Chatham street outfit could hardly have unduded him. With eyes so luminous and expressive in a face so masculine, with shoulders so well carried, a chest so deep, and legs so perfectly proportioned and so free from any deviation from the true line of support, Millard had temptations to cultivate natural gifts.

There was a notion prevalent among Millard's acquaintances that one so versed in the lore and so deft [Pg 8] in the arts of society must belong to a family of long standing; the opinion was held, indeed, by pretty much everybody except Millard himself. His acquaintance with people of distinction, and his ready access to whatever was deemed desirable in New York, were thought to indicate some hereditary patent to social privilege. Millard had, indeed, lines of ancestors as long as the longest, and, so far as they could be traced, his forefathers were honest and industrious people, mostly farmers. Nor were they without distinction: one of his grandfathers enjoyed for years the felicity of writing "J. P." after his name; another is remembered as an elder in the little Dutch Reformed Church at Hamburg Four Corners. But Charley Millard did not boast of these lights of his family, who would hardly have availed him in New York. Nor did he boast of anything, indeed; his taste was too fastidious for self-assertion of the barefaced sort. But if people persisted

in fitting him out with an imaginary pedigree, just to please their own sense of congruity, why should he feel obliged to object to an amusement so harmless?

Charles Millard was the son of a farmer who lived near the village of Cappadocia in the State of New York. When Charley was but twelve years old his father sold his farm and then held what was called in the country a "vendoo," at which he sold "by public outcry" his horses, cows, plows, and pigs. With his capital thus released he bought a miscellaneous store in the village, in order that his boys "might have a better chance in the world." This change was brought about by the discovery [Pg 9] on the part of Charley's father that his brother, a commission merchant in New York, "made more in a week than a farmer could make in a year." From this time Charley, when not in school, busied himself behind the counter, or in sweeping out the store, with no other feeling than that sweeping store, measuring calico, and drawing molasses were employments more congenial to his tastes and less hard on good clothes than hoeing potatoes or picking hops. Two years after his removal to the village the father of Charley Millard died, and the store, which had not been very successful, was sold to another. Charley left the counter to take a course in the high school, doing odd jobs in the mean while.

When young Millard was eighteen years old he came into what was a great fortune in village eyes. His father's more fortunate brother, who had amassed money as a dealer in country produce in Washington street, New York, died, leaving the profits of all his years of toil over eggs and butter, Bermuda potatoes and baskets of early tomatoes, to his two nephews, Charley Millard and Charley's elder brother, Richard. After the lawyers, the surrogate, the executor, and the others had taken each his due allowance out of it, there may have been fifty or seventy-five thousand dollars apiece left for the two young men. Just how much it was the village people never knew, for Charley was not prone to talk of his own affairs, and Dick spent his share before he fairly had time to calculate what it amounted to. When Richard had seen the last of his money, and found himself troubled by small debts, he simplified matters by executing [Pg 10] a "mysterious disappearance," dropping out of sight of his old associates as effectually as though he had slipped

into some cosmical crack. Charley, though nominally subject to a guardian, managed his own affairs, husbanded his money, paid Dick's debts, and contrived to take up the bank stock and other profitable securities that his brother had hypothecated. He lived with his mother till she died, and then he found himself at twenty-one with money enough to keep him at ease, and with no family duty but that which his mother had laid upon him of finding the recreant Dick if possible, and helping him to some reputable employment—again if possible.

In Cappadocia Charley's little fortune made him the beau of the town; the "great catch," in the slang phrase of the little society of the village—a society in which there were no events worth reckoning but betrothals and weddings. In such a place leisure is productive of little except ennui. To get some relief from the fatigue of moving around a circle so small, and to look after his investments, Charley made a visit to New York a month after the death of his mother. His affection for his mother was too fresh for him to neglect her sister, who was the wife of a mechanic living in Avenue C. He would have preferred to go to a hotel, but he took up his abode dutifully in his aunt's half of a floor in Avenue C, where the family compressed themselves into more than their usual density to give him a very small room to himself. His Aunt Hannah did her best to make him comfortable, preparing for him the first day a clam chowder, [Pg 11] which delicacy Charley, being an inlander, could not eat. His cup of green tea she took pains to serve to him hot from the stove at his elbow. But he won the affection of the children with little presents, and made his aunt happy by letting her take him to see Central Park and the animals.

As seen in the narrow apartment of his Aunt Hannah Martin, life in the metropolis appeared vastly more pinched and sordid than it did in the cottages at Cappadocia. How the family contrived to endure living in relations so constant and intimate with the cooking stove and the feather beds Charley could not understand. But the spectacle of the streets brought to him notions of a life greatly broader and more cultivated and inconceivably more luxurious than the best in Cappadocia.

The third day after his arrival he called at the Bank of Manha-  
does, in which the greater part of his uncle's savings had been in-  
vested, to make the acquaintance of the officers in control, and to  
have transferred to his own name the shares which his brother had  
hypothecated. He was very cordially received by Farnsworth, the  
cashier, who took him into the inner office and introduced him to  
the president of the bank, Mr. Masters. The president showed Char-  
ley marked attention; he was very sensible of the voting importance  
of so considerable a block of stock as Charley held, now that he had  
acquired all that was his uncle's. Masters was sorry that his family  
was out of town, he would have been pleased to have Mr. Millard  
dine with him. Would Mr. Millard be in town long? Dining with a  
New York bank [Pg 12] president would have been a novel experi-  
ence for young Millard, but he felt obliged to go home the last of the  
week. Not that there was anything of pleasure or duty to render his  
return to Cappadocia imperative or desirable, but the pressure he  
was daily putting on his aunt's hospitality was too great to be pro-  
longed, and the discomfort of his situation in Avenue C was too  
much for a fastidious man to endure.

Though his return to Cappadocia made a ripple of talk among the  
young women of the village, to whom he was at least a most inter-  
esting theme for gossip, he found the place duller than ever. His  
mind reverted to the great, dazzling spectacle of the thronged  
streets of the metropolis, with their unceasing processions of eager  
people. Since he had all the world to choose from, why not live in  
New York? But he did not care to go to the city to be idle. He liked  
employment, and he preferred to earn something, though he had no  
relish for speculation, nor even any desire to run the risks of trade.  
But he thought that if he could contrive to make enough to pay a  
portion of his own expenses, so as to add the greater part of each  
year's dividends to his principal, such cautious proceeding would  
entirely suit his prudent temperament and content his moderate  
ambition. After taking time to revolve the matter carefully, he wrote  
to the obliging Mr. Masters, suggesting that he would like to secure  
some position in the bank. The letter came at an opportune moment.  
A considerable number of the stockholders were opposed to the  
president in regard to the general policy to be pursued. The opposi-  
tion was [Pg 13] strong enough to give Masters some anxiety. What

was known as "the Millard stock" had been held neutral in consequence of Charley's minority. If now Masters could attach this young shareholder to himself, it would be a positive gain to the administration party in the stockholders' meetings, and indeed it would put the opposition beyond any chance of doing much mischief.

When Masters got the letter Farnsworth, the cashier, was called into his room. But Farnsworth could not give him any information about Millard's character or capacities. That he would not do without special training for a teller or bookkeeper was too evident to require discussion. All that could be said of him at first glance was that he wrote a good hand and composed a letter with intelligence. He might be made of assistance to the cashier if he should prove to be a man of regular habits and application. What Masters wrote in reply was: "We should be most happy to have the nephew and heir of one of our founders in the bank. At present we have no vacancy suitable to you; for, of course, a man of your position ought not to be assigned to one of the lowest clerkships. But if an opportunity to meet your wishes should arise in the future we will let you know."

It was only after some years' experience in the bank that Millard, in looking over this letter, was able to conjecture its real significance. Then he knew that when that letter went out of the bank addressed to him at Cappadocia another must have gone with it to a certain commercial agency, requesting that Charles Millard, of Cappadocia, New York, be carefully looked up. Two weeks [Pg 14] later Masters wrote that it had been found necessary to employ a correspondent to aid the cashier of the bank. The salary would be two thousand dollars if Mr. Millard would accept it. The offer, he added, was rather larger than would be made to any one else, as the officers of the bank preferred to have a stockholder in a semi-confidential position such as this would be. In village scales two thousand dollars a year was much, but when Charley came to foot up the expenses of his first year in New York, this salary seemed somewhat less munificent.

Millard's relations were directly with the cashier, Farnsworth, an eager, pushing, asthmatic little man, wholly given to business. Farnsworth's mind rarely took time to peep over the fence that di-

vided the universe into two parts—the Bank of Manhadoes and its interests lying on the one side, and all the rest of creation on the other. Not that he ignored society; he gave dinner parties in his elegant housekeeping apartment in the Sebastopol Flats. But the dinner parties all had reference to the Bank of Manhadoes; the invitations were all calculated with reference to business relations, and the dinners were neatly planned to bring new business or to hold the old. But there were dinners and dinners, in the estimation of Farnsworth. Some were aimed high, and when these master-strokes of policy were successful they tended to promote the main purposes of the bank. The second-rate dinners were meant merely to smooth the way in minor business relations.

It was to one of these less significant entertainments, a dinner of not more than three horse-power, that he invited [Pg 15] his correspondent-clerk, Mr. Millard. It would make the relations between him and Millard smoother, and serve to attach Millard to his leadership in the bank management. Millard, he reasoned, being from the country, would be just as well pleased with a company made up of nobodies in particular and his wife's relatives as he could be if he were invited to meet a railway president and a leather merchant from the swamp turned art connoisseur in his old age.

Charley found his boarding-house a little "poky," to borrow his own phrase, and he was pleased with Farnsworth's invitation. He honored the occasion by the purchase of a new black satin cravat. This he tied with extreme care, according to the approved formula of "twice around and up and down." Few men could tie a cravat in better style. He also got out the new frock-coat, made by the best tailor in Cappadocia, carefully cherished, and only worn on special occasions—the last being the evening on which he had taken supper at the house of the Baptist minister. If there was something slightly rustic about the cut or set of the coat, Millard did not suspect it. The only indispensable thing about clothes is that the wearer shall be at peace with them. Poor Richard ventured the proposition that "our neighbors' eyes" are the costliest things in life, but Bonhomme Richard may have been a little off the mark just there. Other people's opinions about my garments are of small consequence except in so far as they affect my own conceit of them. Charley Millard issued from his room at half-past six content with himself, and, what was

of much more importance [Pg 16] to the peace of his soul, content with his clothes.

At eleven o'clock Millard is in his room again. The broadcloth Prince Albert lies in an ignominious heap in the corner of the sofa. The satin cravat is against the looking-glass on the dressing-case, just as Charley has thrown it down. Nothing has happened to the coat or the cravat; both are as immaculate as at their sallying forth. But Millard does not regard either of them; he sits moodily in his chair by the grate and postpones to the latest moment the disagreeable task of putting them away.

No matter what the subject under consideration, we later nineteenth-century people are pretty sure to be brought face to face with the intellect that has dominated our age, modified our modes of thinking, and become the main source of all our metaphysical discomforts. It is this same inevitable Charles Darwin who says that a man may be made more unhappy by committing a breach of etiquette than by falling into sin. If Millard had embezzled a thousand dollars of the bank's funds, could he have been more remorseful than he is now? And all for nothing but that he found himself at dinner with more cloth in the tail of his coat than there was in the coattails of his neighbors, and that he wore an expensive black cravat while all the rest of the world had on ghostly white linen ties that cost but a dime or two apiece.

Of course Millard exaggerated the importance of his mistake. Young men who wear frock-coats to dinner, and men of respectability who do not possess a dress-coat, [Pg 17] are not entirely lacking in New York. If he had known more of the world he would have known that the world is to be taken less to heart. People are always more lenient toward a mistake in etiquette than the perspiring culprit is able to imagine them. In after years Millard smiled at the remembrance that he had worried over Farnsworth's company. It was not worth the trouble of a dress-coat.

His first impulse was to forswear society, and to escape mortification in future, by refusing all invitations. If he had been a weakling such an outcome would have followed a false start. It is only a man who can pluck the blossom of success out of the very bramble of disaster.

During that dinner party had come to him a dim conception of a society complicated and conventional to a degree that the upper circle in Cappadocia had never dreamed of. He firmly resolved now to know this in all its ramifications; to get the mastery of it in all its details, so that no man should understand it better than he. To put it under foot by superior skill was to be his revenge, the satisfaction he proposed to make to his wounded vanity. As he could not even faintly conceive what New York society was like—as he had no notion of its Pelions on Ossa piled—so he could as yet form no estimate of the magnitude of the success he was destined to achieve. It is always thus with a man on the threshold of a great career.

Among the widely varying definitions of genius in vogue, everybody is permitted to adopt that which flatters his self-love or serves his immediate purpose. "Great [Pg 18] powers accidentally determined in a given direction" is what some one has called it. Millard was hardly a man of great powers, but he was a man of no small intelligence. If he had been sufficiently bedeviled by poverty at the outset who knows that he might not have hardened into a stock-jobbing prestidigitator, and made the world the poorer by so much as he was the richer? On the other hand, he might perhaps have been a poet. Certainly a man of his temperament and ingenuity might by practice have come to write rondeaus, ballades, and those other sorts of soap-bubble verse just now in fashion; and if he had been so lucky as to be disappointed in love at the outset of his career, it is quite within the limits of possibility that he should have come to write real poetry, fourteen lines to the piece. But as the first great reverse of Millard's life was in a matter of dress and etiquette, the innate force of his nature sent him by mere rebound in the direction of a man of fashion—that is to say, an artist not in words or pigments, but in dress and manners.

## II.

### THE EVOLUTION OF A SOCIETY MAN.

It is the first step that costs, say the French, and Millard made those false starts that are inevitable at the outset of every career. A beginner has to trust somebody, and in looking around for a mentor he fell into the hands of a fellow-boarder, one Sampson, who was a quiet man with the air of one who knows it all and is rather sorry that he does. Sampson fondly believed himself a man of the world, and he had the pleasure of passing for one among those who knew nothing at all about the world. He was a reflective man, who had given much thought to that gravest problem of a young man's life—how to keep trousers from bagging at the knees, the failure to solve which is one of the most pathetic facts of human history. After he had made one or two mistakes in following the dicta that Sampson uttered with all the diffidence of a papal encyclical, Millard became aware that in social matters pretension is often in inverse ratio to accomplishment. About the time that he gave up Sampson he renounced the cheap tailor into whose hands he had unwarily fallen, and consigned to oblivion a rather new thirty-dollar dress-suit in favor of one that cost half a hundred dollars more. He had by this time found out [Pg 20] that the society which he had a chance to meet moved only in a borderland, and, like the ambitious man he was, he began already to lay his plans broad and deep, and to fit himself, by every means within his reach, for success in the greater world beyond.

Having looked about the circle of his small acquaintance in vain for a guide, he bethought him that there were probably books on etiquette. He entered a bookstore one day with the intention of asking for some work of the sort, but finding in the proprietor a well-known depositor of the bank, Charley bought a novel instead. Behold already the instinct of a man of the world, whose rôle it is to know without ever seeming to learn!

When at length Millard had secured a book with the title, "Guide to Good Manners as Recognized in the Very Best Society. By One of the Four Hundred," he felt that he had got his feet on firm ground.

It chanced about this time that Sampson brought an old college chum of his to eat a Sunday dinner at the boarding-house in Eighteenth street. He introduced this friend to Millard with that impressiveness which belonged to all that the melancholy Sampson did, as "Mr. Bradley, Mr. Harrison Holmes Bradley, the author; you know his writings."

Millard was covered with concealed shame to think that he did not happen to know the books of an author with a name so resonant, but he did not confess his ignorance. This was his first acquaintance with a real literary man—for the high-school teacher in Cappadocia who [Pg 21] wrote poetry for the country papers would hardly count. The aspiring Millard thought himself in luck in thus early making the acquaintance of a man of letters, for to the half-sophisticated an author seems a person who reflects a mild and moonshiny luster on even a casual acquaintance. To know Mr. Bradley might be a first step toward gaining access to the more distinguished society of the metropolis.

Harrison Holmes Bradley proved to be on examination a New-Englander of the gaunt variety, an acute man of thirty, who ate his roast turkey and mashed potatoes with that avidity he was wont to manifest when running down an elusive fact in an encyclopædia. At the table Millard, for want of other conversation, plucked up courage to ask him whether he was connected with a newspaper.

"No; I am engaged in general literary work," said Bradley.

Neither Millard nor any one else at the table had the faintest notion of the nature of "general literary work." It sounded large, and Bradley was a clever talker on many themes fresh to Millard, and when he went away the author exacted a promise from Charley to call on him soon in his "den," and he gave him a visiting card which bore a street number in Harlem.

Two weeks later Millard, who was quite unwilling to miss a chance of making the acquaintance of a distinguished man through whom he might make other eligible friends, called on Bradley. He found him at work in his shirt-sleeves, in a hall bedroom of a boarding-house, [Pg 22] smoking and writing as he sat with a gas-stove for near neighbor on the left hand, and a table, which was originally intended to serve as a wash-stand, on the other side of him. The

author welcomed his guest with unaffected condescension and borrowed a chair from the next room for him to sit on. Finding Millard curious about the ways of authors, he entertained his guest with various anecdotes going to show how books are made and tending to throw light on the relation of authors to publishers. Millard noted what seemed to him a bias against publishers, of whom as a human species Bradley evidently entertained no great opinion. Millard's love for particulars was piqued by Bradley's statement at their first meeting that he was engaged in general literary work. He contrived to bring the author to talk of what he was doing and how it was done.

"You see," said Bradley, pleased to impart information on a theme in which he was much interested himself, "a literary life isn't what people generally take it to be. Most men in general literary work fail because they can do only one thing or, at most, two. To make a living one must be able to do everything."

"I suppose that is so," said Millard, still unable to form any notion of what was implied in Bradley's everything. To him all literature was divided into prose and poetry. General literature seemed to include both of these and something more.

"Last week," Bradley continued, illustratively, "I finished an index, wrote some verses for a pictorial advertisement of Appleblossom's Toilet Soap, and ground out [Pg 23] an encyclopædia article on Christian Missions, and a magazine paper on the history of the game of bumblepuppy. I am now just beginning a novel of society life. Versatility is the very foundation of success. If it hadn't been for my knack of doing all sorts of things I never should have succeeded as I have."

Judging by Bradley's surroundings and his own account of the sordid drudgery of a worker in general literature, his success did not seem to Millard a very stunning one. But Bradley was evidently content with it, and what more can one ask of fortune?

"There is another element that goes a long way toward success in literature," proceeded the author, "and that is ability to work rapidly. When Garfield was shot I was out of work and two weeks behind with my board. I went straight to the Astor Library and worked till the library closed, gathering material. When I went to

bed that night, or rather the next morning, I had a paper on 'Famous Assassinations of History' ready for the best market. But what I hate the most about our business is the having to write, now and then, a thunder and lightning story for the weekly blood-curdlers. Now there is Milwain, the poet, a man of genius, but by shop girls and boys reading the Saturday-night papers he is adored as Guy St. Cyr, the author of a long list of ghastly horrors thrown off to get money."

"This sort of work of all kinds is what you call general literary work?" queried Millard.

"General literary work is the evening dress we put on [Pg 24] it when it has to pass muster before strangers," said Bradley, laughing.

What Millard noted with a sort of admiration was Bradley's perfect complacency, his contentment in grinding Philistine grists, the zest even that he evinced for literary pot-hunting, the continual exhilaration that he got out of this hazardous gamble for a living, and the rank frankness with which he made his own affairs tributary to the interest of his conversation.

At length Bradley emptied his pipe and laid it across his manuscript, at the same time rising nervously from his chair and sitting down on the bed for a change.

"Millard," he said, with a Bohemian freedom of address, "you must know more about society than I do. Give me advice on a point of etiquette."

Charley Millard was flattered as he never had been flattered before. He had not hoped to be considered an oracle so soon.

"You see," Bradley went on, "the publisher of a new magazine called the 'United States Monthly' has asked me to dinner. It is away over in Brooklyn, and, besides, the real reason I can't go is that I haven't got a dress-coat. Now what is the thing to do about regrets, cards, and so on?"

Fresh from reading his new "Guide to Good Manners," Millard felt competent to decide any question of Bristol-board, however