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The Elmsbury Ghost

It Appeared in Person to Mr. Ebenezer Pollock.

By CLARISSA MACKIE

"Going once! Going twice! Going three times and sold to Mr. Ebenezer Pollock for \$1,900!"

The auctioneer's hammer fell with a resounding thud and nearly grazed the nose of the purchaser.

"Didn't mean to damage a good customer," chuckled the man of the hammer as he pulled down the red flag above the gate and climbed into his buggy. "Come down to Lawyer Fitch's office hereby, 'Neser, and we'll close the deal right and proper."

"Very well," said Ebenezer.

He watched the crowd of women tiptoeing out of the house and waited until the last one had passed through the gate, each with a furtive glance at the new owner. He was aware that they marveled because he had bought a ghost ridden house.

When he was alone in the shadows of the tall oaks he looked up at the house, dark and forbidding in the midst of rank grass and weeds. Whatever had been its original color, it was now faded to a dingy mustard hue, blotted with the dark green of heavy wooden shutters tightly closed.

There were years and years when the shutters had never been closed. Those were the days before old Simon Elmsbury's granddaughter had run away with the schoolteacher and had in consequence been disinherited by the old man. Simon had left the house and land and furniture to the Foreign Missionary society, and now, five years after his death, they had put it up at auction, and Ebenezer had bought it at much below its real value.

It was well known that Simon would have opposed his granddaughter's marriage to any man. "He was selfish enough to wish to keep her at his side to wait upon him, for she was the only relative he had."

"Let us come and live with you, grandfather," Cornelia had pleaded with her arms around his neck. "You will like Henry better when you know him." But the obstinate old man had angrily flung her aside, and the next day the girl had been married to Henry Stone and disappeared from Melville.

After that Simon Elmsbury closed the main part of the house and lived in the east wing for ten years, and then he died without one relenting word to Cornelia. The Stones had never been heard from since their departure from Melville. Old Simon Elmsbury went to the grave unattended by any relative.

Since Simon's death gossip had it that the house was haunted. On stormy nights, the credulous said, the old piano tinkled softly behind the closed shutters, and a woman's thin, sweet voice was heard singing in low tones. Snatches of this weird music could be heard sometimes in the lull of shrieking wind or dashing rain. Some claimed that Cornelia was dead and that her sweet spirit came back to sing in the rooms of the old home, where she had spent a happy girlhood.

In spite of ghostly rumors, Ebenezer Pollock had suddenly made up his mind to give up boarding in the village hotel and occupy a home of his own. The Elmsbury place suited him. It was near his harness shop, and the east wing was just large enough to serve his simple purposes. As for the main portion of the house, he gave it over to rats and mice and mold.

He had lived in the Elmsbury place for three weeks before he heard the singing ghost. It was the 21st of September, and the equinoctial gale was shaking the old house to its very foundations. Ebenezer had gone to bed, but he could not sleep. The wind screamed down the wide chimney and whistled around the windows. From a distance came the echoing jangle of an old piano touched by timid fingers and a mere thread of melody in a woman's voice; then the rain continued its monotonous beat, and he heard the music no more.

Ebenezer Pollock was angry. He resolved to lay the intruding ghost if possible, and so the next day when a watery sun rendered the house a little less dreary he lighted a lantern and unsealed the door that led into the other side of the house.

The house was quite as dusty and forlorn as on the day he had bought it. Strangely enough, Ebenezer did not look at the little piano which stood open just as Cornelia Elmsbury had left it so many years ago. He scurried through the rooms with a half realization that some slender spirit was sitting through the rooms

away from his contaminating presence.

A few weeks afterward there came another storm of wind and rain, and Ebenezer awoke from his first sleep with every muscle aching and drawing with pain. Rheumatism held him a captive. For hours he groaned dismally, conscious that the fire in his air tight stove was nearly out at a time when he needed heat. There was no ministering hand to apply hot flannels to his swollen joints and muscles or to allay his torture with soothing liniments.

It was then that the ghost came again, this time with groping fingers upon the sealed door. It knocked gently and spoke to him in faint, frightened whispers.

"Go away!" shouted Ebenezer wrathfully.

There was a silence, and presently Ebenezer's thick, grizzled hair stood almost upright on his head. Ghostly footsteps sounded in the rooms over his head and softly, tap, tap, tap, down the narrow staircase that opened into his bedroom.

The lamp beside his bed gave forth a cheering light, and Ebenezer Pollock, thoroughly frightened for the first time in his life, watched with fascinated eyes the slowly opening door at the foot of his couch.

Tall and slender and pale, she stood before him at last, her tender blue eyes filled with pitying tears. Perhaps she was forty years old, but the hair framing her delicate face made her appear much younger.

"I could not bear to hear you moaning with pain all alone. My husband used to have rheumatism before he died, and I know just what to do," she said in a low tone.

"Ma'am" gasped Ebenezer.

He watched her slender figure as it fitted to and fro about his rooms. She mended the fire, and soon its cheering warmth brought relief to his aching limbs. She heated water and flannel cloths and applied soothing liniments with very human fingers.

When the lines of suffering had relaxed and Ebenezer's face still sought hers questioningly she sat down in a low chair and spoke somewhat sadly.

"In Mrs. Stone—Cornelia Elmsbury that was. I've been living here four years."

"Here—in this house? How?" demanded Ebenezer doubtfully.

"In the big back attic," said Cornelia, with a little smile. "It looks out on the tall chestnut woods, you know, and the short chimney comes out there. Grandfather left the cellar full of coal and wood. I've got it real comfortable up there, and on stormy nights I'd come down in the dark and play on my piano till you drove me away. I used to walk over to Belton on dark evenings and get all my groceries and things. It was hard work, but it was heaven to me to get home again after all I went through!" She broke into sobs.

"What made you hide? What did you do it for?" asked Ebenezer excitedly.

"My husband was poor. He died and left a little insurance money—just enough to buy my food and not enough to pay rent. My eyesight is so poor I cannot work, and so I thought I would come back here. I heard the place was shut up, and it was my own by rights. I knew I'd be driven out if any one knew I was here!"

"You poor little thing!" blurted Ebenezer pityingly. "Stay here just as long as you like!" There was a long silence after that, while the little widow cried happily before the fire. Ebenezer was thinking rapidly.

"If you ever go away, ma'am," he said, with a great blush, "I'll go after you and bring you back here and"—He paused.

It happened that one day the ghost deserted the Elmsbury house, and Ebenezer kept his word and went after her—and brought her back a bride to her old home.

Nature as a Painter.

Investigations recently made have brought to light the fact that for all fruits and flowers only three coloring substances are furnished by nature. One of these is the familiar chlorophyll, which paints the beans and peas, the watermelon and the leaves of the trees so vivid a green. Another is xanthophyll, which exhibits its intense yellow in the carrot, for example. The third is erythrophyll, which shows its rich red in the beet. The last two are only modified chlorophyll, however. But it is marvelous to realize that all the varied hues of flowers and fruits are due to these three substances, mixed in different proportions.

Ma Corrected.

Little Sister—Ma, Willie kept the largest half of the apple for himself.

Willie—No, I didn't, ma.

Mother—But I see the largest half in your hand.

Willie—Excuse me, ma. There being but two halves to an apple there can't be any "largest"—Boston Transcript.

MEASURING ELECTRICITY.

The Terms That Are Used and Who They Were Named For.

The five terms used in measuring electricity were all derived from the names of the five greatest pioneers in electrical development; but, strange as it may seem, none of these men had anything to do with the discovery of the particular unit named after him. The names were arbitrarily affixed years later to perpetuate the names of the pioneer electrical geniuses.

The term volt is derived from the name of Alessandro Volta, an Italian, born in 1745. He was one of the first men to try to harness electricity, yet he died without the knowledge that a "volt" was the pressure necessary to force one ampere of current through a conductor having one ohm resistance.

Likewise, Andre Marie Ampere, father of the science of electro-dynamics, never knew that an "ampere" was equal to the number of volts of pressure divided by the ohms of resistance. He was born in France in 1815.

George Simon Ohm was the author of what is known as Ohm's law, now universally recognized as the unit for measuring the resistance of electricity, but it was not until years later that the unit of resistance was named after the German physicist. The number of ohms is computed by dividing the number of volts by the number of amperes.

With either of the two units known the third can easily be found. Likewise, electrical energy is as easily figured. The watt indicates the amount of electric energy being used when one ampere of current is flowing under a pressure of one volt. The watt is derived from the name of James Watt, the man who really invented the modern steam engine. Without the principle of the steam engine, however, electricity as a motive power could not do the powerful tasks it daily accomplishes.

Michael Faraday made the great discovery of magnetic electric currents, the principle on which all modern dynamos and transformers are constructed. In recognition of his great work scientists have named the unit of electrical capacity the farad. This unit of capacity will contain one ampere of current at one volt pressure for one second of time.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

A Glimpse of Tennyson.

Apprehension of being mobbed by the "profane vulgar" amounted almost to monomania with the poet Tennyson. Many stories are told in illustration of this weakness of his. One of the best of them will bear repetition. Lord Tennyson was taking a country walk with a friend when a fellow creature was espied in the distance. "We must turn back," said the poet. "That fellow means to waylay us." His companion persuaded him, however, to continue on their path. They caught up to the enemy and passed him. He took no notice of them whatever. "What an extraordinary thing!" cried the irate poet. "The fellow seems to have no idea who I am!"

Joaquin Miller's Retort.

Joaquin Miller was once advertised to deliver a lecture at San Diego. A smartly, who thought it safe to insult him, approached him as he was standing at the hotel counter, and, throwing down a fifty cent piece, exclaimed: "I will go and hear you talk your rot tonight. Here, give me a ticket!"

Joaquin pocketed the coin, produced a ticket and placing a twenty-five cent piece on it exclaimed, "Children and fools, half price," and turned his back on his would be insulter.

Unprofitable Cows.

In the Farm and Fireside a writer says:

"Not over a third of the so called dairy cows of the United States are profitable to their owners. Ten million 'boarder' cows are milked whose yield is worth less than their feed. Their owners seem to keep them for the sole pleasure of milking them fourteen times a week, cleaning out after them and otherwise enjoying their society."

Dolls.

The ivory doll of the Roman child was too costly for the ages that followed the fall of the empire. For many centuries dolls must have been chiefly of home manufacture. The first shop made dolls after the middle ages were the jointed wooden dolls of the Netherlands. These were known in England and in this country, too, in colonial times as "Flanders babies."

The Ruling Passion.

First Lady Highbrow.—Mrs. Knowlitt made a fine impression at the club this afternoon when she lectured on "The Cosmic Urge."

Second Ditto.—Did she, indeed? How was the dress trimmed? And did she wear aigrets?—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

PERIL IN HOUSE CLOTHS.

Those Used For Wiping and Cleaning Are a Menace to Health.

The dish wiping cloth, even the barred variety, which is sometimes dignified by the name of "tea towel," is in bad repute. Ever since man began to look through the microscope and think in terms of the microscope its fate has been sealed.

Only when freshly washed and boiled and used in clean hands to wipe the rims of already scalded and drained dishes should a wiping cloth be admitted into the modern kitchen. Used in dirty hands till grimy, carried on the arm of a waiter and used to polish a plate or wipe up a table, it belongs to the dark ages, hygienically speaking.

In all dishwashing the household should more and more approach the practice of the laboratory where glassware and porcelain are washed, rinsed in boiling water and placed to drain. No cloth, no matter how well known its antecedents, should be allowed to touch them, for they are now absolutely clean and must remain clean.

In cleaning toilet articles the bathtub and the wash basin it should be remembered that ordinary cleaning cloths belong, like the scrubbing brush, to the early coarser process. The final cleaning must be by hot water only. Whatever comes in contact with any body aperture must be free from all possibility of bacterial contagion.

The common bathtub has doubtless frequently been a carrier of disease germs from one person to another. Before use, however clean it may look, it should be scalded out and not dried with any of the cloths ordinarily given over to the purpose.

Treated as it too often is with any old scrubbing cloth or brush that may happen to be handy the bathtub in a great many homes is never really clean and its germ laden condition makes it as serious a menace to the health of the household as the dish wiping cloth.—New York American.

Exact Thomas.

Thomas Hoar, the devoted servant upon whom Gilbert White, the English naturalist, depended to carry out his garden plans and to look after his comfort in many ways, was noted for his exactness. Mr. H. C. Shelley, in "Gilbert White and Selborne," gives an amusing illustration.

There was one occasion when Thomas came to report, "Please, sir, I've broken and broke a glass."

"Broke a glass, Thomas! How did you do that?"

"I'll show you, sir," he rejoined as he disappeared for a moment. Returning with a glass in his hand he let it fall on the floor, remarking: "That's how I broke it, sir."

"There, go along, Thomas; you are a great fool," said his master, adding to himself, "and I was as great a one for asking such a foolish question."

Have We Gained?

Let a man examine himself.—I Cor. xi, 28. Are we today further on in all goodness and strength than we were, say, ten years ago? Are we as impatient, as fretful, as resentful, as sensitive to all slight, neglect and injury as we used to be? Or are we loftier in mind, larger in thought, fuller in charity, more hopeful regarding the worst? It is for each man to answer these questions for himself and to himself. We may lose great advantage if we make public confession about these things. Sometimes it is well to sit down at our own judgment seat, receive sentence and quietly ponder it in a silence so deep as to be almost religious.—Joseph Parker.

Animals and Climbing.

Bears can climb well if little, but the grizzly and other large species stay mainly on the ground. A bear always climbs down a tree backward, as does the domestic cat until she has nearly reached the ground, when she turns and jumps, but most wildcats run down a trunk head first, even the heavy leopard being a more skillful climber than the light house cat. The tiger and lion, however, do not climb, for no discoverable reason unless it be that they fear falling on account of their weight.

Brass.

Brass is an alloy of tin and copper, and analysis of the earliest existing specimens demonstrates that it was formerly manufactured in the proportions of one part of tin to nine of copper. A notice in Genesis fixes the discovery and use of both these metals, according to the Bible, at between 4,004 and 1,635 years before the Christian era.

Sailing Pretty High.

Lake Titicaca, between Peru and Bolivia, is slightly over 13,000 feet above the level of the sea and is navigated by steamers of about a thousand tons, plying twice weekly between Puno in Peru and Guauqui in Bolivia.—Woman's Home Companion.

MAKE YOUR MONEY WORK.

And the Lesson the Small Investor Needs to Learn.

The advice of one of the large banks of the country is that every one should invest his surplus, whether large or small, in dividend securities of the best class, whether railroad, real estate or farm mortgages or public utilities, for "to keep money idle is a costly operation."

Let every reader of this article remember that with as little as \$5 or \$10 he can make first payment on the purchase of a first class \$100 bond. Let every reader who has a few hundred dollars to spare put it in a good \$500 or \$1,000 bond on the partial payment plan, and let it earn something. Five hundred dollars invested in a 6 per cent bond (with the income deposited in a savings bank at 4 per cent) will double itself in twelve years—that is, the \$500 will have become \$1,000 in that time. This \$1,000 at 6 per cent will earn \$60 a year or over \$1 a week for its possessor. Even at 5 per cent it will double in fifteen years and at 4 per cent in eighteen years.

The lesson the small investor wants to learn is that his money is just as good as that of the larger investor. The former has greater need of being careful because he has less to spare. Learn to be a careful investor. The first thing the careful buyer does if he wants to buy a horse, a cow, a home or a farm, a bond or a share of stock is to make a careful investigation. Schoolboys may swap the jackknives they hold in their closed hands, but grownup men ought to know better. The humblest investor can buy with as great safety as the prudent, for both can deal with the same bankers or brokers in these days when small lots are popular with firms of established character.—Leslie's Weekly.

BIRD ROOSTS.

Safety First as It Is Practiced by the Feathered Tribes.

One of the best ways to prepare for a long journey is to make a short one. So we find that many birds, before they embark on their great air voyage which is to take them from their summer to their winter home, first make daily trips between their sleeping quarters and their feeding grounds.

This is the habit of our robin. Robins raise two and sometimes three families in one season. When the first family leaves the nest early in June it is taken by the father robin to some dense, leafy growth of young trees to pass the night. To this place they return every night. Many other robins, sometimes thousands of them, come to the same woods. Such robins are known as robin roosts. In flying to and from them the young birds learn how to find their way.

Meanwhile mother robin is patiently sitting on her blue eggs, from which in about two weeks time another little family will appear. In two weeks more they also will be large enough to leave the nest and can join their brothers and sisters in the roost.

Grackles, or crow blackbirds, have the same habit. But since they have only one family or brood both the parent birds go to the roost with their young.

Sometimes the robins are joined by the grackles and both by the European starlings, which, brought to this country and released in Central park, New York, in 1890, have since become one of the most abundant birds in our middle Atlantic states. Such a roost is visited nightly by many thousands of birds.—Frank M. Chapman in St. Nicholas.

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