

### British Museum Has Ghosts

If skulls, mummies, sacrificial stones, and murderous implements of all kinds can attract spirits, then most assuredly the British Museum should be haunted. And, if rumor speaks truly, haunted it is.

To begin with, there is the notorious mummy-case that brings bad luck to whoever attempts to move it in any way. The mummy itself is not there. The latter is supposed to have been that of a lady of the College of Amen-ra, at Thebes, but nothing definite has ever been ascertained about her—not even her name.

The series of accidents are said to have begun the moment the mummy was disturbed in its original resting-place. The person who first removed it is alleged to have committed suicide, and his son to have gone insane. Bad weather and minor calamities pursued the vessel that brought the case to England's shores.

An accident overtook someone who tried to photograph the case, and when the latter was brought to the Museum, misfortune is stated to have overtaken the driver who had the temerity to convey it in his carriage. Nor did the mishaps end there. People who visited the museum and gazed disrespectfully at the case are rumored to have been visited with very unpleasant accidents afterwards, and the writer of this article can at least testify to one such happening.

A few years ago a lady who was strolling round the Egyptian gallery halted in front of the mummy-case, and, knowing the story in connection with it, had out her tongue at it, at the same time making some absurd remark. Some minutes later, when she was about to quit the Museum, she recalled the incident to a friend of hers, laughingly observing that now she was in for it, and would assuredly meet with a mishap of some kind or other.

The words were scarcely out of her lips before she caught her feet in some inexplicable manner, in the stonework of the pavement, and, in falling, so hurt herself that she had to be taken home in a taxi. Needless to say, she has never been anxious to repeat the experiment.

By the side of the case is a photo of it, and there is something very remarkable about the photo; for whereas the face that looks at one from the case is merely wooden and painted, obviously a thing of inanimation, in the photo the face in the photo has something decidedly "conscious" about it, especially in its eyes.

At the far end of the room containing this case is another relic, likewise said to be haunted, albeit in not such an unpleasant manner. It is the mummy of one Katebit, a lady of the College of Amen-ra, and most probably of high extraction and no inconsiderable beauty.

Some years ago, according to report, someone was looking at her—or, rather, at her mummy—when, to their infinite alarm, it suddenly shook its head, as if in strong disapproval, and ever since that hour it is said to have been haunted. Crowds came to see it, and many declared they saw a repetition of the same phenomenon. Eventually, I believe, the authorities were forced to interfere, and of late years Katebit has been left in comparative peace.

There is yet another haunted mummy-case. It stands close to Katebit, but has no name, only a long number beginning with a "2." One cannot help noticing it because of the face on its cover, which is arrestive in a distinctly unpleasant way.

People walking past it just before closing-time, at a season when the nights set in early, and the great building fast becomes peopled with shadows, declare they have seen the evil eyes glitter and the painted lips part, whilst a sound something like a very faint malicious chuckle has seemed to come from somewhere within it.

But apart from its haunted cases, the museum has at times possessed other ghosts, one of the best authenticated of which was the apparition of Dr. Wynn Westcott, the famous London coroner.

On Friday, April 13, 1888, Dr. Wynn Westcott was confined to bed with a feverish catarrh. He was much annoyed, because he had promised to meet two friends of his at a quarter to eleven that morning in the library of the British Museum.

Judge of his appointment, however, when, on going to the museum several days later, he was greeted by a lady with the remark: "Is it really you to-day, or is it not?"

He naturally asked her what she meant, and in reply learned that at the very time he was lying ill at home, frothing at not being able to keep his appointment, he had been seen by several people, including one of the officials, walking round and round the library as if in search of someone.

#### Condensed Wisdom.

The searcher for wild flowers of speech would be richly rewarded by gleaning the pages of "My Lady of the Chimney Corner." Here are a few of the choice blooms to be found growing there. "A cup of sorrow isn't so bad, Jamie, when there's two to drink it." "A good thought will travel as fast as far as a bad one if it gets the right start." "A ploughman who skims the surface of the soil strikes no stones, dear, but it's because he isn't ploughing deep!" "There's only one kind of poverty, Jamie, and that's to have no love in th' heart." "The biggest hope I've ever had was to bear a child that would love everybody as yer father loved me."

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#### PRECIOUS METALS.

Did Early British Gold Find Its Way to Palestine?

All through the ages precious stones and the precious metals have been used in religious and national ceremonial, and for personal adornment peasant and princes alike have had a passion for trinkets.

In a recent volume on the subject of antique jewellery and trinkets, Mr. F. W. Burgess makes the interesting speculation that ancient British gold found its way into Palestine, and is mentioned in the Old Testament, and also refers to the Phoenician traders who came to our islands for copper and tin. In this regard mention should also be made of the wonderful island race, the holders of sea power four thousand years and more ago, the Cretans, who in all probability taught the Phoenicians their seamanship.

Crete, that romantic island which strikes the historical imagination, developed a high civilization long before Homer's Troy. Exquisite painting, statuary, pottery, architecture which includes even the pointed arch, representations of musical instruments which disprove the theory of the Greek Terpander's lyre—these have been unearthed by Sir Arthur Evans and the other excavators, English, and American, and Italian. At Knossos there was a system of drainage, with inspecting chamber, etc., in the English fashion, as the Italian professor Halbherr said, like nothing between those days and these.

And jewellery! Who that has seen, in the Ashmolean, the golden effigy of a woman with wasp waist, puffed sleeves, and accordion-pleated skirt, has not had his imagination stirred and his humor tickled? That was one of the finds of Sir Arthur Evans, and on his first expedition he saw Cretan women wearing necklaces of the ancient, engraved seal stones. Very many have been found, the earlier with purely ornamental designs, the latter with pictograms of natural life. And rings, and beads, and diadems, and wonderful work in gold are among the treasures retrieved from prehistoric Crete.

There are thousands of written records, but the language has not yet been deciphered, though it seems undoubted that the Hellenes, through the Phoenicians, derived part of their alphabet from the Cretans. Is it too much to hope that the searchers will at last be rewarded by the discovery that these forerunners of Greece, who did so much, have also left us a literature?

#### Carr's Comments.

There was an occasion when James Whistler, the famous artist, accused J. Comyns Carr, the brilliant wit, dramatist, and art critic, of making a joke at the expense of a certain friend.

"Well," replied Carr, "I can make a friend most days, but I can only make a good joke now and then."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Whistler. "I wish I had said that myself!"

"Never mind, Jimmy; you will," retorted Carr.

This illustration of Carr's wit might be followed by other stories his wife tells in "Stray Memories."

The mother of a pretty young girl whom Carr was openly flattering asked him, laughingly, whether his intentions were serious, to which he replied, "Serious, but not honorable, madam."

Once he was reproved by the management of a theatre for making his party laugh immoderately in the stage-box at a sorely dull farcical comedy.

"Pray present my compliments to the manager," said Carr, suavely, to the attendant who had brought the message, "and assure him that we were not laughing at anything on the stage."

#### African Forest Timber.

A reinforcement for the world demand for lumber is preparing in British East Africa, where there are between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 acres of woodland to draw upon, and a new industry, very infantile at present, is expected to grow so rapidly that the authorities are now considering plans to improve the harbor facilities for exporting the forests. The best wood is suitable for wheel-makers and wagon-builders and the making of wood block paving, railroad ties, bridges, ox yokes and axe, pick, and tool handles. It also makes good flooring and lining boards.

Meaning there are new sounds in some of the African forests, the rhythm of the woodman's axe, the buzz of the sawmill, and the puffing of under-sized locomotives on the narrow-gauge tracks that are penetrating from the main line of railways into the woodlands. And many a workman, no doubt, will some day use tools whose handles grew in an African forest.

#### The Lion's Share.

A man noted for his propensity for taking more than his fair share of anything that was going, arrived home to dinner the other day.

His wife was busy in the kitchen finishing the preparation of the meal, so the head of the household proceeded to pour himself out some beer from a jug.

Then came his wife's voice: "Now, then, don't drink all that; I want the lion's share for once in a way."

When she entered she was astonished to find the man finishing off the last of the beer.

"That's your share," he replied, significantly, pointing to an empty glass. "Lions don't drink beer."

The first stagecoach in America started from Boston in 1661.

#### Humane Cause.

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#### Forgot the \$25,000!

Wm. Gierth, an aged inventor, has lived in poverty for nine years, forgetting that he had \$25,000 credited to his account with the Fidelity Trust Co. of Newark, N.J.

Gierth now anxiously awaits decision of the vice chancellor as to whether or not he can draw the money. His claim was opposed by the bank and several individuals. Among the latter is Ingus Upperco, an automobile dealer, who declared the money was obtained from a cheque he gave Gierth for \$2,500 in 1912, and which was raised to \$25,000. No one was arrested or accused at the time the cheque was deposited, it was learned, and no claim had previously been entered.

The inventor suffered a loss of memory several years ago, and lost all track of the account until his attention was called to it by a clerk in the bank. Hearings on the case will be held June 20th.

#### Many Would Drown.

There had been a certain amount of business in the discussion, which centred around the relative virtue and accomplishment of the two sexes. "You men," said the advanced young woman, "think a great deal of yourselves because there is a shortage of your kind. Personally, I should not mind in the least living in a world where the men and girls were separated by an ocean." The daring bachelor smiled at her. "I dare say you are right," he agreed. "Still, in the event you mention, I'm certain that there would be a large number of women drowned."



HUGE HANGAR FOR AIRSHIPS. The mammoth airship hangar now under construction at Lakehurst, N.J., for the housing of Uncle Sam's Air Lines. The structure is 1,000 feet long, 318 feet wide, and 200 feet high, and big enough to accommodate two ocean liners the size of the Leviathan.