For the Boys and Girls

THE GHOST THAT BILLY SAW

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

It was a rainy afternoon. The boys were in the barn telling stories, singing songs and trying to make the time pass pleasantly.

By the boys, I mean Frank and Roscoe Watts, and their "hired man" whose name was Jake—and Billy Baker, one of the boys who lived in the neighborhood.

Now Billy wasn't considered very bright." A sickness through which he had passed in infancy had left him rather weak, mentally; but, for all that, he wasn't a fool by any means. What he lacked in that direction, nature had made up to him in another way, giving him the strength of a young giant. The neighborhood boys dreaded to provoke Billy's wrath, for they were sure to get the worst of it if he got hold of them.

He had given two or three ill-natured fellows such a "going over" for getting off their silly jokes at his expense that he felt quite sure they wouldn't attempt anything of the kind in future, and as he held himself in readiness to resent any similar conduct on the part of others, he was regarded with a certain kind of respect by the boys.

Sometimes, you know, fear will make persons behave themselves when no moral instincts which should impel them to do so are lacking.

The conversation had turned on the subject of ghosts.

"Do you b'leve there are any?" asked Billy, solemnly of Jake.

Jake was a German, and had some of the superstition characteristic of his countrymen.

"Yes," answered Jake. "Of course do. My father's seen 'em."

At that Billy's eyes stuck out further than ever. At last he had found a man who had seen a ghost, and whose father had, and that was the best thing to finding one who had seen one for himself.

Coming so direct, the testimony to the actual existence of ghosts seemed convincing enough to satisfy any but the most skeptical.

"Where ghost was it?" asked Billy in a voice of awe.

"In mother's house," answered Jake. "He vas there three times."

"Three times!" repeated Billy, in a whisper. "Wasn't he scart?"

"I tink so," answered Jake. "He didn't say, but of course he was."

"I'd like to see one," said Billy, musingly. "Most folks get scart, but I don't believe I would. I'd holler at it if I saw it."

"Mebbe," answered Billy, thoughtfully, "but I guess not."

"I don't believe any one ever saw a ghost," said Roscoe. "They may think they do, but it's something else."

"I never seen one, but I believe in 'em, for all that," said Jake.

"So do I," said Billy. "I ain't afraid o' nothin'. I'd like to see one, to see if I'd be afraid o' that."

"Maybe you will see one some night," said Frank, with a wink at Roscoe. "If you do, you'll tell us how it looks and what it says to you, won't you?"

By-and-by Jake went out to the sheepyard, and Billy went with him.

"I'll tell you how we can have some fun," said Frank. "One of us can dress up like a ghost, and give Billy good scare. I don't believe he's half as brave as he pretends to be. He'd run, of course, and then we could laugh at him about getting scared, even there wasn't anything to get scared at. Let's try it. What d'ye say?"

"I'm for it," answered Roscoe. "You be the ghost, and I'll hide and see the fun."

"He's going from here to the village, and won't come back till evening," said Frank. "We'll wait for him down by the forks of the road."

Now, as it happened, Billy had changed his mind about going to the sheepyard with Jake, and had stopped just outside the barndoor, and, standing there, he had heard every word the boys said.

"So they think they're going to scare me!" chuckled Billy. "Mebbe I would be scart if I saw a real ghost, but I'll bet this one won't make me run. I'll give 'em some fun, if that's what they want, and mebbe 'twon't be as much fun for them as 'tis for me," and Billy chuckled again.

When Jake came back, Billy came with him, and the boys supposed he had been with him all the while. Billy had frequent spells of chuckling over something which they did not understand, but, as he was always "queer," they never once suspected the real cause of his merriment.

When it was about time for them to expect Billy back from the village, the boys set out for the scene of their anticipated fun. Frank had a sheet with him, with which to carry out his ghostly deception.

Roscoe hid himself behind a clump of alder-bushes. Frank crouched behind a stump close to the road, from whose shelter he was to step out suddenly and confront Billy, when he came along.

Billy was not long in coming, for he was as anxious for the fun as the boys were. He felt angry to think that they doubted his bravery, and he was indignant to think they would attempt to play such a trick on him. He wanted to convince them, if not himself, of his fearlessness, and he also wanted to give vent to his resentment in a way that they wouldn't forget very soon.

He came up the road whistling. Just as he was opposite the stump, up rose a tall figure in white.

The boys fully expected to see Billy run as fast as his legs would carry him. But he did no such thing. He stopped, stared hard at the figure in white, and then drawled out, solemnly:

"Be you a ghost?"

"I'm the ghost of Captain Kidd," was the reply, in a sepulchral voice.

Captain Kidd was one of Billy's pet heroes.

"Be you lookin' for some o' the gold you buried?" asked Billy.

"Yes!" answered the ghost. "If you'll dig by the old oak tree down by the bend in the river, maybe you'll find a pot of it."

"I'll see about it," answered Billy. "But if you be Cap'n Kidd, I b'leve I'd orter thrash you for yer wicked doin's. I'm goin' to."

And like a flash Billy sprang at the ghost and caught him by the arm. He had a long, tough stick of hickory in his hand, and he laid it over Frank's shoulders in a way that made him yell with pain.

"Don't, Billy, don't!" cried Frank, trying to break away, but Billy's strong hand held him in a grasp of iron. "Let me go, please! I did it just to have some fun with you!"

"An' I'm havin' some fun with you, jest as I said I would if ever I see a ghost," said Billy. "I didn't s'pose I'd see one so soon, an' here I be a layin' it onto Cap'n Kidd. I say, cap'n, I like to hear about ye, but don't you go 'pearin' to me very often, or I'll make it unhealthy for ye, for I reckon I'll hev to thrash ye fer old doin's every time I can lay hands on ye. You didn't have any marcy on folks, an' I won't on you."

And thick and fast fell the blows on Frank's back.

"Roscoe, why don't you help? He's killing me!" screamed Frank, but Roscoe dared not interfere.

"Hev ye got some relation round here, cap'n?" asked Billy. "If you hev, I'll give them a goin' over, too, now I've got my hand in. I can do it jest as well as not."

Roscoe had no doubt of his ability to do it if the opportunity was offered. He didn't intend to allow him the opportunity, however, so he climbed over the fence and took a beeline for home.

When Billy felt satisfied that he had given the ghost of Captain Kidd some of the punishment that rather mythical person deserved, if tradition is true, he released his hold, and Frank freed himself, and left the scene of his ghostly exploits in a manner more expeditious than dignified. If ever there was a thoroughly demoralized ghost, he was the one.

"Oh, my! but ain't it funny?" Billy chuckled. "An' Cap'n Kidd's ghost, too!" And it was weeks before he got over chuckling.

The next day he came over to see the boys.

"I see a ghost last night," he said to Roscoe.

Frank wasn't to be seen. He was sick," Roscoe said.

Roscoe looked foolish but asked no questions.

"An' it was Cap'n Kidd's ghost," went on Billy, solemnly. "Oh, you needn't look as if you didn't b'leve me," to Jake. "I was a real ghost. I grabbed hold o' an' whaled it with a hick'ry stick an' I wasn't a bit afraid on't, nuther."

Many a time after that Billy told them about his adventure with the ghost of Cap'n Kidd, and always so soberly that they really believed, at last, that he thought he had seen a ghost, and did not suspect their connection with the affair. So he got the credit of being brave enough to face what he really supposed was a visitor from the dead.

If they could have known just what he knew about it, they could have easily accounted for his bravery.

Frank's back was sore for a week. Every time he stirred for a day or two, it made him groan, and every time he groaned he made up his mind that you'd never catch him playing ghost again. If there was any fun in it, he didn't find it.

World's Largest Carpet.

A carpet weighing twenty-one tons has been laid down in the foyer and restaurant of a leading London hotel. It covers a floor space of half an acre. Seventy men were required to handle it, and it is claimed to be the largest in the world.

For the first time in the history of carpet-making, sixty-four Oriental rugs were woven together. Sixty-two came from Persia and two from China. The weaving was done by rug-workers from Samarkand.

According to their custom, the workers, before the growing carpet was allowed to encircle each rug, wove a piece of colored rice fibre pretement who into the heart of it to ensure that all who tread upon it shall know perpetual joy and felicity.

A Poem You Should Know.

Stars of the Summer Night.

Though Henry Wadsworth Longfellow will never rank with the greatest poets, his place among the poets is assured for all time because he has written so much that touches the heart and lives in the memory. Here is a good example of his gift:—

Stars of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps.
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps.
Sleeps!

Wind of the summer night!
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps.
Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!
Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch! while in slumbers light
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps.
Sleeps!

A Palmist's Secrets.

To some people palmistry suggests quackery. To others it conveys the idea of a superstitious pastime, while many regard it as being entirely unworthy of consideration.

But, as Shakespeare reminded us for all time, "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy," and there seems little doubt that quite a good case can be made out for palmistry.

Mr. Neil Jaquin, a leading investigator, points out in his enlightening and interesting book, "Scientific Palmistry," that it is now possible "by a scientific survey of the hands to analyze character, weighing one trait against another, and so to determine which are the strong and which the weak components in the make-up of personality."

Doctors are realizing that a study of the hand may help in diagnosing disease. The author likens the hands to the gauge of an engine by which the engineer is enabled to know the quantity and pressure of the energy being used, the flow of the lubricant, and, in fact, the general running of the machine. The lines in our hands are the gauge of our nervous system, any defects or tendencies in which may instantly be recognized in the palm of the hand.

For example, "certain forms of kidney trouble are marked in the hand by minute spots or points. Where the 'moons' of the finger-nails are large and full, the heart's circulation is good. Where they are non-existent, circulation is sluggish, the heart's action weak. Where the joints are pronounced, there is indicated a predisposition for some disease of the chest."

"One-piece suits are becoming scarcer and scarcer down here every day."

"They sure are. Some of them are almost invisible."

A Fine Record.

Robertson was interviewing candidates for the position of messenger and odd-job man. The one before him did not seem a promising kind of individual, but Robertson, a generous man, decided to give him a chance.

"Er—how long were you in your previous position?" he asked.

Off his guard, the applicant replied light-heartedly:

"A month, sir."

"A month!" exclaimed Robertson. "That is not very long. How about the one before that?"

"Three months, sir," replied the applicant boldly.

"Oh, that's a lot better, my friend. And the one before that?"

The applicant drew himself up proudly as he said:

"There was no time before that, sir. I got off with a fine."

Try This Dish.

Take one reckless, natural-born fool; two or three big drinks of bad liquor; a high-powered, fast motor-car.

Soak fool in liquor, place in car and let go. After due time, remove from wreckage, place in black, satin-lined box and garnish with flowers.

An instructor, the pupil, and the rope in the recently-opened Crystal Gardens pool at Victoria, B.C. It is the largest salt water tank in the world.

A GOOD DAY'S FISHING

"What's the matter, Joel; anything troubling you?" asked Mr. Hoskins, the proprietor of the store, as Mr. Bowman took his accustomed chair by the stove and began to whittle in silence.

"So; only I was just thinking how different things are now from what they were when we ere boys. We never useter have any holidays, save Twenty-fourth of May and Dominion Day; but now—"

"What started you in that train of thought?"

"Oh, I suppose it's that boy of mine, Eph, going fishing again.

"Well, it ain't a crime to go fishing."

"So, tain't a crime, but seems to me it's a kind of foolish waste of time. Eph'll spend a whole day getting a mess of fish that he could buy for half a dollar, and come home as tickled with himself as a boy with his first pair of pants."

"Yes, I know," said Mr. Hoskins reflectively. "It's partly in the way you look at it and partly in folks. Some will just sit and fish all day and think of nothing but what they're catching or going to catch, and others will kinder wander along a stream and see what birds are nesting and what plants are in bloom and whether the berries are going to set thick or not, and a lot of other things that don't seem to have much to do with fishing. I knew a fellow of that kind once that earned a year's salary in a day's fishing."

"Found a musset with a big pearl in it, or something, I suppose," ventured Mr. Bowman with a note of sarcasm in his voice.

"No; nothing of the kind. He was just trout fishing, with a hook and line, but he was always one of the kind that notices things. He worked for the railroad then—and does now—and his boss was just like you, Joel, only more so. Didn't believe in going fishing or playing games or anything much but working. Called it a waste of time same as you do.

"Well, this fellow, Bert Ives, went down to Sharon Brook one day and fished along side of the railroad track. When he went to the office the next morning he says to his boss, 'What should you say if I should tell you that for a few hundred dollars—say two hundred—we could do away with two bridges on our main line?'

"'I should say you stayed too long in the hot sun yesterday,' says the boss, kinder crabbed; but Ives just grinned and drew a little map and talked so reasonable that finally the boss says, 'You go get your hat. We're going down there.'

"You remember the big sand hill that makes out into the marsh, and the way the brook uster curve round it and turn left and south again almost opposite were it made the right turn on the north side? Well, it ain't that way now, and I'm telling you why.

"When they built the railroad they made a deep cut straight through the sand bank, and of course they had to bridge the brook where the road entered the cut and again where it came out; but since then they'd been cutting away the hill on what you might call the land side, to get ballast, so that at that time it was all level, back for a stretch of a hundred yards or so; and all it was needful to do to get rid of the two bridges was to dig a ditch right along side of the track and turn the brook into it. Any folo could see it when it was pointed out to him, but no body had noticed it, and they'd gone on repairing and renewing those bridges till that day when Ives went fishing there.

"The joke of it was that the steam shovel had been working there most of the time and was there on the flat then, so that all the change cost was the expense of moving the shovel a hundred yards, for they used the gravel from the ditch for ballast and did not have so far to haul it.

"Ives always maintained that 'spare the rod and spoil the child' meant a fishin' rod, but I do' know's I should go so far as that."

"Humph!" said Mr. Hoskins reflectively. "My father never understood it that way."

Things We Invent Badly.

The careful housewife, when pouring tea, puts a drop of water in each saucer to keep the cup from sliding sideways. This would not be necessary if the cup were made to fit into the hollow in the centre of the saucer.

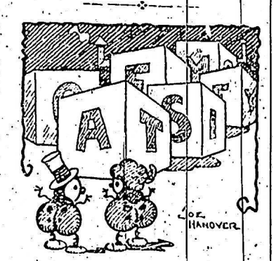
The same with plates. In nearly every place the rim slopes at so sharp an angle that the salt and mustard, to which the user helps himself, slides down into the gravy. This could be avoided by making two small scallops or indentations in the plates edge for the purpose of holding the necessary condiments.

It is astonishing to note how many blunders are perpetrated in the manufacture of articles of everyday use.

The average chair seems to have been built for a race of dwarfs. The seat is seldom long enough for the comfort of a man of middle height, let alone the six-footer. On the other hand, the legs are too long, making the seat too high. Tables, again, are usually made higher than they need be.

Pencils and penholders are usually far too thin at the stem for practical use. The comfort of a thick penholder can only be appreciated by those who have used one. The penholder is usually longer than there is any need.

Compare the modern motor-car with that of twenty years ago and note the vast improvement in the shape. The modern car is built to offer as little resistance as possible to the air. But the train remains much as it was half a century ago, and every driver knows how greatly a head or beam wind slows his locomotive.



Puzzled.

Farmer Bug—"Which block was it Henry Bug said he lived in, my dear?"

Breathe Deeply.

I ride to town every day behind a man who would have the car window open if he had to use the emergency axe, and I work next to a man who likes the breezes from God's great outdoors blowing papers all over the office.

I have a neighbor whose wife says he is "just a great big boy" and who baits me into going for long tramps on Sundays, and I have a wife who says, "Don't you think it's a little close in here?"

I write ads. for a ventilator company.

No wonder I hate fresh air.—Mac. H.

THE PRINCE'S ADVANCE AGENT

When on Tour, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales Travels on a Pre-Arranged Time-Table, but His Advance Agent Has All His Work Cut Out to See That Proper Arrangements Are Made and to Settle Minor Details as They Arise.

Although every tour of the Prince of Wales is planned out months before his Royal Highness leaves England, there are many details in connection with the Prince's visits to different towns or districts that cannot be finally settled except during the tour.

When the Prince halts at one place, half a dozen of the secretarial staff, usually under the control of Sir Lionel Halsey, proceed to the next stopping-place to make the final arrangements for the Prince's arrival.

Sir Lionel Halsey, or whoever controls the secretarial staff, acts as the Prince's advance agent. One of the first duties of the Prince's advance agent is to ascertain if there are any local matters, to which the Prince ought to refer in his speeches.

Too Many Invitations.

For example, some person of much local importance might have died recently; his Royal Highness would make some suitable reference to such a person in his speech.

Full details of local matters which the Prince would be expected to refer to in his speeches are wired by the advance agent to the Prince's headquarters, so that his Royal Highness can prepare his speeches before his arrival at the town.

Before the tour starts the Prince of Wales settles on certain public functions he will attend at each place he visits; but he has always an enormous number of invitations to attend other functions, and also offers of private hospitality. The advance agent decides finally the number of invitations the Prince will be able to accept during his stay at any town.

This he does on instructions from the Prince's headquarters by wire. He then finally arranges all the details, and draws up the programme of the Prince's visit.

The "Welcome" Wallaby.

Two Scotland Yard men accompany the advance agent. They make arrangements in conjunction with the local police for safeguarding the Prince. These arrangements are kept extremely secret. Not more than two or three members of the Prince's suite know of them. The Prince himself never knows of them, because he never troubles to inquire about them.

Unrehearsed and unexpected incidents are, of course, constantly cropping up during a tour, and the Prince is constantly being let in for surprises, usually pleasant, but occasionally a trifle awkward.

During his Australian tour he was received at a station in the back blocks by a number of farmers, rough-riders, and their sisters, cousins, and aunts.

After the Prince had made a brief speech a young girl stepped out from the crowd and presented his Royal Highness with a real live baby wallaby, a species of kangaroo.

What Should He Wear?

The gift delighted the Prince, but also greatly embarrassed him for he had to hold it in his arms for the rest of the afternoon. The baby was christened "Digger," and would have been brought home by the Prince. On the voyage, however, Digger ate some poisonous leaves and died.

Another important part of the work of the Royal advance agent during a tour is to ascertain the kind of garb the Prince of Wales will be expected to appear in in public and also at private functions. At some places the Prince would be expected to wear uniform or ceremonial attire of some kind. At other places people would prefer to see the Prince in mufti, possibly in riding kit-up or even in "plus fours."

It is most important that the Prince should be kept informed in such matters.

First-Aid Tips.

Both on the river and sea, drowning fatalities are unfortunately apt to occur at this time of the year, and many a life has been lost for the want of a little knowledge in dealing with a person who has been dragged from the water.

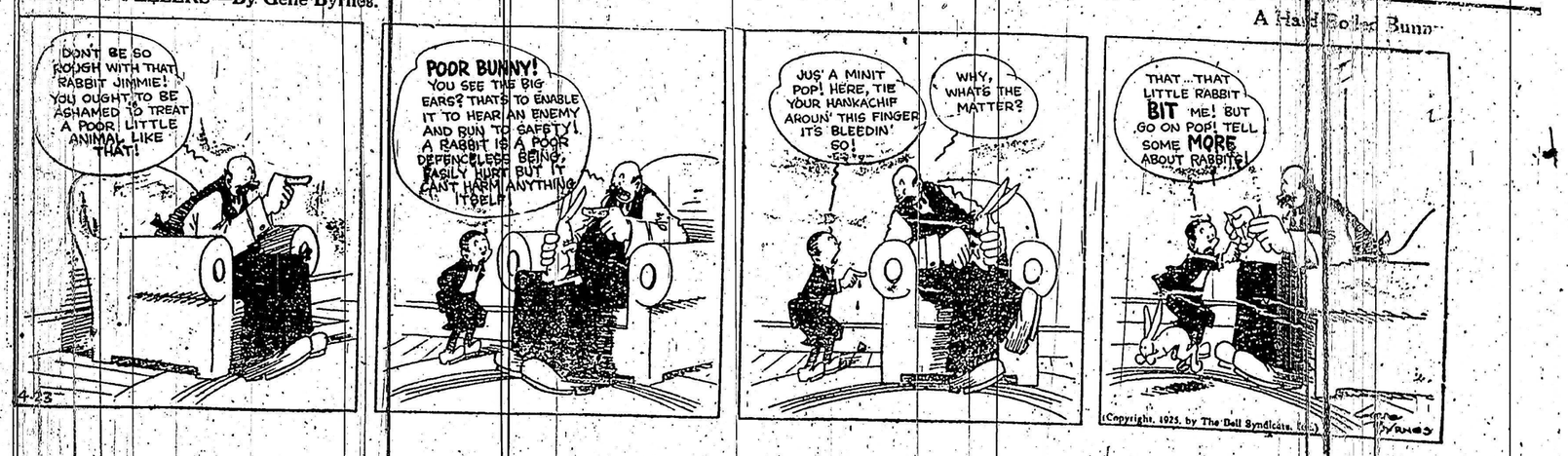
The most important thing to do is to excite breathing by artificial means. And efforts to do this should not be relinquished until fully two hours after the person has been taken on land.

Breathing may be excited by turning the patient on one side and applying smelling-salts to the nose, or tickling the throat with a feather. Rub the chest with hot and cold water alternately. If this fails, turn the body on the face, and then on to the side again, repeating this movement every few seconds. At each turn press the body beneath and between the shoulder-blades.

When breathing has been restored, it is important to promote warmth and circulation. This can be done by vigorous rubbing of the body, and the

REG'LAR FELLERS—By Gene Byrnes.

A Hard Boiled Bunny



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