

OLD FASHIONED PHILOSOPHY.

Scorn not the homely virtues. We are prone
To search through all the world for something new;
And yet sometimes old-fashioned things are best—
Old-fashioned work, old-fashioned rectitude,
Old-fashioned honor and old-fashioned prayer,
Old-fashioned patience that can bide its time,
Old-fashioned firesides sacred from the world,
Old-fashioned satisfaction with enough,
Old-fashioned candor and simplicity,
Old-fashioned folks that practice what they preach.

—National Magazine.

A HAUNTED HOUSE

WHEN my husband took over the direction of the Gertrudis and Santa Maria mines, near Pinal, Mexico, we brought down from "the States" our various goods and chattels, and began the attempt to make ourselves as comfortable as possible in the huge, Spanish-built house which was the only thing in the way of an abode that could be secured, for love or money, in the very inconvenient new-old town of Pinal.

At first I liked the queer, rambling old house, with its wide, heavily pillared corridors, thick walls, high barred windows and enormous carved doors. It had been built, according to a half-effaced date, in the year 1603, and had been the habitat of more than one famous man in its time. But, even after our modern furnishings were put in, flowers and vines arranged about, and everything possible done to brighten it, the house still had a dreary, ghostly air about it, and one always had the sensation that some one else was about—some one unseen, but felt—and altogether there was an indescribable eerie feeling about the place that did not tend to make one very cheerful. However, I consoled myself by remembering that big, old houses generally make one nervous at first; also, the rent was surprisingly low for so large an establishment, with its fifteen rooms, corridors, and corral. And, as one can get used to very nearly anything in this world, by trying hard, I gradually got over the uneasy feeling which I had mostly felt, when entirely alone, and put it down to "nerves."

There was the slight drawback, however, that we could not keep servants. In spite of good wages, light work and short hours, our servants would invariably leave after two to five days' service, refusing, under any circumstances, to stop longer. They gave no reason for this beyond the fact that the situation was not to their liking. So I could only pay them, and, with indignant sorrow, view their departing backs, then fare forth in search of further criadas, inwardly consigning Mexican servants to a future which it would be unladylike to put into bald words.

In the midst of these turnmills, "Society" (with a big, big S) began, slowly and carefully, to call, and pleasantly hinted, in divers ways, that there was something wrong about our house.

The leader of Pinal society, Mrs. Isaacstein, was the last to call. She had at first been somewhat dubious about visiting me. As I have before said, she "led" Pinal society (for her husband was the principal grocer of the place), and therefore she could not, as she sweetly explained to me, be too careful about "beobles she galled upon."

Waiving, however, discussion of this excellent lady, for indeed she is "another story," her statement during her call that our house was said to be haunted by evil spirits, and that we would never be able to keep a servant in it, was somewhat dispiriting. In vain did I inquire particulars. No, she knew nothing beyond the fact that servants and "tradespeople" gave the place a bad name; that it was certainly troubled by something, and that no one ever lived long in it.

Here was a pretty mess! And, indeed, as if in confirmation of the woman's prediction, the very next day both servants left, after they had been with me four days, and I was on the point of beginning to expect better things of them. I sat down and wept. Then, disgusted with native servants, I bled me forth and wired to the "Border" for a couple of old and well-tried Chinese servants, determined that I would not abandon my house, and live in hotels, to please ghosts, Mexican servants or any one else.

In due course the new servants arrived. One, a sturdy, taciturn Celestial, rejoicing in the name of Ching, was to act as porter, caretaker and general watchdog—the ghost would have to be lively that could get ahead of Ching. Charley, his cousin, was of the same ilk, being besides a splendid cook. But I explained matters duly to the two, and could have warbled for joy over their derisive smiles and grunts when I timidly alluded to "ghosts," and hinted that they might be disturbed by mysterious sights or sounds.

And now did I begin to be acquaint-

ed once more with peace, with the coming of Ching and Charley, who feared neither "hog, dog nor devil," and certainly seemed able to deal with anything in the way of terrestrial or supernatural beings.

In fact (for such is the inconsistency of woman), I rather began to wish that the ghosts would walk, or otherwise make themselves known; or that anything exciting would happen. For, after the advent of my two Celestials, my occupation was entirely gone; no longer did I daily wrestle with the kitchen brasser, and harangue the fruit man and the other purveyors to our inner needs. In other words, matters waxed deadly dull and boring, so that I complained bitterly to my other half, who only laughed uproariously, and gave me little sympathy. (You see, he had his work.) And said he: "My good wife, you don't know a fine thing when you see it. Here you are with plenty of leisure and all the chance you want to shine in the 'American Colony of Pinal,' yet you let it slip. Put on your gaudiest gown (if you have one); all the jewelry you can beg, borrow or steal; go and pay your calls, and I'll wager you a Virot hat that you'll have all the diversion you can stand."

Meekly, but without the jewelry, I did as I was told. I called on my ladies, and I opened up a new horizon to myself in the way of topics of conversation. For in Pinal you always discuss your servants, and other people's servants; your own, and other people's position in society; and the fact that "society in Mexico is not what it is at home." To hear the wives of the groceryman, cheap clerks and machinists discussing "social position" gave me rather a sort of "Alice-in-Wonderland" feeling, but I held my peace.

Not many weeks passed before society and I mutually dropped each other, and I gave my husband no peace until he decided upon and arranged a nice, long ducking trip to the lakes, some forty miles from Pinal. And, oh me, how enjoyable it was. But when we returned, with sunburned faces and hands showing traces of powder and hard work, the ladies of the American colony shook dubious heads over me and my probable fate. A woman who actually went hunting with her husband, could ride thirty miles in a day, and was reported to shoot as well as a man, was a paradox to them. For their parts, they wondered why any man wanted to marry such a woman so unfit for society.

To tell the truth, I rather regretted the tan and sunburn myself, when I found upon our return invitations to the usual yearly big baile at the Casino. I hadn't been to a dance of any sort since our last country house visits on Long Island. I had a particularly pretty gown, knew that the floor would be good and slippery, the native Mexican band fair, and that there would be plenty of presentable men to dance with, mostly delegations from the outlying camps. But how in the name of all that was consistent could I appear in an evening gown, topped off by a face, neck and arms that were about the consistency of color of burned leather? My husband unfeelingly suggested whitewash, but I applied lemon juice, and mourned. It really was disappointing, you know.

Three days before the dance, the partner of my joys and sorrows was called away to inspect the installation of some new machinery. He left with reluctance; for, while our big, old house seemed absolutely safe, there had nevertheless been some burglaries of late, and he dreaded leaving me alone with the servants for a couple of nights. But I urged him to go, saying that the doors were perfectly robber-proof, the servants trustworthy, and that I would keep a shotgun handy, so that he need have no fears. In point of fact, for once I preferred his room to his company, having a face-bleaching process in view, the which I knew he would never consent to, did he come to know of it. So he departed, and, feeling relieved and sneaky by turns, I set about preparations for the surreptitious whitening of my unlucky countenance. Most school girls will recognize the beautifier which I hastened to apply, as soon as my light dinner had been dispatched that night. With doors carefully locked, and a revolver handy, in case of burglars, I experimented with a piece of chamels skin

until it amply covered my face, concealing even the ears. Then I cut very small holes for my eyes, nose and mouth, so that I could barely breathe comfortably. Then, sewing on strings to hold the contrivance in place, I proceeded to smear it liberally with good, strong Mexican leeks—and how they did smell to high heaven!

When ready for bed I carefully applied this odorous mask, and tied it on so that it could not by any possibility come off. As I put out the candles, I caught a glimpse of myself, and came near shrieking at the sight, for I looked more like a first-class ghost than anything else. I had twisted my hair back tight, and, to protect it from the leeks, covered it with an old white bathing cap. The mask entirely hid my face, and I looked like some unearthly, tall, white thing, with a flat nose, and no eyes and mouth. I assure you that I was as ghastly an object as one could well imagine; so hideous, in fact, that I precipitately shut out the view, blew out the lights and hastily sought my couch.

My "beautifier" murdered sleep; I tossed about for hours, vainly endeavoring to doze off. Now and then a whiff of the fragrance of leeks would steal up through even the small pinholes I had cut to breathe through, and more often the tightly knotted strings caused me great discomfort as I moved my head, vainly seeking that rest in slumber which seemed denied me. At last, however, some time after the nearby bells had chimed midnight, I dozed off, despite leeks and strings.

The next thing I knew I was sitting up in bed, my heart beating wildly, while I listened breathlessly for a repetition of the sudden wild cry that had thrilled through the great, empty house, waking me from deep sleep. Motionless, I waited there in the dark, not daring to light the candles, and wondering at the sang froid with which I had assured my husband that "no burglars could worry me." In a moment, there it was again—a cry for help, not so loud as it had been at first, and half strangled, choking, this time.

Without stopping to put on more clothes, my feet bare, and my husband's loaded .38 Colt in my hand, I noiselessly opened my door, passed through it, and crept down the corridor toward the back entrance of the house, where Ching and Charley had their rooms. As I went, I concluded that burglars had got in and had killed the two Chinamen; next, they would dispose of me, and then rob the house. So furious did the thought make me that I lost all fear, and fairly ached to get at the wretches.

Noiselessly stealing along, close to the wall, my pistol cocked and ready for work, I caught a glimpse of what was happening before I myself was seen. The light of several lanterns set about showed me poor, old Ching, evidently dead, lying almost across the back entrance door, which was wide open; Charley, bound and still moving, had been flung over him, while several men in peon blouses were busily hauling up mysterious boxes and cases through a hole which gaped in the middle of the paved corral. (I gaped myself, in my astonishment, for I had never seen the hole before.) But that was all I did see just then, for at that very moment one of the men caught sight of me, and glared, aghast, as I advanced upon them. Then he gave a loud yell that fairly terrified me into standing still for a moment, dropped his boxes and took to his heels, yelling that the devil was upon them.

As he fled, the other men stared about, and seeing me, also emitted screams of terror, and made wildly for the back door, dropping their burdens as they went. I fired twice only, for their terror had somewhat taken me aback, and had the supreme pleasure of seeing two of the miscreants clap their hands to their legs, and fall, with grievous groans. (I had fired purposely at their legs, for I didn't want to kill them—Mexican jails aren't overly comfortable.) Then, allowing the two to groan and pray alternately where they had fallen, I went over to attend to the two poor servants.

Neither of them was dead; Ching was badly cut and unconscious, but Charley wounded my feelings by shutting his eyes tight and trying to wriggle away from my touch. "Go 'way," he moaned; "me good Chinaman—no stealie, like Mexican boy—go 'way, devil!"

So they had all taken me for a ghost, or the devil. I could hardly contain my laughter as I enlightened and untied Charley, and left him to revive his unconscious cousin. Then, having relieved myself of my ghostly attire, I sent out for two gendarmes, to whom I confided the wounded burglars, and told my tale of woe.

Next morning, as soon as it was sufficiently light, we inspected the scene of the night before, and found out that the burglars had not been burglars at all, but the members of a famous counterfeiting band who had simply flooded northern Mexico with bad money, and whom the police had never been able to locate. It seemed that they had made unto themselves a secret place under our old house, with a secret entrance covered by stones just inside our back patio wall, and there had stored their contraband goods during

many past months. In this way, with their mysterious movings about, it had gotten out that the house was haunted, and I myself was pleased to verify my past feeling that some one, unseen, was present.

Well, they all went to prison for several years, and the secret entrance to our house was securely stopped, thus doing away forever with its reputation of being haunted by evil spirits.

As for my providential mask, I threw it away, and went to the ball regardless, with my brown face and hands. And the Pinal social leaders, sitting out, wondered audibly "how any woman could have the heart to dance and enjoy herself, after having actually shot with her own hands two poor, helpless human beings!"—San Francisco Argonaut.

BOY HAD PLENTY OF NERVE.

Was Not Discouraged by the Mad Rush of Infuriated Bulls.

There was an accident shortly after the close of a novillada at the Plaza Mexico that came near resulting in the death of a few young hopefuls who took it into their heads that they would like to join in the national sport.

Shortly after the crowd left the ring a half dozen young boys of ages ranging from 12 to 15 years got down into the bull ring to play bull fight. One of the number thought the game was too slow, so while the ring attendants were busy about other work he entered the pen where the bulls were confined and slyly let one of them into the ring.

With a mad rush the big black bull entered the ring. One of the little boys had been using his plush linen cape for a capa in his plays with the other boys and he was near the door when the bull entered. Although one of the opposite gates was open the bull made no effort to get away, but rushed at the boy with the cape.

There was but one thing for the boy to do, and he did it. With all the knowledge which he had gained by watching the matadors in the ring he let the bull charge the cape. But his arms were too short and the bull struck him a hard blow, knocking the little fellow fully fifty feet and tearing his shoulder with his horn. The angry bull then turned his attention to the red cape.

When the other boys saw the bull charging them they fled for the fence and climbed to safety, where they watched the bull tearing the cape. Finally it occurred to one of the older boys that by all charging for the bull he might possibly be scared away from the prostrate body of the injured lad. So with clubs and boards they drove the bull from the ring. They gave their attention to the bull none too quickly, for he had tired of pawing the cape and was making for the boy.

When the doctors got in their work on the little fellow, whose name is Angel Morelos, they found that the wound was the only thing of consequence, and that although the boy was senseless from the blow there was nothing of a really dangerous nature to fear from the accident, as the hurt was a flesh wound.—Mexican Herald.

Witness Was a Puzzler.

In a case heard in a Scottish court some time since a rural witness, after relating how McEl, the defendant, came to him and struck him, proceeded:

"So, your honor, I juist up and gied him one, too. Juist then his dog cam' along an' I hit him again."

"Hit the dog?"

"No, yer honor, hit McEl. And then I oops wi' a stane an' thraved at him and it rolled him over an' over."

"Threw a stone at McEl?"

"At the dog, yer honor. An' he got oop an' hit me again."

"The dog?"

"No, McEl. An' wi' that he gi' a howl an' wen' aff."

"McEl?"

"No, the dog. An' when he cam' back at me he pounded me, yer honor."

"The dog came back at you?"

"No, McEl, yer honor. An' he isna hairt a bit."

"Who isn't hurt?"

"The dog, yer honor."—Tit-Bits.

Intoxicated Insects.

A dahlia garden where the flowers are cut at about noon is a regular pot house for bees and wasps and even the big bungling bumble bees do not refuse to imbibe. From the cut stem of the plant on sunny days about noon a juice exudes that seems to be a whole side-board of intoxicants for the insects, and, for two or three hours afterwards the won't-go-home-till-morning state is apparent. The industrious, steady-going bees, misled into tasting it, will first stagger then drop to the ground and with head down attempt to drag themselves home, only to finally roll over and give up to it. Pretty soon they recover and are ready to try it again if the temptation remains. If not, they take up the burden of work and probably have some excuse to offer for the time lost and no returns. Bees and wasps and bumble bees are not white ribboners if opportunity offers.

It is better to escape through a little hole than not at all.



America's message to a certain South American Republic: "Wail Colombia!"—Punch.

"Your symptoms, madam, indicate jaundice." "Jaundice? But, doctor, I haven't a suitable dress for that!"—Ellegende Blatter.

"What's in here?" asked the tourist. "Remains to be seen," responded the guide, as he led the way into the morgue.—Columbia Jester.

A Dollar Earned: Judge (sarcastically)—Did you ever earn a dollar in your life? Vagrant—Oh, yes; I voted for your honor once!—Puck.

Dolly Swift—He called me his dear little lamb. Sally Gay—What then? Dolly Swift—Oh, then he gathered me into the fold.—Smart Set.

Tourist—Some peepole from the East might not like it out here. Westerner—Well, stranger, they'd find trains runnin' both ways.—Ex.

"Whar you reckon de happy lan' is?" "It's 'way back yander, at de place you passed so long ago, en didn't know you wuz at it!"—Atlanta Constitution.

Adoring Bride—Jack, darling, is this Wednesday or Thursday? Doting Groom—I think it's Friday, dearest. Adoring Bride—Of this week?—Life.

Mama—Bobby, have you been fighting? Bobby—Only a little bit. Mama—How did that happen? Bobby—Oh, the boy I licked wasn't much of a fighter.—Chicago News.

"Grace, can you tell me what is meant by a cubic yard?" "I don't know exactly, but I guess it's a yard that the Cuban children play in."—Boston Christian Advocate.

Experience: Mrs. Friendly—But, honestly, what was your real reason for refusing her dinner invitation? Mrs. Charplor—Experience. I used to have her cook.—Brooklyn Life.

Elsie—There's a man at the door, pa, who says he wants to "see the boss of the house." Father—Tell your mother. Mother (calling down stairs)—Tell Bridget.—Philadelphia Press.

A Critical Summary: "What do you think of that writer's work?" "Oh," answered Miss Cayenne, "he has said two or three clever things, and several thousand others."—Washington Star.

Wife—You don't mean to tell me that Professor Addle has been struck dumb? Husband—Yes, last night. And master of seven languages. Wife—Is it possible that he was struck dumb in all seven?

Jarrod—What did that diamond cost that you gave Dolly for Christmas? Harold—Well, I gave \$40 for the stone, and \$10 to the clerk to tell Dolly it cost \$200 if she brought it back to price it!

"Really," said Mrs. Oldcastle, "your little dinner last night was quite recherche." "Oh, dear," her hostess groaned, "I just knew that new cook would make a botch of it some way."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Little Amzi (who has an inquiring mind)—Uncle Timrod, what's a bonanza? Farmer Neckwhiskers (painfully experienced)—A bonanza, durn it, is a hole in the ground, owned by a liar! That's what a bonanza is!—Ex.

Ernie—I saw you automobiling with Fred yesterday. You looked as though your heart was in your mouth. Ida—No wonder. The automobile was going sixty miles an hour and Fred was proposing at the same time.—Chicago News.

Unendurable: "Deah boy, is it true that you have discharged your valet?" "Ya-as, the doosid scoundrel was too fresh! When I took him out with me he managed to make people think he was the mastah and I was the man, baw Jove!"—Chicago Tribune.

Perdita—It doesn't matter if this is the third installment of the story. The synopsis is printed telling how the first chapters went; so you can start reading it from here. Penelope—Yes; but how stupid of them not to have the synopsis tell how it ends!—Judge.

"Did you have a pleasant voyage?" "No," sighed the beautiful American heiress. "It was one of the saddest experiences of my life. There were two counts and a duke aboard, but the weather was so rough that they never came out of their rooms."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Reporter—How were you impressed by the European cities you visited? Distinguished Traveler—They are marvels of cleanliness, sir. To return to one of our cities after being abroad is like coming back to a hog-pen. Reporter—May I ask what hog-pen did you start from?—Chicago Tribune.

"How is it business has so much improved in the side show?" asked the man from the main tent. "I started the 'living skeleton' to smoking cigarettes," replied the hustling manager. "I don't see why that should draw people." "Yes; every mother takes her boy in and points out the horrible example."—Philadelphia Record.