

# THE "GREY DEMOISELLE."

The Romance of a Christmas Ghost.

## EXPERIENCE I.

The scene of my next experience was Touraine, lovely Touraine, the Garden of France. I had been invited to spend Christmas in a beautiful old chateau, the temporary home of my old and charming friend, Madame de Polignere, who had rented it for the season, while her "hotel" in the Avenue des Champs Elysees was undergoing repairs. There was only one other guest there for Christmas, Yvonne de Bois, a god-child of the Baronne, a bright, merry creature, who kept us all alive with her chatter and her charming voice. We all looked forward to the evenings in the old red salon, where the host and his wife played piquet, and Yvonne trilled the fascinating "Chansons" of Paul Delmet, Chaminade, and other favorite composers. They suited the timbre of her light flexible voice, true and birdlike, and exquisitely trained with the evening, when the music was over, we gathered round the tall, old-fashioned stove, and open fires in those parts; and began discussing ghosts, or rather the others did, while I listened silently; my own experience of one's where, was too recent, and my feeling about it still too sad to discuss and when my attention was made of that spirit-world, between which and ourselves there is such a thin yet impenetrable veil, I could only be silent, and think, and wonder, and try to have faith in Him who rules both worlds, "thems" and ours. That day the Baron had gone over on his automobile to a neighboring chateau, an historic old place in which lived the widow and daughters of an old army friend of his. They had not come across each other for many long years, in fact, the women-kind had never met.

"I heard a curious thing to-day," said the Baron. "I wonder how much truth there is in it. Madame Desbriettes and her daughters declare that Chateau la Reine is haunted, and that the servants as well as the family have seen the fair ghost, for it seems she is a lady and both young and lovely into the bargain. Yvonne was wild with excitement. 'Tell me everything you heard,' she said; 'quick! quick! What is she like? When does she appear? Have other people seen her?'"

"Well, yes; it seems that a man who was there in September for the shooting, had the pleasure of an introduction, and he was so eloquent in his admiration that he got dreadfully chafed for his love at first sight, and his impatience to again behold the lovely spook. He was an Englishman, too, spending a long vacation over here. The Desbriettes had come across him at Monte Carlo and asked him to come to them some time. He continued to rave over the lovely transparent and shadowy figure till the day of his visit. There is nothing alarming about her, they all declare. They are quite fond of the 'little grey demoiselle,' as they call her, and should miss her, if she should ever take her departure."

Yvonne grew more and more curious and excited, asked more questions in five minutes than her uncle could answer in fifteen. To quiet her, her Maraine suggested that she should go to the chateau, and see "haunt," and if she were very good she should be taken to Chateau La Reine and find out some more about her.

"Think we were all somewhat sceptical, thought madame and her ed us out, as he was disentangling my cloak, which was on the wheel. I caught a most curious expression on his face, half alarm, half horror, but he went on as if nothing had happened, and fixedly at Yvonne, not with the admiration which would have been expected—she was so pretty, in her dainty Parisian attire, but with real stupefaction and bewilderment. At that moment, Yvonne, who had been gazing about her excitedly, exclaimed, with her eyes fixed on the old castle, 'Why, Maraine, Miss Benbow, it's my own Dream House, I know every stone of it, have heard her often and often before, I can describe everything to you; yes! everything. I could not understand it at first, but now I know why it is all so familiar.'"

"What an imaginative child it is," said madame, as we went into the old hall. We found the ladies as charming and friendly as the Baron had described them. In a few minutes we had inquired for Yvonne, whom they knew to be staying with the De Poligneres. On hearing that she was in the carriage, Rene, the only daughter, who had been to go and bring her in to have coffee and "syp," from where I was sitting I could see straight across the hall to the open door and portico. I noticed that Rene went forward, then paused midway, and I distinctly caught a little startled exclamation, "Mon Dieu!" She then went on, and presently the two girls entered the salon, Rene pale and unnerved, leading Yvonne to the hostess. The latter held out both hands with a charming gesture of welcome; then daughters might be imaginative or subject to "migraine," the servants probably followed their mistress' supernatural visions in sheep-like fashion. The sporting man's experience? Well, that was more of a poster certainty, a touch of liver, perhaps, from a chill caught while shooting, "was the Baron's uronomic solution of the problem."

Next morning Yvonne began again, and to pacify her, Madame said we would drive over after déjeuner and pay our respects to the familie Desbriettes.

It was a lovely afternoon, and as we turned into the fine old park, with its well kept avenue and drove up to the chateau with its gleaming white facade and picturesque turrets, its terraces bathed in sunshine, and flowers everywhere, it did not look at all the haunted house of one's imagination. The lawn was still green, even at this season, and an aviary at one of the windows was a very concert hall, the birdlings serenading us with all their little hearts and voices as we drove up to the door. Madame and I got out, but it was thought best that, for the moment,

Yvonne should wait in the carriage, as two were enough to go in and pay a first call. The old butler, help she hastily drew back, and looked startled; with difficulty she regained sufficient composure to say how glad she was to see Yvonne. The girl, however, had noticed none of this by-play, not even the enquiring glances exchanged between her godmother and myself. She was looking in a bewildered, fascinated manner round the room.

"You don't know me," she said, in her pretty, impulsive fashion, "why, of course you don't, because you've never seen me before, but I know all about your lovely house. There is a door in that panel over there, and behind it is an old, old staircase going up to some bed-rooms in the turrets. Why, I have often been up and down those stairs. They are very dusty, you know, lots of cobwebs, and funny little twists and turns. Then, that door leads into an old library, hung with tapestry, one panel has a piece cut out of it, and it rather spoils the picture; the stiches look ragged, of course. There are wonderful books, too, old, old



"She Was Wonderfully Pretty, Slender and Graceful."

books with such funny pictures, all in old French, I expect, for I know I could not read them."

"Yvonne is a quaint mortal," said my old friend; "forgive her for rattling on. I think in a former world she must have been a pixie, who came down the chimney to tease people. Well! I don't know that she is so very different in her second life."

"Will you come and see my glass-houses?" said Madame Desbriettes in an agitated tone. "Rene, take Mlle. Yvonne to the tennis-lawn; perhaps she would like to have a game with you."

"As soon as the two girls left the salon, Madame exclaimed: 'You said, when you came in, that the Baron had told you of our ghost; that is she! Your little Yvonne is the ghost, there is no mistake; but what can be the meaning of the mystery?'"

"She went on to say that Yvonne's description of the unseen rooms (she had wandered on more volubly and at greater length than I have told you) was accurate in every particular; in one case, she was wrong indeed, but a few years after the Desbriettes had come to the house an alteration had been made and the description given was of the room at its earlier date."

It was all very curious, very impressive, but we agreed that Yvonne should never be enlightened for fear of making her nervous. We confided in the Baron only, and swore him to secrecy. The strange part that had been seen there little grey Demoiselle in the flesh, she never again appeared to spirit form."

Soon afterwards my friends, with Yvonne returned to Paris and the ghost story was buried in oblivion as we had arranged it should be for Yvonne's good. Now comes the sequel, the happy sequel, for if you have thought my little story weird and fantastic, I think you will approve of its good old-fashioned ending, romantic, true. A year and a half after the ghost story episode, Yvonne was taken up to Oxford for commemoration by her 'spoiling' godmother. They were the guests of a learned but genial (the two qualities do not always go together in the University) Do., professor for his kindly way of opening his hospitable doors to strangers and pilgrims of all nationalities. Yvonne an especial pet of his, had a very good time, her easy manner and bright nature made her a great favorite.

She was full of engagements of all sorts and thoroughly enjoyed everything which came in her way, although dancing was perhaps to her the greatest pleasure of the 'season.' One of the first balls she went to was at Christ Church. It was a beautifully arranged affair, and everyone was keen on getting an invitation to it. The lucky men of the 'houses' who had tickets to give away received an unusual amount of attention, and felt themselves, in conse-

quence, of unaccounted importance, for the time being. The ball was in full swing, when a tall, dark man entered the ball-room during a pause between the dances. He was a good specimen of Englishman, clean limbed, with spare, athletic figure, and honest dark eyes. He looked a "good all-round" man, and so he was. He bowed in his college boat, was good at cricket and "footer," and a crack shot. There were many lamentations at Christ Church because he was about to take his degree and go down. He was looking about him now for a chance of partners, when his eyes were absolutely riveted on a girl who was standing by the door leading into the illuminated quad. She was wonderfully pretty, slender and graceful, with pretty foreign features, and a bewitching French ball gown of satin and chiffon, bedecked with pearl embroideries, all white, and a gesture of color, except in her hair, which was chestnut and rose-leaf complexion.

Paul Lonsdale (did I tell you his name?) could not take his eyes off her, but his expression was not so much one of admiration as of puzzled bewilderment, followed by excitement and surprise. She was chatting unconsciously and brightly to a knot of undergraduates, and she calmly made a pretty picture, leaning against the old doorway, the Japanese lanterns outside throwing a soft glow over her animated little figure and gleaming draperies. Paul quickly turned on his heel and with a muttered exclamation:

in a very unusual fashion, and does not some one here remind you of that other some one?" Her sympathetic expression invited confidence, and then it all came out. "Mlle. Du Bois, was she the grey demoiselle? Oh! what does it all mean?" "Ah! that I cannot tell you, monsieur, it is too deep for a mere mortal to explain away; but I will tell you all that happened after you left, and when we visited Chateau La Reine, only—promise faithfully, surely you will never mention 'la demoiselle' to my god-daughter. She knows nothing of it."

He readily agreed, and when he said good-night to the French ladies he had secured an invitation to the house of the professor, their host. They met often during that festive commemoration week, and the end of all was that Paul proposed, and was accepted.

He assured himself that he had really been in love with her for many long months, but this he kept a secret in his own heart. When he went out to take up his appointment in the Indian Civil Service, he took with him—not his little "grey demoiselle" but her far more satisfactory human counterpart.

## NEWS IN BRIEF CANADIAN.

The Archbishop of Toronto conducted the service of blessing the new Parkdale Catholic Church. Wm. Priest, a Brandon bootblack, has inherited a fortune of \$1,000,000 by the death of an uncle in California. Mr. James Maitland, aged 94 years, died at Bellevue from injuries received by being run over by a lady cyclist.

It is reported at Ottawa that Lord Milner, Governor of the Transvaal, will be the next Governor-General of Canada.

William R. Burton, of Woodstock, was fined \$10 and costs for shooting within the corporation. His gun will be destroyed.

A memorial to the late Walter Massey has been presented by Mrs. Massey to the Central Methodist Church, Toronto.

The Canadian Freight Agents' Association is expected to raise the rate on Ontario flour to 24 cents per 100 pounds.

Edward Murphy and William Bar-ton, accused of attempting to persuade voters at Kingston, were fined \$50 and costs each or six months in jail.

A plan has been proposed to the Minister of Education for a School of Forestry in connection with the University of Toronto and the Ontario Agricultural College.

During ten months of the current fiscal year 64,035 immigrants have registered at Winnipeg, and, according to reports issued by the Dominion Immigration Bureau, the population of the West will be increased by about 100,000 during the year.

The Manitoba Department of Agriculture has issued a report on the total yield of grain for the crop year of 1902. The total yield in Manitoba of all grains is put at 100,052,343 bushels, against 50,502,085 bushels for the previous year.

The Department of Crown Lands has made an estimate that \$84,500,000 feet of pine sawlogs and square timber will be cut on licensed territory this year.

Carroll and Weng, charged with impersonation at London, are said to have jumped their bail. It is said that the man who left for their alleged homes in Buffalo, four hotelmen were held at \$400 each.

At Sinaluata, Assa, C. P. R. Agent Benoit was convicted of a charge of discriminating against a farmer in the distribution of cars and was fined \$50 and costs. An appeal will be taken to the Supreme Court.

The C. P. R. new pension fund, it is announced, will go into force on Jan. 1. The trustees of the fund, Sir Thos. Shaughnessy and Mr. D. McNeill, will issue a circular this week notifying the employees of the rules and regulations.

A Vancouver despatch to a Winnipeg paper says: "The rumor is current in the city that Premier Prior intends to request the Lieut-Governor to grant him a dissolution and an appeal to the country on party lines."

Warden Ducheneau, of St. Vincent De Paul Penitentiary, is about to ask for superannuation. He was appointed by the Mackenzie Government in 1875, but dismissed in 1881 for political reasons. He was reappointed in 1898, but lately was given leave of absence on account of ill-health.

Archibald Cockburn, aged 20 years, son of Mr. George Cockburn, farmer, London township, while engaged chopping wood in the bush, was struck by a falling tree and pinned to the ground. He was released as quickly as possible, but the young man was quite dead. Death had been instantaneous.

The new Spanish Cabinet was sworn in.

Mr. John Dillon, the Irish leader, who was taken ill at Chicago, has fully recovered. For the month of November British exports increased \$9,074,000, and imports decreased \$8,146,500. The Assouan dam, on the Nile, completed at a cost of nearly £25,000,000, will be formally opened by the Duke of Connaught to-day. Thomas Nast, the noted cartoonist, who in May last was appointed Consul-General at Guayaquil, has died there. It is understood that Premier Baili will appoint a royal commissaire in regard to the subject of municipal trading. Hon. Arthur Eliot, M. P., states that so far as he is aware there is no foundation for the report in circulation in London that his brother, Lord Minto, is about to resign the Governor-Generalship of Canada.

# MAD MULLAH DEAD!

## SLAIN BY SPEAR THRUST.

### Assassin Killed Him While He Was in Act of Prayer.

#### News Brought to Aden by a Runner From Garroo—Dead Man Had a Great Influence—Von Buelow on the German Tariff—Says Government Will Not Consent to Fixing Minimum Duties on Meats—Greeted With Applause and Laughter by the House.

Aden, Arabia, Dec. 16: Rumor has reached here of the assassination of the Mad Mullah in Smaliland. The report was brought to the coast by a native runner from Garroo, via Berbera. The Mullah is said to have been killed by a spear thrust in the stomach, inflicted while he was praying. Hajji Muhammed Abdullah, the Mad Mullah, so-called, belonged to the Hadji Sulaiman Ogaden tribe, of Somaliland. He was in the prime of life and only recently became a dominant factor in the military and political situation of the protectorate of Somaliland, by forcing the neighboring tribes into allegiance. Von Buelow on the Tariff. Berlin despatch: Chancellor Von Buelow's presence in the Reichstag caused expectation that he would make a statement regarding Venezuela, and the House was filled. He did not refer to international politics. He dwelt on the tariff bill and said that if the reduction of duty on agricultural machinery and implements, as provided for in the Kordorff amendment, were adopted the federated governments would take the changes into serious consideration. They would not consent, however, to fixing minimum duties on meats. The Government, in making the new commodities, would then guarantee to the domestic animal industry protection enough to ensure its prosperous development, and would accept no provisions in treaties which would render it impossible to adopt the necessary measures to prevent animal disease coming into Germany from abroad. The Chancellor's statement was greeted with applause from the Reichstag, but with derisive laughter from members of the left party.

## SETTLED THE ARGUMENT

### Deputy Sheriff in Chicago Used His Revolver.

#### THE WOUNDED MAN MAY DIE.

Chicago, despatch: Deputy Sheriff Samuel O'Neill, who already had "killed his man," emphasized a "political" argument yesterday afternoon by shooting and probably fatally wounding Charles Slater, a Criminal Court baillif. The "debate" took place in the vestibule of M. J. Quirk's saloon, 120 Clark street, half a block from the county Court-house. Before O'Neill became a deputy sheriff he had been a detective sergeant at the central station. His earlier escapade, for which he escaped punishment, was the killing of Michael McNamara at Jefferson and Forquer streets in 1892. At that time he was exonerated by a coroner's jury, on the plea that he thought McNamara was robbing a man at the time he shot him. Slater and O'Neill, with Joseph Coffey, a clerk in the county building, and Charles Ahern, another baillif, were in the saloon for some time. The conversation turned to the recent instalment of Sheriff Barrett, and the probable discharge of a number of the deputies now in that office who had served under ex-Sheriff Magershead. "You people won't last as long as the snow," laughed Slater. O'Neill insisted that he would be in his position long after all the baillifs were gone. One word followed another until both the men became angry. They were separated, however, and O'Neill was forced out into the alley at the side entrance. Slater was led to the front vestibule and seated behind the cigar case. In a minute O'Neill appeared at the front entrance. He burst through the door, and, leaning over the showcase, pressed the revolver against Slater's body and pulled the trigger. Slater fell unconscious.

The report of the shot attracted the attention of the crowd in the saloon, while many men rushed in from the street. As they thronged through the door O'Neill took advantage of the confusion and escaped. When the crossing patrolmen at Washington and Clark streets reached the saloon the fugitive had disappeared.

## RUMOR WAS FALSE.

### No Case of Foot and Mouth Disease in the Dominion.

An Ottawa despatch says: Lord Strathcona cabled to the Department of Agriculture, stating that a despatch from Boston said that a case of foot and mouth disease had been discovered near Toronto, it being carried there by an empty car from the affected district. Hon. Sydney Fisher was in Toronto when the despatch was received, and the information was conveyed to him there. The Minister of Agriculture had the matter inquired into, and found there was no case of disease in Toronto or anywhere else in Canada. The story arose over a telegram from Dr. Salmon, the head of the Veterinary Department in the United States, who was at Boston, to the department here, asking that an empty car, which had escaped the notice of his men, which had contained stock, had found its way into Canada. The car was at once traced, located and disinfected. This is the only justification for the Boston story. The department has assured your correspondent that no case of any kind of disease has been reported in this country.

It is understood Ottawa is to be created a military district, with Lieut-Col. Hodgins as D. O. C. With view to this step, maps of the district for 150 miles around Ottawa are being prepared in order that the officers of the Ottawa district may be made thoroughly acquainted with the surrounding country.

## LUMBER CUT OF SEASON.

### Nearly Nine Hundred Million Feet to be Taken Out.

The Department of Crown Lands has made an estimate of the probable cut of pine sawlogs and square timber during the present season on territory held under timber license from the Crown. The quantities which are based upon the reports of the respective agencies are as follows: In feet, board measure. Sudbury ..... 121,000,000 Parry Sound ..... 171,000,000 Biscotago ..... 40,000,000 Wilketty ..... 50,500,000 Waghways ..... 150,000,000 Sault Ste. Marie ..... 120,000,000 Port Arthur ..... 13,000,000 Armprior ..... 40,000,000 Pembroke ..... 100,000,000 Peterboro' ..... 44,000,000 Rat Portage ..... 25,000,000

Total ..... 884,500,000

In addition to this quantity, there will be a large number of railway ties, probably 1,500,000 taken out, as well as telegraph poles and fence posts, hardwood, etc., and a considerable cut of hemlock and hard woods, the last mentioned for fuel and charcoal purposes, as well as for use in furniture making, etc.

The quantity of pine cut during the winter of 1900-01 under authority of timber license was 658,000,000 feet, and during last winter 850,000,000 feet. From the reports of the timber agents it is apparent that the chief difficulty the lumbering firms are experiencing is scarcity of labor, men being hard to get and wages high. Provisions and other supplies are also dear, and the expenses of operating are correspondingly greater. The cut during the present winter will be a heavy one, as the demand for timber is good and prices high. The only thing that will tend to keep down the cut is the difficulty in obtaining labor.

## THE ASSOUAN DAM OPENED

### In the Presence of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught.

## A GREAT WORK FOR EGYPT.

Calix, Dec. 16.—The great Assouan dam was opened to-day in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Khedive, Earl Cromer, the British Agent in Egypt, and Countess Cromer, and various Consuls-General. The Khedive turned the key, which by an ingenious mechanism set in motion the electric machinery. Several sluice gates gradually opened, and a volume of water rushed out. On the invitation of the Khedive, the Duchess of Connaught laid a stone commemorative of the event. As to-day was Ramadan, the great annual Mohammedan feast, the ceremony did not take place until four o'clock in the afternoon, consequently the proceedings were somewhat curtailed.

This great work, which has cost £25,000,000 and £25,000,000, will insure complete irrigation, improve security to crops, and stability to harvests, and when the reservoir of the Nile lands under cultivation. The annual flood, with the fertilized silt which has already passed, and the stones of the Assouan dam are now closed for the storage of water until March 1. The sluices will then be opened gradually, and for four months there will be a good head of water in the irrigating canal, for the use of cultivators. The security of water caused by a low Nile will be avoided, and a great increase in the agricultural resources of Egypt will be brought about.

## Princess Chimay Robbed.

Paris, Dec. 16.—The Princess Chimay, who obtained considerable territory four years ago by eloping with a gypsy musician named Jancos Rigo, has been robbed of \$2,000 worth of jewelry. The thief is Rigo's Hindu servant, Akmyk, who fled, taking the jewelry with him. The theft includes a diamond chain with ornaments of rubies and pearls.