

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

"It killed your dog! that is fearful! indeed it is strange that no animal can be induced to stay in that house; not even a cat. Rats and mice are never found in it."

"The instincts of the brute creation detect influences deadly to their existence. Man's reason has a sense less subtle, because it has a resisting power more supreme. But enough; do you comprehend my theory?"

"Yes, though imperfectly—and I accept any croquet, pardon the word, however odd, rather than embrace at once the notion of ghosts, and hobgoblins we imbibed in our nurseries. Still, to my unfortunate house the evil is the same. What on earth can I do with the house?"

"I will tell you what I would do. I am convinced from my own internal feelings that the small unfurnished room at right angles to the door of the bedroom which I occupied, forms a starting-point or receptacle for the influences which haunt the house; and I strongly advise you to have the walls opened, the floor removed—nay, the whole room pulled down. I observe that it is detached from the body of the house, built over the small back-yard, and could be removed without injury to the rest of the building."

"And you think, if I did that—"

"You would cut off the telegraph wires. Try it. I am so persuaded that I am right, that I will pay half the expense if you will allow me to direct the operations."

"Nay, I am well able to afford the cost; for the rest, allow me to write to you."

About ten days afterwards I received a letter from Mr. J—, telling me that he had visited the house since I had seen him; that he had found the two letters I had described, replaced in the drawer from which I had taken them; that he had read them with misgivings like my own; that he had instituted a cautious inquiry about the woman to whom I rightly conjectured they had been written. It seemed that thirty-six years ago, a year before the date of the letters, she had married against the wish of her relatives an American of very suspicious character; in fact, he was generally believed to have been a pirate. She herself was the daughter of very respectable tradespeople, and had served in the capacity of a nursery governess before her marriage. She had a brother, a widower, who was considered wealthy and who had one child of about six years old. A month after the marriage, the body of this brother was found in the Thames, near London Bridge; there seemed some marks of violence about his throat, but they were not deemed sufficient to warrant the inquest in any other verdict than that of "found drowned."

The American and his wife took charge of the little boy, the deceased brother having by his will left his sister the guardian of his only child—and in event of the child's death, the sister inherited. The child died about six months afterwards—it was supposed to have been neglected and ill-treated. The neighbors deposed to have heard it shriek at night. The surgeon who had examined it after death, said that it was emaciated as if from want of nourishment and the body was covered with livid bruises. It seemed that one winter night the child had sought to escape—crept out into the back-yard—tried to scale the wall—fallen back exhausted, and been found at morning on the stones in a dying state. But though there was some evidence of cruelty, there was none of murder; and the aunt and her husband had sought to palliate cruelty by alleging the exceeding stubbornness and perversity of the child, who was declared to be half-witted. He that as it may, at the orphan's death the aunt inherited her brother's fortune. Before the first wedded year was out, the American quitted England abruptly, and never returned to it. He obtained a cruising vessel, which was lost in the Atlantic two years afterwards. The widow was left in affluence; but reverses of various kinds had befallen her; a bank broke—an investment failed—she went into a small business and became insolvent—then she entered into service, sinking lower and lower, from house-keeper down to maid-of-all-work—never long retaining a place, though nothing peculiar against her character was ever alleged. She was considered sober, honest, and peculiarly quiet in her ways; still nothing prospered with her. And so she had dropped into the work-house, from which Mr. J— had taken her, to be placed in charge of the very house which she had rented as mistress in the first year of her wedded life.

Mr. J— added that he had passed an hour alone in the unfurnished room which I had urged him to destroy, and that his impressions of dread while there were so great, though he had never heard nor seen anything, that he was eager to have the walls bared and the floors removed as I had suggested. He had engaged persons for the work, and would commence any day I would name.

The day was accordingly fixed. I repaired to the haunted house—we went into the blind dreary room, took up the skirting, and then the floors. Under the rafters, covered with rubbish, was found a trap-door, quite large enough to admit a man. It was closely nailed down, with clamps and rivets of iron. On removing these we descended into a room below, the existence of which had never been suspected. In this room there had been a window and a flue, but they had been bricked over, evidently for many years. By the help of candles we examined this place; it still retained some mouldering furniture—three chairs, an oak settle, a table, all of the fashion of about eighty years ago. There was a chest of drawers against the wall, in which we found half-rotted away, old-fashioned articles of a man's dress, such as might have been worn eighty or a hundred years ago by a gentleman of some rank—costly steel buckles and buttons, like those yet worn in court-dresses—a

handsome court sword—in a waistcoat which had once been rich with gold-lace, but which was now blackened and foul with damp, we found five guineas, a few silver coins, and an ivory ticket, probably for some place of entertainment long since passed away. But our main discovery was in a kind of iron safe fixed to the wall, the lock of which it cost us much trouble to get picked.

In this safe were three shelves and two small drawers. Ranged on the shelves were several small bottles of crystal, hermetically stopped. They contained colourless volatile essences, of what nature I shall say no more than that they were not poisons—phosphor and ammonia entered into some of them. There were also some very curious glass tubes, and a small pointed rod of iron, with a large lump of rock-crystal, and another of amber—also a lodestone of great power.

In one of the drawers we found a miniature portrait set in gold, and retaining the freshness of its colours most remarkably, considering the length of time it had probably been there. The portrait was that of a man who might be somewhat advanced in middle life, perhaps forty-seven or forty-eight.

It was a most peculiar face—a most impressive face. If you could fancy some mighty serpent transformed into man, preserving in the human lineaments the old serpent type, you would have a better idea of that countenance than long descriptions can convey; the width and flatness of frontal—the tapering elegance of contour disguising the strength of the deadly jaw—the long, large, terrible eye, glittering and green as the emerald—and withal a certain ruthless calm, as if from the consciousness of an immense power. The strange thing was this—the instant I saw the miniature I recognized a startling likeness to one of the rarest portraits in the world—the portrait of a man of a rank only below that of royalty, who in his own day had made a considerable noise. History says little or nothing of him; but search the correspondence of his contemporaries and you find reference to his wild daring, his bold profligacy, his restless spirit, his taste for the occult sciences. While still in the meridian of life he died, and was buried, so say the chronicles in a foreign land. He died in time to escape the grasp of the law, for he was accused of crimes which would have given him to the headsman. After his death, the portraits of him, which had been numerous, for he had been a munificent encourager of art, were bought up and destroyed—it was supposed by his heirs, who might have been glad could they have razed his very name from their splendid line. He had enjoyed a vast wealth; a large portion of this was believed to have been embezzled by a favorite astrologer or soothsayer—at all events, it had unaccountably vanished at the time of his death. One portrait alone of him was supposed to have escaped the general destruction; I had seen it in the house of a collector some months before. It had made on me a wonderful impression, as it does on all who behold it—a face never to be forgotten; and there was that face in the miniature that lay within my hand. True that in the miniature the man was a few years older than in the portrait I had seen, or than the original was even at the time of his death. But a few years!—why, between the date in which flourished that direful noble and the date in which the miniature was evidently painted, there was an interval of more than two centuries. While I was thus gazing, silent and wondering, Mr. J— said:

"But is it possible? I have known this man."

"How—where?" cried I.

"In India. He was high in the confidence of the Rajah of—, and well-nigh drew him into a revolt which would have lost the Rajah his dominions. The man was a Frenchman—his name De V—, clever, bold, lawless. We insisted on his dismissal and banishment; it must be the same man—no two faces like this—yet this miniature seems nearly a hundred years old."

Mechanically I turned round the miniature to examine the back of it, and on the back was engraved a pentacle; in the middle of the pentacle a ladder, and the third step of the ladder was formed by the date 1765. Examining still more minutely, I detected a spring, this, on being pressed, opened the back of the miniature as a lid. Within-side the lid were engraved, "Mariana to thee—Be faithful in life and death to—." Here followed a name that I will not mention, but it was not unfamiliar to me. I had heard it spoken of by old men in my childhood as the name borne by a dazzling charlatan who had made a great sensation in London for a year or so, and had fled the country on the charge of a double murder within his own house—that of his mistress and his rival. I said nothing of this to Mr. J—, to whom reluctantly I resigned the miniature.

We had found no difficulty in opening the first drawer within the iron safe; we found great difficulty in opening the second; it was not locked but it resisted all efforts, till we inserted in the chinks the edge of a chisel. When we had thus drawn it forth, we found a very singular apparatus in the nicest order. Upon a small thin book, or rather tablet, was placed a saucer of crystal; this saucer was filled with a clear liquid—on that liquid floated a kind of compass, with a needle shifting rapidly round; but instead of the usual points of a compass were seven strange characters, not very unlike those used by astrologers to denote the planets. A very peculiar, but not strong nor displeasing odor, came from this drawer, which was lined with a wood that we afterwards discovered to be hazel. Whatever the cause of this odour, it produced a material effect on the nerves. We all felt it, even the workmen who were in the room—a creeping, tingling sensation from the tips of the fingers to the roots

of the hair. Impatient to examine the tablet I removed the saucer. As I did so the needle of the compass went round and round with exceeding swiftness, and I felt a shock that ran through my whole frame, so that I dropped the saucer on the floor. The liquid was spilt—the saucer was broken—the compass rolled to the end of the room—and at that instant the walls shook to and fro, as if a giant had swayed and rocked them.

The two workmen were so frightened that they ran up the ladder by which we had descended from the trap-door; but seeing that nothing more happened, they were easily induced to return.

Meanwhile I had opened the tablet; it was bound in plain red leather, with a silver clasp; it contained but one sheet of thick vellum, and on the sheet were inscribed, within a double pentacle, words in old monkish Latin, which are literally to be translated thus:—"On all that it can reach with these walls—sentient or inanimate, living or dead—as moves the needle, so work my will, and restless be the dwellers therein."

We found no more. Mr. J— burnt the tablet and its anathema. He razed to the foundations the part of the building containing the secret room with the chamber over it. He had then the courage to inhabit the house himself for a month, and a quieter, better-conditioned house could not be found in all London. Subsequently he let it to advantage, and his tenant has made no complaints.

But my story is not yet done. A few days after Mr. J— had removed into the house, I paid him a visit. A van containing some articles of furniture which he was moving from his former house was at the door. I had just urged on him my theory that all those phenomena regarded as supermundane had emanated from a human brain; adding the charm or rather curse we had found and destroyed in support of my philosophy. Mr. J— was observing in reply, "That even if mesmerism, or whatever analogous power it might be called, could really thus work in the absence of the operator, and produce effects so extraordinary, still could those effects continue when the operator himself was dead? and if the spell had been wrought, and, indeed, the room walled up, more than seventy years ago, the probability was, that the operator had long since departed this life." Mr. J—, I say, was thus answering, when I caught hold of his arm and pointed to the street below.

A well-dressed man had crossed from the opposite side, and was accosting the carrier in charge of the van. His face, as he stood, was exactly fronting our window. It was the face of the miniature we had discovered; it was the face of the portrait of the noble three centuries ago.

"Good heavens!" cried Mr. J—, "that is the face of De V—, and scarcely a day older than when I saw it in the Rajah's court in my youth!"

Seized by the same thought, we both hastened down stairs. I was first in the street; but the man had already gone. I caught sight of him, however, not many yards in advance, and in another moment I was by his side.

I had resolved to speak to him, but when I looked into his face, I felt as if it were impossible to do so. That eye—the eye of the serpent—fixed and held me spellbound. And withal, about the man's whole person there was a dignity, an air of pride and station and superiority, that would have made any one habituated to the usages of the world, hesitate long before venturing upon a liberty or impertinence. And what could I say? what was it I would ask? Thus ashamed of my first impulse, I fell a few paces back, still, however, following the stranger, undecided what else to do. Meanwhile he turned the corner of the street; a plain carriage was in waiting, with a servant out of livery dressed like a valet-de-place at the carriage door. In another moment he had stepped into the carriage, and it drove off. I returned to the house. Mr. J— was still at the street door. He had asked the carrier what the stranger had said to him.

"Merely asked, whom that house now belonged to."

The same evening I happened to go with a friend to a place in town called the Cosmopolitan Club, a place open to men of all countries, all opinions, all degrees. One orders one's coffee, smokes one's cigar. One is always sure to meet agreeable, sometimes remarkable persons.

I had not been two minutes in the room before I beheld at a table, conversing with an acquaintance of mine, whom I will designate by the initial G—, the man—the Original of the Miniature. He was now without his hat, and the likeness was yet more startling, only I observed that while he was conversing there was less severity in the countenance; there was even a smile, though a very quiet and cold one. The dignity of mien I had acknowledged in the street was also more striking; a dignity akin to that which invests some prince of the East—conveying the idea of supreme indifference, and habitual, indisputable, indolent, but resistless power.

G— soon after left the stranger, who then took up a scientific journal, which seemed to absorb his attention.

I drew G— aside—"Who and what is that gentleman?"

(To be Continued.)

A mouse skipped across a class-room in Public School No. 42. An eight-year-old girl saw it and screamed. Then several children who had not seen it also screamed, and one of them shouted "Fire!" Most of the inmates now screamed "Fire!" and in five minutes the engines were at the door, a platoon of police, and four thousand people in the street, many of them invoking the Almighty to save their children. It was fully two hours before the panic was over. The mouse escaped.

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GOSSIP ABOUT "THE CLAIMANT."

Orion Compared with Other Fat Men Who Were Famous only for Their Bulk.

The recent death of the Tichborne claimant had stirred up a lot of reminiscences of the man's personality and of the gigantic fraud which he attempted to perpetrate. A recent English paper says of Arthur Orton, the claimant, that he was one of the few men possessed of abnormal adipose tissue who will go down to posterity famed for something else than mere bulk. The London Echo, in discussing Orton, compares him with several other fat men who have won fame by their size. It says:

"The funerals of several fat men have been accompanied by somewhat remarkable circumstances. For instance, when, in 1750, a man named Edward Bright, who weighed forty-four stone, died, the walls and staircase of his house had to be removed to allow the coffin to be carried out. According to a paper of the period, another Falstaffian individual, who died at Worcester in 1770, had a coffin that measured seven feet over, and was bigger than an ordinary hearse, and a wall was obliged to be taken down to admit its passage.

"Daniel Lambert, who, at the age of 39, died at Stamford in 1809 is perhaps

THE MOST NOTED of corpulent men. His coffin was slid down an incline to the bottom of the grave. Lambert, who weighed fifty-two and three-quarter stone, was some time keeper of Leicester jail, but he resigned that appointment for the purpose of exhibiting himself in a house in Piccadilly. Then a would-be- rival in girth, a Kentish man named Palmer, who only weighed twenty-five stone, came to see Daniel. Palmer was so mortified at being hopelessly eclipsed by the other in point of obesity that he took the matter to heart and died soon afterward.

"Lambert, who has been described as the 'acme of mortal hugeness,' has done duty as a synonym, as George Meredith describes London as 'the Daniel Lambert of cities.' Perhaps the heaviest young woman of the century was exhibited in Paris about eighty years ago. At the age of 20 she scaled thirty-two stone, and could lift easily a 250-pound weight in each hand. She was a German, named Frederica Ahrens."

The masses of the uneducated people in England championed the cause of the claimant, and at the time of the trial a laborer was quoted as saying: "I don't care whether 'e's Arthur Orton or Roger Tichborne, but it's a shame to keep the poor man out of 'is rights." The story of the neat fashion in which the claimant gave himself away and enabled the solicitors for the Tichborne trustees to snap up a clue as to his identity was retold by a London paper last week.


"When the claimant returned from Australia he went over to Paris to see his alleged mother, the poor crazed Lady Tichborne, when the famous recognition by maternal instinct ensued. Just before starting Orton, who was then of Falstaffian proportions, visited his native Wapping, and, entering the Globe tavern, made close inquiries respecting members of his own family, and

ESPECIALLY A BUTCHER, A German named Schottler. By this time the opposition got wind that the mysterious claimant to the Alresford estates hailed from Australia, and a detective was sent thither to make enquiries. He speedily found out the erst haunts of the fat man, and ascertained that the latter had been in the habit of boasting about a friend he had in London named Schottler, and sent word to England to that effect. Then the solicitors anxiously consulted the London directory, and it was found that only one Schottler had been in business in the metropolis for a number of years, and that he had resided in Wapping. Thither hied a detective to ferret out what he could. By the unluckiest accident imaginable for the cause of the claimant, he turned into the same Globe. On asking about Mr. Schottler the landlady remarked: "Curious, there was a gentleman inquiring about him months ago!" "Is that like him?" said the detective, exhibiting the claimant's photo. "The very man!" was the response.

Popular sympathy with Orton was shown by sending the claimant's leading counsel to Parliament as member for Stoke, despite the fact that he had been disbarred.

A NEW QUICK-FIRING GUN. Messrs. Kynoch of Birmingham, England, have for some time past been engaged in perfecting the mechanism of a new quick-firing gun, and they have succeeded in producing a weapon a long way ahead of any other gun of a similar type. By turning a wheel the whole mechanism is set working and 600 magazine bullets are discharged per minute. The gun which only weighs a hundredweight is single reloaded, and while in action is kept cool by a water jacket, which is filled automatically. The firing action is supplied with cartridges by an endless belt which passes through a box and collects the cartridges. The gun will kill at three miles and as the barrel is made to swing from right to left it will probably prove to be one of the most deadly weapons of modern warfare.

A MEAN SWINDLE. Mistress—Did you ask for milk bread? Domestic—Yes, mum. What a miserable little loaf they gave you. Yes, mum; it's my opinion, mum, that that baker is using condensed milk.



Old People's Troubles.

Hard for the old folks to come back aches in the daytime—rest at night.

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

Strengthen the Kidneys and help to make the declining years comfortable.

Mr. W. G. Mufgford, Chestnut Street, Charlotetown, P. E. I., writes:

"For the past two years I have had much trouble with disease of the kidneys and non-retention of urine, was dropsical and suffered great deal with pain in my back. I have been greatly benefited by the use of Doan's Kidney Pills."

A NURSE'S STORY.

Tells how she was cured of Heart and Nerve Troubles.

The onerous duties that fall to the lot of a nurse, the worry, care, loss of irregularity of meals soon tell on the nervous system and undermine the health. Mrs. H. L. Menzies, a professional nurse living at the Corner of Wellington and King Streets, Brantford, Ont., states as follows:



Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills

Anaemia, Nervousness, Weakness, Sleeplessness, Palpitation, Throbbing, Pain, Spells, Dizziness or any condition arising from Impoverished Blood, Disordered Nerves or Weak Heart.

Laxa-Liver Pills Clean Coated Tongue

DIVERSIONS OF ROYALTY.

Some of the Games with Which Rulers Crowned Heads Amuse Themselves.

Many of the crowned heads turn to games in these days for relaxation from State cares. The Emperor of Germany turns frequently to tennis for sport, and he has constructed one of the best appointed tennis courts in the world at the castle of Moringen. It is appropriately decorated, and the Emperor himself superintended the building, as he understood the building trade. The Czar of Russia is a master hand at the game of jeralache, or Russian whist, which is like our whist, except that there are no trumps.

The Emperor of Japan, of course, prefers the national game of "go." Schottler for the study of this game are especially noted in Japan, and several periodicals are devoted entirely to the subject. Queen Victoria prefers brettspiel, a German game resembling backgammon, which she learned from the Prince Consort. The Princess Beatrice has taken up golfing, a new kind of golf game, she is also a capital golf player, and belongs to several clubs, to which she presents valuable prizes. The Princess Victoria or Wales is a skillful hockey player.

The Archduchess Elizabeth of Austria takes her athletics in the form of long tramps with her mother. The King of Spain's pet pastime is kite flying, a contest between two kite flyers to see who can capture or disable the other's kite. A game called "Knights of Spain" is also another one of his sports. The young Queen of Holland is devoted to badminton and her bicycle. The Queen of Italy has a reputation as a pedestrian; for relaxation she turns to chess.

Queen Christina of Spain is an expert fencer and a good piquet player. Piquet or piquet, has been known in Spain since the early ages under the name centos. Bowling is the favorite recreation of Queen Olga of Greece. She is also quite devoted to games of solitaire, particularly the one called Helena, which is played with two packs of cards, and said to have been played by Napoleon in exile on the island of St. Helena.

SPRING PROBLEMS.

What is John figuring about? He's trying to find out whether it will be cheaper to move after the folks who have moved away, or to buy a lawn-mower ourselves.

Hardwa

Our business so rapidly that we ly time to write ever we will try know a little about This week we large shipment ware, Gran ware and W

TIN and GRANITE

Cream Cans, Milk Pails, Strainer Pails, Water Pails, Slop Pails, Etc.,

The finest Family Freezer

Woodenware.

Potato Mashers, Rolling Pins, Towel Rollers, Steak Pounders, Churns

Our Buttercup finest in the easiest v

We want every daughter to call and Egg Carriers.

Another large shi Mixed Paints and Arrived.

W. B.

Selling at Cost

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A Large Qua

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CHAS. M

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