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TUESDAY.....March 19 1912

Knowledge of Both City and Country Good For Boy



By Chancellor ELMER E. BROWN of New York University

THE country is not moral because it is country; neither is the city immoral because of itself.

THE BOY THAT KNOWS BOTH HAS A BROADER VISION. A KEENER SENSE FOR TRUE VALUES THAN HAS THE BOY WHO KNOWS BUT THE ONE.

But if you want the good of the country for boys and girls the SOIL MUST BE CULTIVATED AND SEEDED FOR THE BEST INFLUENCE.

Sending city bred children—delinquents—to the country is of no use unless provision is made for their proper training. Country "values" are not incident to living close to the soil. The country youth must be EDUCATED AND INTERESTED IN THE THINGS THE COUNTRY HAS TO OFFER.

THE DANGER THAT HAS EXISTED, ONE THAT STILL EXISTS, IS THAT THE IMAGINATION OF THE MAN WHO DOES HARD FARM WORK SHOULD BE STUNTED, APPLY INTELLECT TO FARMING AND THE IMAGINATION IS GIVEN A CHANCE TO FLOURISH.

Imagination is a valuable asset to all endeavor. It gives grasp, reach and grip. But the only way the farm boy has been able to get food for his imagination in the past has been by GOING TO THE CITY. The city boy has had the advantage of culture, such forces as Homer and early reading to startle him out of himself, distribute his interests and keep him from the worst forms of immorality.

THAT IS THE CASE FOR THE COUNTRY. IT HAS ADVANTAGES IF ONLY THEY CAN BE UTILIZED; BUT, LIKE THE POWER IN THE FALLS OF NIAGARA FOR SO LONG, THEY HAVE BEEN WASTING.

THE WITCH OF DAHLGREN

A Witch In Fancy, but Not In Fact

By CLARISSA MACKIE

The three traveling men drew closer around the hot stove in the parlor of the little hotel at Dahlgren, Pa. Benton, the cigar salesman, was continuing a conversation that had begun at the supper table a short while before.

"Gentlemen," he said impressively, "I know it sounds mighty fishy, but I actually did see what they call The Witch of Dahlgren."

"When?" asked Cooper, the clothing drummer.

"On my last trip to this forlorn hole," was Benton's caustic reply.

"And that was?"

"Last April. It's a short story. Want to hear about it?"

"Yes, go ahead," urged the third member of the group, Joel Gifford, who represented a great wholesale grocery house. He was a tall, good-looking, quiet sort of man, well liked everywhere. There had been a tragedy in his life which many had guessed at, but few knew the real facts in the case.

Benton passed the cigars around and lighted one for himself.

"Now, gentlemen," he began, "please understand that I shall not feel in the least offended if you do not believe what I am about to tell you, but it really happened to me in this town. Last April I arrived here in the regular course of my travels and put up at this same hotel. I was the only guest that night, and after supper I got to talking with our host, whom you may have sized up to be just what he is—a narrow minded country bumpkin."

"You're right," agreed Cooper promptly.

Joel Gifford smiled and shook his head. "I can't express an opinion, Benton, because I haven't seen the chap. This is the first time I've covered this territory."

"You haven't missed much in not making his acquaintance," growled Benton, continuing his narrative. "As I said, I fell into conversation with Linden and asked him a question that had been on the tip of my tongue for several hours—in fact, ever since I had

heard a woman uttering her children with the wrath of the old witch on the crossroads. 'You certainly haven't got a witch in this common-place town?' I asked him jokingly.

"For a moment he was silent, and then he stroked his long black beard and muttered: 'We certainly have, Mr. Benton. The crossroads is a good place to keep away from.'"

"Why?" I demanded.

"Because there is an old woman there who can work a charm or cast an evil spell over anybody. Man, I know it!" And the old fellow got quite excited.

"You're joking, Bill Linden," I laughed.

"He scowled like the villain that he must be from his looks. 'Mr. Benton, when I tell you that that woman has ruined my life you'll understand that I know what I'm talking about. She ought to have been hanged years ago—that's the way they did with the witches in the olden days. If I had my way she'd hang high now.' And he fell to muttering to himself and cursing.

"Guess I'll go and have a look at her," I said half jokingly.

"You better not," I was warned. "She keeps a gun and winged Mason Smith when he got drunk one day and attacked her house. Just opened her window and took aim, and Mason went around with his arm in a sling for three months after that."

"Is she an old woman?" I asked.

"Must be," was the reply. "Hair as white as snow."

"Where did she come from?" I inquired.

"Nobody knows. Suddenly appeared in that little deserted house on the crossroads about five years ago. Never comes out in daytime, but I've seen her face at the window, and some say that she rides at night on a snow white horse. I don't know whether to believe that or not."

"You might as well believe the whole thing while you're about it, my friend," I grinned at him, and I immediately went down to the crossroads and took a stroll along the lonely way that cut through dense woods. Why, they must be back of this hotel!"

Benton paused to re-light his cigar and to marvel for a moment on the idea that had just taken possession of him. Then he resumed: "About a mile down the road I saw a lonely little house—more of a cabin than a house—set back in the woods and overgrown to the very door with underbrush. Smoke curled from the chimney, and I was staring at the windows when all of once a face appeared at one of them. I could not see whether she was young or old, but the face was white as a sheet and on either side of it hung two heavy braids of snow white hair.

The great dark eyes were turned toward me, and two arms were lifted either in supplication or malediction.

"For an instant I was rooted to the spot, and then I rubbed my eyes in wonderment, for suddenly she jerked backward, almost as if some one was behind her compelling her away from the window. She disappeared from view, and I walked on, quite convinced that the apparition I had seen was that of some crazed person. Nevertheless there was an air of mystery about the whole matter, and the village gossip concerning the so called witch determined me to stroll around there late in the evening. I did so near midnight and was rewarded by a strange sight.

"Just as I paused in front of the little house, which I could locate only by a glint of light from one curtained window, I heard the tramping of horses' hoofs and there broke from the tangled growth in front of the house a dim white shape that I knew to be a horse and a suggestion of dim white above that I was convinced must be the face and hair of the witch of Dahlgren. Beside her rode a black bulk that must have been another rider on a black horse, and for the instant I thought the witch must be riding with her master, the devil himself.

"I had to fall back in the bushes to save myself from being trampled upon, so furious was their dash into the road. They turned away from the village toward the open country and disappeared. Gentlemen, I was curious enough to remain there until their return an hour later, when a pale moon peeped from the drifting clouds.

"They were riding slowly now, and the woman was pleading with the other rider, a man. I could see her wringing her white hands, and her voice, a low, sweet contralto, did not sound like that of a deranged person. Her accents were cultivated, but the man spoke roughly in reply, and I heard her break into sobs as he hustled her toward the house and they disappeared beyond it. Later I heard the crashing of branches as if the horses were being led off through the woods back of the hut, and now that I think of it, it must have been in the direction of this hotel."

Benton frowned as he opened the stove door and tossed in the end of his cigar. "I've often felt that I'd like to investigate the matter. You see, I had to leave early the next morning, and this is the first time I've struck this town since then, but my first question when I met a man I knew was, 'Is your witch still here?' And he said she was. There's a mystery in the matter, because—Benton paused and stared thoughtfully at the toe of his polished boot.

"Because"—suggested Cooper impatiently.

"Because the voice of the black rider that night sounded mighty like the voice of mine host here, Bill Linden," returned Benton in a low tone.

Joel Gifford aroused himself from the half lounging position he had assumed when Benton began his narrative, and although he had been a close listener to the story, his own thoughts must have made a sad running accompaniment to the tale, for his eyes were full of troubled reminiscence.

He lifted his eyes to the mantelpiece, where an old fashioned mirror hung in such a position that it reflected the door into the hall. Joel Gifford saw a picture framed in that doorway, and he half rose from his chair and pointed with a shaking finger at the face he saw in the glass.

It was the face of a tall, black bearded man, with a narrow head and little black eyes gleaming wickedly beneath bushy brows. He was staring at Joel Gifford as if fascinated by the younger man's face. There was ferocity in his gaze, as well as surprise and fear.

"Who is that man?" cried Joel Gifford excitedly as he whirled around toward the doorway.

"It's Bill Linden, our landlord!" cried Benton. And then he pulled Gifford violently aside, for there was the deafening report of a pistol, and the bullet that had been intended for Gifford found another mark and shattered the mirror. There was another report, and the landlord of the Dahlgren hotel dropped dead upon the floor, killed by his own wicked hand.

Gifford reached him first and turned him over and looked closely at the dead man's face. "He is dead," he said briefly, and then, rising, he continued to the little crowd of people that had gathered at the sound of the pistol shots: "Gentlemen, this man is not Bill Linden. That must be an assumed name, for he has been well known to the world as Chaffield Chapman, a well known banker who disappeared five years ago and who was supposed to be dead. At the same time he disappeared my young wife, who was his only daughter, also disappeared from my house, and from a note that reached me a few days later I could only judge that both of them were dead. The note was signed by my father-in-law, and he said that as he had failed in business he would end all and that he would take Gertrude with him. My search for them both has covered five years, and it must end tonight, for I believe I have found the solution to the mystery."

"Chaffield Chapman was passionately fond of his only child and always hated me because I loved and married her. It is my belief that he lured her away and has kept her prisoner in this hut in the woods back here, allowing her to ride forth only at night for air and exercise. Gentlemen, the witch of Dahlgren is my wife!"

Accompanied by a crowd of interested villagers, the three traveling men hastened to the house in the woods and found even its barred door. There,

facing them with beautiful white face frozen into fear and her grief whitened locks hanging in heavy braids over her shoulders, was Gertrude Gifford, Joel's lost bride.

At her scream of joyful recognition as her husband took her in his arms once more the people backed out of the house and left the reunited couple alone with their happiness.

Thus passed the witch of Dahlgren.

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