



He had a feeling that the germs of mania were floating in the air around him, and that he might break out with the disease any minute.

He wondered at being left thus alone. A man who had been judicially decided to be crazy should have a keeper. Then he perceived in the shadow of the door a large, ungainly man who seemed to be on watch. He stood in a kind of niche, and had thus escaped Drane's observation when he entered. This man's eyes so glared upon him out of the darkness that Drane's nerves began to dance in a manner that threatened to fit him very quickly for permanent occupancy of the retreat. He felt that he must escape from that man's observation or relieve the oppressive silence by a howl.

He compromised the matter by stepping into the parlor. At this both the ancient and unfortunate ladies assumed an air of modest reserve which was quite frightful to see. Presently one of them drew out her handkerchief and began to weep softly, but with evident determination to do the subject full justice before she got through.

"Madame," said Drane, gently, "if my presence affects you to tears, I will withdraw."

"Do not do so on my account," she said. "It is not your fault that you have revived a sorrow that has long been buried in my breast."

Drane regretted having been the cause of such a joyless resurrection, and he ventured to murmur words to that effect.

"It does not matter," she said. "My conduct must seem strange to you. I can hardly explain it without telling you the story of my life. There is a romance in it," and she brightened appreciably. "You shall hear the melancholy narrative."

"Far be it from me to intrude upon your confidence," said Drane, endeavoring to get away. But she fixed him with



her eye and he sank back into his seat. Then she drew a chair near to his and between him and the door.

"You resemble him strongly," said she. "The same noble features, the same soulful eyes, the same pallor, indicative of the same sad life. Are you a genius? Do you write poems of the soul as he did?"

Drane groaned.

"I know it," she went on. "Listen. We were destined for each other. There was a small matter of property depending upon our union—but never mind. He seemed to avoid me at first, but at length fate threw us together. Returning to his room one morning very early he endeavored to enter the old-fashioned clock at the head of the first flight of stairs under the impression that it was the door of his apartment. It was the absent-mindedness of genius. Ah, will he and the clock fell down the stairs locked in each other's arms, and when they picked him up one of his limbs was broken. I came to nurse him. For seven long weeks I was his constant, his only companion. I read to him, I talked to him—and then—"

"He died?"

"No, he became a hopeless lunatic. I have never loved since then; but now your face brings it all back to me. Excuse the outburst of my feelings."

"She laid her head on his shoulder, and into his collar. Drane could feel his hair begin to turn gray but he shut his teeth together with resolution. The other fellow had stood it seven weeks before he went out of his head, and Drane believed that he could last till Jenkins came.

In fact he did; but it was a close shave. Jenkins was a tall and greedy man, with hollow cheeks and a cheerless smile. At his appearance the woman with a romance in her life vanished in charge of her companion, who proved to be the matron of the house. Jenkins did not care to question the new woman. He was satisfied that all charges would be promptly paid, and he at once escorted Drane to an apartment on the third floor. Here the unfortunate young man secured some toast and tea, which, however, did not wholly sustain him against the horrors of the night.

Jenkins made a casual inspection of Drane's pockets before leaving the room.

"You will excuse this formality," said he, "but the man who occupied this room before you brought in a piece of rope with which he meant to hang himself. It was a sad case. He was a handsome fellow, but he had had many cases of the kind. Good night."

This was a cheerful subject of reflection to take to bed with one, and it was still more consoling to hear the key turned on the outside of the door.

"I believe that I shall actually go crazy before morning," said Drane, as he stretched himself upon the bed. It was sufficiently hot. The windows were carefully barred and screened in a way which not only prevented the suicidal aggression of Jenkins' boarders but denied ingress to an adequate supply of the free air of Heaven. After making this discovery Drane returned to his bed, where he was soon dreaming that the dangling heels of his unhappy predecessor were still knocking against the headboard.

From this nightmare he awoke with a shiver of horror. He sat up and listened. There was certainly a strange noise in the heavy air. Sometimes it

was like subdued voices; then it was sighing; and again it was a guttural groan. For some minutes Drane could not summon up the resolution to investigate, but at length he arose, and quaking with horror he endeavored to trace the disquieting sound to its source.

It led him to a door which apparently separated him from the next apartment. What ghastly mystery lay behind it? He hardly dared to think. He listened, and the guttural sighs made themselves plainly audible. Doubtless some unfortunate was leaving the Retreat by the method Jenkins had described, and had failed to arrange his noose in an entirely satisfactory manner. For what seemed a long time, Drane quaked and hesitated, not daring to penetrate further into the secret. Then with a sudden resolution he seized the knob and threw his force upon it.

The door opened easily. It revealed an empty closet, with a set bowl at the side, into which a thin stream of water was trickling, and running down the escape pipe with the noise which had so horrified him. Alarm gave place to wrath. He vowed all sorts of vengeance upon every body who had even remotely contributed to his present evil plight. Every body but Bessie. He forgave her, and in thinking of her he fell quietly asleep and was not awakened till the light of morning streamed into the room.

Breakfast was served to such of Jenkins' boarders as could be trusted outside their cages, at eight o'clock. After partaking of that frugal meal Drane was permitted to spend a little while in the parlor. It had no other occupant at first except a short, stout man with an abundance of stiff, curly hair who sat at a table writing. Every time he paused in that labor he stuck his pen behind his ear, and when he was ready to resume his task he picked up a fresh one, forgetting what he had done with the other. The consequence was that in a few minutes the bushy hair over his ear was full of pen-holders, and there remained only the one which he was using. Presently that joined the rest, and then the little man, after hunting about the table a few minutes, gave it up and pushed his paper from him.

"The servants here are very careless," said he to Drane. "They always fail to provide me with pens, although they know the importance of my work. And for myself, I am so absent-minded, do you know, that my forgetfulness has been the ruin of my life. It is true."

He leaned toward Drane impressively, and continued: "I am a genius. I once wrote the greatest poem extant. Then I mislaid it. For months I searched for the manuscript, but without finding a trace of it. My cursed forgetfulness! Then I tried to remember what was in it—my forgetfulness again. I couldn't think of a single line. I could remember only that it surpassed Homer, Dante or Shakespeare. The thought that I had thus cast away undying fame by mere carelessness undermined my health, and all they brought me to this sanitarium. Confound it, one might as well be honest about it. There's no sanitarium about it. It's a lunatic asylum, and for the sake of veracity let's admit it. Here I sit scribbling away every day, trying vainly to hit upon the single inspiration which for a moment raised me to an intellectual height no man had ever before attained. Thus far in vain. But who knows—who knows! What's your own special brand of lunacy?"

"I am a sane man," said Drane, half angrily.

The short man shook his head.

"Wait till you've been here a while," said he. "Then you'll dream dreams, and see visions. I was sane enough, too, but the atmosphere of this place—you don't know what it is. In two days you'll have delusions. You'll see things that aren't there—serpents of various hues; zebras with their stripes running from head to tail, and revolving around their bodies like the rings of Saturn. That's why they've put me here. They're jealous of me. They don't want me to remember the great work which I wrote but can not find. It's a plot."

The short man was getting violent, and presently an attendant came and removed him, to Drane's great relief.

In the course of that day Drane encountered several interesting maniacs of a mild order, but no serious incident occurred until the evening. Then, as he was standing in the hall just after supper, he heard Jenkins talking to the matron, and pointing to him.

"Parasite," said Jenkins. "You want to watch him carefully."

And Drane took that delightful suggestion to his apartment, and meditated upon it. Was it possible that he was really insane? Were the strange events of the past few days which he seemed to remember, in reality only hallucinations?

Who could determine, if left wholly to himself, without a single visible link between him and the past, whether that past had any real existence? In short, Drane didn't know whether he was crazy or not. He watched himself for symptoms. Did his hand tremble? Or his heart beat too fast or too slow? He enjoyed a nice case of hypochondriacism till long past midnight, and when he fell asleep, the sobas described by the

forgetful genius were ordinary and reasonable animals compared to those which passed through his dreams.

But the morrow brought a great event, no less than a call from Bessie. She came unattended, but alas! the matron was present during the entire interview. This not only prevented Drane from enjoying the conversation to the full, but it also made it impossible, or at least unwise, for him to ask her name. So he called her Bessie, and she made no objection.

[To be continued.]

THE SILVER LAKE HORROR

The Most Ordeal Affliction that Ever Befell any Community in Oregon.

(Daily Oregonian, Jan. 4.)

KLAMATH FALLS, Or.—Exp-Representative Dr. Bernard Daly, who left for the scene of the Silver Lake disaster, writes from Lakeway, under date of Jan. 1, giving hurried but accurate details of the Christmas eve holocaust. He says: "I shall endeavor to give you all the data in my possession, which will be accurate, having been noted by men upon the scene after the fire, but, owing to the fact that I am very busy professionally, I cannot take time to write of the disaster in detail, clothing it with rhetoric calculated to bring tears of grief and sorrow to the suffering and disconsolate people of Silver Lake. I shall, therefore, note briefly the facts."

The following are the facts as stated by Mr. Daly:

The population of Silver Lake and the valley surrounding was about 250. The building that was consumed by the fire contained about 160 people when the fire began. The fire was caused by some one striking his head against a lighted lamp, causing the oil to take fire after it was splashed out of the lamp by the jar. Just at that moment the people became frightened that another lamp, which was sitting on an organ in another part of the room, was thrown to the floor and exploded. The burning, being built of pine lumber, caught fire so rapidly that its interior was in a blaze in less than two minutes, and in six minutes from the time it took fire it was so far consumed that all life within was extinct. The list of the dead, as given by the doctor, is as follows:

Mrs. U. F. Abslire, David Buick, J. J. Buick, Lela Buick, Ed Bowen, Fred Buick, Mrs. L. Coshaw, Mrs. Jeff Howard, Harry Howard, Bessie Howard, Woodward Hearst, Mrs. Woodward Hearst, Ira Hamilton, Laura McCauley, W. C. Martin, Mrs. Dr. Orsley, Lillie Orsley, Bruce Orsley, Hazel Labrie, Mrs. Dr. Snelling, Mrs. Gus Schroeder, Esther Schroeder, Mrs. Jane Payne, Robbie Small, Samuel Ward, Mrs. Dave Ward, Etta Ward, Mrs. C. L. Williams, Henry Williams, Russell Ward, Frank Ross, Mrs. Phillips, Jessie Phillips, Frank West, Mrs. Frank West, Bertha West, Herbert West, Mrs. John Buick May, Horning and Mrs. W. C. Martin.

The list differs from that published in the Oregonian last Wednesday, in the following respect:

Ada Bell Hearst is not among the dead; Mrs. John Buick is added to the list, and Esther Schroeder, and not Eston Snelling, is one of the dead.

Seriously injured: George Payne, Mrs. Labrie, Roy Ward, Robert Snelling, Maggie Snelling, Mrs. Ward, Mr. Emerick, Mrs. Charles Hamilton, Mr. Jacoby.

About 12 others were more or less injured, but none of them seriously. With the exception of a few bones that were gathered together, all of which were buried in one grave, the bodies were entirely burned to ashes. The dead, as classified, would be as follows:

Seven grown men, all of whom lost their lives in the attempt to rescue others; 15 grown women; 2 boys between the ages of 6 and 10; and 16 little ones, under the age of 6; total number of dead, 40. The Orsley family lost 15 members. The West family all perished except one little boy. Some of the injured have lost their eyes, and some will lose their hands, while some, in all probability, will not survive. As all of the medicines of the place were consumed by the fire, the injured had no relief in a medical way until Dr. Daly's arrival, about 24 hours after the fire. The distance of over 200 miles was made by the doctor across mountains of snow, with the thermometer below zero. This is a feat which has never been accomplished before in this section.

THE POLK COUNTY PRESS.

News Items and Editorial Expressions.

(Transcript.)

Our business men report that the holiday trade, just past, has been exceptionally good.

The legislature should "lop off" all useless and unnecessary commissions. The people can get along without them, and their salaries would be saved to the state.

Grand Master Parker left Monday for a visit to various lodges. He will reach home Jan. 12, and on the evening of that day install the officers of Friendship Lodge.

Editor Ford of the ENTERPRISE came in a few days ago for a chat. The ENTERPRISE has become one of Polk county's stable institutions,

and barring its politics (which don't hurt it much) is a rattling good sheet.

Is the question of better roads ever thought of by the majority of our people? This is one of the most vital of our local questions and should be seriously considered by every business man especially. A bad road of a very few miles may, perhaps, divert the trade of thousands of dollars away from a place in one season.

(Itemizer.)

Six head of fat cattle were recently stolen from the pasture of Alex McNary, near Eola.

Dr. Stanley has a numerous signed petition for the physician-ship of Lake county, Cal.

H. C. Plummer and family have moved back to their old home at Sherwood, which used to be known as Mock's station.

Twenty years ago George McGowan, now a Dallas merchant, was teaching in Lane county, and among his pupils was little Mary Coats. They both wandered away and he had forgotten her. Last week, during the Christian Endeavor convention, she dropped into his store and reminded him of their former relations. She is now county organizer of Christian Endeavor societies and he naturally feels proud of his former pupil.

In 1853 E. Y. Halleck, Phineas Hudson and Luther Tuttle commenced work on what is now known as the Halleck mill, three miles west of Dallas on the Rick-rell. Mr. Hudson and M. L. Robbins hewed the timbers and Samuel Goff hauled them to the mill site. The mill started in the summer of 1854 and has been running almost continually ever since, having cut an average of 250,000 feet per year, or 10 in all.

The ground cut over to furnish this extends four miles up the creek from the mill and half a mile wide, or about two sections of land, making about 7,800 feet to the acre. When Halleck's mill started there were three others in the county, Buell's on Mill creek, Applegate's on Salt creek and Thorp's, where Falls City now stands.

(Observer.)

I've a secret in my heart, Sweet Marie, A tale I would impart, Sweet Marie; If our city would but grow, We should let our people know That the women mills would go, Sweet Marie.

Born, to the wife of Rev. S. A. Starr, a daughter, Jan. 4, 1895.

Young orchards near town have been badly damaged by the recent snow.

Sheriff Plummer and his deputies are busy collecting delinquent taxes.

Attorney Joe Sibley has been seriously indisposed during the past week.

Rev. Futrell reports that Elder Ross, the noted evangelist, will be with us in a few days.

M. Morrison is improving. He has been sick with liver complaint and heart disease for the past week, but is on a fair way to recovery.

What is CASTORIA

Castoria is Dr. Samuel Pitcher's prescription for Infants and Children. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. It is a harmless substitute for Paregoric, Drops, Soothing Syrup, and Castor Oil. It is Pleasant. Its guarantee is thirty years' use by Millions of Mothers. Castoria destroys Worms and allays feverishness. Castoria prevents vomiting Sour Curd, cures Diarrhoea and Wind Colic. Castoria relieves teething troubles, cures constipation and flatulency. Castoria assimilates the food, regulates the stomach and bowels, giving healthy and natural sleep. Castoria is the Children's Panacea—the Mother's Friend.

Castoria.

"Castoria is an excellent medicine for children. Mothers have repeatedly told me of its good effect upon their children." *Dr. G. C. Croson, Lowell, Mass.*

"Castoria is the best remedy for children of which I am acquainted. I hope the day is not far distant when mothers will cease to be in the interest of their children, and I see Mothers instead of the various quack nostrums which are destroying their loved ones, by forcing opium, morphia, soothing syrup and other hurtful agents down their throats, thereby sending them to premature graves." *Dr. J. F. Kingwell, Conway, Ark.*

Castoria.

"Castoria is so well adapted to children that I recommend it as superior to any prescription known to me." *H. A. Archer, M. D., 111 So. Oxford St., Brooklyn, N. Y.*

"Our physicians in the children's department have spoken highly of their experience in their outside practice with Castoria, and although we only have among our medical supplies what is known as regular products, yet we were free to confess that the merits of Castoria has won us to look with favor upon it." *UNITED HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY, Boston, Mass.*

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The Cantar Company, 77 Murray Street, New York City.

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A Clearance Sale

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That will continue until the goods are all sold. We do not like to sell at cost, or for less than cost, but we had rather lose a little more than to have our stock on the shelves until next year, and then have to sell them at half price.

besides running the risk of losing many of our customers by offering them goods and styles a year old.

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MONMOUTH, ORE.

My Wife

And I never have any altercations, and our neighbors marvel at the congeniality. What's the reason for this blessed state of affairs? you ask. Well, when first our two throbbing hearts were made one, we established a sort of a set of rules which both of us have adhered to very steadfastly. But even then differences would arise. For instance: We needed some hardware and crockery. She was in favor of buying at

Frazer & Son's, Monmouth,

where, she insisted, they were the cheapest. I favored going to Portland for them. She wanted her way and I wanted mine. Did we quarrel? Not a bit of it—we effected a compromise. That an agreeable way of settling such disputes, you know. Where did we buy the goods? H'm—well, we bought them where my wife said, Frazer & Son's and saved several dollars.

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