

**THE GHOST OF GOWER**

**Deathbed Confession Reveals Perpetrator of Weird Jokes.**

**How the Missouri Town Was Terrified by the Pranks of a Mischievous Resident for a Number of Years.**

When Thomas P. Ogden died a few days ago the ghosts at Gower, Mo., ceased terrifying the residents of that town. Ogden, on his deathbed, confessed that he had been the "ghost" about Gower. For several years he terrified the village, and while playing one of his jokes he caused a young man to lose his life by running against a tree. At another time he came near being the cause of a citizen of Gower being lynched says a special St. Joseph (Mo.) correspondence of the Chicago Inter Ocean.

In the livery stable in Gower were box stalls for the horses. Posts were set in the ground between the stalls and planked up on each side. Ogden bought a long rubber tube and, concealing himself in the haymow, let the tube down between the boards on one side of a stall. Then he groaned into the tube and the sound of his voice was carried down to a point close to the ground. In a little while the groans attracted the attention of the men employed about the barn. They tore the boards off one side of the stall, but Ogden drew the rubber tube up, and they found nothing. The boards were replaced and the groans were heard again.

There lived in the neighborhood a man who boasted that he was not afraid of "ghosts or devils," and he was employed to locate the cause of the groans. He said they came from the bottom of the stall, and went to work with a pick and shovel. While he worked the voice of the "ghost" encouraged him, and when the pick struck a rock the "ghost" declared that he digger had struck his bones. Several hundred men stood around waiting for a solution of the mystery. When night came a lantern was hung up in the stall, and the man who was not afraid of ghosts worked on.

Ogden threw a white blanket down on the man at work in the stall, and he leaped out of the hole with a frightened yell, running toward the door with the blanket clinging to him. The crowd scattered and one man ran against a tree and was killed. When some of the men ventured back to the place the "ghost" begged them to continue the work of digging, but none of them would go into the stall. The owner of the stable finally closed the place and built another barn.

On a hill near Gower stands an old mansion built in the style that planters affected before the war. It had been vacant a number of years when Ogden conceived the idea of giving it the reputation of being haunted. He had lights flitting about the place at night, and people going near it could hear screams and hollow groans. The doors would slam, and the place was shunned even in daylight. It was impossible to sell the house, and it stands to-day a weather-beaten wreck.

Ogden contrived a network of wires in the cemetery near Gower, to which he attached balls of cotton soaked in kerosene. These he would light at night and work the whole by means of a long string reaching to a thicket, a considerable distance away, in which he concealed himself. The dancing lights in the graveyard attracted the attention of people the first night, and before Ogden quit he had an audience of more than a thousand standing at a safe distance and watching the strange sights. Many people would not go into the graveyard in daylight after that, and some of them removed their dead from the dreaded place. Afterward the ghostmaker of Gower fixed up white figures in the cemetery, and they could be seen swaying about to the accompaniment of his groans and screams. The cemetery is almost abandoned now on account of the reputation given it by the "ghosts."

Ogden has confessed that he haunted many of the houses about Gower, and that he is alone responsible for the reputation that has attached to the place of late years. When he played "ghost" in the livery stable in Gower he made the ghost declare that he was the spirit of a man James Woodward had killed and buried in the stall, and the excited crowd gathered about the place came near lynching Woodward. When he realized that he was on his deathbed Ogden called in a number of his friends and made a confession. He expressed deep sorrow for having caused the death of a young man who ran against a tree in his fright, and said he had always refrained from frightening women and children as much as possible.

**Automobile Horse School.**  
A free school to teach horses not to be afraid of automobiles has been started by the president of the Automobile club at Lenox, Mass. The lessons consist of driving the machine past the horse at different rates of speed, making him follow it, etc., and having the horn blow at him. Three lessons usually suffice.—N. Y. Sun.

**Happens That Way Occasionally.**  
Mrs. Upjohn—Haven't you taken that summer trip yet that you've been talking about so long?

Mrs. Highmore—No; we have concluded not to go this year. The fact is, it cost so much money to get ready for it that we had to give it up. But you just ought to see the dresses I got for the trip!—Chicago Tribune.

**The Usual Thing.**  
Stranger—How did this out-of-the-way place ever get the reputation of being a health resort?

Native—Why, my dear sir, at least three prominent men have died here.—Chicago Daily News.

**OPERATING MARIONETTES.**

**Remarkable Ingenuity and Skill Displayed by One Man in the Business.**

"The ingenuity of some of the hand-ers of marionettes," said a showman, "is incredible. I know a man who conducts a marionette theater, where in an orchestra of eight pieces plays under marionette leadership, while 15 boxes a dozen marionette spectators laugh and applaud, and on the stage a marionette drama briskly enacts itself.

"The conductor of all this stands, exposed to the waist, at the back of the stage, and apparently he is motionless, though really each finger of both hands and the majority of the toes of both feet are working with unexampled rapidity. For each marionette is connected by a string with a toe, or a finger of the operator, and this string sometimes has as many as ten or fifteen branches, joined to the marionette's face, body, arms, legs, etc., so that it may dance, smile, wave its arms and do a number of other lifelike things. One of these figures, indeed, is connected by 32 strings to the operator.

"It is bewildering to think of the number of strings there must be altogether," concluded the showman, according to the Philadelphia Record, "and really it is impossible to conceive of the dexterity and the thought required in the artistic manipulation of a band of marionettes."

**INSTINCT OF A MOTHER.**

**Illustrated by the Cow When There is a Stray Calf in the Western Cattle Herd.**

It might seem that where half a dozen herds were mingled together, it would be impossible to select the calves belonging to a particular owner with any degree of accuracy, says E. Mayo, writing on "Beef" in Leslie's Monthly, that in the round-up they would become hopelessly mixed. But all this is obviated by a very simple rule, which is that the calf belongs to the cow that claims it, and consequently to the concern whose brand she bears. Long experience has taught the cattlemen that the calf may mistake its mother sometimes, but the cow her offspring never. Of course, in these days of wire fences when the free riders of the range are degenerating to the rank of the eastern "hired man," and each "bunch" is kept to its own territory, there is little occasion for the exercise of this test; but in the old days of the open range it worked perfectly, except in the case of mavericks—those cattle that had grown to be yearlings or over without having passed under the branding iron—and there the impartial law of the time distributed in proportion to the number of each herd participating in the round-up.

**DICTATING SORE THROAT.**

**A Curious Malady Which Afflicts Many Persons Who Employ Stenographers in Their Offices.**

Dictating sore throat is an affection of the vocal cords that business men get from the odd, strained, high voices that they use in dictating to their stenographers. "I don't know why it is," a physician said the other day, "but nearly every man when he dictates puts his natural, easy voice aside and uses a high-pitched, feverish note that plays the very devil with the vocal cords as it grates over them. A man of big interests will dictate over 100 letters a day at times. His throat is so sore when he is done that he has to take some oleaginuous and soothing medicine.

"The disease is distinctly a modern one," said the physician, according to the Philadelphia Record, "a sign of these complex modern times, and it has been called, for want of a better name, dictating sore throat. The only cure for it is to teach men to dictate in their natural voices (a thing that seems to be impossible) or to compel them to cease dictating altogether."

**LEFT IN DEPOSIT BOXES.**

**Some Strange Revelations Are Made When They Are Opened by Vault Officials.**

It often happens that deposit boxes rented in bank vaults are opened on account of arrears in payment on the part of the renters, who cannot be found. Then strange are the revelations of a box's contents.

A young woman had a box in a downtown bank and failed to pay its second year's rent. As she had disappeared from her former residence the box was opened recently. All it contained was a pair of baby shoes.

Another box rented by a man disclosed, on being opened for the usual reason, a diamond brooch worth at least \$400. The bank has held the brooch for three months, in the belief that the man or his heirs will one day claim it.

Often these boxes contain interesting letters—letters from an aged mother to her son, says the Philadelphia Record, from a young man to his sweetheart, from a grateful pensioner to his benefactor.

**Cornell's Well Curb.**

A curious Egyptian well curb has been given to Cornell university by Ambassador White, says the New York Tribune. The curb is hewn from a solid rock in an elaborate manner. The diameter is two and a half feet, the height about the same, while the sides are six inches thick. The inner surface of the curbing is worn smooth by constant usage. The stone is of a reddish hue, and is said to be a species of granite. The relic weighs about a ton and a half, and four men had difficulty in removing it from the freight van to the university library.

**GOLDEN GATE CITY LEADS.**

**San Francisco Shows the Largest Percentage of Suicides—Chicago Ranks Third.**

The number of people who voluntarily shuffled off this mortal coil in American and other cities during last year has been investigated by some delver in statistics and the following figures indicate the results: San Francisco leads with the largest ratio, 39.1 per 100,000 of population. Next comes another Pacific coast city, Los Angeles, with a ratio of 29.8. The reader has naturally been looking for Chicago, and that city does, in fact, come next with a ratio of 24.0, followed by the neighboring city of Milwaukee, whose ratio is 22.2. New Orleans was the scene of the self-destruction of 21.8 persons per 100,000 of population, and Cincinnati followed close with 21.2. New Haven is next with 20.9, and then comes the borough of Manhattan with 20.0, though greater New York as a whole is well down the list with a ratio of only 13.6. This is less than Rochester, Indianapolis, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, Omaha and Louisville, besides all of those specifically enumerated above. As to the foreign cities, Paris leads the list with a ratio of 42, followed by Berlin 36, Vienna 28 and London 23. There were more suicides in Saxony than in any other country, 31.1 per 100,000. In Denmark the ratio was 25.8, in Austria 21.2, in France 15.7, in the German empire 14.3, and Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, the United States and Spain followed in the order given.

The table referring to American cities is somewhat difficult to explain. Why the city of the golden gate, and California, with its glorious climate, its sunshine, its fruit and its flowers, should show the greatest number of suicides seems a mystery, unless the presence of a large Chinese population explains it. The high suicide rate of Chicago is, perhaps, accounted for by the rush and struggle of that great city and the large foreign element it contains—a foreign element, moreover, which comes mainly from those countries where suicide is most frequent. The same is perhaps true of Milwaukee and Cincinnati. The high rate at New Orleans may possibly be attributed to its relation to France and the ideas and traditions brought here from Paris, the suicide capital of the world. But New York city casts a cloud over some of these explanations. Here are the large foreign populations, the stress and strain of living and working, the poverty, the excitement. Yet Philadelphia, the sleeping city of the humorous paragraphs, has a higher ratio of suicides than greater New York. And how is it to be explained that New Haven leads all the other New England cities in the number of suicides? St. Paul and Minneapolis lie side by side, but in Minneapolis the ratio is 11.4 and in St. Paul it is but 6.5. It seems that the conclusions must be that there is no method in suicide madness and that the effort to reduce it to rule is doomed to failure.

**CARP OUSTING WILD DUCK.**

**Unless Themselves, They Have Destroyed the Wild Rice Fields in Ontario, Canada.**

The singular complaint comes from various parts of northern Ontario that fish are responsible for the disappearance of certain kinds of game. In localities which were formerly noted for the excellent duck shooting which they offered the birds are now not to be had at all.

The ducks, geese and other aquatic birds were formerly in the habit of frequenting the large fields of wild rice in the lakes and streams of parts of Ontario, but now these fields have been, in many instances, destroyed by the German carp, which has found its way into these waters. The vegetarian diet of this detestable fish not only ruins the flavor of its own flesh, but exhausts the food supply of some of the most desirable forms of feathered game, says the New York Sun.

The Ontario inspector of fisheries, who has been in northern Ontario for the last few weeks, reports that the German carp has not only become dangerous to other fish, as has been frequently claimed, but that in Cook's bay, Lake Simcoe, where there were formerly hundreds of acres of wild rice, not a spear of that plant is to be seen to-day. The same is true of the Holland river, where there were at one time 1,500 acres of rice. The carp have eaten it root, branch and seed.

The almost incredible part of it is that the fish have entirely destroyed the fields in one year. The aquatic birds which visit the locality, finding that all their usual feeding grounds have disappeared, cut short their visit and move away in search of others. The local sportsmen complain, too, that the carp have attacked the beds of wild celery, and that they, too, are almost completely destroyed.

It remains to be seen what the effect of this wholesale destruction of aquatic vegetation will be upon the game fishes of the locality. The fishery overseer of the district declares that it is a question whether the spawn of the muskallunge can be protected and developed without the rice beds. He does not accuse the carp of eating the eggs of the other fish, but states that they keep the water continually disturbed, and that to their presence in these waters must be attributed the decrease in the number of muskallunge frequenting them for spawning purposes.

**A Monster Mushroom.**  
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