

HOUSE IS STILL 'TO LET'

By ALICE TURNER CURTIS

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ON ONE of the streets leading from the park in the center of a town near Boston is a very attractive modern house with a history. It was built for the occupancy of a Mr. and Mrs. Leslie, whose mysterious deaths mark the beginning of this story.

The facts here recorded are just as I heard them. Indeed, I was a resident of the town during the period in which these strange occurrences took place, and had a personal acquaintance with the people mentioned.

The Leslies had been married a year, were apparently happy, and were well and favorably known in the town. One morning a neighbor noticed that lights were burning in the Leslie house. He ran up the steps and rang the bell. There was no response, and after a few hours the neighbors decided that something was wrong inside, and that an entrance must be made at once. The front door was accordingly forced open, and as the men went in they could see into the room beyond the hall, the sitting room. Mr. Leslie was sitting with a paper across his knee, apparently asleep, and on a couch near by lay his wife.

It took but a few moments to ascertain that both had been dead for some hours. Their faces were peaceful and composed; there were no signs of disturbance in the house.

Every possible inquiry was made. No trace of poison or of foul play could be found. Numberless theories were advanced, and the wonder and excitement over the tragic death of the young couple grew daily.

After some months their relatives removed the furnishings, and "To Let" appeared in the cottage windows. The house was immediately taken by a man from Boston, whose family consisted, besides himself, of his wife and two little girls. None of this family had heard the story of the Leslies, nor did they hear it until they had been in the cottage for some weeks. One night, after they had occupied the dwelling for over a week, the man of the family was awakened by a sudden scream. His wife awoke at the same moment, and exclaimed: "One of the children must have the nightmare," but just then the two little girls rushed into the room, exclaiming, "What's the matter, mother? What are you screaming about?" Almost before they had finished speaking two more screams in quick succession rang through the house. The place was carefully searched, but no cause for the disturbance could be found.

The next night at about the same hour like sounds were heard. After that Mr. Weston made inquiries of the neighbors. None of them had been disturbed. One suggested that possibly a cat was shut up somewhere in the house and had made the noises heard, but a careful search of the entire premises failed to discover any such commonplace solution of the mysterious sounds.

A week passed without any recurrence of the midnight sounds, when one night Mrs. Weston awoke from a most terrible dream. She dreamed that she was lying upon the couch in the sitting room. In front of her stood a young man who held a pillow in his hands. "I shall strangle you," he said clearly, "it's no use to struggle." Mrs. Weston dreamed that she tried to scream; that once, twice, three times she endeavored to rise from the couch to push away the pillow, but could not.

From this dream she awoke suddenly, and as she lay endeavoring to overcome its impression, a gasping shriek, quickly followed by two more, awakened her husband, and again sent the little girls lying in terror to their mother's room.

This time Mrs. Weston held herself responsible for the terrible screams. "I've had a dreadful dream, and I suppose I screamed without knowing it," she said. She had hardly finished this explanation when again came the screams, the last dying away in a stifled moan.

The family was by this time thoroughly terrified. They had heard the story of the Leslies, and without waiting for further experiences in the house they moved at once.

Their story got about the town, with the result that the house was vacant for a year. Then a family, consisting of an elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. Walters, and their son, a young man about twenty-five, moved in. The remainder of the story was told me by this son, and I will give it in his own words as nearly as possible.

"I wasn't afraid of any haunted house. My father was deaf, so it would take a reasonably loud scream to wake him, and my mother was a sensible woman. The house just suited us. We got nicely settled in a few weeks, and my elder brother and his wife came out from Boston to make us a visit. The first night they were there I stayed in town for the theater. The train I came out in left a few minutes after eleven, and I reached the house at about a quarter before twelve. I was nearly ready for bed when a shriek like that of a person struggling for his life sounded through the house. I hurried into the hall, and as I did so my brother opened his door. Before either of us could speak

a second and a third scream followed. By this time even father's deaf ears had been penetrated, and we all sat up talking the matter over far into the night before we felt like sleep.

"In the end we decided not to mention the occurrence. We thought of several possible explanations of the noise. The next morning we made a careful examination of the house and surroundings. We made inquiries as to late trains, thinking we might have mistaken the shriek of an engine for a human voice; but all our conjecture led to nothing. We could find no satisfactory reason for the disturbance.

"I made inquiries about the Leslies, and found that many people believed that Leslie had stifled his wife, and then taken some subtle poison which left no trace; but there was no evidence to support this theory; no sign of poison had been found, no cause could be given for such an act, and nothing could explain the midnight screams. A week passed quietly, when one night my brother awakened our mother, telling her that his wife was ill. She had awakened from a bad dream almost suffocated, and my mother worked over her for some time before she was restored. She refused to tell her dream, but we were well assured that it was a repetition of Mrs. Weston's. The next morning my brother and his wife went to their home.

"I had one more experience in that house which I shall never forget. My father was to be out one night until midnight at the meeting of a society of which he was a member, and my mother and I decided to wait up for him.

"About eleven o'clock mother lay down on the couch and went to sleep. The room was brightly lighted, and I sat near the couch reading.

"Just as I heard my father come in I was startled by a sudden moan from my mother. I turned quickly toward the couch, and as I did so I saw plainly that the sofa pillow lay upon her face. I snatched it away, and awakened her with some little difficulty.

"Meantime my father had come into the room, and as he entered, a scream, terrible in its nearness and intensity, rang out, thrilling us all with a sickening shock. We left the next day."

This finished his story. No explanation of these happenings has ever been given. The Leslies' death remains a mystery, and to explain the Presence that occupied this cottage after their death would be to account for a side of life which we barely touch and cannot comprehend.

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Among the NOTABLES

RICHARD GATLING

RICHARD GATLING was inventor of the modern type of machine gun. There were guns, before that, which fired more than a single volley, but none could approach the Gatling for efficiency.

Gatling was born September 12, 1818, in North Carolina, son of a wealthy planter with an inventive sort of mind. Young Richard had such a good education that by the time he was seventeen he was intellectually far beyond most grown men. With his father, he perfected a machine to sow cotton seed, and for many years afterwards, while his work carried him about the country and at last to St. Louis, he kept inventing farming machines. A steam plow had great possibilities; planting and thinning machines almost revolutionized farming. He invented a screw propeller for steamboats, only to find Ericsson had secured a patent for the same idea a few days before. He studied medicine for a time.

Then, with the outbreak of the Civil war, he turned his thoughts to military weapons and made the first machine gun. It fired some 350 shots a minute and was the marvel of all who saw it. But the ordnance department, for some unknown reason, refused even to look at it. General Butler thought enough of it to buy a dozen with his own money and use them, however. But it was some time after the war that congress consented to use the gun (perfected then to a speed of almost a thousand shots a minute). Since then it has been used all over the world. Of course, it is obsolete now. Gatling lived until 1903.

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YOUR Last Name

IS IT COLFAX?

WILLIAM COLFAX, one of the earliest settlers of Weathersfield, Conn., was the ancestor of the Colfaxes in this country. He was of pure English stock, and regarded as typical of the stock that made New England colonists noted for their integrity and hardiness.

He was the grandfather of John Colfax of New London, Conn., who, by his wife, Anne Latimer, had William Colfax, now later as General Colfax, who was captain of Washington's bodyguard, and took a prominent part in the Revolution. He was a man of many graces and much personal charm, as well as one of the bravest of fighters. And it is said that "Lady" Washington was particularly fond of his society. President Washington always knew that his wife would be treated with the utmost courtesy and as befitted the first lady of the land when General Colfax was one of their guests. And in the Colfax family today is preserved a curious little bag knitted of cotton thread, which was made by Mrs. Washington as a holder for General Colfax's cue when it was not in use.

H. Schuyler Colfax was vice president under Grant.

TREAT—The founder of the Treat family in this country was Robert Treat, born near Taunton, Somerset county, England, in 1622. He was colonial governor of Connecticut. His father was Richard who, with his wife, Alice Gaylord Treat, settled in Watertown, Mass., in 1635.

FALKENBERG—The Falkenberg family is of German origin, although their German blood is very liberally diluted with Anglo-Saxon stock at the present time.

The founder of the family was Henry Jacob Falkenberg, who came from Holstein, near Denmark, and settled in New Jersey, where his descendants have always been prominent.

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THE YOUNG LADY ACROSS THE WAY



The young lady across the way says her brother is terribly muscular and you ought to see his biceps.

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POULTRY

RAISING GEESE IS QUITE PROFITABLE

During the past year I have been raising geese and I have found them to be profitable. There is a good market for geese.

In the first place geese require less grain than any other fowl. That is important. The geese derive a greater part of their living from pasture and roaming about, and they get just what they require in the way of feed. In winter it's different. We must feed them, but they do not eat like other fowls, and I have found they will fatten more quickly than other fowls, says a writer in the Indiana Farmer's Guide. The important thing that I do not want overlooked is the fact that the goslings are the easiest of all fowls to raise. That has been my experience of many years past, perhaps ten years or longer. Once they are hatched out, with ordinary care, they will thrive and grow with rapidity to maturity. The thing that is hardest is to get them hatched. I have found so many eggs that were infertile, so I always set plenty of them.

The little goslings will seldom touch feed other than bits of grass until after three or four days. One thing is essential, and that is having plenty of drinking water. They must have this, and require it, for that seems to be their very nature.

The hen and goslings are kept in their coop, where it is warm for the first week. Sometimes I keep them in ten days when it is damp and cold. After that they are allowed all the free range they want, except on rainy days.

The first feed I give the goslings is hard-boiled eggs mixed with milk and cornmeal. That is the best thing in the way of feed that I have ever tried. The milk must be sweet for best results. The eggs may be crushed up, shell and all, and mixed with the milk and cornmeal.

The first month the goslings are fed about four times a day. I have always done this, for while young and growing they require nourishment often, although sparingly feed each time. It is folly to overfeed and it is also injurious.

The breeding birds are fed carefully during winter. I give them clover, vegetables and sprouted oats, so they do not get too fat.

Young Turkeys Require Shelter in Wet Weather

Young turkeys are susceptible to wet weather. One precaution that must always be observed in handling the young poults is to see that they have a dry place where they are protected from the rainstorms, and that they have a dry place to roost.

Turkey hens will lay when a year old if they are well matured. It is probably best to keep the majority of the flock older hens, but it is necessary to keep some of the better young hens to gradually replace the older hens. In this way the flock can be kept in the best of condition.

In feeding and caring for young poults there are as many different rationings and methods advocated as there are for chicks.

No food should be given to the young poults for the first 36 to 48 hours. During the first week hard-boiled infertile eggs chopped fine and mixed with equal parts of rolled oats and fed in limited quantities three times a day is a satisfactory ration. Sour skimmed milk or buttermilk is excellent for drinking purposes. After the third or fourth day cracked corn, hulled or steel-cut oats, cracked wheat or other similar grains may be scattered in the light litter or in the short grass outside of the brood coop in order to encourage the poults to exercise in getting their food.

June Is the Best Time to Caponize Cockerels

While capons are produced only in small number where their quality is known, they sell for fancy prices, according to D. H. Hall, extension poultry specialist of Clemson college, who suggests that the month of June is the best time to caponize young cockerels. At this season the market is usually low for broilers and it will pay to caponize cockerels and keep them for capons.

In selling these capons the local market must be developed first. Some of our tourist towns are already providing good market for capons and are paying good prices for them. Several men in South Carolina are caponizing for the farmers, and are marketing their products for them at a small cost.

The operation on the cockerel is not difficult usually, but should be performed with care. If the cockerels are starved out from 36 to 48 hours before the operation, it will help greatly. If the intestines are full of food the operation is very difficult.

Dirty Feet Retard Eggs

When yards and houses are wet and ooze with moisture most of the time, it means cold and dirty feet for the hens. A hen that "gets cold feet" seldom lays the right quota of eggs, and dirty feet make dirty nests and dirty eggs. In cases where a suitable dry location is hard to get, along with other desirable factors, place a three-inch tile even with the bottom of the foundation on the outside, and provide proper outlet for excess moisture.

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Reading the Minutes.

The word "minute" is from old Latin, meaning a slight fraction or small portion. Its use as a definition of the reading of the former acts of an organization is to call to the remembrance of the members the minute or small things which took place which might escape the attention of the members or fail to be recorded in the permanent records of the organization.

Age of Civilization.

Many people believe that civilization rises in waves, and that many thousands of years ago the greater part of the Atlantic was dry land inhabited by a race of people who, in some respects, had risen higher than we ourselves have risen. However that may be, digging on what is still dry land has proved that civilization is much older than we used to think.

How Industry Got Name.

As the country became settled and it became necessary to bring meat supplies east from points farther and farther west, the expedient was found of slaughtering the animals and sending meat rather than live animals. At first this practice was confined to pork, which was salted down and packed in barrels, hence the name "packing industry."

Artaxerxes' Seal Found.

In rummaging in one of the vaults of a Russian museum, investigators have found what is believed to have been the seal of Artaxerxes, the Persian monarch who ruled 465 to 425 B. C. The seal will now be exhibited in the Fine Arts museum at Moscow. The seal reads: "I am Artaxerxes, the Great King."

Truth About Tickling.

The reason why you do not laugh when you tickle yourself is because, strictly speaking, you cannot tickle yourself. The sensation of being tickled depends largely upon surprise and suspense, and when you tickle yourself there is neither astonishment over your act nor suspense over its degree or duration.

Those Balloon-Tired Glims.

Negro Cook (asked by his mistress if she thought Bobby's spectacles becoming)—Yes'm, I think they becomes him all right. 'Cause I does think they makes his face look kinda crowded.

Wasted Worry.

"We worry about posterity," remarked the Man on the Car, "to have posterity come along and laugh at us."—Toledo Blade.

Brothers of the Savior.

According to the Bible Jesus had four brothers—James, Joseph, Simon and Jude, the last named being also called Judas. Smith in his notable Bible dictionary says Jesus had three sisters. The Scripture merely mentions the sisters of Jesus without giving their number or names. — Exchange.

Pneumonia Puzzle.

"A person may have pneumonia and not know it," said a doctor at an inquest in Grimsby, England. He said a man who died while eating dinner had been suffering from pneumonia for several days.

Go Deep for Oil.

What is said to be the deepest hole in Canada has been drilled by searchers for oil on the banks of the Fraser river in British Columbia. The hole reaches a depth of 5,800 feet.

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Beethoven's Oddities.

Beethoven had an extreme style while conducting an orchestra. One critic says: "At a pianissimo he would crouch down so as to be hidden by the desk, and then as the crescendo increased he would gradually rise, beating all the time, until at the fortissimo he would spring into the air with his arms extended, as if wishing to float on the clouds."

Temperature of the Sea.

The temperature of the sea, like its salinity, is very variable. The warmest waters are found in the Pacific ocean, where the average surface temperature is 19.10 degrees centigrade, as compared with 17.03 degrees centigrade in the Indian ocean, and 16.91 degrees centigrade in the Atlantic. The coldest sea temperatures are found off New Scotland.

Great Gift to Mankind.

It is like taking the sun out of the world to bereave human life of friendship—than which the immortal gods have given men nothing better, nothing more gladdening.—Cicero.

Unusual Dish.

A favorite delicacy of the Eskimo is a dish of good, bad and even half-baked eggs, mixed with angelica and chokeberries, and thrown into a seal-skin bag filled with whale oil.

Unknown to Science.

There is no scientific definition for what is called "palatial color." It is a term used in astrology and fortune telling, meaning the effect of the color of heavenly bodies on the lives of individuals.

Right to Be Haughty.

"They seem haughtier than ever. Has the daughter of the house finally landed a title?" "No, but she's engaged to a journeyman plumber. And this is no society news."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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