

A Haunted Island.

The following events occurred on a small island of isolated position in a large Canadian lake, to whose cool waters the wealthy inhabitants of Montreal and Toronto flee for rest and recreation in the hot months. It is only to be regretted that events of such peculiar interest to the genuine student of the psychical should be entirely uncorroborated. Such unfortunately, however, is the case.

Our own party of nearly twenty had returned to Montreal that very day, and I was left in solitary possession for a week or two longer, in order to accomplish some important "reading" for the law which I had foolishly neglected during the summer.

It was late in September, and the big trout and maskinonge were stirring themselves in the depths of the lake, and beginning slowly to move up to the surface waters as the north winds and early frosts lowered their temperature. Already the maples were crimson and gold, and the wild laughter of the loons echoed in sheltered bays that never knew their strange cry in the summer.

With a whole island to oneself, a two-storey cottage, a canoe, and only the chipmunks, and the farmer's weekly visit with eggs and bread, to disturb one, the opportunities for hard reading might be very great. It all depends!

The rest of the party had gone off with many warnings to beware of Indians, and not to stay late enough to be the victim of a frost that thinks nothing of forty below zero. After they had gone, the loneliness of the situation made itself unpleasantly felt. There were no other islands within six or seven miles, and though the main-lanc forests lay a couple of miles behind me, they stretched for a very great distance unbroken by any signs of human habitation. But though the island was completely deserted and silent, the rocks and trees that had echoed human laughter and voices almost every hour of the day for two months could not fail to retain some memories of it all; and I was not surprised to fancy I heard a shout or cry as I passed from rock to rock, and more than once to imagine that I heard my own name called aloud.

In the cottage there were six tiny little bedrooms divided from one another by plain unvarnished partitions of pine. A wooden bedstead, a mattress and a chair, stood in each room, but I only found two mirrors, and one of these was broken.

The boards creaked a good deal as I moved about, and the signs of occupation were so recent that I could hardly believe I was alone. I half expected to find some one left behind, still trying to crowd into a box more than it would hold. The door of one room was stiff, and refused for a moment to open, and it required very little persuasion to imagine some one was holding the handle on the inside, and that when it opened I should meet a pair of human eyes.

A thorough search of the floor led me to select as my own sleeping quarters a little room with a diminutive balcony over the verandah roof. The room was very small, but the bed was large, and had the best mattress of them all. It was situated directly over the sitting-room where I should live and do my "reading," and the miniature window looked out to the rising sun. With the exception of a narrow path which led from the front door and verandah through the trees to the boat-landing, the island was densely covered with maples, hemlocks and cedars. The trees gathered in round the cottage so closely that the slightest wind made the branches scrape the roof and tap the wooden walls. A few moments after sunset the darkness became impenetrable, and ten yards beyond the glare of the lamps that shone through the sitting-room windows—of which there were four—you could not see an inch before your nose, nor move a step without running up against a tree.

The rest of that day I spent moving my belongings from my tent to the sitting-room, taking stock of the contents of the larder, and chopping enough wood for the stove to last me for a week. After that, just before sunset, I went round the island a couple of times in my canoe for precaution's sake. I had never dreamed of doing this before, but when a man's alone he does things that never occur to him when he is one of a large party.

How lonely the island seemed when I landed again! The sun was down, and twilight is unknown in these northern regions. The darkness comes up at once. The canoe pulled up and turned over on her face, I groped my way up the little narrow pathway to the verandah. The six lamps were soon burning merrily in the front room; but in the kitchen, where I "dined," the shadows were so gloomy, and the lamplight was so inadequate, that the stars could be seen peeping through the cracks between the rafters.

I turned in early that night.

Though it was calm and there was no wind, the creaking of my bedstead, and the musical gurgle of the water over the rocks below were not the only sounds that reached my ears. As I lay awake, the appalling emptiness of the house grew upon me. The corridors and vacant rooms seemed to echo innumerable footsteps, shufflings, the rustle of skirts, and a constant undertone of whispering. When sleep at length overtook me, the breathings and noises, however, passed gently to mingle with the voices of my dreams.

A week passed by, and the "reading" progressed favorably. On the tenth day of my solitude, a strange thing happened. I awoke after a good night's sleep to find myself possessed with a marked repugnance for my room. The air seemed to stifle me. The more I tried to define the cause of this dislike, the more unreasonable it appeared. There was something about the room that made me afraid. Absurd as it seems, this feeling clung to me obstinately while dressing, and more than once I caught myself shivering, and conscious of an inclination to get out of the room as quickly as possible. The more I tried to laugh it away, the more real it became; and when at last I was dressed, and went into the passage, and downstairs into the kitchen, it was with feelings of relief, such as I might imagine would accompany one's escape from the presence of a dangerous contagious disease.

While eating my breakfast, I carefully recalled every night spent in the room, in the hope that I might in some way connect the dislike I now felt with some disagreeable incident that had occurred in it. But the only thing I could recall was one stormy night when I suddenly awoke and heard the boards creaking so loudly in the corridor, that I was convinced there were people in the house. So certain was I of this, that I had descended the stairs, gun in hand, only to find the doors and windows securely fastened, and the mice and black-beetles in sole possession of the floor. This was certainly not sufficient to account for the strength of my feelings.

The morning hours I spent in steady reading; and when I broke off in the middle of the day for a swim and luncheon, I was very much surprised, if not a little alarmed, to find that my dislike for the room had, if anything, grown stronger. Going upstairs to get a book, I experienced the most marked aversion to entering the room, and while within I was conscious all the time of an uncomfortable feeling that was half uneasiness and half apprehension. The result of it was that, instead of reading, I spent the afternoon on the water, paddling and fishing, and when I got home about sundown, brought with me half a dozen delicious black bass for the supper-table and the larder.

As sleep was an important matter to me at this time, I had decided that if my aversion to the room was so strongly marked on my return as it had been before, I would move my bed down into the sitting-room, and sleep there. This was, I argued, in no sense a concession to an absurd and fanciful fear, but simply a precaution to insure a good night's sleep. A bad night involved the loss of the next day's reading—a loss I was not prepared to incur.

I accordingly moved my bed downstairs into a corner of the sitting-room facing the door, and was moreover uncommonly glad when the operation was completed, and the door of the bedroom closed finally upon the shadows, the silence, and the strange fear that shared the room with them.

The croaking stroke of the kitchen clock sounded the hour of eight as I finished washing up my few dishes, and closing the kitchen door behind me, passed into the front room. All the lamps were lit, and their reflectors, which I had polished up during the day, threw a blaze of light into the room.

Outside the night was still and warm. Not a breath of air was stirring; the waves were silent, the trees motionless; and heavy clouds hung like an oppressive curtain over the heavens. The darkness seemed to have rolled up with unusual swiftness, and not the faintest glow of colour remained to show where the sun had set. There was present in the atmosphere that ominous and overwhelming silence which so often precedes the most violent storms.

I sat down to my books with my brain unusually clear, and in my heart the pleasant satisfaction of knowing that five black bass were lying in the ice-house, and that to-morrow morning the old farmer would arrive with fresh bread and eggs. I was soon absorbed in my books.

As the night wore on the silence deepened. Even the chipmunks were still, and the boards of the floors and walls ceased creaking. I read on steadily till, from the gloomy shadows of the kitchen, came the hoarse sound of the clock striking nine. How loud the strokes sounded! They were like blows of a big hammer. I closed one book and opened another, feeling that I was just warming up to my work.

This, however, did not last long. I presently found that I was reading the same paragraphs over twice, simple paragraphs that did not require such effort. Then I noticed that my mind began to wander to other things, and the effort to recall my thoughts became harder with each digression. Presently I discovered that I had turned over two pages instead of one, and had not noticed my mistake until I was well down the page. This was becoming serious. What was the disturbing influence? It could not be physical fatigue. On the contrary, my mind was unusually alert, and in a more receptive condition than usual. I made a new and determined effort to read, and for a short time succeeded in giving my whole attention to my subject. But in a very few moments again I found myself leaning back in my chair, staring vacantly into space. Something was evidently at work in my sub-consciousness. There was

something I had neglected to do. Perhaps the kitchen door and windows were not fastened. I accordingly went to see, and found that they were! The fire perhaps needed attention. I went in to see, and found that it was all right! I looked at the lamps, went upstairs into every bedroom in turn, and then went round the house, and even into the ice-house. Nothing was wrong; everything was in its place. Yet something was wrong! The conviction grew stronger and stronger within me.

When I at length settled down to my books again and tried to read, I became aware, for the first time, that the room seemed growing cold. Yet the day had been oppressively warm, and evening had brought no relief. The six big lamps, moreover, gave out heat enough to warm the room pleasantly. But a chilliness, that perhaps crept up from the lake, made itself felt in the room, and caused me to get up to close the glass door opening on to the verandah.

For a brief moment I stood looking out at the shaft of light that fell from the windows and shone some little distance down the pathway, and cut for a few feet into the lake.

As I looked, I saw a canoe glide into the pathway of light, and immediately crossing it, pass out of sight again into the darkness. It was perhaps a hundred feet from the shore, and it moved swiftly.

I was surprised that a canoe should pass the island at that time of night, for all the summer visitors from the other side of the lake had gone home weeks before, and the island was a long way out of any line of water traffic.

My readings from this moment did not make very good progress, for somehow the picture of that canoe, gliding so dimly and swiftly across the narrow track of light on the black waters, silhouetted itself against the background of my mind with singular vividness. It kept coming between my eyes and the printed page. The more I thought about it the more surprised I became. It was of larger build than any I had seen during the past summer months, and was more like the old Indian war canoes with the high curving bows and stern and wide beam. The more I tried to read, the less success attended my efforts, and finally I closed my books and went out on the verandah to walk up and down a bit, and shake the chilliness out of my bones.

The night was perfectly still, and as dark as imaginable. I stumbled down the path to the little landing wharf, where the water made the very faintest of gurgling under the timbers. The sound of a big tree falling in the mainland forest, far across the lake, stirred echoes in the heavy air, like the first guns of a distant night attack. No other sound disturbed the stillness that reigned supreme.

As I stood upon the wharf in the broad splash of light that followed me from the sitting-room windows, I saw another canoe cross the pathway of uncertain light upon the water, and disappear at once into the impenetrable gloom that lay beyond. This time I saw more distinctly than before. It was like the former canoe, a big birch-bark, with high-crested bows and stern and broad beam. It was paddled by two Indians, of whom the one in the stern—the steerer—appeared to be a very large man. I could see this very plainly; and though the second canoe was much nearer the island than the first, I judged that they were both on their way home to the Government Reservation, which was situated some fifteen miles away upon the mainland.

I was wondering in my mind what could possibly bring any Indians down to this part of the lake at such an hour of the night, when a third canoe, of precisely similar build, and also occupied by two Indians, passed silently round the end of the wharf. This time the canoe was very much nearer shore, and it suddenly flashed into my mind that the three canoes were in reality one and the same, and that only one canoe was circling the island!

This was by no means a pleasant reflection, because if it were the correct solution of the unusual appearance of the three canoes in this lonely part of the lake at so late an hour, the purpose of the two men could only reasonably be considered to be in some way connected with myself. I had never known of the Indians attempting any violence upon the settlers who shared the wild, inhospitable country with them; at the same time, it was not beyond the region of possibility to suppose. But then I did not care to even think of such hideous possibilities, and my imagination immediately sought relief in all manner of other solutions to the problem, which indeed came readily enough to my mind, but did not succeed in recommending themselves to my reason.

Meanwhile, by a sort of instinct, I stepped back out of the bright light in which I had hitherto been standing, and waited in the deep shadow of a rock to see if the canoe would again make its appearance. Here I could see and not be seen, and the precaution seemed a wise one.

After less than five minutes the canoe, as I had anticipated, made its fourth appearance. This time it was not twenty yards from the wharf, and I saw that the Indians meant to land. I recognized the two men as those who had passed before, and the steerer was certainly an immense fellow. It was unquestionably the same canoe. There could be no longer any doubt that for some purpose of their own the men had been going round and round the island for some time, waiting for an opportunity to land. I strained my eyes to follow them in the darkness, but the night had completely swallowed them up, and not even the faintest swish of the paddles reached my ears as the Indians plied their long and powerful strokes. The canoe would be round again in a few moments, and this time it was possible that the men might land. It was well to be prepared. I knew nothing of their intentions and two to one, when the two are big Indians! late at night on a lonely is-

land was not exactly my idea of pleasant intercourse.

In a corner of the sitting-room, leaning up against the back wall, stood my Marlin rifle, with ten cartridges in the magazine and one lying snugly in the greased breach. There was just time to get up to the house and take up a position of defence in that corner. Without an instant's hesitation I ran up to the verandah, carefully picking my way among the trees, so as to avoid being seen in the light. Entering the room, I shut the door leading to the verandah, and as quickly as possible turned out every one of the six lamps. To be in a room so brilliantly lighted, where my every movement could be observed from outside, while I could see nothing but impenetrable darkness at every window, was by all laws of warfare an unnecessary concession to the enemy. And this enemy, if enemy it was to be, was far too wily and dangerous to be granted any such advantages.

(To Be Continued.)

TOYS OF A CHINESE CHILD.

Few indeed would be their playthings if the Chinese children had to depend on toy shops for them. As it is, the hawker is a familiar sight in every Chinese city, and when the children hear the gong of a toy seller it is a signal for a rush to the front gates. At a call these men slip the pole from their shoulders and set their baskets on the ground, and there is always a group of children ready to gather round them.

A display of toys carried by one of these toy sellers includes many things familiar, besides kites, made in the shape of birds, fish serpents, dragons and even inanimate objects, like bells and houses, will have wind harps fastened on to make them sing while in the air, and will have eyes set loose in their heads, so that when the wind blows the eyes will turn round and look as if they were winking at you.

His paraphernalia also include a lot of clay moulds of different kinds of animals or fruits or other familiar objects, and for "one cash" you can take your choice.

The seller then opens up the bottom tray in his rear basket and shows a bowl of yellow sweets set over a pan of burning charcoal to keep them soft. He rubs a little flour in the moulds to keep the sweets from sticking, picks up a little of the soft substance, which he works into a cup shape in his fingers, and then draws it out, closing up the hole. One end is drawn out longer than the other and then broken off. He places his lips to the broken place and begins to blow, and the lump slowly swells.

Then he claps the moulds which you have chosen round it, and gives a hard blow, breaks off the stem through which he has been blowing, opens the moulds, dips a little bamboo stick into the soft sugar and touches it to the side of the sweetmeat figure in the mould, lifts it out and hands it to you on the stick, all in much less time than it takes to tell about it.

IMITATION RUBIES.

One of the great prima donnas now in New York wears in one role a beautiful parure of diamonds, and she horrified another singer in the company by telling her that they were French imitations that had not cost one-fiftieth of what they seemed to have cost.

The other woman was distressed because all of hers were real, and the thought of the money invested in them was too much for her.

Imitation jewels have come to be so finely made that detection is almost impossible. Even for ordinary wear they are accounted beautiful, and it is only the knowledge of their falsity which makes them unpopular. For every ordinary purpose they are as useful as the genuine pieces.

The last jewels to be imitated with wonderful success are rubies, and they happen to be a fashionable stone just now. The manufactory which has these imitation rubies on the market is situated in London, and it has already been said there that the price of real rubies will certainly fall in consequence of the discovery of these wonderful imitations. The profits of the company making the rubies are said to be \$185,000 a year.

Artificial rubies weighing 40 carats can be produced, but are not, as there would be no sale for stones of that size. An authority has said that there is no way known to him by which these stones can be told from the genuine ones.

A London jeweler questioned as to the possible results of these good and cheap imitations said that the stones impossible to imitate might become the most valuable and the most fashionable, eventually.

PUT PINS IN HER MOUTH.

Hundreds of women are in the habit of putting pins in their mouth. Mrs. Catherine Hackman died at her home in Lebanon, Penn., Wednesday after suffering 25 years with a pin in her throat. More than a quarter of a century ago she accidentally swallowed a pin, which lodged in her throat. She suffered excruciating pain at times, and was often obliged to take food through a tube.

AWFUL THREAT.

Jones—Are you going to pay me that account?
Smith—Not just yet.
Jones—If you don't I'll tell all your creditors that you paid me!

WHAT UNCLE SAM IS AT.

ITEMS OF INTEREST ABOUT THE BUSY YANKEE.

Neighborly Interest in His Doings—Matters of Moment and Mirth Gathered from His Daily Record.

Andrew Carnegie has offered to the city of Atlanta the sum of \$100,000 for a free public library on condition that the city furnish a site and maintain the library at a cost of not less than \$5,000 a year.

The national Government has contributed an 8-inch howitzer, with 14 shells, to mark the grave of Major-General John Sedgwick, in Cornwall, Conn. General Sedgwick was killed in battle during the civil war.

There are four Macs in the Senate—McBride, McEnery, McLaurin and McMillan. Two are Democrats and two Republicans; but they all voted for the treaty, and two of them—McEnery and McLaurin—secured its ratification.

Within a few years, or since about the time of Anna Gould's marriage to Count Castellane, 152 rich American girls have married European noblemen. The dowries they have taken across the water average \$100,000 each.

Robert Barr, the novelist, says he will wager he can step off a train at any village in England, and at two out of every three houses receive an affirmative answer to the question, "Have you any relatives in America?"

Congress has just passed a special act placing upon the pension rolls Mrs. Mary Forbes Cobbin, New London, Ind., a Mexican war widow and one of the war of 1812. Her first husband Louis H. Bryan, was a great-grandfather of W. J. Bryan.

Blanche Willis Howard von Teuffel, who died in Germany a few months ago, was cremated at Heidelberg, according to her wish, and the urn containing her ashes has been brought to this country and placed at Mount Hope cemetery, Bangor, Me.

Helen Kellar, the deaf, dumb and blind student at Radcliffe College, visited the Boston Museum of Art a few days ago and "saw" the statues. By passing her sensitive fingers over the figures she was able to get a marvellously correct idea of them.

A Mount Vernon, N.Y., judge thinks that in order to obtain the best results a jury should be made to feel at home in the courtroom. Accordingly he has had the stationary chairs heretofore used by jurors removed, and has replaced them with commodious reclining chairs.

Judge William Butler, of Philadelphia, who has resigned from the bench of the United States District Court, learned the trade of a printer in the office of the West Chester, Pa., Village Record. Among the other boys in the office at the same time was Bayard Taylor.

Mrs. Anna M. Bach, a wealthy widow who died at St. Louis last week, bequeathed \$500 for the care of a pet canary and two dogs. This special duty was imposed upon a niece to whom Mrs. Bach left the bulk of her property. Various charitable institutions received legacies amounting to \$20,000.

A great joke is reported on the "army" from Junction City, Kan. A party of eight officers on a wagonette were held up by three bogus bandits and robbed of \$750, and the officers sent back to the post bare-headed and on foot. The bogus bandits drove back and had all the post turn out to see the officers upon their return. The officers were armed and equipped ready to start for Manila.

Postmaster Tuttle, of Carthage, Mo., has just received from the Federal Government a draft for \$8.26 in payment of a debt that has been running since the civil war, but of which Tuttle knew nothing. It appears that in settling with Capt. Tuttle for his services as a soldier one day's pay was overlooked, and also an allowance for clothing. It took Uncle Sam 34 years to discover the error.

Kansas City has adopted a trademark. Hereafter it will appear on all manufactured goods sent out from that city. The design was selected by the directors of the Manufacturers' Association from 78 which were submitted. It consists of a map of the United States, with Kansas City represented by a star in the exact centre. Above the star hovers an eagle with outspread wings.

According to advices received in New York, the millionaire mine owner, Jos. de La Mar, who came out of the west a rough, rich and eccentric miner, is now going to re-marry his divorced wife in Paris. This wife was Nellie Sands, a beautiful girl, the daughter of a druggist. Captain de La Mar settled a neat little trifle of \$200,000 on her on his wedding day, and gave her for a bridal present a diamond trinket which cost just exactly \$40,000.

GOLD IN CLAY.

It has been discovered that the clay of which our common red bricks are made contains gold, about 25 cents' worth to every ton of bricks. An ingenious person has calculated that, as there are at least 5,000,000 tons of bricks in London, there must be at least \$1,250,000 worth of the precious metal locked up in the walls of that metropolis alone.