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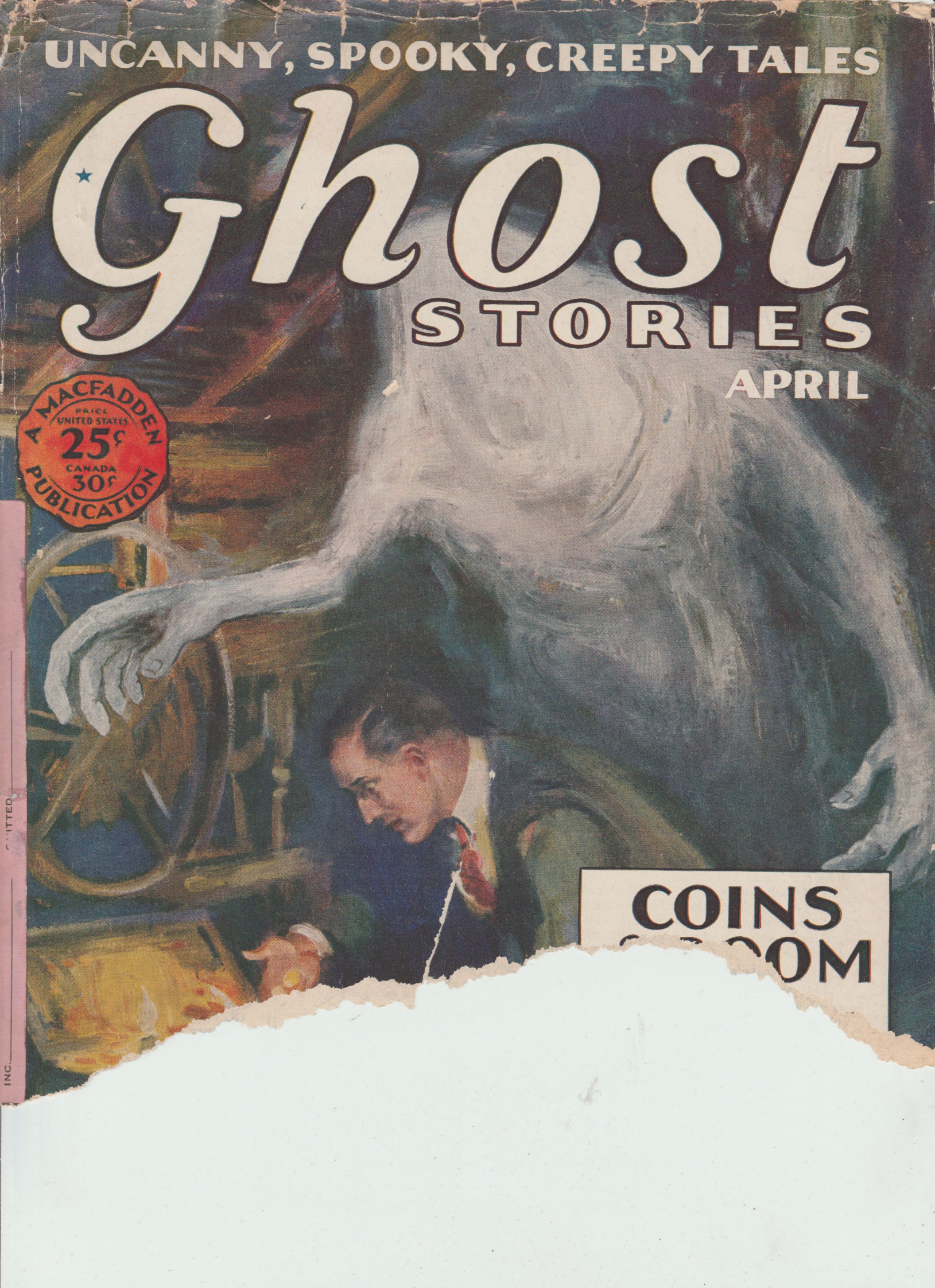

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COINS of Doom

By HARRY MASON

As told to Urann Thayer

WHENEVER I see Lillian Holt's sad, beautiful face, as she walks listlessly through the streets of our village on the Hudson, I am almost overcome with shame and sorrow. For, although she does not know it, I am to blame for her tragedy. I would gladly give up everything I possess if I could only forget that terrible summer night when three human beings were trapped in a weird disaster.

It all began when Tom Blake, Lillian's fiancé, stood with me in the lamp-lit, dust-covered living room of the deserted house where "Skinflint" Roger had died a year before. We were gazing down at a dead body at our feet. Three or four young men stood around, waiting restlessly.

Tom and I were "special police." During the college vacation we had been earning a little money by acting as assistants to "Chief" Fuller, Winton's only regular officer. As he had gone to Albany on business, it had devolved upon us to investigate the report that a dead tramp had been found in the old Roger house, a mile out of town. The other men had come with us out of idle curiosity.

As we stared at the corpse, the silence was broken at last by Buck Chambers.

"How do you reckon he come to kick in?" he asked, in a voice unconsciously low. "There ain't no marks on him what I can see!"

One by one the others offered their opinions in half whispers. But through it all Tom remained silent, staring at the body with a thoughtful look on his handsome, boyish face. Finally, at his suggestion, one of the men started for town in search of Doctor Jackson, who acted as a sort of deputy coroner; the others becoming more and more uneasy in the silence of the gloomy house, muttered their excuses and slipped away, leaving Tom and me alone with the dead man.

Both of us stood there motionless until the voices, more cheerful as they left the house behind them, died away in the distance. Then, with a puzzled frown, Tom knelt beside the body to examine it more carefully.

The dead man was an evil-looking brute. He was huge, almost large enough to be called a giant, and he lay there with his flabby lips parted in a ghastly grin, his tiny pig-eyes staring up at the ceiling with a look of horror that almost made me shudder. Perhaps it was the gloom of that faded room, or the whisper of the summer breeze through the black pines outside the open window, but whatever it was, I was weighed down by a feeling of depression that my own youthful inexperience with dead people could not entirely account for.

Suddenly Tom looked up at me.

"HARRY," he said in a low voice, "do you remember what people said when old Skinflint died? He swore to kill anybody, even after his death, who found the hiding-place of his money."

As he spoke, he loosened the clenched fingers of the dead man's hand—and two gold coins, large and glittering in the lamplight, rolled out across the floor! The sound seemed to echo noisily through the empty house.

I stared at the coins in complete astonishment and then turned to gaze at my chum, who was looking at me with a strange expression on his face.

"Tom Blake!" I cried. "Do you mean to say you're fool enough to believe——"

But I got no further. Suddenly Tom grasped my arm.

Can a Dead Man's Curse Destroy the Living? I KNOW the Answer! For I Found a Miser's Haunted Gold—and I, My Pal and His Sweetheart Were Caught in the Grip of Hell!

"Harry!" he whispered. "Don't you feel it? Something in this house!" He stared ahead of him with widened eyes. "Something listening . . . listening. . . ."

I did not answer, a cold shiver crept up my spine, and I had a queer presentiment that some uncanny disaster lay just ahead of us.

In a moment, however, I shook off my uneasiness and said:

"You're crazy, Tom—crazy or afraid of your own shadow!"

To this day I have never ceased to regret the careless, taunting words I spoke to him that night. For Tom was the finest fellow I ever knew—and the bravest! But at that moment I smiled contemptuously at what I considered his weakness.

I turned toward the door and added curtly:

"I'm going back to town. I was due on my beat half an hour ago. You stay here till Doc Jackson comes."

I pulled open the door and was about to step out onto the wooded path, when once more Tom took hold of my arm.

"Listen, Harry," he murmured. "I—I'll stay. Only just wait here while I take a look through the house, will you?" He dropped his eyes, slightly ashamed. "It—it will give me a little confidence to glance around a bit," he said.

For a minute I stared at him, incredulous. Tom Blake, actually afraid! I started to speak, and then sat down, shrugging my shoulders.

"Go ahead, only make it snappy," I told him. "And whistle! That will give you courage if you need it." But Tom did not apparently hear my last remark. He had crossed to the door leading to the dark stairway and was pulling it open.

I heard him mount the stairs. The door swung shut after him, deadening the sound of his soft footsteps. After a moment, everything was absolutely still again.

For fifteen minutes I sat in the silence of that room, waiting for my friend to return from what I considered a fool's errand, and for some unknown reason I tried to keep my eyes away from the corpse of the filthy, gigantic tramp. Once I thought I heard a startled cry above me; but it was not repeated, and I decided it must have been my imagination.

My eyes fell on the two gold coins shining in the lamplight. With a feeling of curiosity, I crossed the room and picked them up to examine them.

They were both ten dollar pieces, one of 1893, the other of 1886. I gazed at them for a moment and then looked down at the dead tramp. Had this man really discovered the hiding-place of the old miser's wealth, or——

I did not finish the thought. Suddenly I swung around to face the closed stairway door.

WAS it my imagination, or was there *something* beyond that door watching me? Was it the reflection of the lamp-light, or did I see an inhumanly bright eye, looking through the wide cracks, burning with angry malevolence?

"Tom!" I called softly.

He did not answer, and I strode across the room and opened the door cautiously.

The hall and stairway were empty. I cursed angrily under my breath.

"That boy is making me as nervous as he is!" I muttered. Then, looking up into the darkness, I called again:

"Tom!"

There was no answer. I waited a moment and the echoes died away, leaving only the dismal humming of the insects outside.

"Tom!" I shouted in sudden panic and this time my cry echoed eerily through the dark woods beyond the house.

Still he did not reply. Throwing the door wide open, I ran up the rickety stairs to the second floor. Here I felt my way along a narrow hallway until I reached an open doorway where I stopped a moment.

Across the room I could vaguely make out a small window, and beyond it the pale moonlit sky above the thick black pines. I listened a minute, but there was no sound, save that of my rapid breathing. Noiselessly, I tiptoed to the next room and to the next—but there was no sign of Tom.

FINALLY I reached a partly shut door. Grasping it gently, I pulled it wide open and was about to take a step forward, when suddenly I jumped back.

There was a whirring sound as something shot through the darkness toward me. A cold, tight hand grabbed at my throat.

"Now I've got you, whoever you are!" muttered a low, tense voice.

"Tom!" I cried. I struck at his arm and broke away with difficulty. "Tom! Have you lost your mind?"

I heard him gasp as he realized his mistake, and I could feel the trembling of the hand that reached for my arm. For a minute or so he did not speak. Then at last he whispered:

"But it wasn't you the other time! It *couldn't* have been!"

"What other time?" I demanded.

He remained silent for a moment, and his hand gripped my arm tightly in the darkness.

"I hunted through all the rooms down here," he finally whispered, "and then I opened this door and found these steps, leading to the attic. I started up them; and when I got to the top, it seemed as if something cold and terrible touched me. I heard you call, but I couldn't answer. There was a strange, icy clutching at my heart! When you called, though, the feeling stopped, and it seemed as though something flitted by me, down the stairs. I came down, and then I heard you tiptoeing up, and I thought it was that thing again."

For a second I thought of the eyes I had felt staring at me downstairs—eyes that had apparently been drawn there by my touching the miser's coins. But immediately I laughed at myself and pulled my arm roughly away from Tom. He was a coward, I decided, and his cowardice had affected even my dull imagination! What was the matter with my chum?

"Listen, Tom!" I snapped. "There's nothing in this old house except us and that dead body downstairs—and you know damned well there isn't! The murder has just got on your nerves! Here!" I added, taking a flashlight from my pocket and handing it to him. "You hold this and watch me go up to the attic! I'll just strike a match and look around to prove you're dreaming!" And without waiting for his reply, I turned and climbed the stairs, watching my own black shadow creep ahead of me in the light of the torch Tom held below.

I reached the top, struck a match and looked around. I was in a long, dark room that ran the length of the house. Low-hung rafters stretched above me, disappearing into the darkness beyond the light of my flickering match. Everything was still . . . so still that far away I could hear the lonely call of a hoot owl.

Holding the match high, I peered into the darkness, as far as I could see—for, somehow, I again had that queer sensation that eyes were gazing at me from the shadows. However, I once more shook off this feeling and walked back to the head of the stairs.

Tom still stood below, holding the light.

"I've looked all around, Tom," I called down, my voice booming strangely through the deserted house, "but I cannot find anything—no cutthroats, wild animals, ghosts, or——" Suddenly I stopped short.

Above the glare of the light he held, I could just make out Tom's eyes. And as they stared up at me, I could see them widen with fear; a queer feeling crept up my spine.

"What's the matter, Tom," I snapped. "Why are you staring at me like that?"

For a second he did not reply. He gazed up at me with a look of unspeakable horror . . . but was it at *me* he gazed? I saw him wet his lips to speak, while I watched him with astonishment. At last he spoke.

"Harry!" he cried, and his voice was hoarse with horror, "look out, Harry! *Look out behind you!*" And at the same moment his light snapped off, leaving us in total darkness.

I whirled around, striking out blindly. Did I touch Something, for one brief second—something icy and clammy—as my hand reached out in the dark?

At any rate, I recoiled suddenly, tripped on the top step and hurtled headlong down the stairs. Tom helped me to my feet, while I cursed and groaned and laughed. I hardly listened while he told of seeing something vaguely white behind me. More in anger than in pain—anger at what I considered Tom's cowardice—I limped down the lower flight of stairs to the living room.

"You go along home," I snapped, as we stood beside the dead tramp. "Maybe when you get out of here, I'll get back some of my manhood!"

Tom stared at me, unbelieving. I think it was the first time in his life anybody had accused him of being a coward; and I'm sure nobody but myself could have done it and got away with it.

"No, Harry," he replied quietly. "You should have been on duty long ago, and you're a mile away from town. I'll stay here till the doctor comes."

"AND face the chances of a ghost coming down from the attic after you again?" I sneered.

A dangerous light gleamed in his eyes.

"Perhaps I'll go up there and face him," he replied, in a low voice. "Perhaps I'm not quite such a coward as you think I am . . . Good night, Harry," he added, holding open the door.

For a second I hesitated; then I thought, "It will do him good to face his imaginary fears, rather than run away from them. And, as he said, I am long overdue on my Main Street post. I'd better go ahead.

I started down the path.

"Good night, Tom," I murmured and, added with a laugh: "If the ghost gets you, send me a little message—by telepathy—and I'll come back to rescue you."

And with those words I left him there—left my best friend alone in that house of terror! A thousand times I have tried to tell myself that I am not to be blamed for what followed—but I know only too well that I am.

When I reached the dusty road, Tom was still standing in the doorway of the dismal house, and I could see, in the light of the pale moon, a curiously twisted smile on his colorless face as he looked after me.

For over two hours I paced my beat, up and down the deserted main street of the village. Nothing disturbed the peaceful quiet of the night, save the sound of my own feet, echoing hollowly, and the half-hour ringing of the bells in the steeple of the Congregational Church.

I heard the clock strike ten . . . ten-thirty . . . as I walked up and down, up and down. Then, as eleven strokes vibrated in the air and died away, I reached the end of my beat, and was about to turn, when suddenly I stopped. The figure of a girl appeared from a side street, and came hurrying silent-

ly toward me. It was pretty Lillian Holt, Tom's fiancée.

"Lillian!" I cried, as she halted in front of me. "What are you doing out alone at this hour?" Eleven o'clock is late and long past Winton's bedtime.

She stood clutching her black cape around her throat, breathing heavily.

"Harry," she finally said in a low voice, "where is Tom?"

"Why, he——" I hesitated. I had almost forgotten about Tom and what I considered his absurd fears; but instantly I decided it would be wiser not to tell Lillian that he was sitting up with a corpse. "Why, he went down the road, on a little errand for Doctor Jackson," I replied at last.

"Doctor Jackson?" Lillian stared at me. "How could that be? The Doctor has been across the river all day on an operating case, and he won't be back till morning!"

A feeling of uneasiness seized me; so the doctor could not relieve Tom before morning!

"Are—are you sure Tom's all right?" Lillian whispered.

"Right as a tick," I answered. "Why?"

"I—I was in bed, asleep," she said, so low I could scarcely hear her, "and it seemed as if he stood beside me and—and asked me to deliver a mesage to somebody. It must have been just a nightmare, but it upset me so much that I dressed and came out to ask you what to do. I don't know what put *you* in my mind," she added, with a nervous laugh. "I must still be half asleep."

I laughed with her.

"And for whom was this important message intended?" I asked her jokingly.

She was smiling now, completely reassured.

"I don't know," she confessed. "But I remember the words, very plainly. 'Tell him,' he said, 'tell him that this is the message he asked me to send—that I wasn't such a coward after all!' And—and, Harry," she went on, the worried expression reappearing on her pretty face, "he was smiling that twisted, wistful little smile of his—I could see it so clearly!"

I turned my head away. A cold shudder, icy as the wind of death, passed over my body. With an effort I controlled myself, telling her laughingly that it was only a nightmare. I reassured her and sent her home, happy.

BUT I was far from happy as I paced my beat, back and forth, back and forth, listening to the lonely sound of my own footsteps. I told myself that this fear was absurd. How could a normal human being in the Twentieth Century actually believe in ghosts? Impossible! I was a worse coward than Tom could ever hope to be!

The clock struck the half hour . . . midnight . . . twelve-thirty. I paced back and forth, arguing with myself.

Suddenly I thought I heard someone call my name.

"Harry!"

I stopped in my tracks and looked around. Up and down, as far as I could see, the street was deserted. I turned back to continue my beat, when once more the voice sounded, low but distinct, close to me. I was too surprised to move.

"Harry!"

This time there was no mistaking whose voice called. I would know that voice anywhere in the world; I will know it if I hear it on my deathbed. It was Tom Blake's voice!

I stood, rooted to the spot, staring into space. A cold chill crept up and down my spine; but I listened intently.

"What is it, Tom?" I finally managed to whisper.

There was no answer. I waited a long time on that dark and dismal street, wondering what to do. Then, suddenly I made my decision. I turned in the direction of the pine woods.

BUT I had scarcely made my decision—I had not taken one step forward—when that voice came a third time.

"Harry," it called, like a breath in my ear, *"don't go!"*

"Don't go?" I thought; and although I was silent, it seemed as though I shouted the words. "Don't go? Do you think I'm the coward I was skunk enough to call you?"

The answer came, fainter now, and farther away.

"You didn't . . . mean it . . . Harry," it whispered, growing fainter and fainter, *"but don't . . . go . . . for . . . God's. . . ."* And then it died away, on the stillness of the night air.

I started down the street, forgetting my beat, forgetting everything but the fact that I had left Tom alone in that dismal cottage—left him with a sneer at his "cowardice." Was it already *too late?* I hurried frantically on. Had that voice been telepathy, or just my imagination? I stumbled blindly on through the darkness.

The houses on Main Street were left behind and I was in the black, ghostly pine woods, the dusty, winding road shining palely ahead of me in the moonlight. The thick dust of the road deadened the sound of my hurrying feet, the only sound in all that quiet night was the eerie moan of the breeze through the treetops.

It seemed an endless distance, my progress was so slow, winding in and out of the dense woods. Far away, I heard the bells of the clock in the church tower. One . . . two . . . And the faint echo sounded in the stillness around me like the farewell to life of a man treading the path toward Eternity. Then, after a sudden turn in the road, the old house loomed before me.

It looked more dismal, more broken-down, than ever before. Its unpainted sides stood out in the faint, white light of the moon, while the black windows with the panes half broken seemed to leer at me menacingly.

One window, in particular—the small square one up in the attic—was there something behind it in the still, dark room? Something waiting there for me?

Putting aside my fear, I stepped up to the door and walked in.

The oil of the living-room lamp had nearly burned out, but a blue flame still flickered there, filling the room with a ghastly light. Perhaps it was due to the light, or perhaps

it was because of my own feelings or the loneliness of the place, but that house seemed permeated with a sense of watchful death. The air in that dimly lit room somehow seemed poisonous for a human being to breathe.

I started toward the stairway door, glancing at the body of the tramp lying on the floor beside the table.

Suddenly I stopped dead short!

Those eyes . . . those dead eyes . . . was there a glint of life in them, an evil watchful gleam?

I stepped over to the body and looked down. But I saw only the glassy stare of death.

Clenching my fists, I strode to the door, threw it open and looked up into the darkness.

"Tom!" I called.

My voice called back to me loudly, the silence of the night accentuating it. Then it died away, and everything was still again.

EVERYTHING was still . . . and yet, somehow, in that eerily lit room, in those dark rooms above me, there seemed to be a brooding Presence, listening to my voice, waiting for me. . . .

I pulled my flashlight from my pocket and started up the stairs. The wood beneath my feet was old and rotten, and in spite of my light tread, my steps resounded in the dark, empty rooms overhead. I reached the small hall and flashed my light around.

Four open doors stood out with startling vividness. The rooms were empty, as I more or less expected them to be; I could plainly see the broken-down chairs and stripped beds, and, beyond the dirty windows, the somber, straight-standing pines. I tiptoed across the hall, opened the little door and started up the narrow stairway leading to the attic.

And as I mounted with slow and cautious step, I felt that hovering spirit more strongly than ever. The air seemed charged with something indescribably obnoxious and dangerous, like a heavy, deadly gas. Tensing myself, to fight down my fear, I mounted to the top and, without lighting my flash, I stood for a moment in the darkness holding my breath.

There was no sound; not a thing stirred. At the far end of the room I could make out the tiny window. The pale moonlit sky shone through it clearly, casting a faint square of light on the floor. Suddenly I snapped on my light and flashed it around.

I turned the beam from side to side, but the big room seemed empty. And yet, somehow, just beyond the bright circle of my light, I felt the presence of *Something;* something that stood very still, watching me. At times it almost seemed as though I could make out its burning eyes gazing directly at me.

I tiptoed across the floor till I reached the wall, and then I started to make a slow circuit of the big room, intending to inspect every niche and corner. I walked down one side, my light flashing along; made my way the length of the second side; and was just starting up the third, when suddenly I drew back with a startled exclamation.

At my feet was a long, dark hole where a wide board had been removed. Neatly arranged along the edge, as though they had just been lifted from the hole, were a row of canvas bags apparently bulging with money—and near the wall I glimpsed a small chest overflowing with gold coins! Beside the chest was an old-fashioned candle-stick with burnt-out candle.

But it was not this discovery that brought a cry of horror to my lips; it was what I saw just beyond.

On the dusty floor lay the body of my chum, his white face contorted by the agony of death, his sightless eyes still staring as though at some horrible apparition!

Summoning all my courage, I knelt by the body, feeling the heart, lifting the arm with the vain hope of finding some faint beat in the pulse. And as I lifted it, the clenched fist fell open and a glittering gold coin dropped noisily to the floor. The shadows seemed to close around me menacingly.

For a moment I stared at the coin in horror. So Tom had found the miser's hidden wealth, as the tramp had done before him . . . and, like the filthy brute downstairs, my dear friend had paid a horrible penalty! Scarcely realizing what I did, I stooped down and took the coin in my hand.

There was a whirring sound. A breath of icy air stirred against my face. And then, suddenly, I felt long, cold fingers reach out and touch me.

With that touch came a freezing, deadening sensation, lessening my heart beats, numbing my entire body.

I whirled around, but I saw nothing. I tried to rise to my feet, but my legs were fast weakening and I could not move.

And still those icy fingers touched me, drawing at my heart's blood. I could feel the beats slow down: *one, two . . . three . . . four . . .* then, after an interminable wait, a deathly sickness—*five.* I collapsed on the floor. All life seemed to leave me except in the hand that still clutched the gold coin.

And now, as I lay there, I could make out a vague, shimmering whiteness stooping over my body. Two eyes, burning malignantly, stared into mine, becoming brighter and brighter as consciousness of the world around me became fainter. An unearthly hand was placed close to my slowly beating heart—more than close to it; it seemed to pass *through my body* and touch the heart itself!

I think I was dead. I could not move, feel or think. A strange lightness was passing over me. And then, suddenly, the hand that touched my motionless heart was pulled away. The form above my helpless body sat upright and listened.

Far below us, there was a slight sound, a sound different from any I had ever heard, because it was not the sound of a living being. Something moved . . . crept stealthily up the stairs to the hall on the second floor . . . stood listening for a moment . . . and then came up the steps to the attic.

Crouching stiffly beside me, my ghostly conqueror waited and listened. The soft, crunching footsteps came up, up. For a moment they paused outside the attic door, which had swung to; then, slowly, a form appeared, passing *through* the door—the huge form of the dead tramp, ghostly white now, like my captor.

He stood upright, his head brushing the low-hung rafters. Not bothering to look at us, his eyes turned to the hole in the floor near-by, the hole where the miser's wealth was hidden. Then, quickly and noiselessly, he glided across to it. Even in death, when the first wave of supernatural power had passed over him, the brute's first move was toward the gold—useless as dirt to him now!

He reached the hole and, dropping to his knees before it, his huge, bodiless hands reached for the coins. But before he could touch them, he sat upright and spun around.

WITH that queer, whirring noise, the other creature—the ghost of the miser—hurled itself toward the tramp with the speed of lightning. The tramp jumped up to face him. And then commenced the strangest, the most hideous battle a man ever witnessed—the battle of two lost spirits, fighting for gold that they could never use!

How shall I describe it? There are no words in the human vocabulary to adequately portray that unhuman strife. Lying there motionless, unable to move, my eyes could hardly follow the swiftness of their action; my ears, only partially attuned to the noises of the dead, caught terrible sounds, screeches of pain and anger that rent the air . . . and yet were soundless. How could it be? How could the dead inflict injuries on the dead?

I was never to know the answer and I thank God for that! For suddenly I heard a noise, so faint to my nearly deadened senses that it seemed more like the memory of a sound. It was the sound of human voices!

The two struggling forms stood still. Like wild animals scenting danger, they remained tense and motionless, listen-

ing. Below us, footsteps crossed the living room and opened the door.

"Hello, up there!" somebody shouted.

I lay without moving. I could not open my lips; there was no life in me to do even that. A minute's wait followed; then somebody else spoke.

"There ain't nobody up there, Doc Jackson!" I heard Buck Chambers say. "Tom and Harry, they got scared of this tramp here, I reckon, and they beat it!" I heard his hearty laugh, along with the others—the laughter of a man who had slunk away earlier in the evening, leaving Tom and me alone in that house of horror.

"Let's take the body along now," said another voice. "I got to get on home."

Praying with all that was left of me, I waited in despairing helplessness for Doctor Jackson's response. And so, also, did those two hideous forms beside me.

"All right, boys," the answer came at last. "And yet," there was a hesitancy in his voice, "and yet I'm sort of curious. You, Buck!" he added, "you come along upstairs with me! I'm going to take a look around the place!" And I heard him start up the steps.

Absolutely motionless, those dead forms stood before me, locked in battle. Then, slowly, before my eyes, the outlines of the figures became indistinct. Fainter and fainter they grew, until all at once they were no longer visible.

Something stirred inside of me. It was the first beat of my long-stilled heart. As the door flew open and the kindly face of old Doctor Jackson appeared, I lifted myself up a bit, and then fell back in a dead faint. . . .

IN the light of the dying day we stood beside the week-old grave: Lillian Holt, dressed in deep black, and myself. The girl stooped and once more kissed the flowers she had placed on the bare mound. Then she rose to her feet.

"Harry," she said, in a low voice, "when he came that time—when I saw him in my dream—whom do you think he meant me to give that message to . . . that message, 'that he was not such a coward, after all?'"

I turned my head and bit my lip.

"Whoever it was, Lillian," I finally replied with difficulty, "I'm sure of one thing: that Tom was braver than that man could ever hope to be!" Gently I took the hand of my best friend's fiancée. "Tom knew what was before him," I said, "and yet he faced it. And that is the bravest thing a man can do!"

And then, together, the girl and I knelt with tear-wet faces beside the lonely grave.

Are There Evil Spirits?

The following letter was written by a mother in Minneapolis. It reflects the mental and spiritual struggles of many other men and women who are seeking to find out the truth.

WHEN I was a little girl and sat on my grandfather's knee, I asked the age-old question, "Where do we go when we die, Grandpa?"

And the old man answered in his material way, "We do not really know, for no one has ever come back to tell us, but it is my belief that the spirit flits back to its Maker."

To my childish mind, this seemed so strange: that death was a topic about which nobody could really know, while about other things someone knew. When I grew older I determined to investigate, and against the advice of my husband, who was afraid of such weird things, I visited an afternoon circle and had a "reading" that so touched me that my life has been changed ever since.

To witness some of the wonderful things done by the mediums in the light, without any paraphernalia at all, is almost enough to convince one—but I was not satisfied. I wanted to understand the art so as to better judge of its worth; so I studied, visited circles and concentrated at home.

One evening, as I was talking to my little girl, nine years of age, about some of her naughty ways, I asked her how she thought her auntie in the spirit world would like it to see her so naughty.

As darkness crept on, the child cried that she could see such bright lights—then purple roses all over certain portions of the room. Little knocks came here and there. I instituted a code for them to answer our questions by—one for "no," two for "don't know," and three for "yes." Suddenly my little girl said she heard a wee voice in her ear. It was her aunt telling her not to be afraid. Then on one side of the room came a full-length picture of her, and my little girl described the aunt she had never seen.

She was gifted with an unusual power, and I was afraid. It was some time after that, as I was concentrating one night, that the spirits walked before her, portraying their characteristics while in life. As she described them I recognized them. We found that we had our own little band that lived around us and tried to shield us from harm.

To a lady next door, I confided some of our strange happenings and she wanted us to sit in her home, which we did. My little girl brought through their relatives, of whom she knew nothing, especially a baby that had been born several years before and had died. She gave the day of the baby's birth, death and burial—and every detail was correct. The lady's mother was described exactly as she had looked before she died.

The next day there came to this lady's house a woman who was accounted queer in the village, because of her insane moods. She told the lady, to whom she was a perfect stranger, that a spirit had come to her the night before, as she was riding in a car—and she described the same scene my little girl had pictured!

To my mind this woman was clairvoyant, and, not knowing it, she failed to guard herself, so she was subject to evil spirits, which are as strong as the good. Right here perhaps it is best to say, for the sake of those who know nothing about spiritualism, that there is no field wherein one needs to have such an intimate knowledge of the laws of life as in the fields of psychical research. There is no other field where it is more necessary to live the right life and think the right thoughts, for in this work we get in return just what we give out—that is, if one approaches spiritualism with a cynical mind, convinced that it is a hoax, he is likely to meet with cynical jokers from the other side, and he goes away more mystified and perplexed than ever.

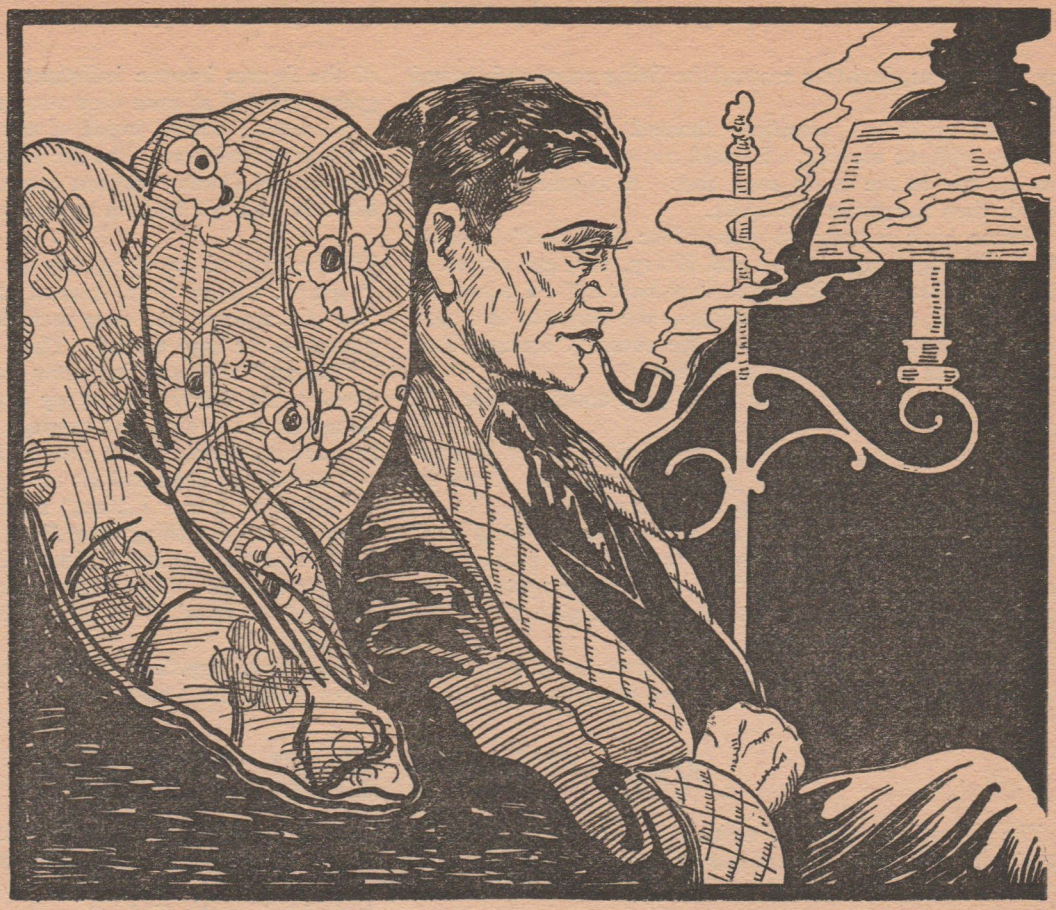
My little girl has been helped materially in her school work by spiritual forces. She was quite dull in arithmetic, even being put back a grade. She has now moved up that grade, and gets 100% every day since we began to concentrate for her. She herself asks for aid mentally, and gets it. Many times red lights dance across her paper or stand before her eyes to let her know her spirit friends are there.

ONE afternoon, not so very long ago, she complained of a choking sensation in her nose and throat. That evening she came out very suddenly with this sentence, "It's John McCoy and Mary McCoy." Her tone was Irish distinctly. They were a married couple my husband had known slightly when a boy, and they had passed out at the same time through suffocation, so they told her.

Just the other evening she read for an hour the proverbial handwriting on the wall, written by a cousin of ours who was killed last year.

Whenever we have been in dire straits, it seems our spirit friends have helped us out, prophesying what is to come and encouraging us to work for that end—and everything has always come out right so far.

Deep in the Heart of a Great Novelist Lived the Child He Had Never Fathered. Could Love Bring Her Out of the Infinite to Cheer His Loneliness?



My DAUGHTER

AT nine o'clock on the Saturday before Easter, William Wade Harrington had locked himself in his study. It was now after eleven, almost Easter Day, and no word had come from him during all those hours except a muttered "thank you," when his ancient servant Peters left his dinner on a tray outside his door.

Peters' master was recognized as one of the greatest of American novelists. He was a tall, rather thin man, whose serious and tender eyes burned with a deep glow under a bold and intelligent brow. His black hair was slightly gray at the temples, and he stooped a bit as if hopeless that life's lavish gifts of money and honor could bring him any measure of joy or interest.

Forty years old and lonely, William Wade Harrington viewed his future without zest. Every year, he knew, would add compound interest to his loneliness.

He felt no thrill in a new success, for all his books were successes. He played the piano and sang well; but music was only a temporary surcease in the grinding labor of his compositions. The commercialized theater was a horror to his artistic taste. Life had given and taken, and he was the poorer by it, for no woman gave him her love and care. William Wade hated women.

His hatred for women had grown in progression from distrust to scorn and finally to bitter contempt. Some of his former mates could tell of a disappointing college love-affair, but no word of this ever came from William Wade. If the love-affair ever occurred, it was a carefully guarded secret which became more personal as William Wade labored through his solitary and brooding life.

The heavy mahogany door to the study opened and William Wade came out. His face was pale; he seemed utterly weary.

The bent, white-haired old servant looked up eagerly. "Did you finish, Mister Billy?"

"I can't finish, Peters," sighed William Wade. "I simply stop working on one book and start another." He yawned and stretched his arms. "I'm tired, Peters, tired all the way through."

"You're working too hard, Mister Billy." The old man presumed on his long years of service and friendship. "You ought to have a wife to take care of you."

"None of that, Peters," interrupted William Wade good-naturedly. "Every woman who reads my books knows I hate her sex."

"Oh, no, sir, I can't believe that! You are very severe with them, but I've always felt that every man needs a wife."

"SOME men do, probably," admitted William Wade. He was smiling at Peters' insistence. "However, we'll try to get along with Cook and What's-her-name, the maid, eh?" He glanced at the clock. "Nearly midnight! Get my coat, please, Peters. I think I'll take a little walk before I turn in."

William Wade slid into his top-coat and took his hat and cane. "It will be Easter when you return, sir," said the old man as he opened the door. "I wish you a very happy one, sir."

"Easter! Ah, yes, I'd quite forgotten. I wish you a happy one, too, Peters." But the day meant nothing to William Wade. He returned to Peters' original statement. "Don't let your mind dwell on women, my friend. They have a habit of taking everything they get their hands on—even your thoughts."

The old man was insistent. "Easter doesn't seem to be Easter without children, sir. I thought that a wife and perhaps a baby—maybe a little girl——"

William Wade interrupted. "We can laugh about women,

By JOHN MILLER GREGORY

WHO Never EXISTED

Peters," he said seriously, "but don't ever mention a child again, especially a little girl. She would be quite too serious even to jest about."

He lit a cigar and went quickly down the hall toward the elevator, as Peters quietly closed the door.

It was almost midnight when William Wade returned, physically weary from his brisk walk. The fire was low in the grate and he threw on another log and sank into his easy chair. He loved the careless welcome of his room. The great, dark-red rug enfolded him in its soft comfort. The few well-chosen paintings on the wall smiled their friendliness. The lamp on his book-laden table, under its golden, mandarin-skirt shade, made a restful glow; and the wide, cheerful hearth, reddened with the log fire, soothed his tired mind with its restful warmth.

On a tea-wagon Peters had placed a little luncheon: two slices of bread in an electric toaster, a pot of water ready to boil for tea, and a bit of cheese. On the back of William Wade's easy chair, drawn in front of the fire, was his black velvet dressing-gown. His worn slippers were warming on the hearth.

William Wade put his head into his hands. His soul was filled with loneliness. It was always like this after he completed his work. His life seemed so empty, so useless; he dreaded to keep on working for the little it had to offer. But he dreaded more to quit. It seemed so childish writing foolish stories for idle people to read.

The clock struck midnight. He heard a merry laugh and raised his head. He rubbed his eyes and stared.

In the chair opposite him sat a young girl. And such a girl! It seemed to him that all the profusion of youth and beauty and joy had been lavished on her.

"Hello!" she cried. "I thought you'd never raise your head." Her voice came in joyous gurgles, rushing and cascading like a merry little stream. "Were you sleeping?"

William Wade closed his eyes and shook his head. He pinched himself on the arm, and looked at her again. "No, I'm sure I'm awake. But how did you get in here?"

She laughed gleefully. "Oh, it's such fun! You see, I'm playing hookey."

He couldn't help but laugh with her. "Are you, really?"

"Isn't it delightful! And on Easter, too! Something happened tonight—I don't know what—and I saw a rift in the veil. So I ran through." She laughed again deliciously, with a sound like the soft breath of wind through the woods.

William Wade was amused. He chuckled quietly, wondering what she meant by a rift in the veil. Probably some new slang.

"I HAVE to go back, though," said the girl suddenly. Her face went sorrowful for a moment, but brightened up immediately. "Isn't it great to be here? I'm so happy!"

She ran to the table and took off her hat. The red light from the fire caught in her dull gold curls and surrounded her head like a halo. She was dressed in some filmy material which folded about her like a cloud, and seemed to change its opalescent color in the light like a bubble drifting in the sunshine.

William Wade marveled at her grace. She moved like a spiral of silver smoke and was almost as ethereal.

"Just look at this table!" She flashed him a shocked glance through her happy eyes. "I don't know what I'll do with you; your books and pipes are all over the place." She looked into a vase of flowers and shook her head in mock severity. "There isn't a drop of water for these roses."

William Wade shivered with delight. He'd never been

criticized like that by any woman except his mother. And it pleased him. He liked the way the girl fussed around, putting his table in order and arranging his books. She filled his pipe and held a match as he lighted it, laughing to herself contentedly when he nodded his appreciation. She glided back to her chair and sat down.

"Now," she said, "let's talk."

William Wade came to his senses. It was past midnight and he was alone in his apartment with a beautiful girl. Grudgingly he had to allow her that much. She was even more. She was charming and dainty—and somehow so unaccountably different from other girls of her age he had met. She was a darling! But he asked himself why that should make a fool out of him. He'd put an end to it at once.

He sat up and scowled. "Did Peters let you in here?"

"Oh, no, I just came."

"Peters is getting old and foolish. You're quite sure you two aren't working some trick on me? Peters has the absurd idea I should marry."

She laughed aloud joyfully. "Oh, my, no! I don't want to marry you."

"WELL, that's some relief, anyway. But I can't imagine what you are doing here." He rose with determination. "I'm really very sorry, but I must ask you to go. It's frightfully late, and I'm tired out."

His tone brought a look of pain to her eyes. "Oh, you don't mean that?"

"I certainly do," replied William Wade. "I can't understand why I let you stay here at all."

The pain grew deeper in her eyes, like a long enduring one. "But I've waited so long to see you," she pleaded.

William Wade was exasperated. "My dear young lady, don't you see you are seriously compromising yourself by being in my apartment at this hour of the morning?"

"But this is my only chance." Much to his disgust, she began to cry.

He regarded her in disapproval, and the absurdity of the whole situation came over him. He was angry with himself; angry with her. He should have turned her out immediately, he thought, instead of talking nonsense with her. And now she was weeping!

"Couldn't you come to see me some other time if it's so important?" he asked irritably. "I've told you I'm tired. I've worked over eighteen hours today."

"And I've waited over eighteen years," she said wearily.

"You'll pardon me," he went on, "but I detest women."

"Oh, but you won't after you know me." Her smile came back. "I haven't much time, and it's the most important thing in the world for you to love me."

"Love you!" he exclaimed in amazement. "The idea! That's absurd."

"Oh, no, it isn't." She laughed again. "You'll find out."

"Don't talk nonsense." He was silent for a moment. The girl was decidedly appealing. He was sorry he couldn't despise her for it. No woman had any business being so attractive. He determined he would take no chances with her.

"See here," he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a few minutes; but you must cut it short. I'll call Peters. He's my man and, if you don't mind, I'd rather have him here."

She laughed lightly. "It won't do any good. Peters couldn't see me. You see I can only appear to you and one other."

He felt flattered. "Thank you," he said, mollified, and leaned forward. "You know you're very unusual. You said something about getting through a rift which I didn't understand. And now you say you can only appear to me and one other. Who is that other?"

"She who was to have been my mother," she said simply.

"Just what do you mean?" his interest now was very personal. He wanted to know more about her, to dissolve the mystery with which she seemed surrounded. "You're not a ghost, are you?" he asked, laughing.

"Oh, no," she replied, "for they, at least, have lived."

"There you go again!" He spoke harshly. "Who the devil are you, and why do you say such odd things?"

"S-h-h-h-h!" Smilingly she wagged a reproving finger at him. "You mustn't get angry."

"Well, don't be silly," he growled. "It's darned inconsiderate at this time of night. If you were my daughter, I'd send you off to bed."

"Your daughter!" She jumped up and clapped her hands. Her voice filled with a bright new note, like a suppressed little cry of victory.

"But, of course,," he went on, "my daughter wouldn't be in a stranger's apartment at this hour of the morning."

She laughed gaily. "Oh, you never can tell."

"Don't be absurd," he said, smiling in embarrassment: "I never had a daughter."

"Then you don't know what you've missed. I'll show you!"

She was out of her seat, her eyes shining with happiness. Her joy was contagious. William Wade smiled. He felt a strange exultation in her youth and beauty. He laughed aloud at her antics.

She ran around the room with the lightness of a feather in a breeze. She made him take off his coat and slip into his dressing-gown; then pushed him into his easy chair while she piled pillows in it to make him comfortable. She cut the toast into four little squares and put melted cheese on top of them exactly as he liked it, and boiled the water for tea. All the time a cataract of sparkling observation fell from her lips in a constant stream of girlish nonsense.

When she finished, she sat on a pillow at his feet and laughingly removed his shoes, replacing them with his wide, comfortable slippers. She made him stretch out his legs and put pillows under them and giggled at the sight. Then she looked up at him, eager for approval.

"Right?" she asked lightly.

"Right!" he echoed happily.

With a contented little sigh she leaned against the arm of his chair and lifted a face marvelous in its happiness.

He bent over and looked into her glowing eyes in the light from the fire, and drew in his breath sharply at some almost forgotten memory.

"What made you so happy when I spoke of my daughter?" he asked.

"Oh, I wanted you to know. Don't you know now?" she asked eagerly.

William Wade's soul rose above the earth. He forgot his hatreds and was lost in the memory of a lovely aching. He spoke in a hushed voice, as if he were afraid she might laugh at him. "She isn't really alive," he said softly. "You see she is only the daughter I dream about," he tried to explain.

THE girl's face shown with tenderness. Her cheeks vied with the glowing coals in warmth. "What is her name?" she asked.

"I call her Margaret."

"That's my name."

"Margaret!"

"Yes, just Margaret. I haven't any other name. Not yet."

He smiled at her childish answer. "I've always wanted a daughter," he said pensively.

Breathlessly she echoed: "A daughter!"

"Sometimes I think of her as if she were really here."

"Oh, yes, I know. Do you want her very much?"

"More than anything else in the world."

The girl's breath caught in a tiny sob of happiness. "Tell me some more about her," she whispered. Tell me about her mother."

"Her name was Margaret, too. Many years ago I loved her dearly. We were very young then, and I asked her to marry me. But there was another fellow."

"Oh!" said the girl, and laid her face against his hand.

"He was a poet, and she must have loved his beautiful

thoughts. I became jealous, I suppose, and quarreled with her."

"Did she marry him?"

"Yes. They live in Maine, where everything is lovely. The lakes at sunrise are blue as a baby's eyes, and the mountains brood tenderly in a purple haze at evening. Then sometimes, at night, God raises his hand and writes in wonderful colors a message in the northern sky. I'm sure it is a message for her, because she is very poor."

"Poor? You mean she has no money?"

He smiled. "Yes, that's what I mean. I saw her on the street in Portland once. Her gown was shabby and there were scuffs on her little boy's shoes."

"Ah, but you couldn't tell by their clothing. Did you look into her eyes?"

His face brightened. "Her eyes were rich in happiness—as filled with peace as those of the Madonna."

The girl clapped her hands with joy. "Oh, I knew she must be happy. I always wanted her to be happy."

William Wade looked at her curiously, but let her remark pass. For a while they sat staring into the fire and each was dreaming. He spoke again tenderly.

"Do you know you are very beautiful?"

"Oh, I'm glad to hear you say that."

"You remind me of someone I must have known somewhere. I can't remember who it was. It must have been long ago."

SHE got to her knees and leaned over so that the fire could shine full in her face. "Think! Oh, please, think hard!"

He looked deep into her eyes; then shook his head. "I'm sorry, but I can't remember. But you are beautiful."

She released her breath in a disappointed little sigh. "I wanted you to remember. You see," she went on, "I can't tell you. It must come from yourself. Then everything will be easy."

He laughed softly. "You are so odd and mysterious. I wish you'd tell me who you are."

Something like pain passed over her face. "I wish I could! Oh, how I wish I could!"

The clock struck the half hour, and the girl started. "How the time flies here," she said.

"It does everywhere," he laughed.

"Oh, no, it doesn't," she contradicted demurely. "With us who are waiting to get through, it drags very slowly." She sighed. "It's so irksome to wait." Her head came up quickly. "But let's not be depressed. Play for me, will you?"

He sat at the piano and played exquisitely an insinuating little waltz, a dreamy, lovely minuet which he thought she would like. He was wholly delighted in her now. His heart beat with an old new happiness. He looked over his shoulder and saw her dancing around the room with the lightness of a butterfly, wholly unconscious of her grace.

He changed into an improvisation, a soft, ethereal melody which sang in his heart. She stopped by the table and idly fingered a book as she listened. A photograph hidden in its pages fell to the floor. With a little cry of joy she picked it up.

William Wade sang in a low voice an old love song. She stood with the photograph pressed to her heart. His voice faltered; the notes, broken, died with a sob. He turned on the bench and buried his face in his hands.

The girl was all compassion. "That was the song I used to sing to Margaret," he said, as he lifted his face and tried to smile.

"Yes, I know."

He seemed not to notice her odd reply.

"Do you still love her?" she asked.

"Oh, yes, I shall always love her."

She held out the photograph. It was the picture of a young girl in a summer dress and a large hat, and the face was as beautiful as a pure white soul. "Is this she?" asked the girl.

William Wade got up quickly. "Give me that!" he demanded almost angrily. "Where did you get it?"

She did not reply. Instead, she said: "She is very lovely."

William Wade paid no atention. Not even Peters would dare touch that book. It had been a gift from Margaret; he kept it as a sort of shrine for his love. He grew unreasonably angry with the girl; all her charm seemed to leave her.

"See here," he said bitterly, "I think you've bewitched me." He stalked heavily across the floor and threw open the door, and when she saw that he was really angry, her face went white.

"Oh, I'm so sorry——" she began.

Shortly he interrupted her. "I've had quite enough of this. You must go."

"OH, please don't send me back—like this," she wailed. Her eyes filled with tears. "You don't know what you're doing." She sank to the floor—a woebegone, helpless little figure.

"I'm sorry," he replied, "but all this is impossible. Somehow I don't understand it, but it has gone quite far enough." He put out his hand to lift her, but she drew away and struggled to her feet. "You mustn't touch me if you feel like that," she said.

William Wade was determined now. "I do," he told her. "You must see it's impossible for you to stay here."

"Oh, if I could only tell you!" she wailed. "If you would only help me! It isn't fair to me—I want to live, too."

"My dear, I don't know what you're talking about."

Her eyes filled with a new hope. "But you will know if you keep thinking—when you hear what has happened. If you'd help me, I'd love you so! Don't keep me out! Please, oh, please don't keep me out!"

"My dear girl," he said quietly, "I think you must be a little insane." He opened the door wider. "Now you must go."

Without a word the girl took her hat from the table and slowly went out. William Wade closed the door behind her.

He started to breathe in relief, but it came in a sigh of regret. His anger cooled. The room all at once seemed empty. He threw himself into his chair but it was uncomfortable. He had never known it to feel like that before. He felt a little chill go up his spine and noticed the fire was out. Only the dull gray ashes were left. He remembered how charming the girl looked in the red glow, leaning back against his

An Easter Miracle

Here is the actual experience of a well-known novelist whose name is thinly disguised under the pseudonym of William Wade Harrington. A part of the weird happenings may have been due to a dream or an hallucination—but how can you explain the strange message that followed the apparition?

Was Harrington's mind mysteriously attuned with that of the woman he had loved hopelessly for twenty years? Did their combined psychic powers serve to materialize a creature that had never lived on earth?

chair. It came like a sudden stab through his heart.

He picked up his cup of tea and a bit of toast; but the tea was cold and the toast was hard. He put them down in disgust. Even the roses, which she had arranged for him, seemed to droop with disappointment now that she had gone; they had glowed with such color when she was there.

He looked at the photograph of Margaret which he still held in his hand, and suddenly it came to him who the girl was. She was Margaret's daughter! There was the same mass of red gold hair; the same dimples in her cheeks; the twinkling gray eyes. He could almost hear her little laugh, which rose so joyously and honestly.

He had never known that Margaret had a daughter. But why not? Why hadn't he thought of it? What would Margaret think of him for turning her out like that?

He rushed to the door and threw it open. "Margaret!" he cried. "Margaret!"

HIS voice broke with compassion. Near his door, huddled against the wall, stood the girl. Her face was buried her arms; her hat lay neglected at her feet. She was weeping passionately and, oh, so piteously.

With a little sob of happiness he was at her side. "Oh, my dear, I'm glad you didn't go."

She raised her face quickly and a radiant smile broke through her tears. "Oh, you're going to let me come back?"

He led her into the room and over to his big chair, and sank on a pillow beside it. "The room was so cold without you," he whispered. "Even the flowers died, and when you went, something in my heart seemed to have died, too. Oh, my dear, you have awakened a love that I thought was dead."

Her face radiated an unearthly joy. "If you only mean that! You must mean it! You do, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, I do," he repeated.

She smiled again, as she did when he first saw her. "Now, it will be so easy to make you understand, since your love still lives. My time is almost up and I shall have to go, but now that you want me, I shall always be near you."

"But I don't want you to go," he protested.

"Oh, but I have to. You see, I'm not a real girl at all," she said simply. "I'm just the beauty that lives in Margaret's soul." She laughed at the amazed expression on his face. "But if you had married her," she went on, "I would have been your daughter. I've never been born at all except in your mind."

"I think I understand," he said softly. "That's what you meant by getting through? It's like a veil, I suppose, and the unborn children are waiting to be let through."

"Yes, something like that. And we are so helpless unless you really want us."

"It's easy to understand now," said William Wade reverently.

The clock struck one.

The girl arose and the smile on her face was the most beautiful he had ever seen.

"My time is up," she said regretfully. "But you mustn't be sad. I shall always be near you." She seemed to float in the air near him. "Happy Easter, Father!"

His heart caught with an exquisite pain. "Would—would you mind saying that again?" he asked.

Her laugh seemed like some far-away music. "Happy Easter, Father!"

"Happy Easter—daughter!"

She was gone. But this time it was different. He could not see her, but her presence played like a sunbeam through his heart. His loneliness had left him. He could almost hear her laugh; hear her soft voice calling, "Father!" Oh, he was glad he was alive! He was glad there was work to do. So much work and someone to do it for.

From a great distance someone was speaking to him. He passed his hand across his face, trying to get the sight of the girl from his eyes. Peters was handing him a telegram, his face anxious.

"What's the matter, Mister Billy? I heard you talking to yourself."

"It's all right, Peters; it's quite all right." He laughed aloud. "I was talking to a girl, Peters. A glorious girl, too. I wish you could have seen her."

Peters smiled indulgently. "Is there an answer to the message, sir?"

William Wade tore open the envelope and drew out the telegram. He read it aloud with hushed wonder in his voice:

James died at midnight. Will you, my best friend, come at once. MARGARET.

For a while he stood motionless; then into his eyes flowed a love he had suppressed for twenty years. Back into his heart danced the smiling, dimpled girl with twinkling eyes and red-gold hair. She was free! She was asking him to come!

"Yes, Peters, there's an answer. Wire this message and mark it 'Rush': 'Mrs. James Raymond Walling, South Casco, Maine. Coming.'"

"I would like to sign it 'Billikins,'" said William Wade to himself.

"Billikins!" exclaimed Peters, amazed.

Out of a haze came William Wade. "No, no, Peters. Of course not. Pack immediately, please."

Into Peters' eyes came a fond look. "Is it the girl, Mister Billy?"

William Wade smiled. "I hope so, Peters."

A YEAR after the marriage of Margaret Walling and William Wade Harrington a square envelope was placed on my desk. In it was a card on which was engraved, "Mr. and Mrs. William Wade Harrington," and in the left upper corner a smaller card was attached by a bow of white ribbon. It was a tiny replica of the other, except that the engraving was "Miss Margaret Wade Harrington," and beneath, in the left corner, "Born Easter Day, 1927." On the back of the larger card William Wade had scrawled: "Peters *knew* it was to be a girl."

The Specter of Blackstone Lake

INDIANS living in the neighborhood of Blackstone Lake, Upper Canada, have reported recently that they have been followed by a skeleton ghost when returning to their homes at night. Their stories are supported by some whites, and a statement concerning the strange happenings was brought from the north to Toronto by members of the Ontario Air Service.

The phantom is said to be that of a trapper murdered by an Indian in 1927. Its habitat is a clearing near a cabin formerly used by the Albany Indians on the way to their trapping grounds. Mounted police, in September, 1927, found in this cabin the remains of the trapper, lying in a bunk and covered with blankets. The skull had been crushed with an axe. In due course an Indian youth of sixteen was found in possession of the trapper's equipment, arrested and hanged.

The police at first decided to burn the cabin, but changed their minds. As far as they know, the skeleton is still there. However, the Indians say otherwise. They insist they have been chased by it at night, the ghost swinging an axe and uttering weird threats of vengeance against all Indians. The Red Men fear to burn the cabin and its contents, but have sent a petition to the authorities requesting them to do so.

Did the Ghost of Bismarck WARN The Kaiser?

On the fateful day when German militarism flung its defiance in the face of Europe and set a world on fire, the War Lord held a weird séance with "Dora," the famous medium. Here are the facts!

Wilhelm II, the former Emperor of Germany

By ALBERT E. GALLIN

THIS is a TRUE account of the most remarkable séance ever held in Germany. Mr. Gallin, the author, is now living in this country. Among the well-known Germans present at the séance were Mr. Albert Ballin, at that time general director of the Hamburg American Steamship Line, and Count Gerhardt von Hasselbruck, director of public instruction for the province of Brandenburg.

MY father was professor of psychology in the University of Berlin before the World War. He was a well-known authority on psychic phenomena and was often called into conference with Wilhelm II, the former Emperor of Germany, who was very mystically inclined. Our home on the Potzdammer Platz used to be the meeting-place for the élite of the scientific world. I recall seeing Freud, Einstein and many other well-known scientists in the room that my father had set aside for séances.

One quiet evening in the summer of 1914—when all Europe was at peace and none of us had even dreamed that the world hovered on the verge of the bloodiest war in history—the bell rang and an Imperial footman announced the coming of the Emperor. As usual, he preceded His Majesty by half an hour. This enabled my father to arrange everything and to dismiss anyone who had not been formally presented to the Emperor. As I had studied with several of the Imperial princes at Bonn and Heidelberg, my presence was not objected to.

Soon the Imperial car drove up and the Emperor was ushered into our home.

I had met him frequently and had an excellent opportunity to form an estimate of his character in private life. American readers may be interested to know that the War Lord impressed me as a man of principle, clean thought and unusual kindliness. He had a splendid sense of humor and could appreciate a joke as well as anyone I know. As a military leader, however, he was quite different—all soldier and a stern disciplinarian.

When the Emperor arrived, my father was discussing spiritual phenomena with the scientists who were present. The Emperor immediately requested that he summon "Dora," a well-known trance-medium who had achieved astonishing results for various members of the German nobility. She had occasionally assisted my father in his séances. He telephoned her and she came at once.

After she had entered the cabinet, the room seemed to grow strangely sultry.

The Emperor said, "Professor, what is the matter tonight? I feel restless and uneasy—something very unusual with me."

I noticed that all the others appeared to be disturbed, too. I am sure that this was not the result of the presence of the Emperor, for he came to my father's house frequently and a rather happy frame of mind usually prevailed when he was present. But on this particular night we all felt something sinister in the room—and looking back now after fifteen years, I can easily understand the reason.

We were seated in a semicircle around the cabinet, waiting for the medium to go into a trance. Suddenly the woman moaned—then silence again. After we had waited several minutes, she called the name of Wilhelm and my father took up the questioning. I may mention here that any sort of collusion between the medium and my father was out of the question, for he was interested in spiritualism only from a scientific standpoint.

"Who is talking?" he asked.

"Otto," came the answer in the deep tones of a man.

"Who is Otto?"

I looked toward the Emperor and saw that he had turned pale and was trembling.

Then the stern voice spoke again. "I am warning you, Wilhelm."

"His Majesty is wanted. Speak, please," my father said softly.

"Is this Von Bismarck speaking?" the Emperor asked.

The answer came in a faint whisper: "Yes."

My father had known the "Iron Chancellor," Otto von Bismarck, and after the séance both he and the Emperor stated that they had recognized the voice.

"What is it you wish to tell me?" His Majesty asked.

"Heed me and do not destroy what I built up—the Empire," the voice replied.

"I don't quite understand, Otto. Is there any danger?"

"Yes," the voice said. "The Fatherland is in grave danger of being led into a great war which will prove disastrous to our country, if you do not heed me."

"Please, Otto, be explicit. Your advice will be heeded if it is not too late."

"Do not send that letter to Count Tisza and stay clear——" Here the medium groaned and we could not catch all the words that were spoken. However, we distinguished the following names: *Vienna, Joseph* and *Von Bethmann-Hollweg.*

Count Tisza was the Hungarian premier. Although I did not understand the message at the time, no doubt the letter referred to was Germany's promise of unconditional assistance to Austria in case of war with Serbia. Von Bethmann-Hollweg was the German chancellor—the man whose reference to the Belgian treaty as "a scrap of paper" was to arouse the indignation of the world a few days later.

When the Emperor spoke, his voice sounded sad and far-away. "You are too late in giving advice, Otto. The letter was sent last night and we cannot recover it."

"It will be terrible for our great Germany!" the voice cried in tragic tones. "It means the end of the Hohenzollern dynasty. *You cannot fight the whole world!*"

THE medium began to breathe heavily and suddenly burst into moans and screams. We were all so alarmed that the séance was discontinued. My father tried to wake the medium but had a hard time of it. Finally he resorted to giving her stimulants.

Upon recovering consciousness, the medium stated that never before in her long career had she felt so completely exhausted.

The Emperor looked as haggard and worn as the rest of us, but nobody said a word. We were all thinking of the future and what it might hold.

The World War bore out the truth of what the medium had said.

If Otto von Bismarck had warned the Emperor a few days before, how much bloodshed and suffering might possibly have been avoided!

The Man Who Tasted Death

There is a riddle for science and a challenge for courageous investigation in this astounding true narrative by Harry Winstone, who gives his address as follows: "Care Henry Williams, Box 511, Serial 50127, Columbus, Ohio."

OFTEN during my life I have had reason to wonder if it was not possible for those who have gone into the "great beyond" to maintain and demonstrate, to those of this world, the interest they had in the people and things from which death separated them.

All doubts were removed, so far as I am concerned, several years ago. I will try and relate the incident that convinced me.

Until I reached the age of fifteen, the relations that existed between Mother and me were more like those which exist between two playmates than between mother and son. Shortly after my fifteenth birthday Mother died suddenly while I was absent, and I never learned of it until several months later.

For years thereafter I had the most vivid dreams imaginable of her, and in them she seemed to be trying to tell me something—but I could never understand.

In 1913 I was stabbed in the left breast, and after a thorough examination by Doctor O. M. Kramer, the prison physician, I was pronounced dead.

Five minutes later, while he was discussing the case over the phone with Warden P. E. Thomas, one of the inmate nurses (a man who had served many years under the silent system and could read a conversation as far as he could see the movements of the lips) hurried into the Doctor's office and reported that he had paused to look at me, after procuring some instruments from the room in which I was awaiting the coroner's arrival, and saw my lips form the word "mother." The Warden hastily appealed to Doctors Hamilton and Rieble (both are widely known surgeons and are connected with two local hospitals) and they arrived at the hospital eight minutes later.

They discovered that the small sac at the end of the heart had been severed, and that the heart action had been stopped by a blood clot which had formed about the heart because the blood could not escape through the small wound. They operated to relieve this condition and I eventually recovered.

Now, if I was dead during the interval between Doctor Kramer's examination and the nurse's discovery, where was my soul? Doctor Kramer declares that it was not in my body.

My last conscious recollection on that memorable day was a feeling of weakness as I ascended the hospital steps. I attempted to sit down and everything grew dark—not the deep, heavy darkness of oblivion, but a sort of twilight darkness. I can't say how long it lasted, but it seemed to part gradually, like a purple velvet curtain controlled by some invisible agency, and I saw my mother just as plainly as I ever saw her. She was looking at something which lay between us with a sort of hopeful, eager breathlessness.

There were none of the weird lights and filmy draperies usually ascribed to ghosts or spirits. Everything seemed perfectly natural. I wasn't even surprised, just intensely glad to see her again; and though she appeared very distinct, I seemed to know that she was quite a distance from me, and that the object she was looking at, which lay between us, was my body on an operating table.

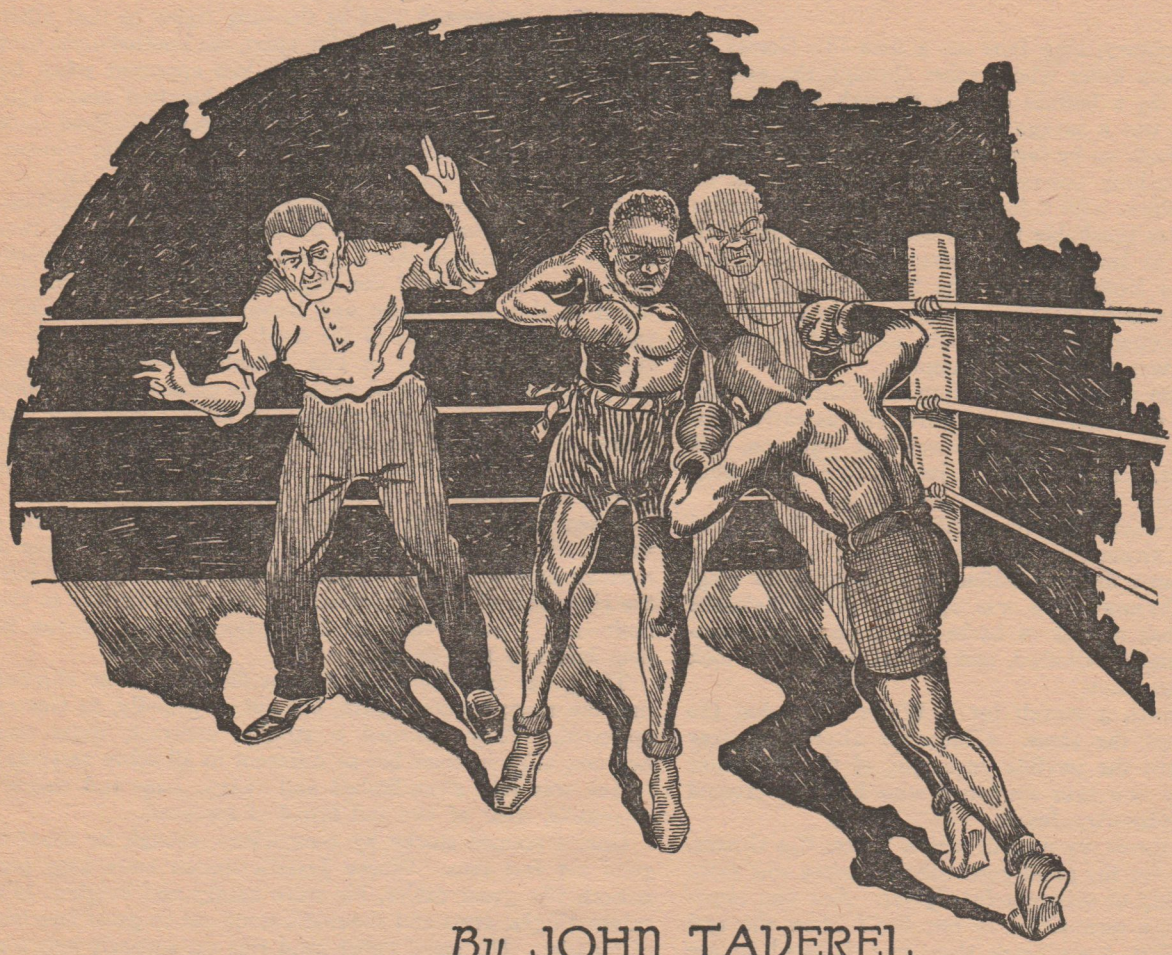
She finally looked straight at me and an expression of happiness that I don't believe it is possible to reproduce in this world appeared on her face. Then, without the slightest sign or consciousness of actual motion, we seemed to draw near. I was never so happy in my life, and in my eagerness to clasp her to me, I exclaimed "Mother!"

Then our advance ceased; a look of keenest disappointment succeeded her happy smile, and I heard her hastily utter four words—and with a sad smile she seemed to grow indistinct until she was swallowed up by the surrounding darkness, which grew darker and darker until my sensations ceased to register.

Since my recovery I have never dreamed of her, and for four years I was baffled by the four words she had spoken—then I understood. Her suggestion seemed ridiculous because I was totally deficient, in education and experience, to carry out her suggestion, but I have tried, and it is hard to tell who is the most surprised, I or my friends, at my success, and I like the work better than anything that I have ever attempted.

Can you blame me for believing that those in the Other World are sometimes interested in the lives of those they have left behind? I am morally certain that my soul looked on my mother's—but if those who know all about psychic metabasis, or phenomena, have a different explanation, I would enjoy hearing it.

The APPARITION in the Prize Ring



Did a Ghost Help Win This Savage Fight? Ask Ace Jessel!

By JOHN TAVEREL

One of the Greatest Managers in the History of the Fight Game

READERS of this magazine will probably remember Ace Jessel, the big negro boxer whom I managed a few years ago. He was an ebony giant, four inches over six feet tall, with a fighting weight of 230 pounds. He moved with the smooth ease of a gigantic leopard and his pliant steel muscles rippled under his shiny skin. A clever boxer for so large a man, he carried the smashing jolt of a trip-hammer in each huge fist.

It was my belief that he was the equal of any man in the ring at that time—except for one fatal defect. He lacked the killer instinct. He had courage in plenty, as he proved on more than one occasion—but he was content to box mostly, outpointing his opponents and piling up just enough lead to keep from losing.

Every so often the crowds booed him, but their taunts only broadened his good-natured grin. However, his fights continued to draw a big gate, because, on the rare occasions when he was stung out of a defensive rôle or when he was matched with a clever man whom he had to knock out in order to win, the fans saw a real fight that thrilled their blood. Even so, time and again he stepped away from a sagging foe, giving the beaten man time to recover and return to the attack—while the crowd raved and I tore my hair.

The one abiding loyalty in Ace's happy-go-lucky life was a fanatical worship of Tom Molyneaux, first champion of America and a sturdy fighting man of color; according to some authorities, the greatest black ringman that ever lived.

Tom Molyneaux died in Ireland a hundred years ago but the memory of his valiant deeds in America and Europe was Ace Jessel's direct incentive to action. As a boy, toiling on the wharves, he had heard an account of Tom's life and battles and the story had started him on the fistic trail.

ACE'S most highly prized possession was a painted portrait of the old battler. He had discovered this—a rare find indeed, since even woodcuts of Molyneaux are rare—among the collection of a London sportsman, and had prevailed on the owner to sell it. Paying for it had taken every cent that Ace made in four fights but he counted it cheap at the price. He removed the original frame and replaced it with a frame of solid silver, which, considering that the portrait was full length and life size, was more than extravagant.

But no honor was too great for "Mistah Tom" and Ace

merely increased the number of his bouts to meet the cost.

Finally my brains and Ace's mallet fists had cleared us a road to the top of the game. Ace loomed up as a heavyweight menace and the champion's manager was ready to sign with us—when an unexpected obstacle blocked our path.

A form hove into view on the fistic horizon that dwarfed and overshadowed all other contenders, including my man. This was "Mankiller Gomez," and he was all that his name implies. Gomez was his ri[illegible] name, given him by the Spaniard who discovered him and brought him to America. He was a full-blooded Senegalese from the West Coast of Africa.

ONCE in a century, ring fans see a man like Gomez in action—a born killer who crashes through the general ruck of fighters as a buffalo crashes through a thicket of dead wood. He was a savage, a tiger. What he lacked in actual skill, he made up by ferocity of attack, by ruggedness of body and smashing power of arm. From the time he landed in New York, with a long list of European victories behind him, it was inevitable that he should batter down all opposition—and at last the white champion looked to see the black savage looming above the broken forms of his victims. The champion saw the writing on the wall, but the public was clamoring for a match and whatever his faults, the title-holder was a fighting champion.

Ace Jessel, who alone of all the foremost challengers had not met Gomez, was shoved into discard, and as early summer dawned on New York, a title was lost and won, and Mankiller Gomez, son of the black jungle, rose up as king of all fighting men.

The sporting world and the public at large hated and feared the new champion. Boxing fans like savagery in the ring, but Gomez did not confine his ferocity to the ring. His soul was abysmal. He was ape-like, primordial—the very spirit of that morass of barbarism from which mankind has so tortuously climbed, and toward which men look with so much suspicion.

There went forth a search for a White Hope, but the result was always the same. Challenger after challenger went down before the terrible onslaught of the Mankiller and at last only one man remained who had not crossed gloves with Gomez—Ace Jessel.

I hesitated to throw my man in with a battler like Gomez, for my fondness for the great good-natured negro was more than the friendship of manager for fighter. Ace was something more than a meal-ticket to me, for I knew the real nobility underlying Ace's black skin, and I hated to see him battered into a senseless ruin by a man I knew in my heart to be more than Jessel's match. I wanted to wait a while, to let Gomez wear himself out with his terrific battles and the dissipations that were sure to follow the savage's success. These super-sluggers never last long, any more than a jungle native can withstand the temptations of civilization.

But the slump that follows a really great title-holder's gaining the belt was on, and matches were scarce. The public was clamoring for a title fight, sports writers were raising Cain and accusing Ace of cowardice, promoters were offering alluring purses, and at last I signed for a fifteen-round go between Mankiller Gomez and Ace Jessel.

At the training quarters I turned to Ace.

"Ace, do you think you can whip him?"

"Mistah John," Ace answered, meeting my eye with a straight gaze, "I'll do mah best, but I's mighty afeard I caint do it. Dat man ain't human."

This was bad; a man is more than half whipped when he goes into the ring in that frame of mind.

Later I went to Ace's room for something and halted in the doorway in amazement. I had heard the battler talking in a low voice as I came up, but had supposed one of the handlers or sparring partners was in the room with him. Now I saw that he was alone. He was standing before his idol—the portrait of Tom Molyneaux.

"Mistah Tom," he was saying humbly, "I ain't nevah met no man yet what could even knock me off mah feet, but I reckon dat niggah can. I's gwine to need help mighty bad, Mistah Tom."

I felt almost as if I had interrupted a religious rite. It was uncanny; had it not been for Ace's evident deep sincerity, I would have felt it to be unholy. But to Ace, Tom Molyneaux was something more than a saint.

I stood in the doorway in silence, watching the strange tableaux. The unknown artist had painted the picture of Molyneaux with remarkable skill. The short black figure stood out boldly from the faded canvas. The breath of bygone days, he seemed, clad in the long tights of that other day, the powerful legs braced far apart, the knotted arms held stiff and high—just as Molyneaux had appeared when he fought Tom Cribb of England over a hundred years ago.

Ace Jessel stood before the painted figure, his head sunk upon his mighty chest as if listening to some dim whisper inside his soul. And as I watched, a curious and fantastic idea came to me—the memory of an age-old superstition.

You know it has been said by students of the occult that statues and portraits have power to draw departed souls back from the void of eternity. I wondered if Ace had heard of this superstition and hoped to conjure his idol's spirit out of the realms of the dead, for advice and aid. I shrugged my shoulders at this ridiculous idea and turned away. As I did, I glanced again at the picture before which Ace still stood like a great image of black basalt, and was aware of a peculiar illusion; the canvas seemed to ripple slightly, like the surface of a lake across which a faint breeze is blowing. . . .

When the day of the fight arrived, I watched Ace nervously. I was more afraid than ever that I had made a mistake in permitting circumstances to force my man into the ring with Gomez. However, I was backing Ace to the limit—and I was ready to do anything under heaven to help him win that fight.

The great crowd cheered Ace to the echo as he climbed into the ring; cheered again, but not so heartily, as Gomez appeared. They afforded a strange contrast, those two negroes, alike in color but so different in all other respects!

Ace was tall, clean-limbed and rangy, long and smooth of muscle, clear of eye and broad of forehead.

Gomez seemed stocky by comparison, though he stood a good six feet two. Where Jessel's sinews were long and smooth like great cables, his were knotty and bulging. His calves, thighs, arms and shoulders stood out in great bunches of muscles. His small bullet head was set squarely between gigantic shoulders, and his forehead was so low that his kinky wool seemed to grow just above his small, bloodshot eyes. On his chest was a thick grizzle of matted black hair.

He grinned insolently, thumped his breast and flexed his mighty arms with the assurance of the savage. Ace, in his corner, grinned at the crowd, but an ashy tint was on his dusky face and his knees were trembling.

THE usual formalities were carried out: instructions given by the referee, weights announced—230 for Ace, 248 for Gomez. Then over the great stadium the lights went off except those over the ring where two black giants faced each other like men alone on the ridge of the world.

At the gong Gomez whirled in his corner and came out with a breath-taking roar of pure ferocity. Ace, frightened though he must have been, rushed to meet him with the courage of a cave man charging a gorilla. They met headlong in the center of the ring.

The first blow was the Mankiller's, a left swing that glanced from Ace's ribs. Ace came back with a long left to the face and a stinging right to the body. Gomez "bulled in," swinging both hands; and Ace, after one futile attempt to mix it with him, gave back. The champion drove him across the ring, sending a savage left to the body as Ace clinched. As they broke, Gomez shot a terrible right to the chin and Ace reeled into the ropes.

A great "Ahhh!" went up from the crowd as the champion plunged after him like a famished wolf, but Ace managed to get between the lashing arms and clinch, shaking his head to clear it. Gomez sent in a left, which Ace's clutching arms partly smothered, and the referee warned the Senegalese.

At the break Ace stepped back, jabbing swiftly and cleverly with his left. The round ended with the champion bellowing like a buffalo, trying to get past that rapier-like arm.

Between rounds I cautioned Ace to keep away from infighting as much as possible, where Gomez' superior strength would count heavily, and to use his footwork to avoid punishment.

The second round started much like the first, Gomez rushing and Ace using all his skill to stave him off and avoid those terrible smashes. It's hard to get a shifty boxer like Ace in a corner, when he is fresh and unweakened, and at long range he had the advantage over Gomez, whose one idea was to get in close and batter down his foes by sheer strength and ferocity. Still, in spite of Ace's speed and skill, just before the gong sounded Gomez got the range and sank a vicious left in Ace's midriff and the tall negro weaved slightly as he returned to his corner.

I felt that it was the beginning of the end. The vitality and power of Gomez seemed endless; there was no wearing him down and it would not take many such blows to rob Ace of his speed of foot and accuracy of eye. If forced to stand and trade punches, he was finished.

Gomez came plunging out for the third round with murder in his eye. He ducked a straight left, took a hard right uppercut square in the face and hooked both hands to Ace's body, then straightened with a terrific right to the chin, which Ace robbed of most of its force by swaying with the blow.

WHILE the champion was still off balance, Ace measured him coolly and shot in a fierce right hook, flush on the chin. Gomez' head flew back as if hinged to his shoulders and he was stopped in his tracks! But even as the crowd rose, hands clenched, lips parted, hoping he would go down, the champion shook his bullet head and came in, roaring. The round ended with both men locked in a clinch in the center of the ring.

At the beginning of the fourth round Gomez drove Ace about the ring almost at will. Stung and desperate, Ace made a stand in a neutral corner and sent Gomez back on his heels with a left and right to the body, but he received a savage left in the face in return. Then suddenly the champion crashed through with a deadly left to the solar plexus, and as Ace staggered, shot a killing right to the chin. Ace fell back into the ropes, instinctively raising his hands. Gomez' short, fierce smashes were partly blocked by his shielding gloves—and, suddenly, pinned on the ropes as he was, and still dazed from the Mankiller's attack, Ace went into terrific action and, slugging toe to toe with the champion, beat him off and drove him back across the ring!

The crowd went mad. Ace was fighting as he had never fought before, but I waited miserably for the end. I knew no man could stand the pace the champion was setting.

Battling along the ropes, Ace sent a savage left to the body and a right and left to the face, but was repaid by a right-hand smash to the ribs that made him wince in spite of himself. Just at the gong, Gomez landed another of those deadly left-handers to the body.

Ace's handlers worked over him swiftly, but I saw that the tall black was weakening.

"Ace, can't you keep away from those body smashes?" I asked.

"Mistah John, suh, I'll try," he answered.

The gong!

Ace came in with a rush, his magnificent body vibrating with dynamic energy. Gomez met him, his iron muscles bunching into a compact fighting unit. Crash—crash—and again, crash! A clinch. As they broke, Gomez drew back his great right arm and launched a terrible blow to Ace's mouth. The tall negro reeled—went down. Then without stopping for the count which I was screaming for him to take, he gathered his long, steely legs under him and was up with a bound, blood gushing down his black chest. Gomez leaped in and Ace, with the fury of desperation, met him with a terrific right, square to the jaw. And Gomez crashed to the canvas on his shoulder blades!

The crowd rose screaming! In the space of ten seconds both men had been floored for the first time in the life of each!

"One! Two! Three! Four!" The referee's arm rose and fell.

GOMEZ was up, unhurt, wild with fury. Roaring like a wild beast, he plunged in, brushed aside Ace's hammering arms and crashed his right hand with the full weight of his mighty shoulder behind it, full into Ace's midriff. Ace went an ashy color—he swayed like a tall tree, and Gomez beat him to his knees with rights and lefts which sounded like the blows of caulking mallets.

"One! Two! Three! Four——"

Ace was writhing on the canvas, trying to get up. The roar of the fans was an ocean of noise which drowned all thought.

"——Five! Six! Seven——"

Ace was up! Gomez came charging across the stained canvas, gibbering his pagan fury. His blows beat upon the staggering challenger like a hail of sledges. A left—a right—another left which Ace had not the strength to duck.

He went down again.

"One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight——"

Again Ace was up, weaving, staring blankly, helpless. A swinging left hurled him back into the ropes and, rebounding from them, he went to his knees—then the gong sounded!

As his handlers and I sprang into the ring Ace groped blindly for his corner and dropped limply upon the stool.

"Ace, he's too much for you," I said.

A weak grin spread over Ace's face and his indomitable spirit shone in his blood-shot eyes.

"Mistah John, please, suh, don't throw in de sponge. If I mus' take it, I takes it standin'. Dat boy caint last at dis pace all night, suh."

No—but neither could Ace Jessel, in spite of his remarkable vitality and his marvelous recuperative powers, which sent him into the next round with a show of renewed strength and freshness.

The sixth and seventh were comparatively tame. Per-

Ace Jessel's Phantom Guardian

As a little black boy, toiling on the wharves, Ace Jessel heard the story of Tom Molyneaux, the negro boxer who became the first champion of America—and it fired him with ambition.

Throughout his strange, brilliant career as a fighter he worshiped Molyneaux's memory, believing with child-like faith that the dead champion was his guardian and protector.

Was it true? Did he really receive uncanny aid? Read the facts!

haps Gomez really was fatigued from the terrific pace he had been setting. At any rate, Ace managed to make it more or less of a sparring match at long range and the crowd was treated to an exhibition illustrating how long a brainy boxer can stand off and keep away from a slugger bent solely on his destruction. Even I marveled at the brand of boxing which Ace was showing, though I knew that Gomez was fighting cautiously for him. The champion had sampled the power of Ace's right hand in that frenzied fifth round and perhaps he was wary of a trick. For the first time in his life he had sprawled on the canvas. He was content to rest a couple of rounds, take his time and gather his energies for a final onslaught.

This began as the gong sounded for the eighth round. Gomez launched his usual sledge-hammer attack, drove Ace about the ring and floored him in a neutral corner. His style of fighting was such that when he was determined to annihilate a foe, skill, speed and science could do no more than postpone the eventual outcome. Ace took the count of nine and rose, back-pedaling.

BUT Gomez was after him; the champion missed twice with his left and then sank a right under the heart that turned Ace ashy. A left to the jaw made his knees buckle and he clinched desperately.

On the break-away Ace sent a straight left to the face and a right hook to the chin, but the blows lacked force. Gomez shook them off and sank his left wrist deep in Ace's mid-section. Ace again clinched but the champion shoved him away and drove him across the ring with savage hooks to the body. At the gong they were slugging along the ropes.

Ace reeled to the wrong corner and when his handlers led him to his own, he sank down on the stool, his legs trembling and his great dusky chest heaving from his exertions. I glanced across at the champion, who sat glowering at his foe. He too was showing signs of the fray, but he was much fresher than Ace. The referee walked over, looked hesitantly at Ace, and then spoke to me.

Through the mists that veiled his muddled brain, Ace realized the significance of these words and struggled to rise, a kind of fear showing in his eyes.

"Mistah John, don' let him stop it, suh! Don' let him do it; I ain't hu't nuthin' like dat would hu't me!"

The referee shrugged his shoulders and walked back to the center of the ring.

There was little use giving advice to Ace. He was too battered to understand—in his numbed brain there was room only for one thought—to fight and fight, and keep on fighting—the old primal instinct that is stronger than all things except death.

At the sound of the gong he reeled out to meet his doom with an indomitable courage that brought the crowd to its feet yelling. He struck, a wild aimless left, and the champion plunged in, hitting with both hands until Ace went down. At "nine" he was up, back-pedaling instinctively until Gomez reached him with a long straight right and sent him down again. Again he took "nine" before he reeled up and now the crowd was silent. Not one voice was raised in an urge for the kill. This was butchery—primitive slaughter—but the courage of Ace Jessel took their breath as it gripped my heart.

Ace fell blindly into a clinch, and another and another, till the Mankiller, furious, shook him off and sank his right to the body. Ace's ribs gave way like rotten wood, with a dry crack heard distinctly all over the stadium. A strangled cry went up from the crowd and Ace gasped thickly and fell to his knees.

"——Seven! Eight——" The great black form was still writhing on the canvas.

"——Nine!" And then a miracle happened; Ace was on his feet, swaying, jaw sagging, arms hanging limply.

Gomez glared at him, as if unable to understand how his foe could have risen again, then came plunging in to finish him. Ace was in dire straits. Blood blinded him. Both eyes were nearly closed, and when he breathed through his smashed nose, a red haze surrounded him. Deep cuts gashed cheek and cheek bones and his left side was a mass of torn flesh. He was going on fighting instinct alone now, and never again would any man doubt that Ace Jessel had a fighting heart.

Yet a fighting heart alone is not enough when the body is broken and battered, and mists of unconsciousness veil the brain. Before Gomez' terrific onslaught, Ace went down—broken—and the crowd knew that this time it was final.

When a man has taken the beating that Ace had taken, something more than body and heart must come into the game to carry him through. Something to inspire and stimulate him—to fire him to heights of superhuman effort!

Before leaving the training quarters, I had, unknown to Ace, removed the picture of Tom Molyneaux from its frame, rolled it up carefully and brought it to the stadium with me. I now took this, and as Ace's dazed eyes instinctively sought his corner, I held the portrait up, just outside the glare of the ring lights, so while illumined by them it appeared illusive and dim. It may be thought that I acted wrongly and selfishly, to thus seek to bring a broken man to his feet for more punishment—but the outsider cannot fathom the souls of the children of the fight game, to whom winning is greater than life, and losing, worse than death.

All eyes were glued on the prostrate form in the center of the ring, on the exhausted champion sagging against the ropes, on the referee's arm which rose and fell with the regularity of doom. I doubt if four men in the audience saw my action—but Ace Jessel saw!

I caught the gleam that came into his blood-shot eyes. I saw him shake his head violently. I saw him begin sluggishly to gather his long legs under him, while the drone of the referee rose as it neared its climax.

And as I live today, *the picture in my hands shook suddenly and violently!*

A cold wind passed like death across me and I heard the man next to me shiver involuntarily as he drew his coat closer about him. But it was no cold wind that gripped my soul as I looked, wide-eyed and staring, into the ring where the greatest drama of the boxing world was being enacted.

Ace, struggling, got his elbows under him. Bloody mists masked his vision; then, far away but coming nearer, he saw a form looming through the fog. A man—a short, massive black man, barrel-chested and mighty-limbed, clad in the long tights of another day—stood beside him in the ring! It was Tom Molyneaux, stepping down through the dead years to aid his worshiper—Tom Molyneaux, attired and ready as when he fought Tom Cribb so long ago!

AND Jessel was up! The crowd went insane and screaming. A supernatural might fired his weary limbs and lit his dazed brain. Let Gomez do his worst now—how could he beat a man for whom the ghost of the greatest of all black warriors was fighting?

For to Ace Jessel, falling on the astounded Mankiller like a blast from the Arctic, Tom Molyneaux's mighty arm was about his waist, Tom's eye guided his blows, Tom's bare fists fell with Ace's on the head and body of the champion.

The Mankiller was dazed by his opponent's sudden comeback—he was bewildered by the uncanny strength of the man who should have been fainting on the canvas. And before he could rally, he was beaten down by the long, straight smashes sent in with the speed and power of a pile-driver. The last blow, a straight right, would have felled an ox—and it felled Gomez for the long count.

As the astonished referee lifted Ace's hand, proclaiming him champion, the tall negro smiled and collapsed, mumbling the words, "Thanks, Mistah Tom."

Yes, to all concerned Ace's come-back seemed inhuman and unnatural—though no one saw the phantom figure except Tom—and one other. I am not going to claim that I

saw the ghost myself—because I didn't, though I did feel the uncanny movement of that picure. If it hadn't been for the strange thing that happened just after the fight, I would say that the whole affair might be naturally explained—that Ace's strength was miraculously renewed by a delusion resulting from his glimpse of the picture. For after all, who knows the strange depths of the human soul and to what apparently superhuman heights the body may be lifted by the mind?

BUT after the bout the referee, a steely-nerved, cold-eyed sportsman of the old school, said to me:

"Listen here! Am I crazy—or was there a fourth man in that ring when Ace Jessel dropped Gomez? For a minute I thought I saw a broad, squat, funny-looking negro standing there beside Ace! Don't grin, you bum! It wasn't that picture you were holding up—I saw that, too. It was a real man—and he looked like the one in the picture. He was standing there a moment—and then he was gone! God! That fight must have got on my nerves."

And these are the cold facts, told without any attempt to distort the truth or to mislead the reader. I leave the problem up to you:

Was it Ace's numbed brain that created the hallucination of ghostly aid—or did the phantom of Tom Molyneaux actually stand beside him, as he believes to this day?

As far as I am concerned, the old superstition is justified. I believe firmly today that a portrait is a door through which astral beings may pass back and forth between this world and the next—whatever the next world may be—and that a great, unselfish love is strong enough to summon the spirits of the dead to the aid of the living.

The Ghost of the Clergyman's Wife

By NOBLE FORREST

This is an absolutely true story. The author is a county health officer in the State of Virginia.

I AM the son of a Baptist clergyman, both my parents being of the purest Scottish blood and both of them natives of that country where so many things of an apparently occult nature have happened—Nova Scotia.

Three children, all girls, had gladdened the hearts of my parents and then had been called to another life before my birth. All the wealth of love and affection built up in the hearts of these God-fearing parents by these girl-children was lavished upon me from my birth and, as I now look back upon that time, I know of no way in which the ties between the three of us could have been more strongly knit together. My school record was an enviable one, and in my fifteenth year I accomplished two years in one in order to start college with some boyhood friends who were a year ahead of me in school. My mother was my most indefatigable helper in everything pertaining to my studies.

At this time we were living in one of the smaller cities of a Middle Western state and in December that year my mother died after an illness of only two and one-half days.

The funeral services were held in the church of which my father was pastor at the time and immediately afterwards her body was enclosed in an hermetically sealed metal casket and, accompanied by my father and myself, started on the long trip back to Nova Scotia in order that she might be buried beside the three children who had preceded her.

Upon arrival in Boston, Massachusetts, it was found necessary to wait over until the next day for a steamer sailing for Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. At that time my mother had a sister living in a small town twenty-eight miles out from Boston, and my father and I spent the night there.

Living with my aunt was a brother, younger than either my aunt or my mother, who had received from both of them the affection usually lavished upon the youngest member of the family. At this time he was in the early stages of pulmonary tuberculosis but was not considered to be in a critical condition as yet.

When we finally arrived at the old home in a small Nova Scotia town my mother's body was laid to rest beside the bodies of her three children. Afterward I spent two weeks in the home of an uncle, my father's brother. This brother was several years younger than my father—a strong, robust, healthy farmer, who never had been ill a day in his life.

Returning to our home in the Mid-Western city, our first move was to break up housekeeping and find suitable quarters in which to live. We rented three rooms from a member of my father's congregation. My father's study and office was a large room on the ground floor with a door opening directly on the front porch. In rear of this room was a bedroom connected with it by a doorway and this was used by my father. Above these two rooms was a larger bedroom on the second floor which I occupied. We boarded with the people from whom we rented the rooms.

About three months after we had moved into these rooms I seemed to wake in the middle of the night and I saw Mother, accompanied by two others, entering my room and approaching my bedside. There was no feeling of fear on my part, for the happening appeared to be perfectly natural. Having reached my bedside my mother bent over me and, in her well-remembered way, urged me to keep on with my school work, in which I had become somewhat lax, and to remember her teachings, to avoid evil companions and to comfort my father.

During all this time the two figures who had accompanied her appeared to wait for her, but my mind was so wholly fixed upon her that I gave them but the most casual attention and never thought to ask concerning them. Having finished, she and her companions left—but I have no memory of the manner of their leaving.

Arising in the morning, I went downstairs to breakfast and found my father and those with whom we lived, to be already seated at the breakfast table.

While approaching the table and before taking my seat, I exclaimed, "Oh, I had the most wonderful dream last night!"

Not a word was said in answer to my exclamation, but in my preoccupation I went right on to tell my experience.

At the conclusion, Mr. S——, with whom we were living, exclaimed, "Well! That is the most wonderful thing that I ever heard! Your father has just told us the same dream!"

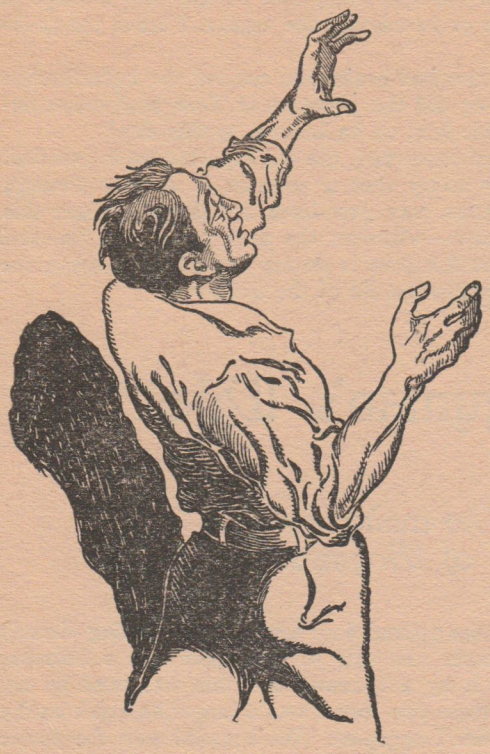
My father then told me that my mother had visited him also and in her talk she had urged him to encourage me to keep up my studies and to make a companion of me, watching always to see that I did not become associated with any characters whose influence might not be for my good.

Within a week after this vision my father received word that his brother, with whom I had stayed, had contracted pneumonia and had died after a very short illness.

Three days later we received word that my mother's brother, who had suffered from tuberculosis, had taken a sudden turn for the worse and had died.

I make no attempt to answer the question as to the meaning of this but yet the question remains, "Who were the two who accompanied my mother?"

The Strangest



Calloway had wronged a dozen women—and gone unpunished. But when he stood in the prisoner's dock, with his life hanging in the balance, the Other World took its weird revenge in its own way

FROM the first I felt that there was something strange and sinister about the Calloway trial.

The prisoner was a big dark man, about forty-five—one of those swaggering fellows, handsome in a rough, masculine way. He had lived in the county only about four or five years, and he'd got in with a bunch of rum-runners that had a reputation for being dangerous. He looked like that kind: lawless, hard-living and ruthless. He'd lived all over the world, and when he was in jail, before the trial, he would spin yarns about the places he'd seen. The sheriff and I would sit there like boys, drinking it in, feeling how tame our lives had been, compared with his. He'd been with bandits in Central America, on tramp schooners in the Baltic, with opium smugglers in China. Everywhere he'd lived, there had been a woman, maybe two or three. Even while he held you fascinated with his tales, you shuddered. He mocked at everything—honor and hell and women.

"Never was a woman I couldn't get," he said with an evil grin, "and I never loved any of 'em. But love—there's no such thing, anyway."

That was the mistake he made, for love and hate are the two strongest forces in the world—as he was destined to learn in an almost unbelievable way. The full story is the most amazing tale that ever came out of a courtroom.

During the several months just previous to Calloway's arrest a nasty situation had developed in the county, but the officers had never been able to get their hands on the guilty parties. Lately things had got even worse. The rum-runners' gang had split—over dividing the profits, I suppose—and they fought whenever their paths crossed. Every once in a while a dead man would be found lying along the road or in a cornfield, with a bullet above his heart. The gangs never squealed on each other. They kept out of court and took the law in their own hands.

Calloway got the credit for the killings. His lawless life in wild parts of the world, his hard and swaggering character, made him the logical suspect. But you could never get anything on him. He'd come in town, after a shooting, and laugh in the sheriff's face.

But finally they got him. His old tricks led to his undoing.

One day a big farmer named Stephans caught Calloway as he was running out of his woods. Stephans wasn't afraid of anything. He told Calloway to stop and when he didn't, he knocked him down and tied him. Then he searched the woods—and found what he was expecting. The body of a dead man with a bullet above the heart! The man was a farm hand who had drifted in a few months before and had been working here and there, wherever he could get a few days' work. He was a rough sort, and the impression was that he had served as a go-between for the bootleggers.

There was only one flaw in the case. Calloway, when the sheriff and Stephans searched him, didn't have a gun on him and they couldn't find any, although they searched the woods and the lanes from one end to the other. But the prosecuting attorney said he wasn't going to let Calloway get off now that they had their hands on him, so he called the grand jury and they thought there was enough evidence to indict Calloway for murder.

Calloway hired the best firm of lawyers in the county and they built up a defense that was hard to beat. All the State had against him was circumstantial evidence: the dead man, and Calloway caught running from the woods. Calloway swore, and stuck to it, that he had been there to meet a woman and that her husband had got wind of it and had come to catch them, and he had run away so as not to get the woman into trouble.

When the trial opened, Calloway's lawyer caused a sensation by announcing that the woman who had been with Calloway that evening had offered to testify in his defense.

The courtroom was crowded with people, as it always is for a trial of that kind, and everybody stared with curiosity as the woman came into the room and took her place just inside the barrier. Her name was Flynn and she was the wife of a farmer who'd made a bit of money, but who was the rough, sullen, ignorant kind that would never be anything better than he was. The woman was handsome, plump, black-haired, with snappy black eyes that looked restless and frightened as she sat there feeling the eyes of the curious staring at her. Her husband had come with her. He sat glowering ahead of him, looking at nobody.

AS I said, from the first I felt there was something queer about this trial—something uncanny. Although I had seen a good many such trials, I felt excited and nervous, as if I were waiting for something to happen. Calloway sat beside his lawyers, staring at his finger-nails, or at the ceiling; once in a while he'd send Mrs. Flynn a sharp, glittering look. But most of the time he just stared down at his hands.

He watched indifferently the business of getting a jury, and at last lost interest entirely and looked away. Getting a jury in a case like this is a long-drawn-out affair. First one side excuses a juror, and then the other. Finally they had to go out on the street and pick up men to take the place of the challenged jurors.

At last the jury was sworn, and as I was getting the names I noted particularly the seventh juror. He was a gentle, rather weakly man named Arthur Clark—a real-estate agent. I knew him slightly and I thought to myself that the State had made a mistake in leaving him on. He'd never

Murder Trial—

By a COURT BAILIFF Who Would Lose His Job if His Real Name Were Given

convict a man of murder. He was too mild and easy-going.

All of a sudden I felt a strange cold shudder go over me. It was the sort of feeling you have when you say someone is walking over your grave. I thought to myself, "Something terrible happened just then," but when I looked around the courtroom everything was just the same as usual. The lawyers fussed around with their papers, the judge yawned, people in the back of the courtroom strained their necks and stared. The sun poured in at the dusty windows. I went over and stood in the sun, trying to warm myself out of that deathly chill but it wouldn't leave me. My hands were icy cold, and I was afraid; I didn't know what of, but I was afraid.

Finally my eyes wandered to the seventh juror and stopped there in horrified amazement. He was a little, pale man slouched down in his chair like the others. I told myself I was crazy, letting my imagination get the best of me. But all the time I argued with myself, I knew that something had happened to him. This wasn't the gentle, smiling man who had been sworn in a few minutes before.

HE was naturally pale, but his color became ghastly, the white waxy color of a man who has lain in a hypnotic state for a long time. His face, its smiling good-nature erased as if with one stroke, became stern and cold. Somehow his eyes sent a cold flood of fear over me again. They were empty and sunken—like the hollows in a skull. When he looked at the prisoner, I saw a light glow in them as if someone had just thrown a torch into a pit.

Calloway had begun to feel as I did, without knowing what it was that affected him. He grew restless and nervous. Once he shuddered and pulled his coat closer about him. I believe he thought the woman was trying to give him the evil eye. He'd told the sheriff and me that things like that happened in strange parts of the world—he said it had happened to other men, but not to him. He was too strong.

His eyes kept darting to the woman, angry and suspicious. The sweat broke out on his forehead. He stood up once, but the judge rapped sharply for him to sit down. After that, he sat with his fists clenched, as if he was resisting with all his strength the thing he felt beating about him, like bat's wings. And no one but me saw the cavernous eyes of the seventh juror, with the light in them like a torch flung into a bottomless pit, resting on the prisoner with terrible intensity.

I couldn't keep my eyes away from Clark; they kept going back to him with the fascination of fear. What had happened? I asked myself, trembling.

Suddenly I wanted to shriek at Calloway and warn him—against what? I did not know.

A lawyer asked for a book, and when I went to get it, my hands were trembling so that I couldn't control them. My knees were so weak I could hardly stand.

No one else seemed to sense anything unusual. At recess Calloway went out with the sheriff, sending the woman another desperate, vehement look, not even glancing towards the jury. I had to speak of it to somebody, so I went up to the judge as the jury was filing in.

"Judge," I said in a low tone, "look at that seventh juror.

How white he is—he's queer——" I paused uncertainly.

"It's the poor ventilation," the judge answered sensibly—"lack of fresh air. Some men are affected more than others. He's the pale type, too."

He studied Clark for a few minutes. Apparently he didn't see anything wrong with his appearance. "He's healthy enough, I think, Dan," he said, and dismissed the matter.

They had put a character witness on the stand, and Calloway turned to look at him. At that moment his eyes met those of the seventh juror. He sprang to his feet and gave the most terrible shriek I have ever heard.

"My God," he screamed, "that man's dead——" Then he crumpled up on the floor in a faint. I never saw a man faint like that before.

We carried him into the judge's room and called a doctor, and after a while he came to.

"He's all right," the doctor said carelessly. "Too much poison liquor, that's all. It makes them see things."

When Calloway got to his feet, he tottered like a man who had been through a long sickness. His eyes were blank with fear.

"Rest a few minutes more," the doctor told him. "They'll wait for you."

He sank into a chair and sat there for at least ten minutes, his hands on his knees, his eyes staring ahead of him at nothing. When he got up finally, he was still white, but the horror had gone out of his eyes.

"WELL," he said with careless roughness, "we're holding up the show. I'm all right now, Doc."

I watched him as he entered the courtroom, and saw his eyes meet those of the man in the jury box, grimly and defiantly. He had his own code of courage, Calloway had. The other simply stared back at him with horrible, unchanging eyes.

The lawyers went ahead with the case, arguing over points of law, making a big fuss over technicalities, while all the time a strange and terrible conflict was going on between the prisoner and the seventh juror. Nothing you could put your finger on. The smile on one man's lips, the transparent whiteness of another's face. Little enough to base a tragedy on. Little enough to cause that weak sense of terror that gripped me and made the whole trial seem one long night-

mare. It wasn't strange, perhaps, that younger men—strong with life, warm-blooded, living in the present—didn't see what was going on then. But I am an old man and maybe I am a little nearer to that strange spiritual world that surrounds us.

They examined Stephans, whose evidence was damaging to the prisoner, and then they put Mrs. Flynn on the stand. Calloway hung breathless on her testimony. He sat still, looking at her with eyes that never wavered. Her evidence meant life and death to him, and he knew it.

ALL the time she spoke, Calloway's eyes were on her face, and the seventh juror's gaze never shifted from Calloway. An uncanny hate glowed in those deep-set eyes, and although I did not like Calloway, or anything he stood for, I felt sick with fear and pity for him.

Mrs. Flynn glanced at Calloway when she started to tell her story and I saw that he still had his way with her. She was telling the truth, shaming herself before her husband and her neighbors, for the sake of this man to whom she had been merely another plaything for an hour or two. She told the truth, because she loved him and would make any sacrifice to save him from death. Her husband leaned forward heavily. His eyes, like Calloway's, never left her face, except when he looked at the prisoner, and I saw a look of helpless hate smoldering behind the coarse mask of his face.

The woman answered all questions clearly and without hesitation. No one had any doubt that she was telling the truth. She was a good witness.

"I had gone to the woods to meet Mr. Calloway," she said. "I went there every evening while my husband was doing the chores. He never bothered where I was, but that evening something must have made him suspicious. He followed me. There were a lot of dry twigs and leaves on the path and he made a noise as he walked. We heard him coming.

"I told Mr. Calloway, 'For heavens sake, go away. That's my husband.'

"At first he laughed. He said he wasn't afraid of any husband living. But I begged him, for my sake, to get away before we were caught. My husband was pretty close then and Mr. Calloway turned and ran. I went on home. My husband said he had been looking for a lost calf and went on through the woods, but after about ten minutes he came back. I didn't see Mr. Calloway again, until I saw him here." Her dark eyes stared unseeingly at the crowd.

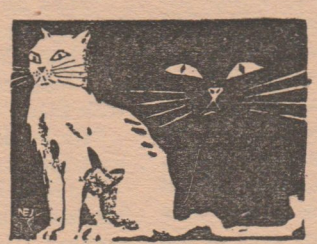
"You and Calloway had been pretty intimate, hadn't you?" cut in the prosecutor.

She moved in her chair, twisted her handkerchief and finally said, "Yes," in a low tone. I saw her husband clench his big fists.

"Did he ever tell you where he got the money he spent on you?"

"No," she replied.

"As a matter of fact—" the lawyer stood up and shook his finger at her—"this man is a criminal character, and is accused of rum-running and robbery as well as murder. You know that, don't you?" His voice rose to a harsh snarl.



Calloway's lawyers were on their feet objecting.

Mrs. Flynn said firmly. "I don't know about that. He was always good to me."

I saw Calloway's tensely clasped hands relax a little. He shot one look at the man in the jury box—a jeering, taunting look that would have made any human being want to leap at his throat. But the eyes of the man in the jury box never changed.

Mrs. Flynn went back to her place beside her husband, and he gave her a smoldering, angry look. She would have a bad time ahead of her, that poor woman. All for the sake of a man who would laugh at her, when he was free, for being such a fool about him.

Calloway was in high spirits when they led him back to prison at the close of the day's trial. His fear was gone.

"He can't beat me," he laughed excitedly. "Even dead, he can't beat me."

The sheriff looked at me. "Do you suppose he's going off his head?" he asked. "He keeps talking about some fellow that's come back to life to get even with him."

"I expect there are a lot of them would come back if they could," I said. "That woman's going to get him out of this."

"It looks that way," he returned. Neither of us doubted that Calloway was guilty. He had too much against him. His record with the bootleggers, his reputation for gaudy sin, his wandering nature——

The case went to the jury the next day. Calloway laughed with his lawyers. He was too confident. Things always went his way, he said. "I believe in my luck." He offered to bet that they'd return their verdict in an hour.

But they didn't come in all night, and next morning when I took them out to breakfast they hadn't come to any decision. I noticed one thing. They had begun to look at Clark as if they were afraid.

At noon I let them out again and still they hadn't come to any decision. The other jurymen avoided walking with Clark, and I found him beside me. Once his sleeve brushed mine, and my flesh crawled. I don't know how I ever got down the street without shrieking and running away, as I wanted to do. When we got to the restaurant the other men crowded together at two tables and left me and Clark to eat alone.

"I don't believe I want anything to eat," I said.

He smiled. It was the first time he had changed expression since the trial began. When he smiled he looked like a skeleton. The cold sweat stood out on me.

"I never eat," he said in a thin voice that sounded clammy. It wasn't Clark's voice. It was a voice unlike any I had ever heard before.

IF I had had the strength I would have got up and run from him, duty or no duty. But I was too weak to move. I sat in my chair staring at him with terror in my heart.

In those awful moments the whole truth flashed before my mind. With a deadly certainty I *knew* that I was face to face with some supernatural force stronger than any man! Every tingling nerve in my body was aware of the identity of the Thing, and stronger than ever before I could feel its black and terrible hate for Callaway—a hate so bitter that it had defied death itself and crashed through all the barriers between the living and the dead!

I was like a man in a trance as I whispered, "What did he do to you?"

He saw that I had pierced the truth. "He took my wife," he said, "and she didn't want to go. When I found her, she had killed herself.

"And then," he added, "I killed myself, also."

All around us people were coming and going: eating, joking, arguing, dreaming of love and money, never guessing the terror they brushed against as they passed.

The seventh juror leaned toward me. "Then I was Benito Condi," he told me. "My wife was a beautiful woman—like a flower—like all the flowers in the world! Have you ever seen a woman like that? She loved me. She wouldn't look at that brute. Her kisses were all for me. Her sweet, loving caresses. He wanted her the more because she denied him. So one day, when I was gone, he carried her off—and took her——"

If possible, his unearthly pallor deepened. "Since that day I have been waiting for the day of reckoning. Fifteen years. But there is no time where I am. No common revenge could satisfy me—I wanted something that would make

him suffer all the hell that I have endured because of him."

He grinned, his terrible skeleton grin. "It won't be very long," he said, "not very long—they are turning."

"You mean," I stammered, "they thought he was innocent?"

He nodded and clapped his pale hands together as if he were enjoying a great joke. But he didn't make a sound.

When we went back to the courtroom, the sheriff told me: "Calloway's losing his nerve. I never saw a man go to pieces the way he has. All of a sudden. He was counting on an early verdict."

One of the jurymen told me afterwards what had happened in the juryroom while they tried to reach a verdict. He had to tell somebody—there had been something so queer and incomprehensible about the whole thing. Even now, he told me, he couldn't understand——

They had gone in, convinced of Calloway's innocence. The woman's story had rung true, and although they all felt Calloway was no good they didn't believe he had been guilty of the murder. The first ballot stood eleven to one for acquittal. To their amazement, when they talked it over, they learned that Clark was the one man who had voted for conviction.

"YOU'VE got to be pretty sure," the foreman told him, "when you hang a man."

Clark grinned.

The jurymen looked at each other queerly. They all knew Clark to some degree. A gentle-natured man, always taking in stray dogs and cats—easy-going to the point of weakness. This wasn't like Clark. His eyes looked strange. What was the matter with him?

They began to talk, arguing excitedly, as if fighting something. And yet Clark hadn't said anything, hadn't forced his opinions on them. He'd just sat there, and smiled.

Gradually, without seeming effort, he put doubt in their minds. They couldn't fight him off.

"The gun," he said with confidence, when they brought that up," is at the bottom of the river. It was weighted and it sank in the mud. But it's Calloway's gun."

"How do you know?" the foreman asked him. "You're so sure——"

Clark grinned again. They said he grinned as if he knew everything in the world, all the evil and the horror—the things that decent men turn away from.

"I know," he said.

They were afraid of him now. They saw each other's hands trembling, and they wanted to get out of that place, away from him. The air felt stifling, cold and damp, as if they were in a cave somewhere. During those few minutes when they were let out for meals, they welcomed the sun like prisoners.

The vote changed slowly. Some of them, the stronger-minded and least impressionable, held out longest. As each vote was taken, *he* stared at them with his horrible, cavernous eyes. When he moved closer, they shrank back. He bared his teeth, and his face looked like a skull.

"The man is guilty!" he said, in his voice that was like the touch of clammy fingers. "Do you dare to say he shall not pay the penalty?"

Two men still voted for acquittal: the foreman and the juryman who told me what had happened. The man who stood there in Clark's body went up to them and touched them with his cold fingers. They had never known what terror was before, but they knew it then.

"You are doing wrong," he said gently. "The man is guilty."

On the next vote he counted the ballots as they dropped into the box from hands that trembled. They said that the eyes of the seventh juror glowed like balls of spurting flame, as the last one fell.

When they rapped on the door to notify me that they were ready to return their verdict, I felt my flesh crawl. I had a feeling what it was going to be, and I knew that the dead had been victorious in his duel with the living. The judge came in and took his place. They brought in Calloway and he sank into a chair with his head drooping forward on his breast, his shoulders sagging. He looked twenty years older. I noticed a streak of gray in his hair.

THE jury filed in. I watched the seventh juror as he took his place and turned his eyes towards the prisoner. In that look there was a terrible triumph.

The foreman read the verdict: "Guilty of murder in the first degree."

Calloway leaped to his feet like an animal that has been shot. "You can't do that!" he babbled wildly. "He's not alive, I tell you. He wants to drag me over there with him. I won't go! I'm innocent!"

He fell writhing on the floor in a fit.

Conviction of murder in the first degree means electrocution in our State. All the time Calloway was in the death cell he raved like a man out of his head. He asked to see me, and they let him talk to me for a few minutes out of hearing of the guard.

"Dan," he pleaded, "you saw it. You know what that was! My God, why couldn't they all see it? That wasn't Clark in that chair. It was a ghost. It's not right——

"To have him beat me like that," he raved on—"a fellow that couldn't do anything but play the piano and raise flowers! But I'm not dead yet! I'll beat him at the very door. Tell them I'm innocent, Dan! I didn't do it!"

To the very last he insisted that he was innocent.

They electrocuted him a month after his conviction. He raved all the way to the electric chair. The guards were as white as dead men themselves when it was over. They said they never wanted to go through such an experience again.

It was about a year after Calloway's death that Flynn, the husband of the woman who had loved Calloway, was shot

A Courtroom Thronged With Ghosts

"It has often occurred to me that if we could only know it, the courtroom must be thronged with the spirits of wronged and murdered people trying to break through the wall of silence to bring justice or revenge to their enemies.

"Has any one of them ever succeeded? This story is my answer; it is a tale of a passionate love and a burning hate that were too strong to die."

The above statement is made by a court bailiff who has spent thirty years in the courtroom.

in a hijacking battle, and made his confession before he died.

He declared that Calloway was innocent, not only of that murder but of any of the others.

Flynn himself was the killer. He was a perfect shot, and he had been in the rum-running game from the first. Calloway was just a bragger, Flynn said; he told what he did here and there, but he was yellow and a coward. Women—yes—he told the truth there. He was always after women who belonged to other men. Liked to show that he could take them away by snapping his finger.

Just as he had taken Flynn's wife.

Flynn knew they had been there together. He didn't find Calloway but his hired man had seen them and he came mocking at Flynn and sneering—and Flynn had shot him. When Calloway was arrested for the murder, he found that his wife's lover had been trapped and he kept still and hoped they would punish him for it. His slow, heavy mind wasn't able to make the most of the chance. He just sat back and waited for the others to act, and if it hadn't been for that other—his companion in hate—he would have had to watch Calloway go his way free and triumphant.

Calloway was cleared of the crime. But he was dead then. He had gone to answer for his sins, whatever they were. There were enough of them.

A strange thing happened on the day of the execution. I had gone to the prison, out of a feeling of pity, so that Calloway might have one friend not far away when he walked to his death.

As I stood outside the gate Clark came up and stood beside me. He looked worn and haggard, as if the spirit that had possession of him, so much stronger than his own, had almost worn out his frail body. He stood with his deep, cavernous, smoldering eyes on the great iron door—waiting.

Finally the door opened. The reporters who had seen the execution came out.

"Dead," they told us briefly, as they hurried away.

For one moment the eyes lit up in a terrible glow of triumph. Benito Condi had seen the end of his revenge.

I turned to go down the steps, then looked back. Clark was standing staring up at the somber gray walls of the prison, with a look of amazed repugnance.

"For heaven's sake," he demanded, shuddering, "what am I doing out here?"

He was once more the gentle, easy-going man whose mild eyes looked with friendliness at the world. Benito Condi had gone, leaving no memory of his strange tenancy behind him.

The doctors described what had happened as a nervous collapse. Clark had a lot of business worries, it seemed, and they said that sometimes such a condition makes queer changes in a man. I let them believe it, if they chose. None of them knew the truth. No one ever did know the truth but Calloway and me. And I never told it, until now.

The Bride and the Open Grave

A True Story by

DOCTOR ROBERT H. CHILTON

of Princess Anne, Virginia

IN 1910 I was employed by a lumber company in Louisiana as company's physician. A patient of mine had a fall which alarmed her to such an extent that I sent her into the city to her parents. This was during her seventh month of pregnancy. On the morning of August 2nd, 1910, I was awakened about 3:00 A.M. and, raising myself on my right elbow, I looked out of the east window of my room into a thicket of gum-trees. There I saw this patient on a double bed in the northwest corner of a room papered with tan-colored paper. There were two physicians, one of whom had been my professor in surgery, the other a classmate; a trained nurse of my acquaintance, my mother and my old negro mammy. The vision slowly faded out, but so impressed me that I dressed and caught the through freight to the city and arrived to find that the woman had undergone a very difficult labor and had called for me at or near three o'clock in the morning.

In 1913 I was teaching at a college part-time during the day and two hours in the evenings. The principal of the college was a divorcé of some fifteen years, an expert accountant and a man highly thought-of in the South as an educator. He fell in love with one of the young lady students but was worried on account of religious scruples about remarrying. He talked with me on almost every possible occasion about his love-affair.

On one of these occasions, while he was talking to me, there suddenly appeared a vision of a well-known church which the young lady attended. This was to the left of the scene. Front center stood the young lady in bridal apparel—waiting. Leading almost from her feet was a path of cement walk, midway of which stood a tall "old maidish" woman in her thirties, dressed in deep mourning. Beyond and to the rear of her was an open tomb.

I told him of the vision and he interpreted it as meaning his release by the death of his divorced wife. I took it to mean his death. Four months later he went insane and died of abscess of the brain—and at his funeral, for the first time, I saw his ex-wife, who answered to the description of the woman in mourning at the tomb.

Can anyone explain these two visions? While I saw them I seemed not to exist in the flesh, but had an unusually light and buoyant feeling as though I had been freed from my heavy (185 lbs.) body. Everything about me faded away, leaving me the impression of being in infinite space, far from earth, with only the vision before me.

Some days ago I was to operate on a woman and went to her residence, along with a nurse to assist me. Her husband approached my car. It suddenly seemed to me that I felt, if not an antagonistic feeling towards him, a feeling of opposition.

I said to him, before we even greeted each other: "Well, you have decided to put this operation off?"

He seemed much agitated for a moment and then began to explain his reasons for the delay.

On many occasions at night I have awakened from a sound sleep, got to thinking of some serious case and, while dressing, have had some member of the patient's family call me to go to the patient.

Of course, we can explain the first instance and the last ones, but how did the mind find material to construct the second—the vision of the grave? Telepathy would explain my being aroused from sleep by the woman's calling me; I might even have received the details of the scene at her bedside by telepathy; but this does not explain the prophetic vision of death and the still-waiting would-be bride and the ex-wife at the open tomb.

She Walks in Beauty

When a girl is passionately in love—and her lover dies—can she ever find happiness again? Alyce Graham did—in the most amazing way

By FREDERICK GRAHAM

As told to Anatole Feldman

A FEW years ago I was the engineer in charge of a piece of railroad work in the swamps of Alabama. The project was about one hundred and forty miles from my home in Birmingham. Due to unexpected difficulties encountered in the work, we were far behind our schedule and I had determined to stay there on the job until completed, which would be some few days before Christmas. Then I planned a long vacation at home with my only daughter, who was rapidly blooming into lovely womanhood.

Pushing my men for all they were worth, I remained locked up in the interior for almost six months. During this time, with fair regularity I received letters from my daughter.

At first they were the usual run of school-girl chatter. She gave me the little personal details of her life, that meant so much to her and so little to anyone else except myself.

After a time a new note crept into her letters to me. She was in love. She had found her perfect man, her ideal. Of course she was ridiculously happy, and her happiness was mine. If Alyce had found the one man who interpreted life and love for her and who returned her love in kind, I was well satisfied. She had been motherless now for years and as my work often took me away from home, I could not devote to her the time and attention she deserved. I knew that she would find fulfillment in a happy, domestic life.

Towards the end of my stay in the swamps she wrote me of her engagement. They were only waiting for my return at Christmas time to celebrate the wedding. Enclosed with her letter to me was one from her fiancé. He told me of his great love for Alyce and of how he was looking forward to the meeting with me. He signed it unaffectedly, "Allen." It was a simple, straightforward letter, and it appealed to me immensely.

I was happy in their happiness.

Then just a few days before the job was completed I received a telegram which destroyed every dream I had ever cherished. It must be understood here that I had no warning, no premonition, nothing to prepare me.

The wire was brutal in its stark reality:

Come home at once. Alyce dying.

I leaped into action, turned the remaining work over to my superintendent, commandeered an idle engine and lurched over the forty miles of track we had just laid, to the nearest railroad junction.

I care to say little about that trip home. Suffice it that I agonized over every one of those hundred and forty-odd miles. I aged more in that day than in the preceding ten years.

WHEN I arrived in Birmingham late that night, I raced to my home on the outskirts of the city as fast as a cab could take me. But they told me there that Alyce was in the Washington Hospital. For the second time that night I broke all traffic laws through the quiet city streets.

I was permitted to see her for only a few minutes. There on the bed—crushed, broken—lay my poor Alyce. A merciful state of coma relieved her of her agony. As I gazed at her pale, wan face, the first tears in many years furrowed my cheeks. If it had been humanly possible, I would have gladly taken her place on the bed, exchanging my worn, spent life for her young one still to be fulfilled. What father wouldn't be willing to make the sacrifice?

In her delirium she did not recognize me, but before

they took me out of that cold, white hospital room, it seemed to me that she relaxed and breathed more easily. I prayed that my presence at her bedside would help her.

As I walked the hollow, resounding corridors that night, they told me the story—what little there was to tell.

That morning Allen had called for Alyce in his car. They started for the city to do some belated Christmas shopping. That was all that was definitely known. A half hour later their wrecked machine was discovered on a sharp curve in the road. Allen was extricated in a dying condition and did not live to reach the hospital. And my girl—even now she was struggling with the dark forces of death! An examination of the demolished car indicated that a steering knuckle had broken, and instead of taking the curve, the machine had swerved straight ahead to crash against a giant oak—a shapeless wreck of twisted steel.

MORNING came and the doctors told me that there was a slim hope that she would pull through. I prayed.

My time for the next week was divided between the hospital corridor, the restaurant on the corner and a room in the hotel across the street. Allen was buried. I did not, would not, go to the funeral. Unkind as the thought may have been, I held him responsible for my girl's condition. I was bitter and unforgiving.

Alyce lived. In a few weeks' time I brought her home. Though she was not out of danger by any means, I nourished the hope that with constant care and attention I would win her back to health again. She was very brave and never once did I hear her complain. Hers had been a double tragedy; for on the threshold of life, not only had she lost her lover, but it was very doubtful if she herself would ever live to know again the ecstasy of love.

I could not understand her fortitude. She shamed me by her patience and graciousness even throughout the periods of her greatest suffering. At times, I was surprised to see on her face a faint, indescribable smile. When she was unaware of my gaze, I would see her lips form the one word—Allen. It was pathetic, heart-breaking.

I questioned her one day.

"Alyce," I said, "why do you smile?"

"Did I, Father?" she replied.

"Yes, dear girl," I answered gently. "You were smiling and your lips formed a word——"

"It was 'Allen,' Father. *His* name I spoke. At times I feel him very close to me."

"You are not unhappy then, dear?" I asked.

"No, Father. Not unhappy when Allen is near. I know he will always be near me—that we are still to have our love together—that we are parted only for a little while."

I could not speak. I held her hand a bit closer in my own. To me the grave was the last resting-place—and beyond it, nothing.

She read my thoughts.

"Father, don't feel that way. I—I *know* that sometimes he comes to me. Though I can't see him, I feel his presence. I feel his hand in my hair, his fingers caress my cheek and if I close my eyes, the velvet of his lips touch mine. You do not believe, but I know—and some day you will know, too. And so I am happy—happy in waiting for the time when we shall be united again."

Before she was aware of the tears in my eyes, I disengaged my hand and retired.

No, I did not believe. At that time I never thought I would believe. But it would have taken a man with a heart of stone to have tried to argue her out of her delusions.

Months passed. Alyce's condition remained unchanged. Only her face became more delicately molded, refined and spiritual.

Spring came. One day I was pleased to note an expression of happy, excited expectancy on her face. She smiled at me over the breakfast table and her look gave me the impression that she was nourishing in her own mind some delightful secret. The slight flush in her cheeks made me happy.

That night was warm. A full moon rose early in all its splendid glory. The nurse and I, with infinite care and many pillows, made Alyce comfortable in an immense armchair on the veranda. From where she sat, she looked down the broad, silvery path of the moon, across the spacious lawns to where the path lost itself in a group of shapely elms. She was smiling to herself and seemed lost in reverie; and so, not to disturb her day-dreams, I went round the corner of the porch to enjoy my after-dinner cigar.

It is possible I dozed. At all events, I was brought back to reality by a blistered finger caused by the burning cigar. An hour must have passed since I had first sat down there, for the moonlight was no longer a silvery path on the lawn but a dimming, diffused radiance. I reclined in my chair and was dimly aware of voices from around the corner of the porch. It was a full minute before it penetrated into my dull consciousness that someone was talking to Alyce. I heard a mellow baritone, and Alyce's light and eager voice answering softly.

Who could be talking to Alyce? I had heard no one arrive. A pause—then Alyce addressed the speaker as "Allen." Strange—a curious coincidence. Allen had been the name of her lover.

My God! The man was making love to her! Didn't he know, didn't he know——? I strained my ears to catch what they said. Snatches of conversation came to me.

"Allen, dear, I knew you would come. I've been waiting so long."

"And, dear heart, I've been watching over you, too, waiting—waiting—for a long time."

"You're handsome tonight, dear. Beau Ideal, gallant."

"And you, sweetheart, are lovelier than I have ever seen you."

My brain was in a whirl. I could not believe my ears. Who could this lover be? Alyce talking to her illusion? But no. For the illusion answered! My brain staggered in search of the explanation. Some old friend of hers, no doubt, going through a pretty bit of play-acting. That was it! Exquisitely done! Lovely! I relaxed again.

ONLY a moment did I lie back in ease, enjoying mentally the pretty idyll going on round the corner of the porch. The voice, the low melodious male voice, was talking.

"Come, let us walk—out into the moonlight."

A simple sentence but it brought me to my feet with a smothered exclamation. But something held me back. What was to follow? I distinctly heard the sound of a chair pushed back. And then—I could not believe my eyes. Was I dreaming? Had I suddenly lost all sanity? My cigar burnt deep into my fingers, and I knew that I was awake.

Down the broad, terraced stairs walked Alyce with the stranger! The moonlight shimmered on her hair like a bridal wreath. It seemed to me that never before had she looked so stately, so regal, as she walked into the night on the arm of her mysterious lover.

Their heads nodded closely together as lovers' heads always do on a languorous night in spring. In a moment they were lost to sight in the group of shadowy elms; and the paralyzing indecision that gripped me was over.

An instant later I had turned the corner of the porch. To my utter amazement there sat Alyce in her chair—still, aloof, like a woman chiseled in marble—with a divine smile upon her lips. And I knew—what a strange sensation of perfect peace—that Death, the Great Romanticist, had claimed her.

Wistfully, I gazed down at her fallen crutches, and saw they had formed in the liquid moonlight the symbol of peace beyond understanding—the Cross of God.

When the Yankee Ace Came Back

The German guns turned vengefully on my crippled plane—and I faced death! Then—did my buddy return from the shadows to help me?

By

LIEUTENANT "PINKY" MARTIN
of the Army Air Corps

AERODROME "A" was in a blue funk, with the flight commander a bundle of nerves.

"Dammit," he snapped at mess that night—his name was Major Harlow—"it isn't bad enough to lose Pitkin and Marland yesterday and have three machines lost today, but now Haskell is missing! Where the devil can he be?"

Haskell was our ace of aces. He was a queer chap, hardly more than twenty-eight, but already he was credited with eighteen of the enemy's planes. Whenever he'd get one he'd come back to the officers' quarters and sit down at the battered old piano in our lounging room and bang out wild music that chilled us to the bone by its savagery. Every time he got another score he would do that. His favorite was Rachmaninoff's *Prelude* in C sharp minor. It begins with a stately movement that quickens as the music goes into strange chords in the upper register, and then bursts into crashing sounds of wild frenzy, like "Archie" bursting all around you and big guns spitting death down below. Then, diminishing in tempo and tone, it suggests a tortured soul, dropping to earth, mangled and crushed as the plane piles up.

They say it's the leitmotif of the Russian composer's tempestuous life. He fancied he faced some terrifying and unconquerable power, Fate or Destiny. The helpless horror he experienced before this fanciful Fate, the impossibility of escape except in an opium-induced mirage of paradise, shows in the music.

Anyway, that was what Haskell played whenever he brought down an enemy plane. It gave us the willies to hear him, with his tall, slight frame hunched over that old battered piano, his blond head wagging in time to the music, his long hands spanning the keys and crashing out those terrific chords, he played with an ecstasy that was close to insanity.

Then, quite calmly, he'd get up and grin at the startled look on our faces, and amble off for forty winks.

But Haskell evidently had overplayed his hand. His ambition was to bring down the Black Knight—Von Ehrenfeld, the German ace. How many Allied planes Von Ehrenfeld had bagged, I don't know, but there were a lot. A jolly fellow he was! Once he nearly had me and we tried to shoot it out, up there in the sky. But our ammunition gave out and then we flew alongside each other for a while,

he grinning at me and waving a hand as friendly as you please. Never seemed to hold any grudge at all. All in the business of war, you know. If he got you, that was your hard luck. If you got him, probably he'd go down smiling just the same. Friendly as the devil!

He drove a big Fokker with the nose painted black. That's why we called him the Black Knight. Toodles Haskell had been after him a score of times. Only that morning he had started out to find him—and he hadn't come back. He had been due hours before. That was why the Major was worried.

"Dammit," he complained petulantly, "we've got plenty of hard luck on our hands! The C. O. has given orders we've got to bring down the Knight. He's raising too much deviltry. He bombed Aerodrome 'B' this morning and fooled around over the lines, thumbing his nose at us. We're up against it. Toodles was the only man who could get him, and now Toodles is gone. Who the devil," he exclaimed harshly, "is playing that damn piano?"

I listened and caught my breath.

"It's Toodles," I cried, jumping up. "That's the *Prelude* in C sharp minor!"

Tiny Minot leaped to his feet. Tiny had been Toodles' buddy in a way—the way a small dog chums around with a big one. Pure hero worship, on his part. Tiny ran from the table to the door that opened on the lounging room. For a second he stood there with the door pushed slightly open, looking in.

Then he turned to us. His face was as white as death, his jaw sagging. He took two or three staggering steps toward us and nearly collapsed. The Major jumped up.

"What is it?" he cried. "What the devil is going on in there?"

He started for the door, but Tiny stopped him.

"For God's sake, don't go in there," he gasped, his face ashen. "Don't go in, Major. It's Toodles. But he's dead! For God's sake, Major!"

But the Major wouldn't listen. He strode past Tiny and threw open the door. The music had ceased. The Major turned and looked at Tiny questioningly.

"Are you drunk, Minot?" he snapped. "Or are you crazy?"

We crowded around the door. The room was empty!

But before anyone could say a word the telephone rang. It was the operator at headquarters.

In the stillness we heard every word.

"Plane BH4-R2 crossed enemy lines at 4,000 feet up when attacked by enemy plane, Fokker design, at 5:38. Observer reports a combat ensued and plane BH4-R2 was seen to stagger as if pilot had been hit and then start to glide. Flames burst from plane when down to 1,000 feet. Believe plane crashed behind enemy lines. Records show this plane from your station. Report."

We stood there staring at each other, unable to believe or to understand the strange thing that had happened. The BH4-R2 was Toodles' plane.

THAT night we held a council about the Black Knight. He had been regarded as Toodles' own. But now who'd get him? The Major cursed plenty and harped on the reputation of Aerodrome "A." At last he said he himself would lead a flight next morning, and that we would stay up until we got the Knight or until nobody was left.

Early next morning we were tuning up in the gray mists that hang over France just before dawn, when the enemy staged a raid. We heard the drone of the motors, and the Major ordered us up to meet them. I had a Sopwith, one of those blundering old buses left over from heaven knows when. But it had a mighty fine Lewis gun in it, and I went up, alone, in the hurry of the take-off.

I don't know how it ever happened. The Germans had a knack of taking advantage of every low-hanging cloud and hiding themselves for a time, to swoop down when least expected. I was young at the game, having arrived at the Aerodrome only a few weeks before from the English training fields. The Sop started to act up. In a minute I was behind our patrol and soon I found myself over the enemy lines with the Archie bursting dangerously close. I zigzagged and was attempting to find my way out of the mess when a burst sounded just behind the tail of my plane. I was scared, I can tell you, and looked around to see how much of the plane was left—when out of the mist came humming a big Fokker with a black nose!

It was Von Ehrenfeld all right. He hung just above me and came riding into my tail where the Archie had been a minute before. He was so close I could see the grin on his face.

Down below they had a searchlight going and it was flashing all around. They picked us up in a minute and the Archie stopped. Some flares went up, lighting the ground beautifully, and I could see some deep craters down there. I wondered which one of them I'd land in and whether I'd be dead when I reached the ground or burn to death after cracking up in one of those holes.

BELIEVE me, I could see old John W. Death sitting on my wings, waiting to drop me off into space.

Von Ehrenfeld opened up with his machine-gun. I gave an exhibition of spiraling and banking that ought to have won me something if the C. O. or the flight commander had been present. But I wasn't thinking of medals just then. I wanted to get away from the Black Knight and duck for home.

Ehrenfeld's bullets whizzed around me. They spat into the fuselage and one of them nicked me in the shoulder. It felt like a red-hot needle. But if that was all I got out of it, I'd be thankful.

I think Von Ehrenfeld was playing with me, giving me a little scare before sending my plane crashing to earth. I tried to climb, thinking I could get above him and get my Lewis into action—but my engine missed fire. One of his bullets had done something to it.

He was alongside of me now, thumbing his nose at me. I cursed him and shook my fist. In another second he was up above me while I worked with that damnable engine. I knew he was maneuvering to get behind me and fire into the tail of my plane. That would be the end of the show—for me.

He banked. He zoomed above me. He swung around. And just when I had begun to despair of getting away, I saw another plane swooping down toward us. It came out of the clouds from away up somewhere, looking as thin and misty as the clouds themselves. But on the side of it was something that made me gasp. In big, black letters and figures was the designation "BH4-R2." It was Toodles' bus!

Watching the rev. counter with one eye, out of the corner of the other I saw the plane coming toward us. It gave me a queer sensation at the pit of my stomach. Toodles was supposed to be dead! Had he succeeded in getting away? I wondered. Had he been playing 'possum somewhere, waiting to catch Ehrenfeld off his guard? But they said his bus had crashed.

Suddenly I remembered the crazy happening of the night before when Tiny said he had seen Toodles. Up there in the air, with those drifting clouds coming between us and the earth, shutting us off as though somebody had dropped a curtain and the three of us were backstage alone, I tell you it was a queer feeling I had.

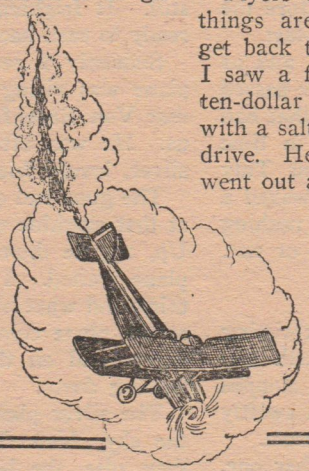
But there wasn't any time to think. At that minute Von Ehrenfeld's gun must have jammed. He quit firing. The other plane sailed alongside me. For a brief instant I looked across and a hand waved encouragingly at me. But I couldn't wave back. I couldn't do a thing but sit there as though paralyzed. The hand that waved at me was as filmy and intangible as a wisp of cloud!

I suppose it was only instinct that kept me right side up.

When I got control of myself again, my plane was practically being pulled to pieces by a hurricane wind that had suddenly sprung up. Down below me was a ground mist that hid everything there. I seemed to be absolutely in a world by myself.

Ehrenfeld had quit me. Whether he had seen the other plane and had transferred his attention to it, or whether he had discontinued the attack because of lack of ammunition, I do not know.

I put my left wing down and turned on the wind that was blowing. Even though the engine continued to cough and sputter, the wind seemed to cradle me so I could ride down it in a long glide. When I finally got through the mist, risking my neck and hoping I'd land in something soft, I brought up with a *crunch* right back of the aerodrome! Some dozens of breathless mechanics came running. I tried to choke down my feelings and inform them I was quite all right. One of our pilots said he didn't know how I had managed to land at all and thought I was damn lucky. Boy! He didn't know the half of it!



IT seemed foolish to try to tell them what had happened to me. H. Q. had reported Toodles as dead and I knew nobody would believe me if I told them about seeing his plane. So I kept my own counsel until I had a chance to talk with Tiny. He was very grave when I told him.

"Yes, Toodles is up there somewhere," Tiny agreed. "But he isn't alive any more. He didn't want to live."

"Didn't want to live?" I repeated in amazement.

"No. Just before he took off the last time, he showed me a letter from his girl back in Iowa or some place. She jilted him. She said she never could marry a flyer—that she admired him greatly and all that but his vocation was too dangerous. She had became interested in an infantry captain, instead, and thought seriously of marrying him.

"I tried to tell Toodles it was for the best; that she was a poor skate, anyway. But he wouldn't listen. He just grinned and ran his long fingers through his shock of blond hair and said he hoped he'd meet Von Ehrenfeld soon. Then he went in there and played that damnable piece. It sounded—honest to God, Pinky—it sounded as though he was playing his own funeral dirge; only it was wild and eerie and savage!"

"And he met Von Ehrenfeld," I added.

"I don't think so," Tiny insisted. "Not as he wanted to. Something else happened. He didn't get the Knight and that's why he's wandering around up there. He's waiting. He can't rest."

For days we didn't see anything of Von Ehrenfeld. I began to think that maybe Toodles had got him after all, up there in the clouds, when that hurricane came up. I talked it over with Tiny and we agreed that something had happened, although we couldn't tell what.

Airmen get superstitious as the devil. They're as bad as actors, in a way. For example, to whistle before you go up in a flight is bad luck. Flyers believe in charms, too. One of the men in our flight had the propeller of a plane in which he made his first kill, nailed to the bottom of his bus. Another attached some sort of mystic significance to a piece of shrapnel that had been extracted from his side; he had it screwed to the instrument board of his ship. Strange things were painted on the planes—death's heads, jolly rogerses, black cats.

Flyers laugh at death. When you're up in the clouds things are different. You become detached. When you get back to earth you want to do things, to break things. I saw a flyer once enter an enlisted man's canteen, lay a ten-dollar bill on the counter and bet he could hit the clock with a salt shaker. Somebody covered the money and he let drive. He didn't hit the clock and he lost the bet. Then he went out and got uproariously drunk.

In spite of superstitions, however, neither Tiny nor I talked about what we thought or had seen. Somehow you don't tell things like that. You don't like to have your buddies think you're any crazier than you actually appear to be.

Haskell, the American ace of aces, wrecked his plane deliberately—because of a girl. He didn't want to live.

When he reached the Other Side, did he regret his act? Did he want to come back and atone for his weakness? Was that the explanation of the fantastic things that happened above the German lines?

The story of Haskell's death—and its remarkable aftermath—has become one of the legends of the World War. Read the facts as told by Haskell's buddy.

ABOUT a week later we heard of Ehrenfeld again. He had started working in another sector. They had identified his plane at H. Q. and we got a nasty report on it.

"Listen, you birds," said Major Harlow to us. "Something has to be done! Von Ehrenfeld is at it again over on the left wing. He got away from us before, though somebody laid him up a while. But he's in business again and the C. O. has notified me it's up to us. What are we going to do about it?"

The Major was furious this time. He said we'd go up next morning and if we didn't get Von Ehrenfeld he'd disembowel us all. Hard, the Major was!

We rolled out of bed early. The Major was determined that somehow somebody had to get the Black Knight. It was hardly three o'clock when we pulled our flying suits over our pajamas and started out. Tiny and I were detailed to the same machine—he to pilot it, and I to make observations and drop a few bombs over the aerodrome where we thought Von Ehrenfeld kept his bus.

"Your business is to smoke him out," Harlow instructed us. "It's a great morning for a flight and he'll probably take after you. Then we'll rush in and get him."

Wasn't that cheerful? We two, the youngest and most inexperienced of the bunch, were to be used as bait. We stood a fine chance of ever getting back alive. However, it was all in the day's work. But I do say that we shook hands with the bunch and threw our hats away, which is the sign that we didn't expect to need them any more.

The aerodrome which we thought Von Ehrenfeld used as his base was about four miles over the line. The sky was a bit misty when we went up and Tiny rose to 6,000 feet. The early-morning mist bothered us even there and we hung around for a quarter of an hour trying to get a

good sight on the target. Below us we could make out a Hun patrol of three machines buzzing around, but somehow they didn't seem to see us in the half darkness above.

When the German planes veered off to one side, we dropped lower—and then, almost before we knew what had happened, the search-lights picked us up and the guns opened with a compliment of Archie. It wasn't long before we were in a bee's nest and a flaming bullet hit us and started a blaze near the tail. I yelled for Tiny to straighten out but he seemed in a daze. Ticklish business as it was, I crawled back along the fuselage and beat out the flame with my hands. I'd hardly got back to my seat before the engine coughed hoarsely and we started to drop—fast.

I figured it was the end. Tiny thought so, too, and as if he figured on getting in one good wallop before we passed out, he dove straight at one of the Boche machines that had returned to attack us. The Boche swerved just in time and all but did a nose-dive. And at that moment Tiny crumpled and I knew he was hit. He turned and waved a hand at me, his face gray with pain. There was nothing to do but pray. I don't remember whether I did or not. I shut my eyes, waiting for the crash.

THEN suddenly our machine seemed to hit a resisting force. If a giant had reached up from the earth and held our plane in its palm, we couldn't have been stopped any easier. It was like putting on the brakes in a swiftly descending elevator when you're almost at the bottom.

There was a bump, of course. A bump and another one. When I opened my eyes we rested about four feet in front of a deep hole. A miracle had happened.

I was thankful. Boy, I was thankful! But it was too early to cheer. We were inside the enemy lines! I discovered that quickly enough, for the artillery was trying to fire at close range, striving to smash us flat. Then it stopped. I looked up. High in the sky was a silver plane, burnished against the rising sun. It looked like a silver bird floating lazily there as if waiting for something. It hardly seemed to move—yet it did move, slowly circling in the sky close to the morning clouds that were dispersing before the one really bright day I ever saw in France.

The guns gave the plane their attention right away but the pilot of that ship seemed to sneer at them. He was too high up for any serious damage from them. We ourselves were forgotten for the moment—but I knew it wouldn't be for long. In a minute or two, gray-coated men would come swarming across that field with guns and bayonets.

I was about to drag Tiny over into the observer's seat and try to get the bus started again, when Tiny pointed upward.

"Look!" he cried.

I looked up but all I could see was that silver plane high up and the two Boches streaking it for home, off in the distance.

"What, Tiny?" I asked. "What do you mean?"

He pointed again. The plane was beautiful up there. It shone as gorgeously as though even the wing cloth were of silver.

"It's Toodles," said Tiny, his voice filled with awe. "He's up there. He's saving us. He knew we needed help and he's come to draw the artillery fire and the other planes. Listen to the guns."

All along the salient they were roaring at him. Smoke bullets puffed high in the air as the gunners attempted to get his range. But he hung there, suspended almost, with no sign of fear. Far off we could hear the drone of our own patrol but the guns were driving them back.

Only that plane hung there suspended. And if there was any doubt in my mind as to its being Toodles, that was quickly dispelled when I put my glasses to my eyes. He was dropping closer to the earth. And I could see the number on the ship, BH4-R2!

I got Tiny over into the other seat. His wound was in the side and was more painful than dangerous. I set to work on the engine and started tinkering. What I did, I don't know to this day. But suddenly it coughed. Tiny, with a superhuman effort, leaned over and grabbed the controls. I spun the propeller and like a rabbit leaped into the machine. Before I realized it the machine was taking off. I knew we couldn't go far and I only hoped we'd last until we could get over the lines into our own territory.

The bus jerked and jumped but it climbed. And then in a second I realized that all along the line the guns were still. It frightened me, for I thought they were getting ready to turn back on us. But they didn't.

Suddenly I realized what had happened. Behind us a plane was rising; its nose was painted black and I knew that Von Ehrenfeld had taken to the air. He wasn't after us. He was after that other plane up there—that bright, silver, lovely thing that floated so easily above us.

The guns had quit. They were giving Ehrenfeld a chance at that machine up there. He did not hesitate in his flight. Up, up, he drove with all the speed he had. The other plane waited. I wondered if that specter up there could think and what his thoughts would be as he sat there staring at the plane coming to meet him. I pictured his delicate, filmy hand on the side of the cockpit as he leaned over, looking down.

The silver plane turned. It moved away, higher up into the sky. Von Ehrenfeld followed. Higher and higher they rose, the beautiful phantom plane and the gray one with the black nose. Up, up, the two went to some vast dueling ground we couldn't see, to have it out together.

They headed east—into the path of the sun. I lost them against the light.

No one knew what happened up there in the air. Did they fight together up there—a phantom and a living man? Did the phantom overcome the mortal with mere mortal things like machine-gun bullets, and send the Knight finally crashing to earth somewhere, dead? Or did they engage in a comradely agreement in which neither became the champion, and in which the phantom enticed Von Ehrenfeld off into the spaces where the wind forever blows between the worlds—forever to fly side by side, rivals still, but comrades until the end of time? God only knows.

I looked back at Tiny. He sat there tense, his face rigid as a mask. But his lips were moving. I never asked him what he said.

I had no time to study him long. It was all I could do to keep our bus in the air. Yet somehow by coaxing and cajolling, and finally by a long glide, I managed to pass over our own trenches at a height of not more than 400 yards and then we crashed.

IT was flyers' luck. We weren't ready to turn in our chips just then. That's why we weren't injured except for bruises. I dug Tiny out of the wreck. Soon help came and I got him back to the aerodrome and under the care of a surgeon. His wound wasn't so serious. The bullet knocked a couple of ribs out of whack, but what's that in the life of a flyer?

It was at night two days later that I sat beside Tiny's bed, talking to him. He had begged so hard to be released from the temporary hospital that I guess the surgeon, knowing that aviators aren't content unless they've in the thick of things, let him come back. The quarters were deserted, except for Tiny and me. There was some sort of shindig in the town near-by.

But hardly had I seated myself before Major Harlow came in. He eyed us queerly and then as if an impulse struck him he came over to us.

"What do you birds make out of that silver plane the other day?" he asked abruptly.

Tiny and I stared at each other. Then Tiny turned to the Major.

"You may not believe it," be began stoutly, "but it was Toodles."

"What makes you say that?" the Major asked.

"Did you see the markings on the ship?" Tiny queried.

"I heard about them," he evaded. "But by heaven I don't know myself what it's all about. Just now I've received the finest compliment from Headquarters a man could wish."

He took a paper from his pocket.

"It says," he began, "we're to be commended for the strict attention to duty—and all that rot. And it says also that Von Ehrenfeld is down, though H. Q. isn't sure where. Today a wing from his machine was discovered about fifteen kilometers south of us. Where the rest of it is, nobody knows. The wing was torn off as if the plane had been in collision with another. We get credit for prompt action."

THE Major stopped, staring into space, deep in thought. Suddenly he looked up, his brow perplexed.

"In God's name," he cried, "do you really believe that was Toodles up there?"

Tiny nodded.

"But—Toodles is dead! We got an official report of his death over the German lines."

"He's dead—but he was up there," Tiny said determinedly. "For two reasons. The first is that he went out deliberately to commit suicide."

"Suicide!" the Major gasped.

"Yes," said Tiny. "Because of a girl. Listen, Major," he went on hurriedly. "You may say I'm an ass and all that, but this is my theory. He went out, as I said, in an impulsive moment and committed suicide. Then when he got over on the Other Side he regretted his act. He knew that was the wrong thing to do. He found he'd left one matter unaccomplished."

"That was bringing down the Black Knight," I put in.

"Exactly. But he's got him now. I don't know whether they're flying together side by side in the spirit world, grinning at each other like a couple of happy kids, or not. I could believe it, though."

"And the other thing?" the Major asked.

"It has to do with a letter. The day after you got official notice that Toodles had cracked up, a letter came to him from his girl in Iowa, the one who turned him down for the infantry fellow. Toodles was madly in love with her. Being nearest to him here, I opened the letter. The girl was damn sorry for what she had written and would have given her old shoes to recall it. Said the infantry officer was no good, that she found she loved Toodles after all and would wait for him forever. Begged forgiveness and all that. Crawled on her knees to him."

"And by that time he was dead," I said.

"Committed suicide. Deliberately. Knew all about her letter after he died—regretted it horribly. But it was too late then. Toodles couldn't rest until he'd made good—done something heroic to wipe out the stain of suicide."

The Major looked at us strangely.

At that moment the silence was broken by music. Though faint and eerie as if it floated to us from a far distance, it came crashing in on our jangled nerves like the end of the world. It was the *Prelude* by Rachmaninoff that Toodles always played after he had brought down an enemy plane.

It was weird and savage. It was profound and passionate. It began softly with that strange, haunting melody in the agitato movement, sweeping majestically higher and higher and faster into those chords on the upper register. It worked up to that crashing, reverberating passage in quadruple forte like all the big guns in the world sending their horror of death to wreck men's souls and tear and rend their puny bodies. It swept on and on in wild frenzy as if a despairing soul turned to flaunt its helpless horror in the face of Fate.

Major Harlow sprang up and started toward the door of the other room. Tiny tried to stop him.

"For God's sake, Major, don't go in there!" he cried.

But the Major would not listen. Fiercely he yanked the door open.

The room was empty.

"It was Toodles," Tiny said quietly, "playing his own funeral dirge. His work is accomplished now. He's brought down the Black Knight. The girl wasn't fit for him anyway—not fit for Toodles. Twice he saved Pinky and me. Don't you see, Major, his destiny is fulfilled? He's accomplished after death the big thing that made his life incomplete. That was his swan song we heard. We won't see Toodles any more, or his spirit ship up there in the air. He's winging his way into the sun now."

Did He Talk with Shakespeare?

ALL England—and particularly the professional circles of London—was amazed recently when Sir Frank Benson, theatrical manager and actor, who ranks high among the contemporary interpreters of Shakespearean rôles, announced that, by occult means, he had talked with the spirits of the Bard of Avon and of Æschylus, the Greek playwright.

Sir Frank has long been interested in spiritualism but he gave the first hint of his astounding communications from the Other World in a foreword to a book dealing with the occult. Reporters immediately sought interviews, and he called several together and made the following statement:

"It was during a séance which I attended—without expecting to hear anything of particular interest to me—that a voice suddenly called my name. The medium replied for me, and then the other—indubitably it was Shakespeare speaking—gave me some sound advice which I shall follow. Among other things it said, 'I know you are engaged with my plays. I am glad. You have done well. Go on.'

"I asked no question and spoke no assent; just listened for further words. However, to my surprise, another voice spoke to me. It was that of Æschylus. His identity was made known by the medium, and he and others present translated what the Greek's spirit said.

"'It was I who caused you to do your work upon the stage before you were helped by my successor. Our interests are along similar lines,' the Greek dramatist said."

Sir Frank insisted "my successor" meant Shakespeare and explained that he had made his first appearance on the stage in a production of *Agamemnon,* which is one of the best-known works of Æschylus.

"I am perfectly satisfied the communications were genuine," he went on, "for I have frequently spoken with my son, who was killed in the Great War, and with others." He said he would make no special efforts to again communicate with the shades of the famous dramatists, but anticipated they would talk with him at future séances.

The uncanny experiences of still another British nobleman—the Honorable David Bowes-Lyon, brother of the Duchess of York—have also received considerable comment in the English press recently. This young aristocrat is said to possess the gift of "second sight."

His most startling accomplishment occurred during the World War. The British War Office reported that his older brother, Michael, had been killed in action. The family immediately went into mourning. But soon thereafter the Honorable David assured them that his brother was not dead. He explained that he had "seen" Michael and that he was alive, though wounded.

Two months later an official report from Germany reached London that Captain Michael Bowes-Lyon was wounded and a prisoner there. Later his exchange was effected and he returned home.

The SPIDER

"That jane had something to do with the murder!" the electrician growled

Falsely suspected of murder—forced to watch helplessly while the police manhandle the girl he loves—Chatrand dares to use the weapons of magic in a desperate duel with the law!

CHATRAND the Great Magician faced the most dramatic moment of his life in the Tivoli Theater in New York City. He was in the middle of a regular performance of his mind-reading act and had just presented Alexander, his assistant, to the audience, after telling the boy's curious story. The lad, he said, had been found unconscious on a deserted road; he had recovered the normal use of his faculties but had lost his memory completely. All efforts to identify him had failed.

A moment later the magician was passing among the audience, soliciting objects for his blindfolded assistant to identify. Suddenly, in one of the front rows, he spied the girl who represented the one clue to Alexander's past—the girl whose photograph had been found in the pocket of the unconscious boy! He was sure he recognized her!

He was so excited that he could hardly speak, but he managed to ask her for some article. She started to hand him the locket she was wearing, but her escort, a gruff, elderly man, unexpectedly interfered.

Chatrand insisted on taking the locket and a fight followed. Suddenly the lights went out—and a pistol shot rang through the theater! When the lights flashed on, the girl's escort lay bleeding on the floor.

Pandemonium reigned. Then the police arrived and Inspector Riley took charge of the investigation. The girl identified herself as Beverly Lane and said that the wounded man was John Carrington, her guardian. The Inspector's suspicions were immediately directed toward her, toward Chatrand and toward his assistant.

The boy mind-reader was apparently still in a trance. When the police removed his mask, a pathetic scene occurred—for Beverly recognized him as her brother Paul, who had disappeared two years before.

The boy was searched—and a pistol was found in his pocket! At once he was officially accused of the crime!

Chatrand turned impulsively toward the hysterical Beverly. "Listen here, little girl!" he said. "I'll take care of that boy no matter what happens. You can count on me!"

IN spite of Chatrand's sincere words of encouragement, Beverly Lane continued to weep uncontrollably. Her eyes followed Inspector Riley as he approached her brother and bent over to examine him. Her face was drawn into sharp lines of dread and terror, and Chatrand's heart went out to the girl, so pitiful was her sorrow.

"Come now," he said earnestly, as he gripped her gently by the shoulders with both hands. "We're going to need you. You must pull yourself together. Here!"

Out of his pocket he pulled a fresh silk handkerchief and, smiling wryly, offered it to her for drying her tears. She accepted it gratefully and Chatrand was thankful to see her make a real effort to control herself. She was biting her lips cruelly in an effort to choke back the sobs.

Alert, even during his moment of sympathetic attention to the girl, Chatrand was diverted at that instant by Riley's voice.

"I GUESS the boy *is* sick!" the Inspector was admitting grudgingly. "Simpson, you'd better take him down to his dressing-room and stay with him until we get a doctor. I'll be down in a minute; I want to ask him a lot of questions."

Even as the Inspector spoke, the policeman called Simpson had taken Alexander by the arm and half lifted him to his feet. The boy swayed, then at a word of sharp command tried to walk. Two short steps he managed, and then collapsed, stiffening out in a way that caused Chatrand to make a quick leap to his assistance.

But the magician was immediately prevented from reaching the boy. Sergeant Schmidt had watched Chatrand's every move, listening to each word he had spoken to the girl.

An Amazing Version of the Famous Mystery Play

By GRACE OURSLER

Now he forestalled Chatrand's impulsive movement to go to the boy's aid.

"Look out!" snarled Chatrand in high irritation.

"No, you don't," Schmidt drawled in quiet authority. "You stay where you are."

As the boy was suddenly lifted by the two policemen and carried off the stage, Beverly darted forward to appeal to Riley.

"Let me go with him, please," she begged.

"You stay here," Riley ordered crisply. "This looks like awfully queer business to me. I'm sorry if I seem hard on you. I'll let you talk to your brother later—when I'm with you."

With a sigh of desperation the girl turned away, glancing unconsciously toward Chatrand. As her eyes met his, it was as if in that glance she accepted his offer to see her through and help her brother, no matter what the cost. It was as if she told him in so many words that she trusted him, and him alone, of all the people who surrounded her in that terrible situation.

Chatrand answered her look with one of complete assurance. He stepped forward, placing a chair for her to use, and patting her silently on the shoulder as she seated herself gratefully.

During this all-important moment between them, a hubbub of confusion had distracted Inspector Riley. Mr. Young, the house manager, begged that the curtain might be lowered.

"IF you're going down to the boy's dressing-room," he argued, "can't I put on another act? What about my audience? They came here for a show, you know."

"I want everything kept just as it is," Riley snorted unsympathetically. "And I don't want anybody to leave the theater. This is too serious a matter."

His words brought a shrill answering voice from the middle of the house.

"Mr. Policeman, may I say a word to you, please?"

It was Mrs. Wimbleton, the wife of the floor-walker, marching down the aisle in an attempt to confront the Inspector with her problems.

Schmidt, however, recognized her and headed her off.

"I know!" he barked. "You and your husband have a baby. Now, *sit down!*"

Whereupon, the half-distracted Officer Dougherty again had to bustle the woman to the back of the theater.

Inspector Riley turned to those on the stage and drew himself to his full height, clearing his throat tentatively. When he spoke, he addressed Chatrand.

"Now, listen to me," he began gravely. "I don't understand yet what happened, and I want a straightforward story from you. I want you to tell me just what took place from the time the argument started."

"Very well," agreed Chatrand.

"And I don't want anybody to interrupt me while I'm talking to this man," ordered Riley.

But someone far beyond the reach of his orders interrupted even as he spoke.

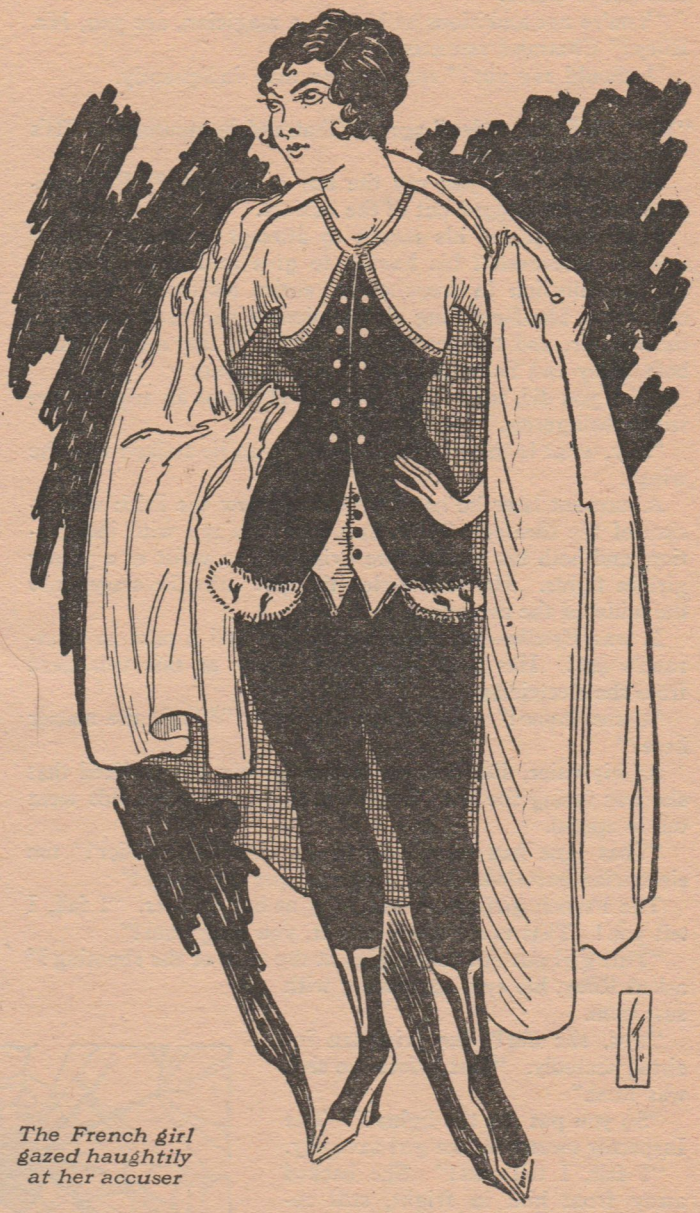
The droning, singsong voice of Alexander came from the dressing-room off stage.

"It . . . is . . . a . . . me-dal-lion. . . ."

"My assistant is ill," complained Chatrand frantically. "Won't you please let me go to him?"

"Why are you so anxious to get to that boy?" asked Riley suspiciously.

"You can see for yourself that he's ill, Inspector," Chatrand argued earnestly. "And you can see for yourself that this must be an unusual shock to the boy. He was a victim of amnesia—he had lost his memory completely. Tonight his sister tried to signal to him. He has had a grave, and, perhaps, dangerous shock. To tell the truth, I half guessed that this young lady might be connected with Alexander in some way."



The French girl gazed haughtily at her accuser

"You half guessed, did you?" snorted Riley. "You're not giving yourself away, are you, Mr. Magician?"

"If you mean to infer that I knew this young lady was the boy's sister, you're wrong," protested Chatrand. "I knew nothing about it."

"Yeh?" parried Riley in evident disbelief. "Well, I want you to show me first what took place before the shooting."

"ALL right, sir," submitted Chatrand, trying to control his worry about Alexander rather than make a dangerous enemy of this man. "I was in the middle of my mind-reading act. I commenced my act by doing a few little tricks. Next, I produced some goldfish, flowers and doves, and then I produced my assistant."

"You *produced* him?" echoed Riley, frowning.

"Yes. I make him appear," Chatrand explained, amused in

spite of himself at the Inspector's incredulity. "I show the audience this empty cabinet, then I close the curtains, and when I open them Alexander is standing there."

Riley turned his gaze from Chatrand to the cabinet in a meditative and suspicious glance. He walked up to it slowly, turned it about, knocked its walls and stepped into it to examine it closer.

"You're not ambitious to become a magician, are you, Mr. Riley?" Chatrand ventured.

"I should say not!" snapped the man indignantly.

"YOU'RE very wise," agreed Chatrand in amusement. "It's a rotten business."

"But where did you say the boy came from?" Riley demanded as he stepped out of the cabinet.

Chatrand opened his mouth to attempt a facetious reply that might forestall his having to give away the secret of his best illusion in front of an entire audience. At that moment a blood-curdling shriek pierced the very rafters of the theater, and the sound of a scuffle in the wings turned both Riley and Schmidt away from Chatrand.

"Yes, you did, too! I saw you do it!" came an angry voice with a belligerent Irish twang.

"Say, what is this?" bawled Schmidt as he stalked into the wings.

A moment later he had hauled into view the Irish electrician of the theater. The man's face was red with indignation, and both his hands were gripping the wrist of a young girl in tights. He half hurled the girl onto the stage, into the midst of the investigation.

It was Estelle—the French girl who had a part in Chatrand's act! Her eyes blazed with fury at this treatment from the electrician.

"Come, come!" called Riley sharply. "What's the matter here?"

At his voice, Estelle turned, and swiftly she realized that she was facing the law. Her face paled, but her hands went out in appeal.

"That jane had something to do with the murder!" the electrician growled. "She switched out my lights!"

The French girl gazed haughtily at her accuser. "I fall, I tell you! That is all there is to it, you beeg bum!"

"This girl put out your lights at the time of the shooting?" asked Riley, his eyes narrowing with suspicion.

"Yes, she did!" the Irishman insisted heatedly. "Just before the shot was fired."

"So you put out the lights?" The Inspector swung on the girl savagely.

"I fall, I tell you!" She backed away from him in fright, still repeating her denial. "I just fall!"

"How can anybody fall on the lights?" Riley demanded, taking a step toward her threateningly.

But Estelle had thrown a quick glance at Chatrand and from him she seemed to gain a new confidence.

"It is very simple, Mr. Inspector," she began volubly in her broken English. "I am standing there in the wings, next to all those beeg handelles that put on and off the lights. They work so——"

She made a wide gesture of pulling down the switch, as though that would be a perfect explanation to the glowering man who closed in upon her.

"I was there watching my master while he read people's minds. And I wonder—does he know what I am thinking? Oh, mon Dieu!" The girl's eyes closed temperamentally in mock shame. "I blush! I grow faint! I tot-taire. . . ."

"You do what?" Riley snapped.

"I tottaire!" repeated Estelle, showing him in elaborate pantomime exactly how she staggered from faintness. "I fall—so! The handelle is near my hand. Down I fall. I grab the sweetch as I fall, and the lights go out. It is all dark. . . ."

"Yeh! That's a funny story," interrupted Riley disgustedly. "You tottaire! You turn out the lights just when a man is shot!"

"Say, Inspector!" The Irishman was all alert to take advantage of the Inspector's evident annoyance at the girl's story. "Whoever did that shooting had something to do with turning off my lights. And this jane did it. I saw her do it!"

"Why didn't you tell me this before?" demanded Riley.

"Well," the electrician explained, "she ran down to her dressing-room, and I had to go after her and bring her back."

The Inspector turned back to the French girl disapprovingly.

"How long have you known this man Chatrand?" he asked her quickly.

"I—I join his act three week ago in Wilky-Barry," Estelle stammered, wide-eyed.

Chatrand stepped forward quickly.

"This girl is one of my assistants, Inspector," he put in quietly. "I am sure she is telling you the truth."

"So, she works in your act!" Riley repeated slowly.

"Yes, she does!"

"You half guessed that this young lady"—he pointed to Beverly—"might be connected with your mind-reading assistant," Riley drawled slowly. "This French woman put out the lights, and Miss Lane's guardian is shot. It's beginning to look pretty simple to me, Chatrand."

A SLIGHT confusion off stage broke in upon Riley's summary, and a second later Doctor Blackstone, his shirt sleeves rolled up, stalked onto the stage, wiping his hands with a towel. Behind him, pale and agitated, followed Mr. Young.

"Mr. Inspector!" Young cried hoarsely. "The doctor here wants to tell you something."

"Are you the doctor?" Riley turned toward Blackstone.

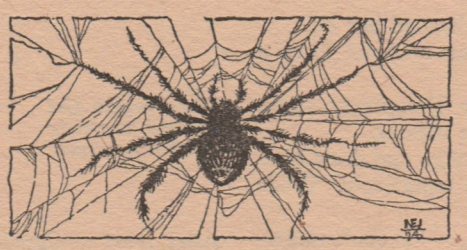
"Yes, sir," that gentleman nodded gravely.

"Well?"

"Mr. Carrington is dead!" announced the doctor quietly.

"Dead!" echoed Riley with a sharp intake of breath.

Beverly, in spite of herself, screamed aloud at this announcement, realizing all that it might portend for her brother. A murmur of excitement and confusion ran through the theater like an electric shock.



"Quiet, here!" cried Riley thunderously. "This is murder!"

His tone quelled the confusion which for a moment had threatened to grow into high panic, and his voicing of the charge which was in everyone's mind and which no one had dared to utter, galvanized the audience and those on stage into absolute attention. For a moment there was not a sound.

The Inspector straightened his shoulders and stepped toward the footlights.

"Schmidt," he barked, giving his order in dry staccato tones, "hold everyone in this theater as material witnesses. Mr. Young, have you a place where I can conduct my examination?"

The little manager trembled at the question and wet his lips timidly.

"Only my office," he offered. "But——"

"The dead man is up there!" cut in the doctor quickly.

"Perhaps a dressing-room," suggested Young almost in a whisper.

"No." Riley shook his head. "I'm afraid a dressing-room would be too small. I'll use the office, anyway. Schmidt, put two men to guard the body and have it searched. Notify the medical examiner. And take all these people on the

stage up to that room. Now, I want absolute quiet, throughout the house. This is a murder case, and somewhere in this theater there is a criminal. I'm going to get the guilty man if I have to keep everyone here under lock and key for the next twenty-four hours!"

These words the Inspector addressed in granite tones to the audience.

The stark terror of the moment, coupled with the severe authority of Riley's voice, struck a numb awe into the hearts of those present. With the exception of one!

Up from her seat, her face almost purple with indignation, rose Mrs. Wimbleton, who until that moment had been partially convinced by Dougherty that all would be well shortly.

"My God!" she cried in heated protest. "You can't keep me from my little Buster for twenty-four hours. I'd like to see the man who can stop me! I'm going home right now!"

"Dougherty!" shouted Schmidt from the stage. "Watch that woman and keep her quiet!"

"I'll watch her," the energetic little policeman called back desperately as he again bustled Mrs. Wimbleton toward the rear of the house. "But nobody can keep her quiet!"

The Mystery of the Spider Locket

In some strange way the Spider Locket holds the key to the weird murder in the Tivoli Theater!

John Carrington, the dead man, had ordered Beverly Lane to wear the locket that night—he had tried frantically to keep her from handing it to the magician—he had died rather than let it out of his sight!

What IS the secret of the locket? This astounding story has thrilled hundreds of thousands of New York playgoers. You are fortunate to be among those who are reading it in GHOST STORIES, for it has never been printed before.

SCHMIDT dismissed the subject at that and turned to hurry those on stage into the care of policemen who would march them up to the office. The electrician, Estelle, Young, the doctor, several performers from the skating and dance acts who had loitered near-by—all he hustled along, giving the reporter from the *Graphic* a good swift push as he attempted to protest. Then he turned to Beverly, who was still seated near Chatrand, her eyes wide with horror.

"Come on, miss," he ordered kindly.

"No! No!" she cried as she got to her feet and shrank back from him.

"What's the matter, Miss Lane?" The Inspector turned from his notes in surprise. "I'll want you, too, to identify the body."

"I couldn't," mumbled the girl in deepest agitation. "I couldn't go up to where he's lying—dead!"

"I'm sorry, Miss Lane." Riley dismissed her objections by the very tone of his voice. "But I will have to ask you some very important questions." He took her roughly by the arm.

"Mr. Riley!" Chatrand could no longer control himself; he faced the Inspector accusingly. "You can't do a thing like that! Can't you see the girl is all unstrung? It's downright brutal to ask her to go up there."

"I'm conducting this investigation, Chatrand!" snapped the Inspector.

Chatrand turned away in disgust.

"You'd better go along with Schmidt, Miss Lane," Riley directed in a tone of finality. "I won't keep you any longer than I can help."

With a glance of heart-breaking appeal at Chatrand, the girl braced herself against the coming ordeal. Chatrand nodded his head, in an attempt to impart to her some sense of comfort and safety.

"Come on! You, too, Chatrand!" Riley commanded.

With a shrug, Chatrand thrust his hands in his pockets and started to follow Beverly and Schmidt off the stage. He had gone but a few steps, however, when a familiar voice—a voice burdened with fright and suffering—reached his ears with a weird message.

"It . . . con-tains . . . a gold . . . spider . . . locket. . . ."

Chatrand turned quickly on his heel and faced Riley.

"If you don't mind," he said with a grim determination, "I'd rather go to my assistant."

"Not on your life!" Riley objected. "Why is he your main concern, Chatrand?"

"Because you're likely to have another dead man on your hands if he isn't taken care of!"

"And is his condition more important than a murder?" Riley parried.

"It most certainly is!" flared Chatrand. "Won't you let me talk to him? You can send a squad of policemen with me if you think it is necessary."

"No," decided Riley. "I'll talk to that boy myself. You're trying to get to him because you're afraid he'll tell something."

"I give you my word of honor!" protested Chatrand, exasperated.

Riley glowered at him as he pushed back his coat and stuck his thumbs into the armholes of his vest.

"I think," he said slowly and deliberately, "that you're both guilty as hell! The pair of you!"

Chatrand bit his lip. He was exercising every vestige of strength he could command to control himself.

"And you won't let me talk to him?" he asked finally.

"NO!"

CHATRAND turned away with a gesture of despair. As he did so, Mr. Young brushed past him unceremoniously and stalked up to the Inspector.

"Please, Mr. Riley," the manager begged breathlessly, "can't I put down the curtain now?"

"What for?"

"I've got to do something for this audience," the little manager complained bitterly. "I can't just hold them in their seats, with you leaving the stage bare."

Riley glanced out at the sea of tense, worried faces in the theater and considered the matter.

"You can let the audience go for a smoke if they want to," he decided slowly. "But I have my men posted at every door now, and anyone who tries to get away will only make trouble."

During this conversation between the manager and the Inspector, Chatrand, nervous, irritated and worried about the boy who was so obviously ill and who no doubt was being treated with neither gentleness nor consideration by the two policemen who stood guard over him, was pacing quietly up and down at the back of the stage. More than once his eye rested on the cabinet that stood idle in the center of the stage, and more than once he measured with a glance the distance between the huge, forbidding figure of the Inspector and the cabinet itself.

Chatrand was on the point of making a desperate move. He felt that he must reach the lad—and that he must learn just what had happened and how. His own theory that perhaps the man had shot himself accidentally had been blasted by the finding of the dead man's pistol, without a shot gone!

How had it happened that Alexander had carried a loaded target pistol on the stage? He cursed himself, under his breath, for ever allowing the boy to possess one.

But what was done was done, and now was no time to regret. It was imperative that he should ascertain how much the boy remembered and just how he had been affected by the shock of all that had happened. Perhaps he had lost his mind!

This last thought sent a chill through the magician. Not only would his own heart be broken if such a thing had happened to Alexander, but the girl—the boy's sister—perhaps she would never recover from such a tragedy! She had been through so much already in the past two years.

As he paced back and forth, his thoughts dwelt admiringly on Beverly. What a little thoroughbred she was, just as he had dreamed and imagined her to be. . . . She *had* traveled to Europe about the same time he and Alexander had indulged in their first sittings together. He had *not* been mistaken, then, in thinking that he had seen her on the threshold of his stateroom! It had not been an hallucination. He must ask her, when all this was over, how she had disappeared and why—and why he had never seen her in the general gatherings on the ship. . . . Alexander's real name was Paul! That was what she had called him! He must use the name to the boy. Oh, if only he could get to him—if he could have just two minutes alone with him! . . . And that lovely, wistful, charming creature was not, after all, the boy's young sweetheart, but his *sister*. . . .

A SUDDEN blood-curdling yell pierced the very galleries of the theater, interrupting the Inspector and the manager, and causing every person in the audience to grow tense with horror. It was a scream of sudden fright from Alexander, a scream of great mental suffering and pain. Chatrand clenched his fists. Were they torturing the boy? What had they done to make him cry out so?

"Chatrand!" cried the boy in anguish. *"Master! Chatrand——"*

The calling of his name in a moment of such terror was enough for Chatrand. Instantly he threw all caution to the winds. He flung only one glance at the Inspector and the manager. He realized that they had edged stiffly toward the wings from whence the cry had come, and were gazing blankly into the shadows, their own blood frozen by the inhuman timbre of the scream.

He had only a second in which to act—but Chatrand took advantage of that second. With one nimble leap he reached the inside of the illusion cabinet and swung the curtains closed almost as soon as his feet touched the floor of the cabinet. It had been many moons since he himself had worked the illusion, but he knew perfectly what to do, and did it swiftly and surely.

But he was somewhat in the dark as to exactly what might lie in wait for him as he slipped through the trap-door of the stage, and down into the cellar. . . .

Young, the manager, had seen and understood what Chatrand was up to, the instant the curtains had been slammed closed over the illusion cabinet. He tugged at the Inspector's arm, clawing frantically as he stuttered.

"L-look! My God! He's escaping!"

Inspector Riley wheeled about, his jaw thrust forward belligerently. For a moment he could not believe that the magician had outwitted him, or that he himself had been fool enough to turn his back upon the man whom he was now positive was the criminal.

Instantly his hand went to his hip pocket. For a second time that evening a shot rang through the theater; a shot that pierced the black velvet of the illusion curtains. But no howl of pain, no thud of a falling body, followed—and with a grunt of disgust Riley darted to the cabinet, drew back the curtains, and faced—a blank, empty cabinet, with four gleaming walls and a smooth floor intact!

"Where does this lead, Young?" Riley shouted.

"Into the cellar! There's a trap-door under the cabinet!"

Even as he spoke, the manager shoved the cabinet aside and tore manfully at the trap-door in the floor of the stage. Two policemen rushed forward to help him. They forced it open, and as they did so, a cloud of smoke and huge tongues of flames tore through the hole in the stage and leaped up into their faces!

"Oh, my God!" groaned Young, with visions of a burning theater to cap the evening.

"After him, men!" Riley was shouting. "Go down there and get him! Thompson, block all the doors that lead to the cellar. Warn the men at the exits. He *can't* get away!"

The stage seemed suddenly filled with policemen, with Riley shouting orders at the top of his voice.

Without further thought of obtaining permission, the manager yelled into the wings.

"Down with that curtain, Jack! Put it down—quick!"

He breathed a prayer of thankfulness as his call was obeyed. At least one man was still on the job! As the curtain was slowly lowered, cutting off the view of the burning stage floor, Young stepped down to the footlights and addressed his audience.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he yelled above the jumble of terrified voices throughout the theater. The sharp hysteria of his own voice commanded attention, and for a moment everyone looked at him to see what he might have to say. Instantly, the little manager felt helpless. What could he say to these poor souls who had come here for an evening's entertainment? His hands went out in feeble appeal. "This is the first time I've ever had a murder in my theater! It puts me in a very difficult position. I've got a good show here this week and I don't want you to miss a thing, and just as soon as this trouble is cleared up, we'll go on with the program. I hope so, anyway. But in the meantime you must all help me in carrying out Inspector Riley's orders. Now, everyone, please be quiet. Be patient. Don't get nervous. Everything is going to be all right!"

But as luck would have it, these very words were accompanied by the sound of two shots back of the curtain.

Mr. Young jumped a foot in terror, and looked helplessly from one side of the stage to the other. Then he gulped and turned to the orchestra leader.

"Walter, pay a little music please—and play it loud!"

The orchestra responded to this plea lustily, and Mr. Young rushed off the stage, leaving the behavior of his audience in the hands of the gods and the squad of policemen who were guarding the aisles.

In the wings he encountered a group of players, huddled together, talking in whispers, their faces pale beneath their make-up. In relief, he listened to their explanation of the flames. It had not been a fire—but something that the magician had used purposely to delay any possible pursuit. It was some sort of magic fuse that had immediately died down and had done no damage. Fiercely Mr. Young cursed magicians and all their mad paraphernalia. He never had trusted them! Had they caught Chatrand yet? No? Well, where was Riley?

THE Inspector, so he was informed, was down in the boy's dressing-room, and the doctor was there, too, working on the boy. It looked as if the investigation would be held there, for Riley figured that Chatrand wanted to reach the boy and would certainly make for that dressing-room—if he were not caught first!

Immediately Mr. Young elbowed his way through the hushed, tense groups that were scattered on the stage, in the dressing-room corridors, and on the fire-escape, dodging a hysterical question from Estelle, a dogged explanatory remark from the electrician, a peremptory demand from the reporter and a dozen questions from all sides. He made his way silently and quickly to Alexander's dressing-room, explaining to the two stalwart policemen on guard outside the door who he was, and demanding admission.

"Come in, Young," called Riley, as the door opened. "You're the very man I want to talk to."

Mr. Young edged his way into the small, overcrowded dressing-room, which reeked with the mixed odors of grease-paint and pomades, and was flooded with the sharp, relentless light of the huge, uncovered make-up lights. He saw that Alexander sat slumped in a chair in front of the dressing-shelf; the boy was pale and strangely silent, as if he had been given a drug. Bending over the boy was Doctor Blackstone, grim and perspiring. To the right, beneath the clothes that hung against the wall, Beverly Lane sat perched on an old trunk, her eyes marked with tear-stains and her fingers plucking at each other nervously.

At the extreme left of the room sat Riley, his chair tipped back, and at his side stood Dougherty, the policeman who until this moment had guarded the recalcitrant Mrs. Wimbleton.

"Young," Riley began as soon as the manager had entered the room, "we've been working on the boy, and I think he will be able to talk very soon. In the meantime I want to ask you a few questions. When was the first you heard of all this?"

YOUNG cleared his throat and a tone of importance crept into his voice as he realized that his words were all-absorbing for the moment. Even Beverly leaned forward to hear each syllable.

"I was in the box-office, counting up," he stated gravely, "when one of the ushers told me there was an argument in the aisle. I rushed right through the lobby, found the house was dark and heard a shot. Then the lights came up, and——"

"You didn't hear any of the argument?" Riley interrupted.

"No, sir."

"What do you know about this magician—this escape artist?"

"I only know his reputation," Young offered volubly. "He's the best known magician on the circuit, and he's played my house a dozen times before. He's got a great act."

"You don't know anything about him personally?"

"Well, there's a lot of funny talk about him," Young admitted slowly. "He's not like the average vaudeville performer. He puts up at the best hotels, never associates with the rest of the actors, has a swell car, plenty of money all the time—one of those Ritzy, high-hat fellows."

"A vaudeville actor living like a millionaire, eh?" Riley enjoyed the description. "Where do you suppose he gets all his money?"

"Well, look at the salary he gets." Young shrugged his shoulders.

"How much?"

"Well," Young drew a step closer to the Inspector and spoke confidentially, "for publication purposes, it's twenty-five hundred a week. But between you and me it ain't half that much."

Riley frowned.

"How on earth does he earn a salary like that?" he marveled.

"I don't know," Young sighed. "I don't know how he does any of his tricks."

"Well, when I put the handcuffs on that gentleman," Riley averred, "there's a lot of his tricks he'll have to explain, believe me! This thing lies between him and that boy. That's why he got away. He was trying to get to this dressing-room, but he wasn't quite quick enough. He can't get away. Schmidt is after him and he'll get him sure as hell. Doctor, do you think I can question the boy now?"

Beverly got to her feet swiftly at this, edging toward her brother in deepest concern.

"He's still pretty badly off, Inspector Riley," the doctor announced respectfully. "I think you'd better wait a little while anyhow, until what I've given him has full effect."

"Well, in the meantime, I want to ask you a few things, Doctor," Riley decided after a hopeless look at the boy.

"Please, Mr. Riley," Young interrupted anxiously. "In the meantime can't I go on with my show? The police won't let anybody out of the theater, and if you keep that audience just sitting there, they're apt to go panicky and be hard to manage."

"The orchestra can play, and that's all!" Riley decided. "No vaudeville! The stage must be kept exactly as it is."

"Gee!" complained Mr. Young as he slouched to the door in high disgust. "The actors get paid anyhow. But if the musicians play they'll charge me for overtime."

"That will be all, Mr. Young," Riley said with finality.

As the manager left the room, the Inspector turned to the doctor.

"Doctor Blackstone, did you hear Carrington say anything before he died?"

"Well, sir," the doctor considered thoughtfully, "he muttered a few words, but right after that he lost consciousness—and he never regained it. I think he did say something about—'He got me—he shot me!' and something about a spider locket!"

"He meant the boy recognized the locket," Riley summed up complacently. "That's what he meant."

"I'm certain those were his very words," the doctor repeated quietly.

At this, Beverly, who had again taken her seat on the old trunk, got to her feet and drew a sharp breath of alarm. The doctor noticed her movement and realized all it meant.

"Look here, Inspector," he amended quickly, "I don't want to accuse anybody—I don't mean to incriminate anyone——"

"Miss Lane—" the Inspector turned to the girl for the first time— "did you hear Carrington say anything?"

"No, sir," she said quietly. "I knew he was speaking, but I couldn't understand him. I was too excited."

"I see." Riley pursed him lips. Then he turned back to the doctor again. "Where was Carrington wounded?"

"Just over the heart," the doctor answered easily. "It's a miracle he didn't die instantly."

"As I understand it, Doctor," Riley continued, "you were a witness to the shooting?"

"Yes, I was," the doctor admitted regretfully. "I was sitting quite close and I saw the whole thing. When the mind-reader came down the aisle, he was taking things from people and I thought he was quite wonderful. He even read the number of my watch! Then this young lady tried to give him something. Mr. Carrington objected. It did seem to me, Inspector, that—now, I don't like to say this——"

The doctor hesitated and moistened his lips for courage, obviously torn between a desire to tell the whole truth as he had seen it, and his fear of hurting someone.

"You've got to tell the truth in a murder case, Doctor," Riley prompted him.

"Well, it seemed to me," the doctor continued slowly, "as if this mind-reader was trying to—to flirt—with Miss Lane here. He was smiling at her most peculiarly, and I remember wondering why he insisted on going ahead. He could see that Mr. Carrington was furious."

RILEY noted narrowly the flush of indignation that suffused Beverly's cheeks at this interpretation, and evidently decided to ignore its import for the moment.

"Tell me, Doctor," he directed, "as a medical man, wasn't the shot fired from the steps?"

"That's my opinion," the physician said, with a nod.

"Do you think the magician did it?" Riley flung at him.

"I—I don't know who did it!"

"Could that shot have come from the audience?"

"Why, I don't think that possible."

"It came from the steps," Riley repeated sharply.

"Yes—or from the stage!" the doctor amended.

But Beverly could stand no more.

"You're all trying to accuse my brother," she flared at both men accusingly. "And he didn't do it, I tell you! He didn't do it!"

"He did—or Chatrand did it," Riley told her quietly. "It all adds up. The boy hated Carrington. That French girl in Chatrand's act turned out the lights. She must have been tipped off what to do. And just as the boy is reading that locket—— By the way, Miss Lane! Was there anything special about that locket?"

Beverly seemed completely taken aback by the suddenness of this peculiar question. She threw back her head and her hands clenched as she answered.

"Why—yes, there was! There was something very strange about the locket."

"What do you mean?" Riley growled.

"WELL," she answered bravely almost as if she believed that this confession might relieve the suspicion against her brother considerably, "for the last two days my guardian wouldn't let me have the locket. He insisted upon keeping it locked up. And tonight he told me he intended to take me for a walk down Broadway, and he wanted me to wear the locket then, with my evening wrap thrown open. He had made me do that once before, several months ago, very late at night, 'way downtown on Broadway. I thought it was very queer, but I was afraid to say much about it. He had so many strange ways, and I didn't dare question him."

"Well, I'll say that's queer!" marveled Riley, scratching the back of his head in puzzlement. "What did you say your guardian's business was?"

"He was in the real-estate business. He used to be my father's partner, but the business seems to have gone to pot ever since my father died. That was about six years ago. My mother died about three years ago. We lived with our guardian, Paul and I, after that. Or, rather, he lived with us—on our estate up on the Hudson. Then—shortly after Paul disappeared—Mr. Carrington sold our estate, and I haven't had any real home since. I've been at the sanitarium, traveling with Mr. Carrington and my companion, and just living in hotels. But, lately, Mr. Carrington dealt with such singular people outside his office. I was always afraid of them. And he met them in such queer places."

"What kind of places?" Riley urged her as her voice trailed off.

"Oh, subway stations," Beverly told him, "garages—and once he met them late at night in the shadows of the arches of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and once in a little shack on Eighth Avenue where some construction was going on. Why, he even met those two men who offered to loan their car—he met them outside this theater tonight!"

"And you were to wear that locket tonight—with your coat open?" Riley repeated in bewilderment.

The girl nodded sadly.

"It's damn queer," Riley puzzled. "There must be something about that locket we don't understand. Doctor, I'll have to talk with this boy now. Bring him over here."

As he spoke, the Inspector jerked a straight-backed chair around to face his own and seated himself heavily.

"You don't realize, Inspector," the doctor warned him, "how serious this boy's condition is. He may die on your hands."

Beverly caught her breath, and unconsciously she crossed to her brother and laid a protecting hand on his shoulder.

"Just what's the matter with him?" Riley demanded.

"He may have lost his mind forever," the doctor averred. "He has had a terrific shock, and his heart is very weak."

"Dougherty, help him!" Riley snapped, as the doctor half lifted the boy toward the chair in front of the Inspector. "I asked you, Doctor, what is the matter with the boy?"

"I can't tell exactly," Doctor Blackstone had to admit. "Chatrand said he was suffering from amnesia, you know."

"That's loss of memory," Riley interpreted for himself.

"Yes," the doctor corroborated. "Now he may be recovering his memory under the influence of the shock. But you'll have to handle him with kid gloves, I warn you!"

Riley scowled at the doctor's insistent warnings and turned his attention to the pale, passive, almost bloodless face of the boy who had now been placed before him. He realized that Beverly was standing behind the boy's chair, poised like a mother-cat ready to spring at anything that might harm her young. Perhaps the agony on the girl's face, more than the protests of the doctor, prompted Riley to put a note of warmth and kindness into his first words to Alexander.

"What's your name?" he asked, looking the boy directly in the eyes.

There was a terrible moment of suspense and then the boy seemed to realize that he was being addressed. His face twitched with the effort to summon his faculties.

"It . . . is . . . an object . . . with a . . . curious . . . history. . . ." he droned in hollow tones.

"What's that?" Riley started to his feet.

"Why, that's exactly what he said when he was reading the locket," the doctor gasped, "just before the murder!"

"He's still delirious," Beverly cried. "Please stop!"

But Riley believed himself on the verge of making some important discovery and his eagerness brooked no interference.

"Didn't you hear what I asked you?" he barked shortly. "What's your name?"

"It . . . is . . . a . . . me-dal-lion!" chanted Alexander tonelessly.

"Look here!" protested the doctor. "You'd better let him recover himself first."

"Stop it!" pleaded Beverly hysterically. "Stop! You mustn't let him go on!"

But Riley waved her aside.

"Just a minute," he breathed anxiously.

Alexander was speaking again. *"It . . . con-tains . . . a locket. . . ."* he repeated in his singsong voice.

"Go on!" spluttered Riley breathlessly. "It contains a locket. What's inside the locket?"

"Inside . . . the . . . locket is. . . ." continued Alexander, his voice strained and high-pitched.

But Beverly, in desperation at this torture of her brother, had edged her way back from Riley to the wall of the dressing-room. She felt that she must do something—anything—to prevent this unspeakable brutality in the examination of her brother. She spied the switch of the electric light and her hand shot out and snapped it, plunging the entire room into complete blackness as Alexander was speaking.

"Lights!" roared Riley's voice in the darkness. "Who the hell put out those lights? Where's the light switch!"

BUT even while he spoke, the deafening sound of a shot rang out under their very ears.

"Again!" screamed Beverly in horror. "It's happening again!"

"My God!" groaned the doctor. "What can this thing be?"

But Riley had groped for his flashlight and had at last turned it on. The yellow circle of light played along the wall of the dressing-room until he discovered the switch. In another second he had snapped on the lights again.

"Good God!" cried the doctor. "Look! The boy!"

With a cry of horror Beverly's eyes sought the form of her brother. Alexander was lying, crumpled in a heap, upon the floor at the foot of his chair!

What has happened now? Has the terrible SPIDER LOCKET claimed its second victim? Is there any earthly way for Chatrand to save himself and the girl he loves better than life? You will be amazed by the thrilling events in the next instalment. Chatrand is ready to try the strangest scheme in the world in an effort to force a confession from the murderer! The May GHOST STORIES *is on all new stands April 23rd.*

The FACE in the FOG

An Opera Star's Amazing Experience

By Tito Schipa

Tito Schipa, premier tenor of the Chicago Opera Company

IT happened aboard an ocean liner bound for Buenos Aires, where I had an engagement to sing. Whether it was an apparition, a ghost or one of those things in which imagination plays a big part, you can judge for yourself; I have my own opinion in the matter.

Only a few weeks previous, during my first opera engagement at Monte Carlo, I had met the most charming girl I ever knew. Just a few hours before I saw her for the first time, I sang in a matinée of *Lucia* as Edgardo. *She* was there, but I did not know it; otherwise, maybe I could not have sung at all.

The young lady was a Parisienne. Having had influenza, her doctor had ordered her to Mentone for absolute quiet and rest. She was accompanied by a girl friend. As Mentone was deadly dull and Monte Carlo gay, they soon ignored the "absolute quiet" part of the cure and came to Monte Carlo, where there was no quiet at all.

Well, it must have been fate. That evening I saw her at my hotel in the ballroom. A nice old lady, whose hand-bag I had found and returned two days before, introduced us. So we danced. The earlier part of the evening I danced with both girls, but the latter part and all the other evenings I danced with only one.

As we were all stopping at the same hotel, I managed to see her pretty often. Three times in those happy days her parents wrote, "Are you not yet well?" Three times she answered, "I never felt better in my life." Then came a telegram, "As you feel so well, why not come home at once?" They understood things better when at last, my Monte Carlo season ended, I reached Paris two days before I was due to sail for Buenos Aires and asked their sanction to our marriage.

This time fate was not so kind to me. Being conventional in their notions, they felt that a wedding, to be a real wedding, needed a lot of fuss and preparation, and two days' notice was ridiculous. So there was nothing to do but put it off until I got back from South America. I wanted to cancel the trip but it was impossible. When a singer signs a contract which calls for his presence on a given day in a given city to begin rehearsals for an opera season, he must be there. But before I left, I made them agree to send out the invitations in time for the great event to take place two days after my return.

You may say that all this has nothing to do with my story of the ghost or whatever you decide to call it—but it has much to do with it. Everything in this life goes by steps. We can trace an incident back through a lot of other incidents that led up to it, like links in a chain. I found the old lady's hand-bag; she introduced me to my future wife; my love for her inspired me with a stronger sympathy for other people than I had ever felt before. This brought about my friendship with the steamship Captain, which in turn resulted in my adventure with the supernatural, thereby convincing me that there is a world other than the one we see. Some day, science will make the mystery clear.

BY end of the first week of my voyage to South America, things had settled down to steady routine as if it were to last forever. Meanwhile, the Captain and I had grown to be fast friends. He told me much about his wife and showed me her photograph on his desk alongside those of their children. Hers was a lovely face, gentle and womanly, and I could understand his happiness. There was one drawback to our mutual comfort; no radio was installed on his ship. So we both longed for Buenos Aires and the cables that would be waiting for us there.

One of his officers falling ill, the Captain had to take his watch on the bridge. I was often with him. One night we fell to talking about telepathy and he confided

to me that by mutual agreement he and his wife had arranged to send "thought messages" to each other daily at a certain hour.

"Everyone has had strange experiences of a telepathic nature," he said. "For instance, if a person thinks steadily of another who is absent, he will often get a letter from that person. Sometimes their letters will cross; for thinking of each other at the same time brings that result. The telepathic power of any individual can be increased by practice and mental concentration.

"The best proof any man could have of the existence of telepathy came to me early in my married life," he went on. "I was then first mate on a tramp steamer. Before I left on a voyage, my wife and I promised to think about each other at a set time daily and send thought messages of how things were going.

"One night fire broke out in the hold. Death seemed very close to us, for we had a highly inflammable cargo of alcohol and olive oil. For two days we fought the fire and on the third we gave up the job. Nothing could be done but take to the open sea with not a ship in sight. Boats were filled and lowered. The Captain and I were the very last to leave. Cut off from the life-boats by a rush of flame, we got off on a raft of boards.

"For three days we drifted on a smooth sea under a blistering sun. No water, only a little wine to drink. Then a sailing vessel bound for the Azores picked us up. The others, all of them, had the luck to fall in the way of steamships. Reaching their several ports long before our sailing ship got to the Azores, they reported us as last seen on the flaming ship. Consequently, we were given up as lost.

"All that time, every day at the set hour, I kept the thought message going, 'I am safe.' And later my wife told me she got it. Even when she got my cable from the Azores she felt no surprise. I tell you, boy," he added, "when two people love each other, their concentrated thoughts catch those electric waves that girdle the earth—and they can notify each other of what goes on."

Well, we were within four days of Buenos Aires when one night I joined the Captain on the bridge. He looked very troubled.

"My wife is ill," he said. "I know it. The message came this afternoon. And yesterday she was well. It is something sudden, something bad."

I tried to cheer him, but my words stopped. He seemed too certain of his premonition.

We stood there a long time silent. The twilight was radiant; a strange light made everything around us so distinct and near as to seem uncanny. We appeared to be drifting through a weird world between two vast silences, the sea and the sky. Suddenly, springing from nowhere, a long streamer of dense fog floated across the ship's bows and rested there. Presently it dragged its clammy length to just below the bridge and hung there motionless. The sky above, at the ship's stern and on both sides, was clear.

As we peered down into the strange fog, it began thinning toward the outer edges. Presently, as shreds of mist fell off, the very heart of it took on the vague shape of a woman wrapped in trailing cloud. Then, very indistinct at first, the outline of a face formed in the fog. It grew more and more definite as we stood there gazing, speechless. For an instant, lit by the strange glow in the sky, the face turned full toward us.

Even then neither of us spoke, though the Captain had caught my arm with a grip that hurt me.

When he did speak, he asked sharply, "Whose face was that?"

I did not answer—but I knew it was the face of the woman whose photograph stood on his desk. By that time the fog streamer had melted. Not a sign of it was left.

When we reached Buenos Aires, a terrible message was waiting for the Captain. His wife, fatally injured in an accident, was dead. The date and hour of her accident conformed exactly with the hour of his first premonition—and the date and hour of her death tallied with the floating fog, coming from nowhere, which had shown her face.

The Curse of the Sacred White Elephant

SAID ALI, a Mohammedan Indian mahout, who was considered the finest elephant trainer in the world, was recently beaten to death in his apartment in the London Zoo and "Sandy" Wee Nira, a Burmese elephant driver, was found beneath Said Ali's window, raving mad and seriously injured. At the very hour of the murder, Pa Wa, a famous sacred white elephant, died in Calcutta. Investigation convinced the authorities that the crime and the elephant's death were closely linked.

According to general belief among the Hindu natives of the Ganges valley, the white elephant is the most sacred of all animals. It is worshiped as a god, and an ancient and terrible curse is said to follow anyone who leads such an animal from its native land. Said Ali and Wee Nira were the ones who took Pa Wa on his forbidden journey from the Ganges, first showing him in England and America, then selling him in Calcutta. They later took up their residence in London to escape the vengeance of the natives they had offended.

Said Ali, possibly, had no regrets, for he received a great amount of money for exhibiting and selling the sacred animal. But Sandy, who had been very religious in his youthful years, finally became conscience-stricken and his worry made him morose and sullen. Shortly before the tragedy he engaged in a fast and a period of prayer for forgiveness. Hunger drove him mad, and in his frenzy he killed his employer and attempted suicide by hurling himself from a window.

Accounts of the murder were printed far and wide, finally reaching India, where the natives had been waiting for the "curse" to be fulfilled, their priests encouraging them to be patient and insisting that it was only a matter of time until the gods wreaked vengeance on the apostates.

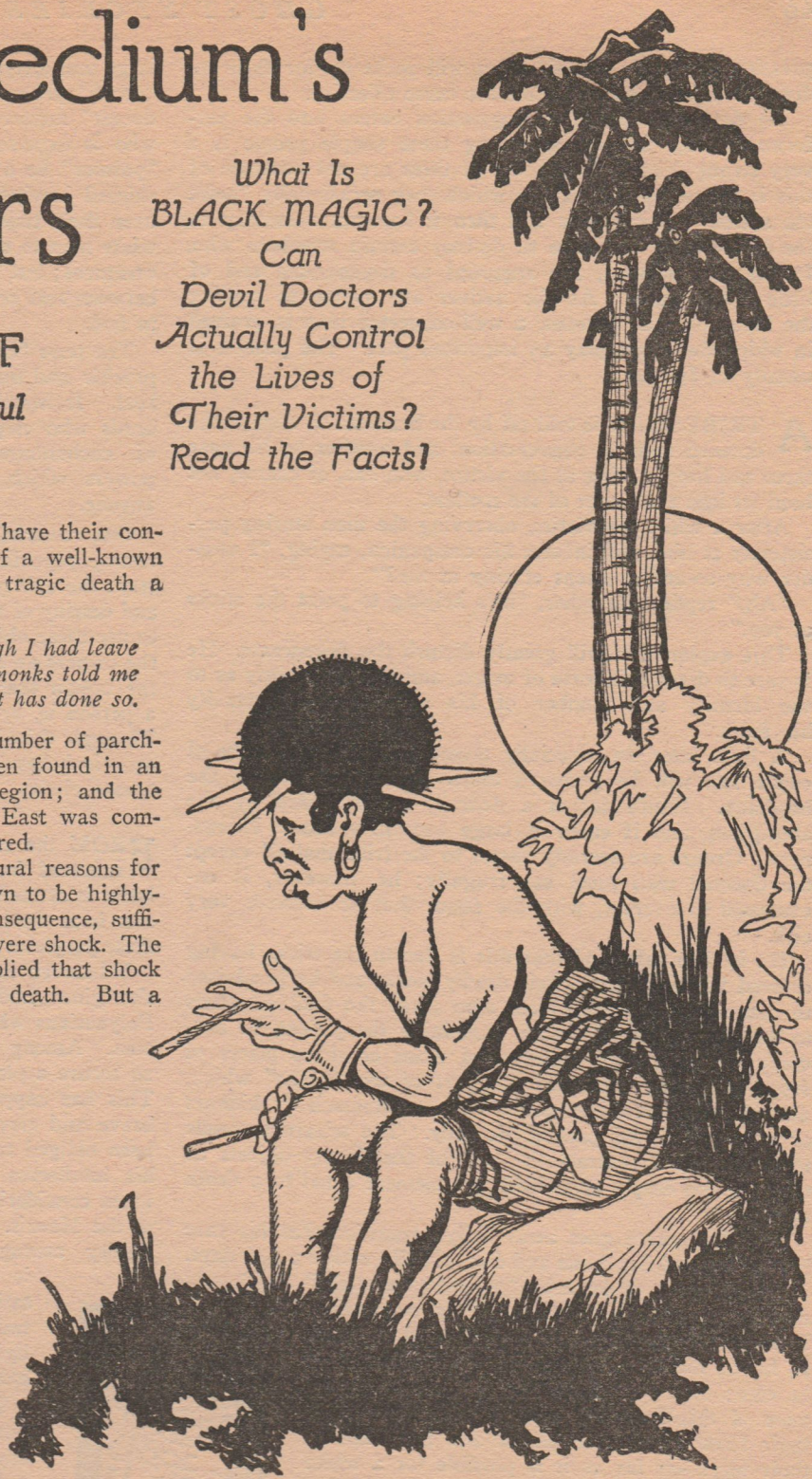
FOLLOWING great meetings to celebrate the passing of Said Ali, services were held in the temples in memory of Pa Wa. The purpose of these services was not only to honor the sacred beast but to convey to his spirit in another world the message that all other Hindus were guiltless of any part in his removal from India so that he and the gods would not exact further vengeance.

A Medium's Memoirs

What Is BLACK MAGIC? Can Devil Doctors Actually Control the Lives of Their Victims? Read the Facts!

By HORACE LEAF

England's Most Successful Ghost-layer



PEOPLE who believe in curses will have their convictions fortified by the assertion of a well-known Egyptologist who, just before his tragic death a few months ago, wrote:

I knew there was a curse upon me, though I had leave to take those manuscripts to Cairo. The monks told me the curse would work all the same. Now it has done so.

The manuscripts appear to have been a number of parchments in Arabic and Coptic which had been found in an ancient monastery in the Wadi Natrum region; and the curse seems to have been one that in the East was commonly laid on documents believed to be sacred.

The skeptic will, of course, find good natural reasons for the Professor's sudden death. He was known to be highly-strung, emotional and nervous, and, in consequence, sufficiently unstable to be overwhelmed by any severe shock. The lamentable death of one of his friends supplied that shock and was sufficient cause for his own sad death. But a consideration of the supposed power of curses may weaken one's confidence in this explanation and give at least a show of reason to the Professor's declaration.

BELIEF in black magic is held by millions of people, cultured and uncultured. In a native shop in Bombay I once saw a white woman obtain a metal tray on which she had set her heart and price, simply by telling the obstinate dealer that if he did not let her have it for the sum she offered, he would have no luck. Having solemnly pronounced her curse, she started to leave the premises—but the obviously disturbed proprietor hastened to say:

"Memsahib, you may have the tray if you will recall those words. You ought not to say such a thing."

And the woman walked off with an excellent bargain.

Thirty years ago I saw a crowd of excited men and women storm a house in south London, smash the windows and cover the walls with filth in an effort to force its occupant, an old man, to come out to them. The cause of the trouble was that this man had cursed a young Irish woman and her new-born babe, declaring that they would die within a certain time—and die they did. It was clear that all who participated in the assault had little doubt that in some unaccountable way this modern magician had achieved his purpose, and that on him rested the responsibility for the untimely death of the unfortunate mother and child.

I have seen this same confidence in curses expressed by the aborigines of Australia and the Maoris of New Zealand, notwithstanding that the Maoris are ostensibly Christians.

Among the aborigines the practice of cursing is very general and none of these people in their native state doubt its efficacy. It is, indeed, one of the bugbears of their naturally hard life. The method usually adopted by them when passing a curse is known as "pointing the sticks." I have seen hundreds of "sticks" that have actually been used in this nefarious work, and some of them have been said to be so effective that they were in great demand by the natives anxious to destroy anyone. These "sticks" are innocent enough in appearance, usually consisting of pieces of quartz, bone, or burnt wood of from three to six inches in length.

In the main, however, the power to curse is believed to belong to the individual pronouncing the malediction, some natives being regarded as particularly gifted and able to act alone. When the faculty is considered to be weak, two or more natives may combine their efforts under the im-

pression that their united action will make up for their individual deficiencies and make the curse effective.

No doubt the power of suggestion enters into the performance—for suggestion among these simple people is a very strong force. That some of them are not unaware of this is shown by the way in which they occasionally "point the sticks." Every now and then it becomes necessary in the interests of the tribe to destroy certain members who, for various reasons, are regarded as degenerates and of little tribal value. As the natives are averse to spilling the blood of such persons, a well-concerted plan is evolved in which the sticks play an important part. The process is usually as follows:

A TRIBESMAN is told off by the headmen to engage the doomed man in conversation, and another to lie near them and keep staring at the victim, who has, of course, not been let into the secret of the method.

After a while the victim, observing the man staring persistently at him, will inform his companion, saying, "I wonder why so-and-so keeps staring at me?"

"Ah," replies the other, "he's helping to point the sticks at you."

This explanation will greatly disturb the degenerate. He is sure to dread this form of magic, and his uncertainty as to the identity and number of his enemies will intensify his fears.

A little later an especially attractive meal, generally of emu's fat, will be prepared under the supervision of the headman. Emu's fat is a delicacy greatly liked by the aborigines, and if eaten in large quantities causes biliousness. Orders are secretly issued to the tribe that all except the doomed man must eat frugally; he, however, is encouraged to overeat, with the result that he becomes very sick.

He is then informed that this is due to the sticks having entered him and doing their deadly work, and he is advised to consult the medicine-man, who gives the final emphasis to the suggestion. Carefully examining the patient, he suddenly produces some splinters of wood or sharp pieces of stone, declaring that they are part of the "sticks" which, alas, have entered the man's liver or stomach or kidneys or some other vital part of his body. The wizard pretends to be unable to extract the rest of the deadly objects as they are too deeply embedded; a statement equal to a death sentence.

The degenerate goes away fully persuaded that his case is hopeless and lies down and dies, usually within a few days.

But all cases of death by "pointing the sticks" do not seem to be explainable by suggestion. In many instances the act is performed in secret so far as the subject is concerned; nevertheless, he often dies. I have received complete assurance of this from old settlers who have spent their lives among the blacks and have known their ways—as far as it is possible for a white man to know them. It must be remembered that the aborigines, in common with most other primitive races, do their utmost to hide their religious and magical practices from unsympathetic white people.

One of the officials of the South Australian Police Force assured me that in some instances the effect of "pointing the sticks" has been so disastrous among the natives that it has been necessary for the authorities to pay special attention to certain individuals whose power thus to destroy life has proved singularly potent. These men apparently made a trade of "pointing the sticks," and for various odds and ends which constitute wealth among the aborigines were prepared to curse anyone and project the "sticks."

Some of these specialists in black magic make a most elaborate ceremony of the practice and are truly fearful to behold when operating.

Seated on the ground in the midst of leaves and twigs, with down stuck upon his body and face with his own blood, a large and dirty turban of human hair upon his head, and the "sticks" protruding from his forehead like horns, the "devil doctor" mutters his curse and concentrates on his victim, who is expected forthwith to wither and die. Should the "pointer" be a real medicine-man the victim's fate is considered inevitable, for the power of these remarkable men over their tribesmen is extraordinary. It is difficult for a white man to evaluate the powers of these strange and eerie creatures; but it is pretty safe to say of them that the line between real occult manifestations and trickery is very hard to find.

The term "blackfellow doctor" is used for those who have psychic and magical powers, as well for those who merely heal. It includes rain-makers, seers, spirit mediums, and bards who employ their poetical faculties for the purpose of enchantment; but all seem credited with magical powers which, among other things, can lay a curse on anyone.

One remarkable gift possessed by many of them is known among psychical researchers and spiritualists as psychometry: the ability to "read" from personal articles the nature and destiny of the owner. The wizard claims also to be able to use these objects as a means through which to transfer to the owners an evil or good influence. The belief arises from the notion that anything that has once been in touch with a person is, by some occult link, always in touch with him. Through this invisible connection the aboriginal medicine-man is believed to cast his spell or curse upon his unfortunate victim.

FROM the ethnological point of view the Maori is far removed from the Australian aboriginal. Whereas the latter is at the bottom of the scale of primitive races, the former is at the top. The appearance, manners and customs of these people are entirely dissimilar.

Whatever may be said about the low mentality of the aborigines, nothing but admiration can be felt for the noble Polynesians who inhabit New Zealand along with the white man. Among all Great Britain's colonies no race has won so secure a place in the white man's esteem as the Maoris. This has happened not only because the British admire a brave and clever foe; but because the New Zealander has been obliged to admit that the Maori is, in many respects, his intellectual equal. It is important to remember this when considering the religious beliefs and magical practices of the Maoris. Notwithstanding the rapid spread of Christianity among them, their old belief in Tohungaism is far from dead. I have proved to my own satisfaction that if the inquirer carefully penetrates below the surface of a modern Maori's religious professions, firm faith in many of the old magical formulæ will be found.

In 1922 I visited a Maori village in the North Island, and saw clear evidence of the present-day force of tabu illustrated in connection with a beautiful, translucent natural pool of boiling water which was fenced around so that no one should touch it—lest a curse should fall on the village. The tabu was the result of the tragic fate of an unfortunate Maori who had fallen into the pool some years before and had been scalded to death. His body was sucked underground by the strange currents for which these pools are often noted.

The loss to the villagers of this pool must have been considerable, as it could have been used for many domestic and social purposes; yet, since that fatal night when their compatriot met his terrible doom, no Maori has dared to touch it for fear of the curse.

Another example of the persistence of their ancient belief in magic and animism—in this case illustrating their notion that even the spirit of a tree may cast a curse—was visible as I motored down Hongi's Pass. Here was a large tree regarded as sacred by the natives, and none would

venture to pass it without making an appropriate offering, for fear of incurring ill-luck. These offerings took the form of fern leaves plucked from the surrounding trees and carefully placed in a natural cleft in the sacred plant. An idea of the earnestness with which these offerings were made was afforded by a great pile of dead fern leaves lying near, having been taken from the cleft to make room for others. One magnificent fern tree had been practically denuded of its leaves by the faithful, many of whom were doubtless nominally Christians.

It is impossible here to do more than indicate the strength of the belief in black magic entertained by the Maoris. Every Maori chieftain and priest is believed to be able to bring about the downfall of any person unless that individual can exercise the necessary occult resistance. In this supposed power lies much of the value of those mysterious qualities known as *tabu* and *mana*, as well as the special virtues said to be possessed by the *tohunga*, or priest, as the result of his strict training in the special schools instituted for that purpose. Two well-known instances of the supposed power of curses among the Maoris will suffice.

In Whakarewarewa there is a celebrated *whare whakaiera*, or cursed house, called Rauru, after the first Maori carver who came to New Zealand. The *whare* was ordered to be built by an old Arawa chief in honor of his wife. While the carvers were at work on it, the chieftain carelessly entered the building smoking his pipe. According to Maori belief, the owner of the house should not smoke or eat in it until it is finished and a certain ceremony performed for the purpose of removing the tabu from it. The ceremony is a religious rite of great importance among the Maoris.

An old priest warned Te Waru, the chieftain, not to proceed with the erection of the house, as it had been revealed to him in a dream that the chief's sacrilegious action had laid it under a curse, and seven people would die as a punishment if the house was completed.

Te Waru, being civilized, paid no heed to the warning and ordered the builders to proceed with their work. Almost immediately his wife died, and in consequence the work was discontinued for a while.

In the course of time Te Waru married again and ordered the resumption of operations on the *whare*. His second wife died shortly afterwards, and the work was again suspended.

After two years he took another wife who bore him two sons, and when they had grown to manhood the old chief again ordered the *whare* to be finished. Almost immediately he lost his third wife and two sons.

At last, fully persuaded that the *tohunga's* prophecy was a true one, he ceased work on the *whare* altogether, and the house became tabu among the Maoris, who regarded it with awe as an accursed thing. Knowing this, and seeing some commercial value in it, Mr. Nelson, a well-known citizen of Rotarua, decided to purchase it and succeeded in doing so through the influence of one or two Maoris.

When Mr. Nelson completed the purchase, he had the house removed to its present site and arranged for the building to be completed. Te Waru warned Mr. Nelson that the curse still remained as only five victims had died, and he felt sure that if the white man persisted in his task either he and his wife, the two carvers, or the two *tohungas* engaged to perform the incantations at the opening ceremony, would die.

These warnings were disregarded; the house was duly completed and opened. A week afterwards the old *tohunga* who had officiated at the opening ceremony died—and the day he was buried, the *tohunga* who had assisted him died also!

This story is well-known throughout the district, and no doubt of its truth is entertained by those acquainted with the facts. The Maoris in their own quiet way merely wonder why the chief was so indiscreet as to run the fearful risk he did, in view of the known power of tabu and the terrible accurracy of the *tohunga's* prophecies. To them the consequences were inevitable.

The second incident relates to the eruption of Mount Tarawera, which came with terrible suddenness in 1886, entirely burying two native villages and part of a third. The Maoris attribute the eruption to a curse passed by an aged and powerful *tohunga* named Tukoto.

A short while before the upheaval the wife of a neighboring chief denounced Tukoto for causing the death of her child. Angry at the unjust charge, the old man invoked the god of earthquakes and the spirit of Ngatoro, the magician who kindled Tongariro, one of the most famous of New Zealand's volcanoes, to send down death on the chief's wife and her people. The gods responded without discrimination, overwhelming Tukoto and his friends along with his enemies.

Tukoto's curse, however, might not have proved effective but for the fact that twenty generations before, Ngatoro himself had cursed the same tribe, promising that in the course of time their race would be blotted out by an eruption of Mount Tarawera.

An interesting feature of the eruption is that Tukoto, who was said to be over one hundred years old, was buried under the lava four days. When dug out, he was found to be hale and hearty. I have been informed by white residents of the district that the Maoris placed so much importance in the old *tohunga's* curse that several days before the outburst many of them moved away from the vicinity of Tarawera, asserting that it would soon erupt. No one could have foretold this by normal means, as Tarawera showed every sign of being an extinct volcano.

Among the Maoris black magic is known as *makutu* and used to be practiced by all who knew the necessary formulæ. This included the pronouncing of appropriate incantations which lost their desired efficacy unless each word was uttered correctly. The slightest mistake was believed to have a boomerang-like effect, causing the curse to return and destroy the one who uttered it.

To produce the most drastic effect the operator needed to possess something belonging to his intended victim—a lock of hair, a portion of his garment or even a piece of his food. Over these the spell would be uttered and then the articles were buried. As they decayed, their owner was expected to waste away and die. This was sure to come to pass if the victime was aware of (*Continued on page 88*)

The HOUSE I HAUNTED

By JEAN HUMPHREY
As told to
Helen Brooks

ONE summer, several years ago, I was motoring through England with friends. They were looking for a country house to rent for the summer; I was—well, that will come later in my story.

We were following a typical highway in Surrey, when suddenly I put my hand on the arm of the man driving the car and cried excitedly:

"Stop! Please stop!"

Needless to say, the car came to a halt so sudden and unexpected that we were all thrown violently forward. Indifferent to the physical discomfort of a jolt, I pointed eagerly in the direction of a large estate off to the right.

"Loo! Do you see that old ivy-covered stone wall, and that iron-wrought gateway? Do you see that house on the knoll with the old-fashioned garden leading to it? I want to go into that house. I'd like to rent it for the summer."

My friends were never surprised at anything I might do, but they demurred at this new and unreasonable fancy of mine.

"But there is no sign that the place is for rent, Jean," someone reminded me. "Won't the owner think we're a little mad?"

"Never mind," I persisted. "They won't refuse to admit us. We'll think up something to say when we get into the house."

As I had predicted, we were admitted without demur by the man-servant who opened the door. When the lady of the mansion entered the drawing-room—to which we had been escorted—our attention was arrested by two things: the first was the silver-haired charm and beauty of the woman who hesitated for a second on the threshold of the room; the second was the uncontrollable start she gave at sight of us—of *one* of us, to be exact. Then she came forward with dignified calm and a cordial smile, greeted us graciously and asked what she could do for us.

Observing that I was, for some obscure reason, slightly embarrassed, it was one of my friends who explained our eagerness to find an attractive home for summer rental, and that, being particularly struck by the beauty of this estate, we had ventured to make inquiries, in spite of there being no rental sign upon the premises.

Then the lady said: "Strangely enough, only yesterday I instructed my lawyer to put my house on the market for summer rental. If you would like to inspect it, we will see if we can come to some arrangement mutually satisfactory."

Eagerly and enthusiastically we agreed to her suggestion, and then she escorted us over the house, showing us—apparently—every nook and cranny.

Out of an impulse that I was only half conscious of obeying, I said, when we had returned to the ground floor: "Is there not a room in the ell to the right in the rear?"

The surprised glances of my friends were of no consequence to me, but our hostess' sharp and penetrating stare into my eyes brought the blood to my face.

"There is such a room. It was my husband's study. How did you know?" the Englishwoman asked coldly.

With an effort I gathered the remnants of my self-possession, and I said in as casual a manner as I could achieve: "I thought I observed—from the highway—such an ell, with several windows."

"I see," the lady said gently, but her eyes, looking into mine, did not see at all—or saw more than my words conveyed.

MY friends were delighted with the place (obviously intent upon renting it for their own use) and upon asking one or two questions relating to business, they expressed their satisfaction with the entire project. It was at that point that the white-haired lady, shifting her gentle regard from my friends to me and back again, said slowly:

"I think, after all, I do not care to—to rent my home for the summer."

Surprised and discomfited ejaculations greeted this quiet announcement, but to our pleadings and perplexity she replied calmly:

"No, I think that it is better that I do not rent my home.

I Was a Ghost While Still Alive! LOVE Sent My Spirit Forth to Fight for the Man of My Dreams!

"The fact is," she supplemented with a slight hesitation, "this house is haunted."

Further ejaculations of our various reactions—surprise, indifference (to ghostly visitations), eager assurance that no such obstacle should be permitted to alter our plans—made no impression upon the chatelaine of this beautiful home. She shook her head, with a kindly smile, and repeated her determination not to rent the place.

Finally, having my own secret purposes in view, I said eagerly: "I assure you, dear Madam, that a house being haunted is nothing to me. Every old house in England is haunted, for that matter. What possible difference could it make to you or to—to me?"

She looked deep into my eyes, then she said quite simply: "Ah, but you see, my dear young lady, it happens that my house is haunted by—*you!*"

I must go back over time and space, and narrate the strange occurrences which had entered my life prior to the amazing incident I have described—occurrences that led to this incident and were part and parcel of it. I have had a colorful life, but one single chapter of it contained mystery and drama enough for a lifetime; by comparison, all the rest fades into the limbo of forgotten things.

To tell my story with the zest necessary for so romantic and unusual a tale, I must start with the prelude of a love which rose above human limitations. This does not necessarily imply strength of character; it was a spiritual phenomenon that carried our souls over obstacles that our human minds and bodies would have found insurmountable.

I was twenty-five when an aunt took me for a trip to India. It was in Madras that I met Lamar Brocton. He was then a lieutenant in the Royal Dragoon Guards, which was considered a "crack" regiment of his Royal Highness, the King of England.

Lamar was the first attractive Englishman I had met, and his opinion of American girls was not a flattering one, so it followed that we were not predisposed to admire one another. However, we fell in love in the manner that philosophers deride—at first sight—and within a week we were so deeply and romantically attached to each other that it was almost inevitable that Fate should take a hand in our affairs. An ugly and sinister hand it was, reaching out from unknown spaces and unguessed causes, to wreck the happiness we had miraculously found.

For a time neither of us was concerned with the material aspect of the situation. In other words, neither of us halted in our mad and joyous love-path to face certain rather painful and obvious facts.

I was a flagrant exception to the rule that American girls, traveling abroad, are heiresses. I was penniless except for a small income left me by my parents, which I was obliged to supplement by teaching singing. Rich relatives occasionally showered benefactions upon me, but there was no one to give me permanent backing.

Lamar came from an old and wealthy county family. He had a twin brother—Alfred—for whom their father cared far more than for Lamar. In fact, the old man's antipathy dated back to the birth of the twin boys, soon after which the young mother had died.

Alfred was the living replica of the wife who had been deeply loved and desperately mourned by Edward Brocton. From early infancy Lamar had resembled his father in appearance and temperament. For some obscure reason Edward held Lamar directly accountable for the mother's death. This had puzzled the twins since they had been old enough to be aware of it. They had agreed—between themselves—that the only explanation of their father's attitude must be that Lamar had been the last born, and that his coming had actually snapped the thread that held the mother to life.

ODDLY enough, neither of the boys had ever been told which of them was the elder. They had early learned that to question their father on the subject was to bring his wrath upon them. Their old nurse Mary evaded their questioning in true Celtic fashion, or pretended not to remember. The only other person qualified to inform them was the physician who had assisted at their entry into the world—Doctor Vaughn. But it was not until they were fifteen that they began seriously to wonder which of them was the elder, and Doctor Vaughn had died suddenly when they were twelve. Moreover, since childhood they had seldom seen the family physician; their father, for reasons unkonwn to them, having quarreled with Doctor Vaughn and cut his acquaintance.

When the twins were about sixteen, they faced the fact that, according to British law, only one of them could legally inherit the entailed estate and fortune. English law provided that the elder of twin boys—if only by sixty seconds the elder—was the proper heir. Unknown to their father they consulted the family attorney. By him they were informed that there had been a birth record in the Registry of Vital Statistics, in the county-seat, but that the Registry Office (existing when they were born) had been burned years ago, together with all records.

Finally the brothers decided that regardless of which of them should eventually inherit the property, they would share and share alike. They were close pals, genuinely devoted to one another, never dreaming in their boyhood that any alien influence could ever wedge between them.

His father's antipathy for Lamar increased as years developed the similarity between them. Their wills clashed continually, and Lamar, deeply resenting injustice, gave vent to a bitterness that widened the breach between them. After leaving Sandhurst, he entered the Guards and proceeded to live beyond his income and call on his father to pay his debts. Mr. Brocton's antagonism then flamed more intensely than ever.

ALFRED took up farming and horse-breeding, and lived at home, looking after the estate. At twenty-three—in 1913—he married an English girl whom I shall call Evelyn. Lamar went home for the wedding and he and the young bride had taken an instant dislike to each other.

Then, three years after the War—one year before my meeting with Lamar—he had had a final and disastrous quarrel with his father, who had cut him off without a penny. Alfred, however, was sending his brother half of his own allowance, unsuspected—so far—by either his father or wife. Certainly this went to prove that the twins were still close to each other, and that Lamar could count on Alfred's loyalty to the last.

The pay of an officer in the British Army has always been small, and a crack regiment is an expensive institution. It was all Lamar could do to scrape along—and to support a wife even in a less expensive regiment was out of the question.

Such was the situation, and a serious one for two persons deepely in love and eager to marry. Lamar had been trained for the army, and at thirty-two a young man cannot begin a different professional or business career.

So, with hearts aflame and spirits soaring to high altitudes of hope and faith, we decided to live in the happy present and wait for time to settle our material difficulties.

Lamar took leave of absence and traveled with us through India and Egypt. Romance and adventure went with us, from the hill country back of Simla, to the Nile over whose green waters we sailed under blue Egyptian skies. As we stood together on "The Roof of the World"—that glorious high plateau beyond Cairo—we seemed to see the entire universe in panorama beneath us, and it was there that we recognized the immensity and power of such love as ours.

Dawn and sunset, moonlight and shadow—it was all perfect in our young and idealistic eyes. We felt that the rapture of love and youth would be ours forever.

And so, at the end of two unbelievably happy months, we parted. Lamar returned to his regiment and I and my aunt wandered back to America. Lamar wanted me to meet him in England in a year's time. He held the fatuous belief that I possessed the magic with which to win his father to justice and generosity.

As I look back to that hour in Cairo when Lamar held me to his heart for the last time, I marvel that I endured the months that followed. Loneliness—heart-break—despair! Despair began when Lamar wrote that he could not get leave for the trip to England. I began to question what the future held for us. Days and weeks and months were merely so much dross of life to be annihilated, along with every other obstacle that lay between me and the man I loved.

I had always liked men, but their admiration and attention had ceased to mean anything to me. I was only happy when I saw the sun rise over a mountain top, or heard a bird calling to its mate in the woods, or listened to the roar of surf breaking on a beach. These things brought me spiritually close to my loved one, and our minds kept in tune by books mutually read and discussed in letters.

I knew that I came of a good family who, for generations, had been subject to amazing and unaccountable dreams. I had often heard strange stories of dreams, but no one of my people had ever arrived at the true meaning of their remarkable dreaming. To me it was given, at last, to do this.

Often I dreamed of Lamar, but these dreams were unreal and fantastic. He seemed always out of reach and perversely unlike his actual self. Knowing of the family tradition, I longed to dream of Lamar in less illusive form. Then came a night when I saw him clearly and felt his lips on mine. I even heard his dear voice whisper:

"I love you, Jean, with all my heart and soul!"

Only that—but I awoke trembling with joy. At last he had appeared to me in my dreams, a flesh-and-blood man who took me in his arms and quickened the beat of my heart with the touch of his lips and the sound of his voice. After that, every once in a while, such a dream would come to me to make the loneliness and waiting easier to bear.

A letter arrived one day, about this time, and in it I read bad news. Alfred had written to his brother to tell him that his wife had discovered the secret dispatch of money to Lamar each month, and had gone to their father with her discovery. The immediate result was a reduction by one half of Alfred's income and steps taken to prevent his sending a penny of it to his twin brother. Lamar stated that, unless matters should mend during the ensuing months, he would be obliged to resign from the Guards and join a less expensive regiment.

All this made me very wretched, for it seemed to portend far more than appeared on the surface. I had a feeling that sinister powers were at work, and I wrote to Lamar concerning my fears. But he treated these forebodings with a light dismissal, assuring me that regardless of all else Alfred was and would continue to be loyal to him, and that it would be only a question of time, and not such a long time, before everything worked out all right. Lamar, having no reason for feeling affection for his father, was not hypocritical enough to pretend any sorrow or regret in contemplation of the fact that the old man was—according to Alfred—growing more feeble each month and would be unlikely to live much longer. It may sound cruel, but such treatment as Edward Brocton had accorded Lamar does not inspire either love or respect. I did not blame him for looking forward to his father's death with a sense of relief.

SHORTLY after this I began to have stranger dreams than before. One night I went to sleep very early and I dreamed of being in Lamar's ancestral home. He had described it often and had shown me pictures of it, so there was nothing extraordinary in seeing it vividly in a dream. I walked along vast corridors where dim lights brooded over the shadows, and through empty, high-vaulted rooms. Not a soul did I see, though I passed through most of the rooms in the house.

I wrote of this dream to Lamar and in his reply he expressed surprise at the accuracy of my vivid description. No photograph—he wrote—could possibly have shown the things I described; details that he had forgotten but which he must have given me.

Several weeks later—and again I had gone early to bed—I dreamed of the home in Surrey a second time. The first thing I recall was standing in the doorway of a huge room. Seated at a long table were three figures, a woman and two men. They meant nothing to me and I watched them without interest. I observed that one of the men was old.

Suddenly the elderly man lifted his head. I saw his face clearly and I almost cried aloud, for his eyes were the eyes

of Lamar, only deeper and without tenderness. Then I heard him say:

"You have heard my decision. I shall abide by it."

The face of the younger man was clearer now. It was young and weak, but kindly, and the eyes were full of pain. Then he spoke, looking straight at the old man.

"Father, how do I *know* that I and not Lamar was the first born?"

The old man's lips twitched and his eyes seemed to glow like living coals. His voice rang out and I saw the other one shrink back as if struck.

"How do you *know!* Do you dare question my word? Do you dare oppose me, knowing that I have only a few weeks, perhaps, in which to live? I want your oath—on paper—not to give a penny to your brother after my death, or I shall break the entail for one generation and leave everything to your son on his coming of age."

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"And no tricks, Alfred! You will render an accounting to those empowered to act in my stead. I could not count on Evelyn tattling on you—as before—" I saw him throw the girl a look that held a touch of scorn—"for she would have too much to lose."

I saw the man called Alfred fling his arms on the table, bury his head in his arms and give a moan that was like a sob. I saw the girl smile, and I hated that smile: it was so full of satisfied venom. She pushed a paper toward Alfred and touched his arm. He lifted his head slowly and took in his hand a pen that she gave him. His fingers moved clumsily, painfully, over the paper under his hand.

Then a strange thing happened. Up to that moment I had stood there as if unrelated to time or space or circumstance. Sudden awareness now took possession of me, and I knew that the scene enacted before me concerned me vitally because it concerned one whom I loved. From my throat came a cry of protest, and I took a step or two into the room.

Three things occurred instantaneously. Alfred turned toward me and on his face I saw stupefaction rather than fear. The girl turned also, her eyes bulged in their sockets. She half rose in her chair, and her lips parted in a shriek of terror. The old man, his face stiff with horror, fell forward over the table.

That was all I remembered after waking. At the sound of that shriek the dream ended, abruptly and definitely as a nightmare ends, on a high note of physical or mental distress. I awoke trembling and in a cold sweat.

That dream—the most vivid I had ever experienced—left me spent, physically and emotionally. But dream or vision, fantasy or reality, I knew what I must do. I sent a cable to Lamar, saying:

Your father is dead. Go to England as soon as possible.

For twenty-four hours I heard nothing, then a cable came from Lamar. It read as follows:

How in God's name did you know? Have just received word from my brother. Am leaving tomorrow.

In God's name, how *did* I know? Well might he ask me that, as I asked it of myself, day and night.

I had a short respite from dreams of any sort; then, early one morning, after a wakeful night, I had a very strange dream. I found myself in an utterly unfamiliar house and I knew in my dream that I had never seen it before. But the dream began outside this house.

It seemed to be a summer morning and I saw trees and shrubs. I was on a country road going toward a wrought-iron gateway in an ivy-covered stone wall. Through the gate I saw a garden path bordered with flowers of whose scent I was conscious. I opened the gate and walked up the path to a mansion and entered by a wide front door which was open. The house was spacious and I wandered about without seeing anyone.

THEN I entered a room in the rear, on the ground floor. It looked like a man's study. I stood motionless, as if waiting for something, and suddenly I saw the figure of a man approaching me from a corner of the room. I seemed to see both face and body as if through a mist. The face was tender, beneficent, with kind eyes and a gentle smile. Some deep-seated instinct told me that this was not a figure of the quick but of the dead; yet I felt no fear nor shrinking.

He came nearer, smiling at me, then went toward a bookcase near where I stood. I heard a slight sound outside the room, and I was aware that the man heard it also, for he stood arrested. I turned my head and in the doorway I saw a lovely white-haired woman. Her gray eyes met mine with a look of questioning wonder, as if asking what I was doing in that room. It seemed as if she saw *me,* but not the figure standing so close to me.

I turned to look at him but there was no one there! No one in the room but myself and the gracious woman in the doorway! I turned and spoke to her, but as I heard my own voice speaking, I saw a strange expression flash over her face. The next second she and the room had disappeared, and I awoke with a start.

Deeply puzzled and intensely curious, I was certain that I had dreamed of an actual house and a living woman—and of another being who was not living. But who were they and

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Without fear or even surprise I saw coming toward me the same man with the gentle smile. He seemed to recognize me and to greet me with his eyes. He walked directly to the bookcase, or rather he seemed to glide across the room. As before, I knew that he did not belong to the living world. Often we dream of the dead, but it is usually of the dead whom we have known in life. This man I had never known.

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must be done, rather than of the uncanny phenomena that had resulted in the discovery. Then, at last, they returned to the subject of my strange dreams. I told them of each one in detail, and when I dwelt upon my impression of the lady's husband when he had first appeared to me in the study, she said tremulously:

"And I, who would have given the rest of my life for one glimpse of his dear face—it was not to me that he came, but to one whom he had never seen in life."

"Yes," I said quickly, "but it was surely because he wanted to right a wrong and he knew that I could help him."

"I, too, could have righted the wrong," the dear lady said sadly, "if he had appeared to me and shown me the journal records of which I knew nothing. There is more to it than that, my dear child. It must be that you possess a psychic power which is very rare. How else can you explain your extraordinary dreams?"

How else, indeed! That was what Lamar said to me, weeks later, when everything had been adjusted and he had even forgiven Alfred for the cowardly part he had played in the affair.

IT was on our honeymoon that Lamar said to me one day: "Sweetheart, I don't believe that you *dreamed* what you saw and heard. Those were not dreams as we understand the definition. I was so long in India that I can understand or at least accept many things that others deny and laugh at."

He went on to tell me that when my letters began to reach him, telling of my strange dreams about his home, he tried to treat them lightly, but that all the time he had been deeply impressed.

"If I didn't *dream* what I saw and heard, then what *did* I do?" I asked him, utterly at sea as to his meaning.

"There is such a thing as the disembodied spirit," he told me—"that is to say, the temporary departure of the spirit from the living body, during the unconscious period that we call sleep. In many countries the superstitious natives claim that a person should never be awakened suddenly or violently, as it does not give the soul sufficient time to return to the body, and then the body dies. This is a very common belief. They even claim that sleeping persons should never be called by their own names. They have many ideas on the subject in India, and I have talked with intelligent East Indians who firmly believe that to some it is permitted to wander in spirit whither they will, while their bodies lie inert in sleep."

In all my life I had never heard of this strange belief, but the more I considered it, the more I accepted it as truth. I am positive that it was not to dreams, however remarkable, that I owed the wonderful disentangling of the twisted skeins of my love-life.

My soul had gone forth to help me and the man I loved, and it had accomplished its purpose!

Out of such a soil our love has grown into a richer, sweeter flower than is the gift of Life to most mortals!

A Quaker Lady's Strange Experience

A True Story by

DOCTOR A. J. FAWCETT, *Glendale, Oregon*

FOR years I have been an interested observer of things occult or psychic, although I have always maintained the position of the proverbial Missourian—"Show me."

A few years ago there occurred in my own family an incident that was the most conclusive evidence of spirit return that it has ever been my pleasure to observe.

My mother, who is an old Quaker lady, has always been what I would call a true psychic. A little incident that occurred many years ago, although it probably shows nothing more than a keen telepathic power, may be of interest before going into the details of my main story. We lived on a farm in a very rural district in Ohio, and these were the days before the rural telephone and modern conveniences. An older brother, who had been in Iowa for several years, had written that he would be home soon, and then had written later that he could not come, being detained by business.

A few days after this last communication my mother startled the family by remarking, "Walter will be here to dinner tomorrow."

We knew that she had had no opportunity to receive any word from him, so we lovingly laughed at her and told her that her desire must be the father of her idea.

She only smiled knowingly and remarked, "Wait and see."

The following day—the farmer's dinner comes at noon—Mother set an extra place for Walter, but when we came to dinner Walter was not there. So we seated ourselves, all but Mother; she said she would wait.

We had scarcely started to eat when Mother came in, leaning on Walter's arm.

My mother's life has been filled with similar incidents. For a number of years she has been living in Pasadena, California, where she has a home with a widowed daughter. It was there that the phenomenon, if such it may be called, occurred. My mother speaks of death and going to heaven as casually as I would speak of a trip to a near-by town.

One day when she was confined to bed by a long and dangerous illness, she was wondering if she was going to recover and what her daughter would do in the event of her death. Let me tell what occurred in her own words:

"My father, who was an old Quaker doctor, had been dead for thirty-five years, but he came and stood at the foot of my bed and smiled at me and said, 'Mary, thee is going to get well. I am doing all that I can for thee.' I saw him as plainly as I ever saw him in my life."

Immediately after this took place she called my sister and told her that she had seen her father and what he had said to her.

About thirty minutes after their conversation had taken place, an aunt, who lived but a short distance from them, came in. Usually upon entering the house, she asked my sister how mother was and if she might go in and see her for a short time; but on this day she did not wait at all but went straight to my mother's bed and said, "Mary, thee is going to get well. Father came to me a while ago and I saw him as plainly as I see thee now, and he said to me, 'Mary is going to get well; I am doing all that I can for her.'"

I do not try to explain this incident but I do absolutely vouch for the truth of every statement that I have made.

My mother is now nearly seventy-nine, a very bright old lady, and is known as the Quaker poetess to a great many people.

Have you ever seen a ghost? Have you ever had a bewildering, uncanny experience? Send us your TRUE story!

The Witch

Did the queer little man have power to inflict pain—and death—merely by muttering a charm? He claimed he did. Events seemed to prove—well, decide for yourself!

Terrified, I watched the sorcerer thrust a pointed stick through the wax model

THE old house on Morton Street had always fascinated me. As far back as I could remember—and I had passed it daily for nearly five years—there had been a sign *Room to Let* nailed beside the front door. It was on old sign when I first saw it, but it was never taken down. I often wondered about that sign. If it had said "rooms," it would not have interested me; but the word "room" seemed to indicate that there was one apartment in the building which was not occupied and apparently never would be.

I always looked at the house whenever I passed in the street-car, but only once had I seen anyone entering it. That person was a stooped old man, muffled in a heavy overcoat, topped by an ancient derby hat. During my momentary view of him I could see only his back. Probably there were others who lived in the two-story house, for the sign always said "room"—not "rooms."

The second-story front room, I surmised, was the one that was untenanted, for the blinds were always drawn. They were old brown blinds, almost the shade of the smoke-stained yellow bricks of which the house was built. It was a dilapidated house; and I often wondered what the room looked like from the inside. Probably it contained an antique bed, a rickety table and two unsteady chairs, with a mirror or a chromo hanging on the wall. And if it was carpeted, the pattern would be old and colorless. Probably a most uninviting room. Many people must have looked at it; yet it was never taken. What was wrong with the room? Or with the house?

Two events occurred to change my living arrangements. The relatives with whom I had been dwelling left the city; and the factory where I worked was moved to another building. I decided that my best plan was to find quarters within walking distance of the factory. This was not easy, for the neighborhood was uninviting; but after making calculations I discovered that the old mystery house was within a mile of my new working place. Neither the house nor the neighborhood were pretentious; but I was not very particular about my abode, and my curiosity of five years' standing demanded satisfaction. Yet somehow I postponed my visit until the last possible day—and so I found myself standing before the house on a Saturday afternoon, with my trunk on a wagon, ready to take the room sight unseen.

After pounding on the door and ringing the bell for several minutes, I heard the slow click of a latch being turned; then the door was opened cautiously and I faced a strange old man—the very one whom I had seen from the street-car. His shoulders bent low; his face was saffron in color, but unwrinkled. His thin gray hair and short-clipped mustache added nothing to his expressionless countenance.

"I would like to see your room. Is it furnished?"

He studied me for a moment, and I felt in the position of a candidate for initiation. Finally he spoke in a thin, bitter voice, which seemed tinged with sarcasm.

"Yes. It is furnished. You can move in now. But I don't think you will like it. Nobody does—and *I don't care.*"

in the Next Room

By WALTER GIBSON

"My enemy will suffer agony in his shoulder," he rasped

I motioned to the two burly men on the wagon. "Bring in the trunk," I called.

I felt sure that the old man was impressed by my confident manner. Without seeing the room, without asking its price, without the least hesitation, I had taken it. Yet he showed no trace of surprise.

"This way," he said, and started slowly toward the stairs.

The lower hallway, the stairway and the second floor hall were bare. He took me to the front room as I expected, and when he had falteringly raised a shade I felt a thrill of delight at seeing the room almost as I had pictured it. I took off my hat and overcoat and laid them on a chair, and picked a corner for the trunk. The men went out while I raised the second shade, and I was alone in the room with the old landlord.

"The price of the room is four dollars a week," he said solemnly.

I nodded.

"Payable in advance," he continued.

I gave him the money.

"Here is your door key," he said, shuffling toward me.

I took it and he left the room.

I was satisfied with my new home. I laughed as I watched the trolley-cars passing on the street. I felt that I had plunged into a pleasant adventure. The room was amazingly cheap; the old man was all right. Funny no one had taken the room before!

The first week passed smoothly. I was seldom in the room before midnight and I left before nine each morning. I learned that the old man's name was Crayton, and I conjectured that he was living on a moderate income. There were three rooms on the second floor. He lived in the back one; and someone occupied the large middle room; but the door was always locked. These were all the facts that I determined in the space of seven days.

Just one week after my arrival a queer thing happened. I had come in at midnight Saturday, and was reading in bed. I fancied I heard a noise in the hallway; so I extinguished the light and quietly opened the door.

A low moaning was audible. I thought of old man Crayton. Perhaps he was ill. So, in my stocking feet, I sneaked along the hall—but I soon discovered that the sound came from the middle room. My curiosity rose. A tiny speck of light emerged from beneath the door. Evidently a strip of cloth had been placed across the bottom. I looked for the keyhole, and decided it was stuffed with paper.

The moaning continued, and with it I heard a *swish-swish*, as of liquid being stirred. Then began a weird chant, in a soft, musical language—the words were indistinguishable and yet the sound stirred the imagination strangely.

SO it continued: the chant, then the moaning, then silence broken only by the swishing water. Then I heard a frightened squeal, and immediately afterward a powerful voice sang a short melody of three or four notes. Quiet, for an instant—then a sound of padding feet.

I stole back to my room, locked the door and went to bed. I was not afraid; yet my hands trembled and it was some time before I could sleep.

At ten o'clock in the morning I arose and went downstairs. I found the old man waiting at the foot of the steps.

"Would you like a cup of coffee?" he asked.

I nodded.

He conducted me to the kitchen. There we sat opposite

each other at a small table with a percolator between us, and the old fellow studied me intently.

"This is the beginning of your second week," he announced dryly. "Do you wish to stay?"

I reached mechanically for a cigarette and tried to appear nonchalant.

"Certainly," I answered. "Why not?"

The old man chuckled, but there was no merriment in the sound.

"You're the first who has decided to stay. Some go without a word, some have coffee with me; but they always go away. The sign is still on the door. Did you notice it?"

Come to think of it, I had noticed the sign; but I had not spoken to Crayton partly because I had not seen him and partly because I had thought it none of my business. But there was something sinister in the old man's comment.

"Pardon me a moment," I said. I was piqued by Crayton's sarcastic attitude. I intended to settle his doubts at once.

I LEFT the room—and I honestly believe he didn't expect me to come back, for I went to the front door. There I pulled the old sign from its decaying fastenings. Then I returned to the kitchen and laid the piece of wood on the table.

"Put it away," I said. "You have a roomer who is going to stay—for a long while."

It was not easy to break the reserve of old age; especially when mistrust is its principal cause. But once their confidence has been gained, elderly people are eager for comradeship. So it was with old man Crayton. His bugaboo had been that no roomer would remain in his front apartment. He had been resentful toward all newcomers; he had waited sneeringly for their departure even though he had longed for them to stay. Now my emphatic action—the removal of the sign-board that was his fetish—had transformed him from a sour host into a willing friend. He thrust a faltering arm across the table and gripped my hand. He held the clasp for fully a minute; then abruptly dropped my hand and poured out two cups of coffee. He tried to cover his emotions; but I could see that words were beyond him for the time.

We sipped in silence. Then the old man, recovering his composure, leaned close to me and whispered.

"It's *him*—" with an upward thrust of his thumb— "Him, upstairs. He's why they won't stay."

"Who is he?" I asked.

"Shh! He hears everything! He's been here for five years or more—always just him. No one else will stay. You know why. You heard—last night."

I nodded. Further comment was useless. I did not want to interrupt the old man.

"Five years ago he came," continued Crayton in the same quavering whisper. "What he is I don't know—that is, I don't know his nationality. He may be a Hindu—a Malay—or a West Indian. He's been all around the world. He knows everything—that is, everything he shouldn't know."

The old fellow finished his cup of coffee.

"He has books up there, and pots—what do you call them caldrons? Yes, and he has mice and rats, and bats, and an owl and a funny little animal—I forget its name. It comes from India and kills snakes."

"A mongoose?"

"That's it! It's his pet. Sits in a corner of the room—always watching—for something. And Lord knows what he keeps in boxes and baskets up there. Terrible sort of man—he never did me harm, though—I shouldn't speak ill of him. And every Saturday night—nearly every Saturday night, he——"

The old man stopped abruptly. His left hand was poised in the air, and he spread his fingers in a gesture for silence, while his right hand hurriedly seized the coffee pot.

Before I could understand the interruption, there was a light rap at the door.

"Come in," said Crayton.

When the door opened, I expected to see a most villianous character. Instead, I beheld a rather small, dark-skinned fellow whose face was impassive but not unkindly. He had the forehead of the thinker, a chin that was somewhat weak, and a nose that was not all flat. His thick black hair gave him a prophetic air; and only his eyes were sinister. He looked at me questioningly, and I could see his eyelids narrow instead of widening, so that only two tiny black gleams were visible between them.

"Our new guest?" he inquired in a smooth, even voice.

"Yes, Mr. Papaman," replied Crayton. "I shall introduce you. This is Mr. Gibson, who will be with us indefinitely."

"I am glad," said the dark man, extending a hand which I gripped without reluctance. "It is seldom that we have a permanent guest; and perhaps I am responsible. I work late at night—you may have heard me. "But—" he laughed— "I am really harmless."

He studied me as he spoke; and I did not like his eyes or his laugh. Yet the man was not repulsive.

"I didn't quite catch your name," I said.

Again the laugh.

"Papaman is the name I use. My other names are hard to say—to pronounce. But where I come from—one of the places where I have made my home—we have a king and queen: a 'papa' and a 'mama', we call them. I was once the king—the 'papa man'—so that is the name I use."

He turned to Crayton.

"You were talking about me," he said.

Crayton sought refuge in a gulp of coffee.

"Of course you would speak well of me. We have been friends for five years—and we must be friends for many more."

"Yes, Mr. Papaman," answered the old man.

"But people must not talk of what they do not know. Perhaps you have told Mr. Gibson of my room—of my cauldrons—of my potions—of my pet. That is well, but I would prefer that Mr. Carter *see* instead of *hear*. He is welcome to call on me whenever he may please."

The last words were addressed to me as well as to the old man. I bowed.

"Whenever you may wish, you may call," said Papaman to me. "Any time. Knock on my door. You will not disturb."

He extended his hand in parting. Then he left the room without another word to Crayton.

"Queer—" I began softly, but the old man held up both hands.

"Yes, it is queer weather we have been having," he said rather loudly. "Tell me about your work, Mr. Gibson. Is business good?"

Again the signal for silence, and I fancied I heard a light step leaving the hallway by the kitchen door.

I carried on the synthetic conversation. I began to believe what the old man had said when he announced that the mysterious man in the middle room could hear everything. But finally, assured that Papaman was up in his room, we reopened the subject.

"THERE are men who come to see him," said Crayton. "Men like him—but not so cunning—not so clever. They come in the back way—through the kitchen here—and they go away with little boxes and little bottles. And they give him money."

"Is he a chemist?" I questioned.

"Bah!" exclaimed the old man. "Chemists with rats and bats and owls? And frogs? He has them, too! I don't know what he is! But he isn't right."

Evidently the riddle of Papaman's vocation was beyond the old man. I wondered why he kept such a strange tenant.

But Crayton knew more than I supposed, as I learned a few weeks later.

Everything had progressed nicely. There were the same noises from the back room—every Saturday night and sometimes other nights. I met Papaman in the hallway several times and he spoke pleasantly on each occasion. Each Sunday old Crayton resumed his former theme but gave me no

real enlightenment until one morning when he became unusually confidential.

"I know what that man is," he whispered across the coffee table. "He's a voodoo—a witch! That's what!"

"How do you know?" I responded.

"Do you think I'd let him stay here if he wasn't? he asked.

"I wouldn't think you'd let him stay if he was."

The old man smiled sourly.

"Listen!" he said. "I used to complain about the noises. Said I couldn't get another tenant. That was five years ago. So he paid me more money. Still I complained. I was in his room, when I talked to him that time, and he picked up a little figure of a man in wax.

"'A man,' he said, 'has done me wrong. He will have a pain in the shoulder.'

"With uncanny fear I watched him thrust a pointed stick through the wax model.

"'And if he does me more wrong,' he said, 'I will put a pain in his heart—and it will be his past pain. But my friends—if they are old, I make them young. You are old. You should be my friend. I can be of service to you.'

"That was all. We didn't talk about it any more. But there was a smart man used to come to see that fellow upstairs. He and another man came together. Both dark-skinned. A couple of days later the smart man comes with a shoulder all hunched up. A week later his friend comes alone.

"WHERE is the other man?' I asked.

"'Dead,' was what he answered.

"The next time I was in that room upstairs I saw the little wax image. There was a sharp stick of wood through the heart of it."

The old man had told his whole story. I knew now why the mysterious roomer had stayed for five years and would stay as long as he wished.

That night I was in my room early. There came a slight tap at the door, a tap that I recognized, and I could not repress a shudder. I admitted Papaman, my neighbor.

"You have not come to visit me," he said quietly. "Would you like to call this evening?"

A refusal was not expected. Furthermore, I wanted to see his room. So we walked quietly through the hall—for old man Crayton was already asleep—and I was ushered into the most curious apartment I have ever seen.

The blinds were drawn, and the room was illuminated by shaded electric lights. In the center stood the caldron, with no fire beneath it. On the walls were charts covered with strange signs. A long shelf was occupied with bottles of many sorts and sizes, bearing curious labels or no labels at all. There were three traps, each containing occupants. Three rats glared from one; mice ran restlessly in another; and the third held a living bat. There was the owl, too, perched solemnly in a corner; and the mongoose—so I surmised—huddled by the door. Boxes and baskets were in a pile. What they held, I could not guess.

Papaman pointed to a chair and I sat down.

"It is better that one should know much than little," he said, gazing intently at me. "You know a little; so I would prefer that you know much. The old man has told you of my room—of my visitors—of my waxen image. I did not mind because he knew little when he talked to you. But you can talk to others. So I will tell you much—and you will not repeat it."

The definite firmness of his voice was evident. I nodded my agreement.

"You promise?" he said.

"Yes."

"I am not a voodoo as the old man has said," he went on, "but I know voodoo and I have governed the voodoo people. I am the man who knows many things—more than other men. The men who try voodoo come to me. I give them potions and powders for love—for ills—yes, for vengeance."

He went to a box in the corner and lifted a little toad from its hiding-place. It was the most curious toad that I had ever seen—red and tiny—a queer, loathsome creature.

"Many have heard of this toad," he said, "from the books of Agrippa—over there." He indicated a row of books behind my head, a feature of the room that I had not previously noticed.

"But where to find the toad? How to recognize it? I alone have done that—today—although many did it years ago. I have many of these toads. Watch!"

With a knife he killed the toad, and cut a tiny bone from its left side. He dropped the bone in the caldron.

"Feel the water," he said.

I did. It was cold.

"This is not known to the voodoo," Papaman continued. "They know but few things. They are easy to control. Feel the water."

I PUT my hand in the caldron. Was it my imagination? The water was becoming warm!

"Now let me tell you this," said Papaman solemnly. "I can do many things. People must be my friends, if they do not wish to be harmed. I have power. Not just power here—but after death!"

"Do you believe in ghosts?" I asked.

"*Believe* in them! I have *seen* them!"

"Did they try to harm you?" I asked.

Papaman laughed. He signed for me to dip my hand in the caldron. I did so and drew back quickly. The water was extremely hot!

"Ghosts can harm you, but not me," he said. "They can frighten you. They can drive you insane. You cannot kill them, for they are spirit. Neither can I, but I can drive them away. So can you—if you know how."

"How?" I asked.

Papaman pondered.

"I shall tell you," he said. "But ask me no more questions. Others know this. It will not do any harm to tell you. You shoot the ghost."

"But you said ghosts were invulnerable."

"Yes," said the dark man, "they are—to ordinary weapons. But not to a silver bullet. Shoot them with a silver bullet. They will never return."

He was sitting a few feet from me. Neither of us spoke. The water in the caldron began to boil!

"Enough," cried Papaman. He went to the table and I could see him extracting a bone from the right side of the

Witches in Pennsylvania!

This country was startled recently by the "witchcraft murder" in York, Pennsylvania.

Nelson D. Rehmeyer, accused of practicing the black arts and of having bewitched the Hess family, was killed by a man and two boys. Police investigation revealed that most of the inhabitants of York Township believed in magic and curses.

Do you want to know the facts about Pennsylvania witchcraft? Then don't miss this story! It is a vivid account of Mr. Gibson's terrible experience with a "powwow doctor."

toad. He threw the fragment into the caldron of water.

He pointed to the nearest cage.

"I can haunt the body of a rat," he said. "I can make a man's spirit enter the rat—when the man dies. Or that mongoose—my pet from India. I call him Gehenna. Perhaps some day Gehenna will have a man spirit. But if I dislike a man I will put him in a rat, or an owl—but not in Gehenna, my mongoose."

The soirée was becoming fantastic. Surely the man was crazy. Yet it was interesting to listen to him, although his preposterous statements were almost ridiculous.

"Feel the water in the caldron," remarked Papaman.

"It's too hot," I replied.

"Not now."

GINGERLY I dipped my fingers in the water. It was very cool! My doubts began to fade. This man must have a marvelous power. Was it hypnotism? I sought refuge in the subject of ghosts, which I could at least doubt.

"How long will a man's spirit remain in the rat or the owl?" I asked.

"Until the creature dies. Yet you cannot kill it. It will die only if you can drive the ghost from it—because it belongs to the ghost."

"What a horrible existence!" I said, shuddering.

"Not at all," replied Papaman calmly. "I may choose it for myself."

"Why?"

"If my ghost wants vengeance," he answered, "I shall have it enter the body of some creature. Then it can control that body and do greater vengeance than if it were free."

"Will you enter the mongoose?"

Papaman laughed again.

"You ask so many questions. No, I shall not enter the mongoose with my ghost or spirit. I shall choose a creature more of my liking—if I choose any. I just have my mongoose as a pet. He fights snakes. He fought them in India—in Haiti—in other places where I have been. I have him handy to keep snakes away."

"Are you afraid of snakes?"

The man became indignant.

"Snakes?" he exclaimed. "I *love* them. I have one of a very rare sort in one of those baskets over there." I glanced uneasily at the baskets, for I do not have any particular liking for snakes. "Did I not tell you I knew the voodoo—and the snake is sacred with the voodoo! I can call all snakes—and they will obey me. I have charmed the cobra in India. I can control the rattlesnake! But all snakes come to me; and I do not wish them around unless I choose. So I keep my mongoose. He drives away those that I do not wish. Feel the caldron again."

I did so. The water was extremely cold.

"You cannot heat that water," said Papaman, "unless I take the bone out."

He lighted a burner underneath the caldron.

"The people know little today," he said. "Yet much has been written. Still, it is not believed. Here is a chameleon"—he drew a tiny lizard from the box where he kept the toads—"should I burn the liver of this creature on the house top, lightning would be caused. Some day I may show you. With the heart of a frog, I can—but what is the use? I do not do these things for amusement. Feel the water in the caldron. Feel it and believe!"

I dipped my hand in the water and found it colder than before, despite the blazing burner beneath.

"I have told you much," said the mysterious man. "I have shown you much. You may not believe, but you do not disbelieve. Remember your promise. I am your friend—so long as you do not seek to injure me. Do not listen to the old man. Remember that I hear all. I must ask you to leave me now. I have work to do."

Back in my room, I wondered if it all had been a dream. The man who called himself Papaman, who claimed control of voodoo worshipers and who kept a mongoose to drive away the snakes that loved him was either a wonder-worker or a clever charlatan. In either event, it was not my business to interfere with him. So I would keep my promise. But before I went to sleep, I solved one problem that had been perplexing me. Papaman's room was directly over the kitchen. Through a hole in the floor he could hear everything that old man Crayton said.

Two or three more weeks elapsed, and I avoided both the men who lived in the house. Papaman continued his incantations nearly every night, and I attributed his increased activity to the fact that the moon was full. But I didn't discuss it with Crayton.

One Sunday the old man drew me into the kitchen for a cup of coffee. I went reluctantly. Sitting at the table, I glanced toward the ceiling and saw what appeared to be a small hole there. So I was decidedly ill at ease when the old man began to talk of his tenant of the second floor back.

"This man upstairs," he whispered, "wants me to take a potion that will make me young. Do you believe it will?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"He says he is older than I am," the old man rambled, "and he drank some from a bottle. Said it kept him young. Wanted to give me a botttle—to take in small doses. Said I'd have to go easy with it at first. What do you think about it?"

"I don't know what to say, Mr. Crayton. You know the man better than I do."

"I may try it," the old man said, "but he won't give me the potion, unless I make out a will leaving everything I have to him. That's funny, isn't it, when he wants me to live long?"

The plan did sound questionable; but I did not know how to handle the subject, especially as I was sure Papaman was listening in. So I made no comment.

"I may try it," remarked the old man, as I was leaving the room.

The week went by, and Saturday night came. I was in at midnight and went to bed. But somehow I couldn't sleep. I wondered why for a while, and then realized that there was no noise coming from the room at the back of the house. Once I had settled the cause, I slept; but when I awoke the next morning, I took up the problem again.

I encountered old man Crayton at the foot of the stairs.

"I didn't hear any noise from Papaman last night," I said softly. "I wonder why?"

"I didn't, either," replied the old man. "I listened, though."

His remarks struck me as peculiar. I recalled Papaman's invitation to call at any time. So I went upstairs and knocked at his door. There was no answer.

"Did he go away?" I called down to the old man.

"No," came the reply.

I PUT my hand on the knob of the door, and to my surprise, the door swung open—inward. There was Papaman, sprawled on the floor, in a débris of books, cages and boxes. The caldron was overturned, and two or three bottles lay broken on the floor.

I rushed downstairs and told the old man. There was no telephone in the house, so I went to the corner and called a hospital. An ambulance arrived with a doctor, who pronounced Papaman dead.

There was an inquest, and it was decided that the voodoo man had tried one of his own potions with disastrous results. In the agony of poisoning, he had probably upset many of the things in the room, and the broken bottles stood for a frantic search for an antidote.

Old man Crayton seemed helpless. So I stayed home from work and helped a man clean up. We released imprisoned toads; drowned the rats, mice and the bat; and sent the mongoose and the owl to the city zoo. We emptied all the bottles, threw the boxes in the rubbish, and turned the books over to a second-hand book store. Most of the boxes and baskets had been upset; those that remained

contained nothing but dead plants, dried leaves and rubbish.

That was the end of Papaman—so I thought. His death disturbed me for a while, but I continued to live in the house with the old man. We drank coffee together on Sunday but carefully avoided any reference to the deceased roomer until more than a month later.

Old man Crayton opened the subject on a Sunday morning.

"Do you know," he said, reverting to his old whisper, "I thought I heard that man upstairs again last night!"

"Nonsense!" I replied.

"But I did! I'm afraid, Gibson."

"Why?"

"Because I think he's haunting the place."

I remembered the dead man's comments on ghosts, and shivered.

"YOU know that elixir of life he was going to give me?" asked Crayton, confidentially.

"Yes."

"Well, he gave it to me but I didn't drink it. It looked just like the bottle he had. Both bottles were full."

"Did you make out your will?"

"Yes," said the old man. "I did. And that made me leery. He was a clever man, that fellow—but I was cleverer—even if I am old. I was holding the bottle in my hand that Saturday night. He rummaged around in a box to find a little glass for me—and while he was doing it, I took his bottle off the table and put mine in its place.

"He gave me the glass and said, 'Drink!'

" 'Do you drink this stuff?' I asked.

" 'Certainly!' he said. 'See!'

"And he took a big drink from the bottle on the table.

" 'I'll drink mine in my room,' I said, and I walked out with the bottle and the glass. Then I heard a lot of noise in his room—it was before you came in—and that was all. There was poison in that bottle, Carter—intended for me! He drank it instead! But *I* didn't kill him!"

I saw the old man's nerves were going to pieces. I poured him some coffee and changed the subject. This new insight into Papaman's death was indeed a revelation. I could appreciate the strain which the old man was undergoing.

So I made a practice of coming home early every night. I tried to cheer up the old man, and talked to him each morning before I went to work. All went well for a few days; then Crayton again protested that he had heard noises in the middle room.

"Call me the next time you hear them," was my reassurance.

The next night there was a tap on my door. I awoke. It reminded me of Papaman's tap; but I quickly opened the door and found old man Crayton.

"Listen!" he said.

There *was* a noise in the next room. It sounded like the *swish-swish* of the water in the caldron. I crept to the door and was sure I heard something within. But when I opened the door and turned on the light, the room was silent and empty.

"It's his ghost!" cried old man Crayton. "He's after me! I've heard him in the hall, at my door! I'm afraid!"

There was nothing to do but sleep in the old man's room. He hauled a cot from the closet, and I took up my residence with him. But nothing more disturbed us that night.

Two nights passed quietly. On the third the old man wakened me at about three o'clock by reaching out and shaking my cot silently. We listened, and I distinctly heard something in the hallway. I turned on the light and opened the door. Nothing there.

"Perhaps some of his rats got away," I suggested. They may be running around the house." But the old man doubted my suggestion, and I regretted it myself; for I remembered that Papaman had said a man's spirit could enter a rat. I kept the thought to myself—but the association suggested something that might help the old man. I told him in the morning.

"Papaman said a silver bullet would lay a ghost," I remarked. "Why don't you have one handy? Then the ghost will be afraid to come around."

Crayton responded instantly to the suggestion. He brought out an old muzzle-loading pistol that bore the date 1856, and from a slug that he furnished I had a silver bullet patterned that very day. The old man cheerfully paid the bill, and he slept with the gun beneath his pillow.

I set up rat traps and armed myself with a revolver of small caliber. I was convinced that the phenomenon was physical; and that if the rats or frogs—or whatever they were—were unwary, I would get a chance to test my marksmanship and the trouble would be ended.

The noises still persisted. The old man was losing his grip on himself; his condition was pitiful.

Then one night came the *tap-tap* at the door. It was terrifying—it sounded just like Papaman's *tap-tap*.

With revolver in hand, I turned on the lights and opened the door. Nothing there. Crayton seemed delirious. His voice quavered, and he was a pathetic figure, sitting in bed, with his ancient pistol ready.

I suggested that we leave the house; but the old man would not listen.

"It will follow me everywhere," he declared. "It will drive me crazy! Can't we end it?"

The *tap-tap* came every night after that! Certainly it was not a rat; yet was it a ghost? I began to half-way believe it was. But I resolved to let the thing in—whatever it was; and one night I left the door ajar, without telling the old man.

A loud scream awakened me. I sat up in the cot, and turned on the floor lamp beside me. Crayton was sitting up in bed, trembling and waving his hands frantically.

"I saw IT!" he cried. "I saw HIM!" His face was right beside me! It's his ghost!"

I heard a noise in the hallway, and I went to the door; but my investigation was useless. Nevertheless, the opened door had brought results. I locked it for the night, and thought out another plan.

The next night I left the door unlatched and stayed awake. I didn't tell the old man my scheme. I saw that he went to sleep early. Then in the darkness I listened, and waited.

At last I heard a noise in the hall. It was quite distinct. A slight bumping—an indefinable noise—certainly not a rat. Then came the *tap-tap*—and in the gloom I fancied the door swung open slightly. Still I waited, but heard nothing more. Then, after long, long seconds came a noise from the corner of the room. I peered through the darkness, but to no avail. The corner was away from the old man's bed. Crayton stirred restlessly, and spoke in a mumble.

While I still looked away, I heard him scream.

"Save me! It's here!"

I PULLED the cord of the lamp. It did not light. In a brief quarter second, I realized what had happened in the corner of the room. Someone—Something—had disconnected the wire from the floor socket!

A strange form arose above the old man—just beyond him. It was a head—a head with gleaming eyes! There was no time to think of the light. I seized the pistol, leaned across Crayton—to within four feet of the sinister face—and poured the whole volley of my automatic between the leering eyes. I had scored a direct hit—yet the thing remained there!

I was helpless. The old man was sinking back on his pillows. There was a sharp, sibilant sound—and the invulnerable head rose higher, and came downward toward the old man's face.

At the same instant the old man raised his right hand. His forearm grazed my cheek and I could feel him tremble. There was a flash of light a foot from my eyes—and I was deafened by a tremendous roar. I could see nothing for fully a minute—then I realized that the eyes were—gone.

Trembling with dread and excitement, I went to the cor-

ner and fumbled with the light socket. Suddenly the floor lamp gleamed. Crayton was sitting upright in bed, still holding the ancient pistol pointed toward the wall. The terrific noise had been the discharge of the silver bullet.

On the floor I found—it. It lay dead—a hideous thing—a huge cobra—the dread snake of India. Its spectacle-faced hood was riddled with bullets.

MY automatic had done its work—but it had not killed nor had it wounded. For the cobra had raised its head after I had shot.

While my steady hand, holding a modern gun loaded with steel bullets had failed, the trembling, quavering hand of an old man, with the single shot of a silver bullet, had killed the threatening carrier of death.

Some may have their doubts, but I believe. Those who examined the cobra declared that one shot from my gun should have caused instant death to the snake. Who, ever before, heard of a cobra with human intelligence—a snake that knocked at a door—that released a light socket—that planned vengeance?

I know now why Papaman kept the mongoose in his room. I know now that he spoke the truth when he said his spirit would enter the body of a living creature—and I know that he chose the form which most appealed to him—the form that was most suited to his evil nature. When he died, he overturned the basket—and with the escaping cobra went his ghost.

His remark to me—my suggestion to allay the old man's fears—these were the two chance steps that stopped the evil vengeance of the voodoo master, the man who knew much—but not enough.

Crayton is still alive, and may have many years ahead of him. The middle room is unoccupied—but there is no *Room to Let* sign outside the door. I still live in the front room, and Crayton and I have coffee together Sunday mornings. But the haunting of the house has ended. It ceased the night when the old man laid the ghost with the silver bullet.

My Chinese Brother *and* What Befell Him

MR. EDWARD W. ROBINSON, whose brother startled the British Isles and the entire European continent under the guise of Chung Ling Soo, writes the following gripping recital of what happened on the night his brother was killed:

A number of years ago my only brother became a professional conjurer, and after a few years' association with such eminent magicians at Alexander Hermann and Harry Kellar he went abroad to seek his fortune.

Success eventually crowned his efforts, and now under the *nom de theatre* of Chung Ling Soo he became known to the patrons of vaudeville houses throughout Europe and the East. We corresponded with each other from time to time, but of late his letters had become more infrequent.

My wife and I finally heard rumors that preparations were being made for his return to his native land during the theatrical season of 1898-9, and one evening in the spring of the former year we were discussing with joyful anticipation the coming reunion. We dwelt at some length upon the strange vicissitudes by which an American had carved out a career for himself not only in alien lands but also in the guise of a member of an alien race. Then more talk of the sensation he would likely create among his compatriots—and so to bed, as dear old Pepys would have said.

Ruminating upon these and similar fancies, I soon entered slumberland, and what more natural than that I should dream of wandering through our ancient haunts, arm in arm with my beloved brother, both having reverted to boys again. He had just discovered the basket of tricks and conjuring tools that had been our father's, and was wonderingly endeavoring to master their mysterious marvels.

Not for long did I assist at this engrossing occupation. With startling suddenness the past returned to the present, and the subconscious became the conscious, for I was awakened by a shriek.

I pressed the electric button, flooding the room with light, and discovered my wife sitting up in bed, her cheeks ashen.

"What on earth's the matter?" I cried in alarm.

"Why—why—I just saw a man killed," she gasped.

"You'll have to quit eating just before going to bed," I jokingly admonished.

"Oh, but—but it was Will!" she cried.

"What Will?"

"Your brother!" was her startling reply.

"My brother—are you positive?"

"Absolutely. His features were as plain to me as yours are now. I saw him resting his head in Dot's lap, while he pressed his bleeding bosom with his hands. Near him stood a man with a smoking rifle, while a great crowd of people were looking on."

"Well, the murderer seems to have selected a pretty public place for the shooting," I jestingly remarked, and I finally succeeded in quieting her overwrought nerves.

For several days thereafter the "nightmare" was the theme of some discussion, to be eventually relegated to the limbo of forgotten things.

About a month later I was approached by Mr. L. O. Hall, the well-known dramatic critic of a prominent Chicago newspaper, who handed me an English periodical, intimating that within its pages I would find an item of some importance to myself. Somewhat skeptically I carried it home and, during an interval in the evening meal, my eyes roved amusedly over its columns. Suddenly my wandering vision was halted by the following startling and unexpected story:

"Magician killed during act! Chung Ling Soo, Chinese magician, was accidentally shot at Wood Green Empire Theatre, March 23rd, during his performance, and died a few hours later. The act which caused his death was the well-known Hermann bullet-catching trick, in which the performer catches upon a plate a pair of bullets fired from two rifles held by volunteers from the audience. Immediately after the rifles were discharged, the magician exclaimed, 'My God, I'm shot,' and fell to the floor. The audience imagining it had witnessed a rare bit of acting, applauded loudly, and dispersed, unaware that it had witnessed a real tragedy.

"Harry Houdini, a lifelong friend of the deceased, made the following statement:

" 'Two trick muzzle-loading rifles with secret chambers were used in the act. Examination later revealed that a rusty bolt prevented proper operation of one of them, and the real charge exploded instead of the prepared one.'

"Chung Ling Soo was really an American, named William E. Robinson, who changed his name when he went to Europe under the management of Ike Rose. In America, under the name of Achmed Ben Ali, he was the first exponent of that particular species of illusion technically known as Black Art. Like Lafayette, Robinson died a showman's death right in the harness. On history's pages he will be recorded as the American who passed as a Chinaman to the public, and crossed the Great Border through the trick that left a trail of blood all over the world—the Bullet-Catching Mystery."

The paper fell from my enervated fingers. My wife picked it up and read the item with increasing agitation. Having finished it, she rushed to her writing desk, found her diary and then feverishly fingered its pages.

"There it is," she ejaculated. "I knew it! I knew it was true! It was not a nightmare. Will was killed on that very night I had that horrible, but all too true, vision!"

Skeletons in the Closets of Famous Families

Here is the TRUE story of the worst haunted castle in France. Priests and officials united to lay the ghosts—but the grim specters won!

By GORDON HILLMAN

NO man ever wrote a stranger document than the "ghost diary" kept by the late owner of Calvados Castle. Day by day and almost hour by hour he recorded the uncanny happenings in that terror-infested château. No detail was too small to escape him and the whole report is attested by reliable witnesses and certified by the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, the journal of the leading French psychic societies.

For several hundred years the old Castle of Calvados was the scene of crime, violence and mystery. The peasants of Normandy were afraid to pass it at night and told all manner of fantastic stories concerning it.

In 1867 gossip was temporarily laid to rest when M. de Regny bought the property, tore down the old castle and built a new château a hundred and fifty yards to the north.

De Regny had never heard of the reputation of the old castle and had no reason to expect that the new structure would be haunted. But it was.

In October, 1867, there occurred a series of extraordinary incidents which frightened De Regny nearly out of his wits. But before he could make up his mind to quit his new and expensive property, these ceased.

Eight years later they began again, and De Regny, who must have been a remarkably cool and collected person, started on the most startling supernatural diary in all history.

"This is October, 1875," he writes as the first entry. "I propose to note down and record every day what happened during the night before. I must point out that when the noises occurred when the ground was covered with snow, there was no trace of footsteps round the castle. I drew threads across all openings, secretly. They were never found broken.

"At present our household consists of the following: M. and Mme. de Regny and their son; the Abbé Villiers, tutor to the son; Emile, coachman; Auguste, gardener; Amelina, housemaid; Celina, cook."

Thus begins that remarkable document, the ghost diary. Every least occurrence is noted, set down, sworn to by witnesses. As the ghostly phenomena went on, curates and priests were called in, army officers stood guard, a French bishop sent down a canon to investigate, a special mass was said at Lourdes to exorcise the "spirits," which according to the parish priest were "diabolically supernatural."

The diary is much too long to print as a whole, and so are the sworn statements. In brief synopsis, these are some of the weird and unearthly phenomena observed:

On October 13th, the Abbé Villiers complained that his armchair moved about the room when no human hand touched it. De Regny and he attached gummed paper to the feet of the chair and fastened it to the floor.

AT a quarter of ten, the Abbé heard a series of ghostly raps on the wall of his room. Immediately the armchair moved more than a yard. No one except the Abbé was in the room.

On the next three nights screams resounded through the castle, violent blows were heard, voices conversing in archaic French sounded in a corridor. The corridor was empty.

On October 18th the curate of the parish arrived as an added witness. He heard "the (*Continued on page* 86)

A BAD

By FRANCIS CURRAN

As told to

Walter Adolphe Roberts

I knew I was caught in a grim and incredible snare!

THE fact that I attended the séance in my friend Stanley's apartment was in itself rather extraordinary. I am not a spiritualist, and I have never cared enough for the subject even to investigate those public meetings where mercenary, tired mediums try to read the future for all comers at so much a head. I knew, of course, that Walter Stanley was a sincere student of the occult, and that he had faith in mediumship of the higher sort. He had urged me to weigh the evidence in certain books, but I had not done so.

Then, one afternoon, he telephoned the invitation I have mentioned.

"There's a psychic named Bertram coming at nine," he said. "I haven't seen him work, but he's reported to have strange powers. At least, he doesn't do it for money, so the chief excuse for suspecting him of being a faker is absent. It would be worth your while to join us."

Stanley was not very insistent. I afterwards learned that he wanted to round out a party of seven, and he had thought of me at the last moment. He fully expected me to decline.

But I experienced one of those sudden hunches which influence human conduct so often and so mysteriously. It would have been impossible for me to say whether I felt I would bring good or evil upon myself by going. I only knew that I desired quite violently to be present, and that a cold wave crinkled the skin between my shoulder blades like a foreboding of uncanny adventure. The amazing outcome—but even to hint at what that proved to be would spoil my story.

"All right," I called back, "you can count me in."

I was fairly prompt in reaching the apartment on Central Park West, yet all the other guests were ahead of me. I was acquainted only with Walter Stanley. As he introduced me around the circle, two persons impressed me in a definite way. The first was the medium, Theodore Bertram, a gaunt, prematurely old man who slouched behind a table and turned a queer, bird-like face to greet me. His snow-white hair, large, round eyes and hooked nose gave him a startling resemblance to a screech-owl.

The other individual was a tall, dark girl with a tragic expression in eyes that were much lighter in color than her complexion warranted. Having once seen them, it was out of the question for anybody to forget those stony, greenish eyes. Her name was Fritzi Schneider. I had lived in Vienna, and I judged from her accent that she was a native of that city. I asked her whether I was right. She replied curtly in the affirmative, but added that she had been in New York for eight years.

The remaining members of the group were a lawyer called Colton and his sister, Ethel and Marjorie.

After seating us all at the table with the medium, Stanley substituted bulbs of red glass for the ordinary bulbs in the floor lamp. He then turned off all the other lights, and the room was suffused with a ruddy glow in which, as soon as one's eyes grew accustomed to it, objects could be distinguished quite clearly.

At Bertram's direction, we joined him in resting the tips of our fingers on the table, though there was no attempt to complete a circle by having the hands touch each other.

"This helps us to concentrate," the medium explained, in a queer, squeaking voice. "It gets things started. But I'm not just a table-tipper. If we attract a spirit force to us, it will speak through me in other ways."

Scarcely five minutes had passed when the table began to quiver and creak. It was as though the wood were about to split open. Then we heard raps on the under surface. Two of the legs left the ground, and the table tilted toward the side on which I was sitting. I tried to tell myself that the whole demonstration was hokum, that one or more of the sitters must be manipulating the table. But somehow my own skepticism seemed flat and foolish. There were no real indications of fraud.

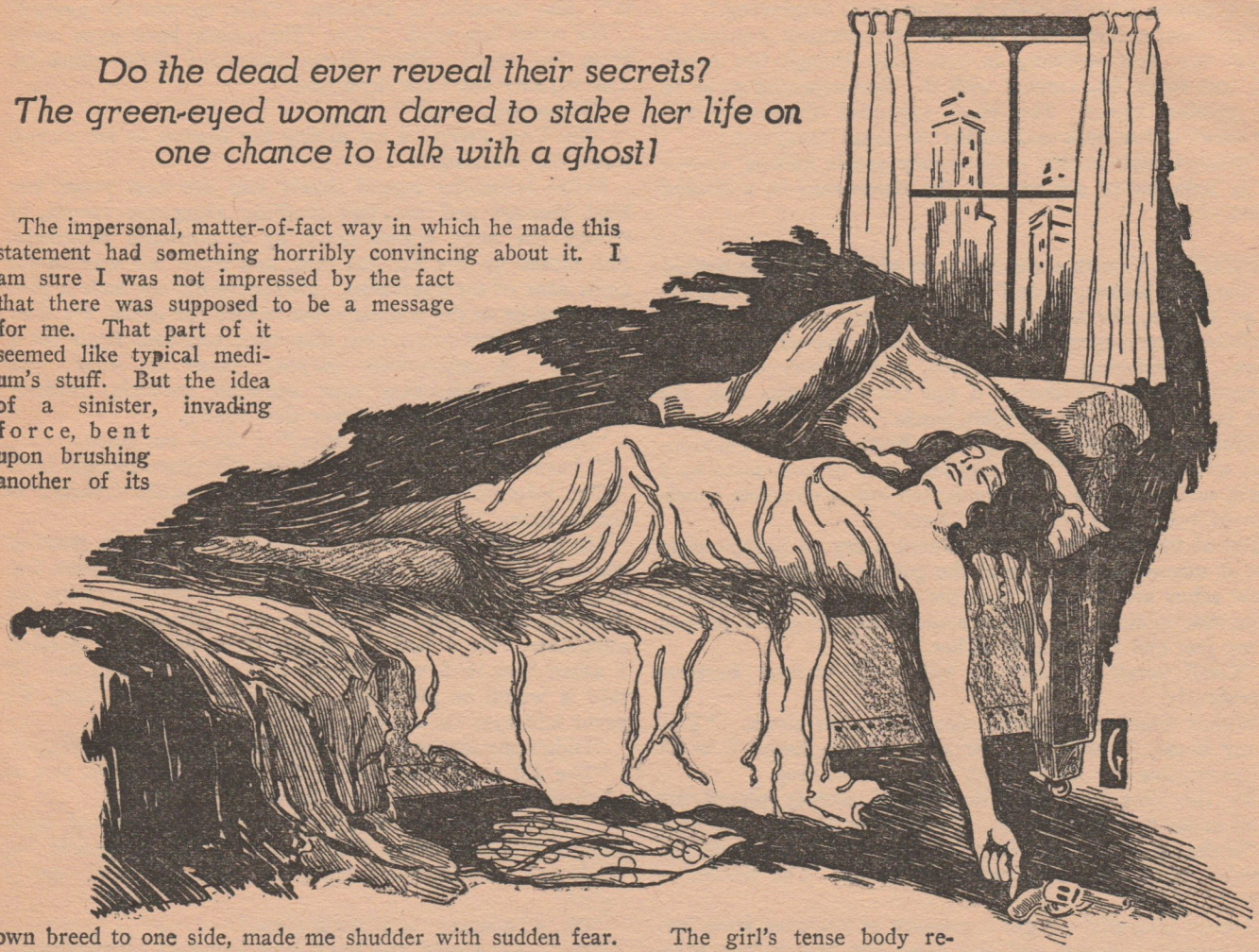
"Very good!" commented Bertram. "We have an invisible presence in the room. I am ready to receive any message it may wish to convey."

HE dropped his hands into his lap and the rest of us followed his example. The board between us immediately was restored to a normal position. Bertram's odd face became intent and somber. He closed his eyes, and did not utter a word for several minutes.

"The first influence to reach me is a spirit who has something to tell that gentleman," he declared at last, pointing to me. "It has news of the most wonderful sort for him, a promise of happiness in the near future. I can get that much—and no more. For a second presence is fighting against the first one. The new arrival is evil, evil! It is a powerful spirit with a message of its own—I don't know for whom; I don't know what. It tears at my brain, it tries to get possession of me. I have a sense of constriction on all sides of my skull, particularly at the temples."

HALF HOUR

Do the dead ever reveal their secrets? The green-eyed woman dared to stake her life on one chance to talk with a ghost!



The impersonal, matter-of-fact way in which he made this statement had something horribly convincing about it. I am sure I was not impressed by the fact that there was supposed to be a message for me. That part of it seemed like typical medium's stuff. But the idea of a sinister, invading force, bent upon brushing another of its own breed to one side, made me shudder with sudden fear.

"I can see the evil spirit now," went on Bertram. "It stands by the window, close enough for me to touch it with my hand. It is the spirit of a blond, middle-aged man. His features are twisted with passion. Oh, oh! He is far from attractive. The face is too dim for me to recognize it. I do not think, anyway, that I have ever seen him before."

"But who does he wish to speak to? Can't you find that out?" asked Fritzi Schneider, a bit shrilly.

"Yes, it comes to me now," answered Bertram, his squeaking, monotonous tone not altering a particle. "He is here for you."

"*Ach!*" the girl breathed. "Is he angry at me?"

"He is not. It is the first spirit with the message for Mr. Curran who makes him furious. Neither one can triumph over the other."

"Chase that first one away, can't you?" Fritzi Schneider suggested. "I have a right to my message."

"So has Mr. Curran. I am not certain that I could do what you suggest, but I shan't even attempt it."

The girl turned to me with an eagerness I thought grotesque. "If *you* would help!" she gasped. "It—it means a lot to me."

"I don't see what I could do," I muttered.

"The control that's here for you might go, if you asked it to. I implore you to try."

"Really, Miss Schneider, you're not playing fair. We ought both of us to be willing to take what comes. This is supposed to be a scientific investigation, isn't it?"

"Curran is right," cut in Walter Stanley. "It's dangerous, anyway, to take sides with a powerful, evil control like the one we've heard described."

The girl's tense body relaxed and a despairing, thwarted look came into her face. She darted a glance at me, however, that was positively venomous. I knew she could have cut my throat with pleasure.

Bertram shrugged his shoulders uneasily. "This argument has scattered our psychic forces. My mind feels blank, though I've still got the pain in my temples and the bad spirit is still here. Let's try all over again."

He placed his finger tips on the table. The Coltons, Stanley and myself imitated him. But Fritzi Schneider arose silently and walked with dragging footsteps to a far corner of the room, where she sat in an armchair. I thought she was sulking because she had not been allowed to have her own way. So I paid no attention to her, nor did the others.

THE room was absolutely noiseless for several minutes. The table showed no signs of repeating the phenomena of tilting and rapping. My attention became concentrated on the medium's white hair, which clung about his head, I mused, exactly like the feathers of a bird. I wondered whether there was any significance in the fact that he was the human counterpart of an owl.

Then the silence was broken by a faint moan from Fritzi Schneider. It made us all turn toward her. I saw that she had assumed a strange position in her chair. Her arms were extended along its arms, and her fingers were tapping spasmodically upon the wood. Both her feet were twisted around the front legs. The small of her back was sunk in the cushioned seat. Her chin was lifted, and her lips were tightly drawn over her bared teeth. Because of my

lack of experiences in such happenings, I feared that she had become desperately ill and I made a move to leap to her aid.

"Be quiet," ordered Bertram. "Miss Schneider is going into a trance. This is likely to prove most interesting."

This reassured me and I watched the spectacle, fascinated. Fritzi was now writhing in the chair, though her hands and feet never lost contact with it. She appeared to be in the greatest agony. Her chest expanded abnormally and the veins in her neck and on her forehead stood out.

"Much trouble in this room—many people looking on—— Help, help me to get away!" she stammered in a choked voice.

SUDDENLY, with a violent thrust of her body, she pushed the chair backwards until it collided with the wall. Unable to go farther, she sobbed and whimpered, while her frame exhibited every symptom of being on the verge of convulsions. Nevertheless, she remained, in some curious way, an integral part of the chair. I got the impression that she was lashed to it with invisible bonds.

"She is perfectly all right," said Bertram in his emotionless, scientific way. "This may be a case of possession by a spirit, and when she has been forced into a complete condition of trance she will speak to us."

But at that moment, Fritzi uttered a cry so heartrending that it seemed she must be at the point of death. Her face grew ashen and haggard, and she rolled her head piteously from side to side. Unable to stand it any longer, I jumped to my feet and rushed over to her.

"You'll break the spell, I tell you," warned Bertram querulously.

Walter Stanley, however, also had taken alarm. "This is my house. I won't let her risk her life here. I won't be responsible for it," he said, his voice shaking.

By the time he joined me, I had already placed my hand under her right elbow. He took her by the other arm.

"Wake up, Miss Schneider. Wake up!" I cried sharply. "We're your friends. Come back to us. The trouble is over."

Almost instantly, we got a measure of response from her. Her muscles relaxed and she drew her breath less painfully. But it took a lot of coaxing and some physical effort, after that, to detach her from the chair. When she was on her feet, she staggered in a circle, clutching at us, and ended near the window, against which she leaned. Her condition of trance passed slowly away.

By common consent, everyone waited for her to speak first.

"I want to know what I've been doing," she demanded harshly at last. "I feel awful queer. My wrists and my ankles pain me."

"You have just finished portraying the tortures of a person being put to death in the electric chair," answered the medium. "It is safe to say that you were possessed by a control, who hoped to use that means of entering your body and speaking through you."

"*Ach,* God!" she muttered, and turned more ghastly pale, if that were possible. I, too, was shocked at the brutal coolness with which Bertram had made his statement. Yet I realized that he had simply voiced an impression that all of us had received. Fritzi had undoubtedly behaved like a victim of legalized murder, through whose frame the electric current is pouring. I recalled how her hands and feet had seemed riveted to the chair. And she had made the remark that her wrists and ankles still hurt her! It was a blood-curdling detail, for executed murderers are strapped tight to the chair by bands around the wrists and ankles.

"Unfortunately, you did not reach the point of delivering a message," continued Bertram.

"Why was that?"

"Because you were prematurely awakened by Mr. Curran."

"You!" she gasped, whirling on me, while hatred spat out of her eyes. "How dared you interfere with me?"

"I thought you were going to die, Miss Schneider. Your condition was terrible. Anybody would have been frightened."

"You fool! The message was for me—and you blocked it." She appealed to Bertram. "Can we not try again?"

He shook his head. "No. The spirits have gone away from this room. There is no chance of their returning. The *rapport* has been destroyed."

"Tomorrow, then?"

"No, I am sorry. I am sailing for Europe at ten o'clock tomorrow morning."

Fritzi Schneider moved slowly into the next room, her head lowered and her feet shuffling along the carpet, as though she were beaten down by a profound weariness. She picked up her hat and coat, and made her way to the front door of the apartment. Perfunctorily, she bade a general good-by to the company, but before she closed the door behind her, her green eyes met mine and held them for a moment. A mysterious purpose shone in them; yet, strangely enough, they now reflected sardonic mockery where I was concerned, rather that venom.

"Stanley, who is that woman?" I asked our host.

"I haven't the least idea," he replied. "Bertram brought her."

The information astonished me unreasonably. I turned to the medium. "Then you tell us about her!"

He frowned. "I can't tell much. It's been a peculiar contact. She heard of me somehow and telephoned this morning to ask for a private séance. I couldn't spare the time, but she pleaded so earnestly that I hated to refuse her altogether. As I had this engagement with Mr. Stanley, I asked him if I might invite her to be present, and he said it would be all right. Until she joined us here, I'd never laid eyes on the woman."

"Didn't she say anything about herself before I arrived?"

"She did not. What you've heard and seen gives you as much of a slant on her as I have."

"I take it that she was hoping for a solution of some definite problem in her life," I said. "She recognized the spirit you described and knew he could help her. Am I right?"

"Oh, of course! It is quite clear."

"But why should she have been impelled to pantomime an electrocution?"

"A connection in her memory with some tragedy of the sort. It may be that she is simply very sensitive—the type of person who worries over the executions and crimes reported in the newspapers," he answered warily. "If I said anything more positive than that, it would be guess work. Permit me to forget the woman until I return from Europe. Then, perhaps, we may get hold of her for another séance if Mr. Stanley would care to do so."

"PERHAPS!" I echoed—and was aware intuitively that I, at least, would see Fritzi Schneider long before the time to which he referred so vaguely.

I left the apartment a few minutes later, went straight home and fell into an unusually deep sleep. The following afternoon I received at my office a letter which had been addressed to me in Walter Stanley's care. It bore a special delivery stamp and my friend had hastened to forward it to me. The handwriting on the envelope looked foreign and feminine. I can still see the slanting, flourished initials, the circles instead of dots over the "j's" and "i's." Why did I hesitate before opening it? I do not know. When I finally slit the flap, this was what I read:

Dear Mr. Curran: You will agree that you prevented me from following out a whim, and so made me unhappy. As an honorable American gentleman you cannot refuse me a small favor by way of recompense.

I wish you to call to see me this evening exactly at nine o'clock. My apartment is on the third floor. Please walk up without ringing, for the bell is out of order. Tell

none of your friends where you are going. The matter is confidential.

FRITZI SCHNEIDER

My first reaction was hostile. The girl's invitation seemed crude and certainly it was equivocal.

"She probably wants to borrow money," I thought. "But, on the other hand, this may be a desperate confidence game. Who is she? What is she?"

The address given was in the West Nineties. I looked her up in the telephone book. She was not listed. Then, abruptly, I laughed at my fears and decided that I would do as she had asked. I can give no explanation of this, except on the grounds that I have always been beguiled by the prospect of adventure.

I had dinner uptown and kept my eye on my wrist watch, in order to be precisely on time. The block to which my errand led me proved to be shabby, especially at the Columbus Avenue end. The house itself was an old-fashioned "flat" building. I found the name Schneider on one of the bells, but I did not ring. The front door, as is common enough in such places, offered no pretense of being locked. I pushed it open and walked slowly upstairs.

ON the third landing, the Schneider card in a metal frame was the first thing I saw. This time I pressed the bell button. There was no answer, though I rang twice again. I then observed, to my wonder, that the catch must be off the lock, for a narrow slit showed between the door and the jamb. Could Fritzi have intended me to enter the apartment without warning? Even so, why did she not respond to my insistent ringing? Possibly, she had gone down to the corner for something and had left the door open for me. I accepted this theory and pushed the door open.

I stepped into the parlor of what used to be called in New York a "railroad flat"—that is to say, the rooms were arranged in a straight line, connecting with each other for the entire length of the building. Only the rooms at the front and at the rear had windows on the outdoors. Archaic flats of this description survive in run-down neighborhoods. They generally comprise five rooms, with the kitchen in the center.

Uneasy in spite of myself, I threw a hasty glance around Fritzi's parlor. The place had no charm. The furniture was seedy and the walls covered with cheap lithographs. A photograph of the girl, at a somewhat earlier age, hung against the wall in a cardboard frame. I imagined that the eyes were bright green, and that they jeered at me. A notion gripped me that Fritzi was actually in the house, playing a fantastic game of hide-and-seek. This stung me to action, and I passed into the next room. It was a sort of dark alcove, with chairs and boxes piled helter-skelter. Nothing there! So I hurried through the kitchen, through another nondescript room, and into the bedroom at the far end of the flat.

Only those readers who have themselves been caught in some grim and incredible snare will fully appreciate the shock that awaited me. Fritzi Schneider lay on a couch, with a rose-shaded floor lamp glowing behind her. I thought for a moment that she was asleep. But one hand trailed over the edge of the couch, and on the carpet below the crooked fingers I saw a revolver. My eyes traveled painfully along her body in its faded yellow dressing-gown. A red patch showed over her ribs on the left side.

The woman was stone dead—shot through the heart!

I leaped across the space that separated us, but I did not touch the body. Her face was drained of color. Her mouth and eyes were both open, yet her expression was surprisingly tranquil. Was it murder or suicide? I asked myself frantically. The latter, in all probability; but why had she done it at the very hour when she was expecting me?

THE query was no sooner formulated than a horrible suspicion gnawed at me. Perhaps she had planned this to make me seem guilty of murder! It might be her macabre idea of avenging herself for the happenings of the night before. If my presence there were discovered, would I be able to clear myself? Would I not be accused of having placed the revolver on the floor, in order to give the tragedy the appearance of suicide? A cold sweat broke out all over my body. Never before or since have I endured such mental anguish.

Then swiftly my brain grew calm and crafty. No one had seen me enter, I reflected. I would leave quietly. I would burn the sinister letter which had lured me there.

I turned to go—and at the same instant I heard the front door of the flat being opened, and the footsteps of men in the parlor!

My heart sank and my will seemed paralyzed. I waited stolidly. There was no hesitancy about the newcomers. They tramped from room to room. I lifted my drooping head to find three uniformed policemen staring at me! The one in the lead looked sure of his ground in a curious, menacing way. I felt myself to have been condemned in advance.

"I didn't do it!" I screamed. "Officer, you've got to believe me! I came here a few minutes before you did, and found her dead."

He raised his hand, the calloused palm outwards, and thrust it toward me with a jerky motion. "Shut up! I ain't charged you with no murder, have I?"

Advancing to the couch, he briefly scrutinized the corpse. Then he reached under the pillow on which the head rested, and drew out a piece of paper covered with writing. He seemed to know just what to expect, yet gaped at the actual discovery of it.

"This is for you, all right," he (*Continued on page 87*)

Phantom

"Living or dead, I shall claim you as my bride!" the Hindu snarled. Could he fulfill his dreadful threat—even after death?

ROBIN Carr fell in love with Detla Noone when he was a little boy. Meeting her several years later, he realized she was the only girl in the world for him—even though she was the fiancée of his chum, Parker Storey.

That night a robbery was committed at the house where Detla was a guest, and for some reason she was much upset and insisted upon going to her home at once. Robin offered to drive her home.

On the way a white-robed Hindu suddenly appeared on the running-board of the car. Robin lost control of the machine and it crashed down an embankment; however, neither was hurt. The Hindu disappeared.

As they walked along the road, Detla told him an amazing story. She said that for years Kala Neo, an Oriental magician, had exerted a hypnotic control over her.

After they arrived at her home, Detla went upstairs—and suddenly Robin heard her screaming. He rushed to her aid, but when he broke into her room, someone grabbed him and choked him into unconsciousness.

When he regained his senses, he found himself tightly bound to Detla. After a terribly painful effort they succeeded in partly freeing themselves. Robin fainted.

Later he recovered—to find that Detla had vanished. Shortly after he had called the police, Bhanah, Detla's Hindu servant, appeared. On hearing Robin's strange story, he suggested that if Robin would consent to be put into a trance, perhaps they could locate Detla by psychic means.

Robin lay down on a couch—and suddenly it seemed he was traveling rapidly through space. In a moment he found himself in Kala Neo's luxurious apartment in the Oriental quarter of Boston. Detla, crying piteously, lay on a cushioned divan, clad only in a flimsy silken garment. Above her stood the terrible figure of the Hindu. He bent to kiss her and Detla fought wildly. Robin was powerless to interfere.

ROBIN! Robin! For God's sake, man, wake up. This is no time to sleep! Wake up! WAKE UP!"

At first the words seemed to come from a great distance, then the voice drew nearer and nearer until finally Robin realized that someone was shouting into his ears.

He opened his eyes to find himself in Detla Noone's library, with Parker Storey shaking him violently. He started up, aghast, flinging Parker from him.

"Come!" he cried. "I know where she is! Come! Perhaps we're too late already!"

He was dashing out of the room, dragging Parker with him, when Bhanah's voice reached them.

"Wait!" he commanded. "Where has he taken her?"

"Boston. The Oriental section. T—— Street. Number Twenty-eight. Come quickly!"

"No." Bhanah's voice was stern. "Wait! She is in great trouble?"

"The worst that can come to a girl. For heaven's sake—" Bhanah checked him.

"Parker goes alone," he said. "You, my friend, go once more in the spirit. It may be that you can help her in her struggles. You go swiftly."

Robin stared, irresolute.

"Oh, I tried to help her, I tried to help her!" he moaned. "But it was no use. I tried to get between them—to fight him off—but he pressed right through me. He had his foul lips against hers!"

"What rot are you talking?" Parker demanded. "You've been asleep in here. You've kidded yourself into dreaming about finding Detla. This spirit stuff is the bunk. The thing for us to do is—"

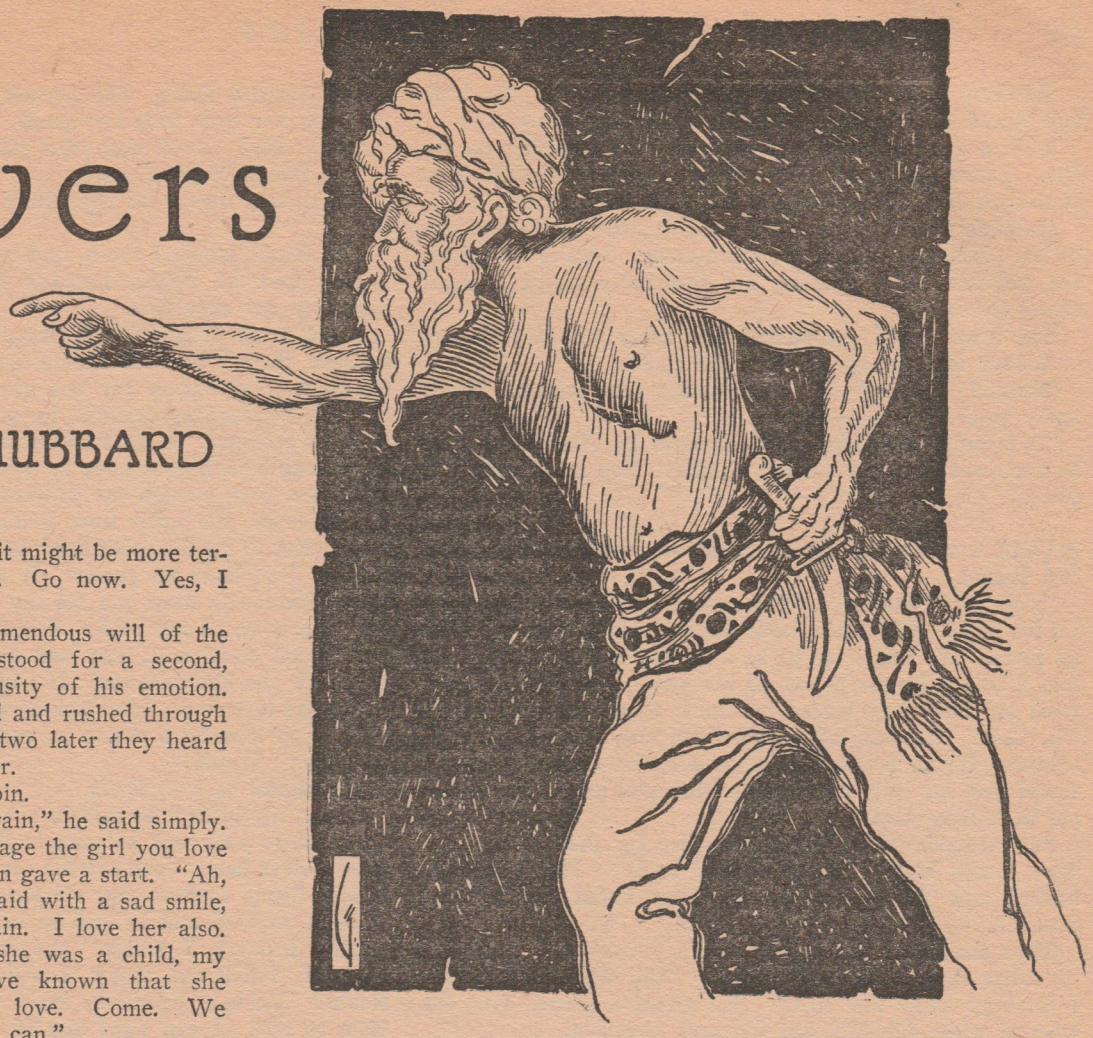
Robin interrupted him, taking him by the shoulders, looking him straight in the face.

"PARKER, old man," he said solemnly, "I don't believe it is bunk. I never had a dream like that. It was all real I tell you, my spirit left my body, took strength from Bhanah's sleeping form, and then I could hear Detla calling me. I went—like the wind, only ten times as fast. I swept through country to Boston, then to T—— Street, and the house number—Twenty-eight. I went in—upstairs—right through a closed door, and found her. He was alone with her. God! He was trying to make her his bride—— She fought furiously. I tried to get between. He laughed at me—and kissed her lips. You waked me and pulled my spirit back at that minute. *It is not bunk.*" He suddenly covered his face with his hands. "God! God!" he moaned. "Think what may have happened to her by this time!"

"We must stop thinking—and act," Bhanah said with sudden, incisive grimness. "This spirit experience that you call 'bunk', Parker, is something I have experienced all my life; it is cruel fact. Parker, go as fast as your car will take you to that house that our friend has visited. Rescue her if you have to kill him; but do not kill him unless you

Lovers

By GRANT HUBBARD



have to, for his evil spirit might be more terrible if freed by death. Go now. Yes, I say GO!"

Dominated by the tremendous will of the young Hindu, Parker stood for a second, trembling with the intensity of his emotion. Then suddenly he turned and rushed through the door. A second or two later they heard the starting of his motor.

Bhanah turned to Robin.

"Now, you must go again," he said simply. "At least you can encourage the girl you love by your presence." Robin gave a start. "Ah, yes," the young Hindu said with a sad smile, "you love her. It is plain. I love her also. I have loved her since she was a child, my playmate—though I have known that she could never return that love. Come. We must give what help we can."

He stepped to the library door, locked it from the inside and immediately lay down on the floor.

"I sleep," he said quietly. "Do exactly as you did before—and you may render powerful aid. Remember that good can always overcome evil. Do not give up. Find her and stay by her, no matter what the torment or disaster."

He closed his eyes.

Trembling, Robin lay on the couch and tried to lose himself in the vast, spiritual void. At first he could not accomplish it. His poignant longing to help Detla defeated itself. Then he thought of Bhanah—Bhanah, who had loved this girl hopelessly, but nobly, all his life, and was now giving himself to sleep that another might use his body as a vehicle to go to her. If Bhanah could do it, he could! Resolutely he tried to efface every thought from his mind, to concentrate upon vacuity, to free himself from his body.

Finally, he accomplished it—he seemed to be floating off into limitless space, far above the bodies of Bhanah and himself.

But this time no cry from Detla; nothing to guide him. He dropped through space to Bhanah's body, hovered over it, took strength from it, saw his own body through a shimmering mist, felt the surge of great power, and started quickly to Detla's aid.

It was as though he had floated directly from the big library, through a flash of bright sunlight, into the incense-fragrant room where he had last struggled with Kala Neo in defense of Detla's body and soul.

Suddenly he gave a cry of horror.

On the long, cushioned divan at the end of the room, they lay side by side—apparently asleep—the slender girl in her thin silk garment and the swarthy Hindu half-naked.

Robin flashed across the room to them.

Yes, they were sleeping—peacefully—in a deep slumber. What could it mean? How could this have come to pass? There was no sign of a struggle. Surely——

He knelt beside Detla's sleeping form. Was he too late? Oh, was he too late!

Ah, if he could only make her feel his presence there! If he could only waken her! But he was only an intangible, wraith-like thing. He could do nothing.

Kneeling by the low couch on the side where Detla lay, he gazed for a long time into her sweet, exquisite face. Her calm repose was beyond his understanding. A short time ago she had been subjected to the worst torment a girl can know—fighting for the sanctity of her body and soul. Now she lay peacefully beside the evil Hindu. What could it mean? Ah, if he could only waken her! If he could get her away while the villainous Hindu slept! But he was a spirit, without substance—helpless!

WAIT! Had not Detla told him that she could see the spirit form of the Hindu as easily as she could see his bodily form? And had he not seen her apparently holding the hands of her little spirit playmates years ago? Was it not possible, after all, that his spirit touch could awaken her?

He leaned forward and touched her hand. Strange! He could feel that touch as he had not been able to feel the touch of Kala Neo. There must be some peculiar quality about Detla that reacted strongly to spirit substance!

Eagerly he lifted her hand and squeezed it.

She gave no sign of having felt the pressure. He would have shaken her and called to her, but he was afraid of waking the Hindu by her side. He pressed her hand again.

A faint drawing together of her brows, as if in pain, gave him hope. On an impulse he let go of her hand and took her face between his palms. The next instant, drawn by a force outside of himself, he bent and kissed her eyes. The lids flickered under his lips.

He drew back, but she did not open her eyes. He bent and kissed them again. Again they flickered slightly.

With a desperate surge of emotion, he kissed her on the lips. There was a strange, spiritual sweetness in the kiss. It seemed like the meeting of his soul with hers.

Suddenly her lips responded, returning the gentle pressure of his. His soul was filled with ecstasy. Lifting her arms, she embraced him, pressing her lips for a single moment closer to his.

The next second she pushed him away with a little cry of horror and sprang up from the couch.

"Robin! Robin!" she cried under her breath. "Is it really you—or is it——"

"It is only my spirit, given strength by Bhanah's body," he answered in a low voice. "Quick! You must leave this place."

DETLA cast a shuddering glance down at the half-naked Hindu.

"Yes, yes!" she cried. "There's is still time! I am not yet his bride. Oh Robin, he is not satisfied to take my body by force. He wants me to be a willing bride. He put me into a trance by the power of his eyes. He drew my soul from my body and forced my spirit to go with his spirit. Oh, God! He was taking me from one horrible place to another—trying to arouse the same desire in me, so that I would give my body willingly to his awful love. You called me back from that——"

She stopped. She seemed to realize for the first time by what means Robin had called her back. Her pale face flushed and she covered it with her hands for a brief moment.

Then she lifted her eyes to his.

"What shall I do?" she cried. "Oh, what shall I do? I can't go away like this." She swept a glance over the wisp of white silk that was her only covering.

He was horrified at what she had just told him, but strangely elated, too—since it meant that he had not come too late.

"Never mind how you look," he cried softly. "What does that matter? Go! Once you get outside, call a policeman. He will take care of you. Parker is coming—in his car. But there's no knowing how long it may take him. Go! Kala Neo may awaken any moment."

"Yes, yes, you are right!" Detla cried. "I must go!"

She rushed to the door at the end of the room and frantically pulled at the knob. But she could not open it. Her eyes flashed swift appeal to Robin.

By the mere effort of his will he swept across the room to her side. He seized the door-knob, but his hands met no substance. The realness of his contact with the girl had made him forget. He had no tangible substance!

"It's locked!" she cried frantically.

"And I can't help you!" he groaned.

From across the room came a low, hideously triumphant laugh.

"Yes, my bride, and you, her lover, the door is locked! And you cannot help her! Fools! Did you think that the spirit of Kala Neo would fail to come back to his body when the spirit of his bride came back to hers? Ha! I returned in time to see that embrace of awakening—that kiss by which you betrayed not only me, but him to whom my bride is supposed to be pledged. Good! That kiss has shown me that she is neither cold beyond awakening, nor faithful to her pledge. The things that she has seen have already warned her. All the more pleasure it will be to me to make her my bride!"

He rose from the couch, evil and triumphant, and came slowly toward Detla, who shrank back against the wall, covering her eyes with her hands.

"No! No! No!" she cried piteously in protest.

The Hindu laughed softly.

Robin in a frenzy of rage flung his spirit form between them.

The Hindu laughed again, and stepped through the shimmering mist of Robin, stopping before Detla, laying his hands on her shoulders.

Robin tried frantically to force his substanceless form between them. But the Hindu seemed not to notice him, except to find reason for one more triumphant laugh.

"It is useless, my friend," he said. "I am not troubled by your presence. I am scarcely aware of you. When my spirit fought with your body in this girl's room, you felt my substance just enough to prevent your breathing easily. To my bride, the spirit form is almost as real as the body itself. But to me the spirit form is nothing. See—I breathe easily. You have no power. It will be a pleasurable revenge for me to have you see my will conquer the will of her who is to be my bride. I shall find delight in having your spirit come with hers and mine to visit those scenes of which she has told you. It will give me much pleasure to see the torture on your face as you see her cold aversion turn to as burning a desire as even a *Mahnee Raha* could wish for. Watch!"

He turned back to Detla.

"Now, my bride," he said in a voice of terrible intensity, "once more your will submits to mine. I am master, as I have always been. You are the servant, as you have always been! Sleep, so that your spirit may follow mine."

Detla writhed and twisted in his grasp.

"No, I won't, I *won't!*" she cried. "You are not the master! I will not sleep! I will not go with you again! Robin! Robin! Speak to me! Don't let him take me! Talk to me! I can fight him if I hear your voice!"

WHILE the Hindu had been speaking, Robin had been trying in every way to impose his shimmering, misty form between him and Detla. But it was useless. Now he gave it up and moved quickly to Detla's side, putting a protective arm around her and marveling at the mystery that gave reality to the contact between him and her. With his arm around her shoulders, he felt new strength and new courage to help her.

"I'm here," he said. "Of course you can fight him. His power is only hypnotism and suggestion. Remember that your soul is your own—now and always. Pay no attention to him. Listen! Parker is on his way as fast as his car will carry him. It is only a matter of time and he will be here."

"Detla!" came the Hindu's voice. "Pay no attention to this man. You are mine. You——"

"You are not his!" Robin cried with all his strength. "You belong to yourself. Answer me! Speak to me! Act as if you did not hear him."

Detla shuddered and sobbed behind the hands with which she still shielded her eyes. She made no answer. The Hindu's voice came, more intense than ever, more dominating:

"Bride of a *Mahnee Rana*, you did not hear this man. He is not here. What you think you see, you have imagined. The voice you think you have heard is——"

"Is *real*, Detla!" Robin cried. "You have imagined nothing. Bhanah lies asleep in your library. He has given me knowledge of how to come to you, and he has given my spirit strength from his body, just as he used to do for your little playmates. Think of him! Think of his loyalty! Think of Parker rushing here in his car! Think

of me by your side. Speak to me, I tell you!" he shouted.

"You can't speak to him," came the Hindu's dominant tones. "Your will is mine. You cannot speak!"

Detla shuddered. Her throat worked as she tried to answer, but no sound came. Wild, desperate thoughts swept through Robin's mind. What could he do? What arresting words could he say to her? What could he——

"Yes, your will is my will," went on the dominant voice. "Already you want to lower the hands before your face. You want to look into my eyes. You are lowering them." Detla's hands came down slowly. To Robin's horror, she was meeting the hypnotic eye of the Hindu. The quivering of her body was gradually ceasing. "You find in my eyes the mastery of the spirit," droned Kala Neo's voice. "You know that I completely control you. You know that when I tell you to sleep, you *must* sleep. Your eyes are heavy now, the lids are closing. Soon you——"

Robin gave a sudden, desperate cry:

"Detla! Detla! You mustn't. I'm here. Don't you feel me?" He shook her in his arms. "Don't you hear my voice? You must hear me. Listen! I am here because I love you! I love you, I love you! I *will* not let you sleep again. Wake up! Wake up!"

IN sheer desperation, he snatched her into his arms and began to kiss her passionately on her closed eyes, on her lips!

All the time he heard the evil voice of the Hindu intoning commands. He tried to speak a counter sentence to each of them. And all the time he kept kissing the relaxed lips and pressing the limp form of the girl to his spirit body, speaking wildly of his love for her.

All at once she stiffened. Her eyes opened; they looked full into his.

"Robin! Robin! What does this mean?" she cried. "What are you telling me?"

Exultation filled Robin. He held her steady in his arms and looked down into her face. The voice of the Hindu, growing more terrible than ever, passed unheeded.

"I am telling you that I love you," Robin cried intensely. "I love you! I have always loved you, since the first day that I saw you there in the woods. You love Parker. I know it. I know you can't love me. I am not being disloyal. I am telling you this because only great, real things can keep your attention from that man. Listen to me."

"I am listening, Robin dear. I am listening, and I know you do not mean to be disloyal. I am not disloyal, either. I love Parker. But you are very near to me now . . . nearer in spirit than Parker has ever been. I love you in a way that I have never loved him. I feel that you understand. I feel——"

Her words were suddenly interrupted. The Hindu quickly swept her into his arms, against his naked breast—darted across to the room to the low couch, and wheeled to face Robin.

"You have won!" he cried. "The curse of the gods be on your love. Yes, you have won. But you have lost, too. You have saved her soul from me, but the body you cannot save. That I shall take now; and you shall blame yourself for the hurt to her that I would have avoided. Look, I kiss her, and she writhes away, but she is helpless—and you are helpless. Look! I——"

"No! No! No!" Detla screamed in agony. "You won't——"

But the sinewy arms of the Hindu held her fast, bending her frail body to his kisses, while Robin raged helplessly above the swarthy head and shoulders.

Suddenly the door at the end of the room opened with a crash! Parker Storey stood in the doorway for a single second, pale, wild-eyed, disheveled.

"Parker! Parker!" Detla cried, and the boy went across the room in a mad rage, hurling himself through the air at the Hindu and sending Kala Neo, Detla, and himself crashing to the floor.

The Hindu was up on his feet again in a second. A long, gleaming knife was in his hand, drawn from a sheath concealed in his loin cloth. He sprang at Parker.

ROBIN tried with horrible futility to interpose himself, only to have the Hindu pass right through his misty form.

The blade was lifted and struck viciously downward at Parker's throat.

Parker threw himself backward. At the same time, Detla seized the Hindu's hand in mid-air.

The keen blade missed Parker, but the force of the stroke was such that it bore Detla to the floor, the knife point gashing her left forearm.

Parker was like a man insane. He wrenched the knife from the Hindu's hand and stabbed the man twice, full in the breast.

A terrible light came into Kala Neo's eyes. He staggered and sank to the floor, half reclining against the side of the low couch, the blood pouring from his breast.

Detla gave a cry of horror. Parker stood for a moment breathing hard. His eyes fell on the dripping knife in his hand, and he flung it from him to the floor.

Speechless Detla and Parker stared at Kala Neo.

The Hindu's baleful eyes had not lost their strange, terrible luminosity. They gripped Parker and Detla, and even Robin, with a mysterious force and held them utterly mute. Then Kala Neo spoke, slowly, with increasing weakness, but with frightful menace in his voice.

"You have killed me. Perhaps it was well done. Kismet.

But know now, betrothed of my bride, you have only given me greater freedom. Know also that I shall use the greater freedom to gain sweet revenge. Beware, thou who hast killed my body. At thy next sleeping, thou shalt meet me again, and I shall do the killing in such a way as thou canst not even guess."

He turned to Detla.

"Bride of the *Mahnee Raha,*" he said, speaking low but impressively, "remember, thou art still my bride. I shall come for thee—in the flesh, too—when thou least expectest me. Farewell until that meeting."

He shuddered in agony and his eyes glazed. He lay in a crumpled heap on the floor.

The two watched him as if fascinated. Robin, apart from them, let his eyes shift from their faces to Kala Neo's and back again. He felt strangely detached from the scene now. Without realizing it, he drifted back of the other two, though still watching with poignant interest.

At last Detla spoke, hardly above a whisper.

"Is he dead? Oh, Parker!"

Suddenly she flung herself, sobbing, into his arms. Parker folded her close to him and kissed her in a passion of relief. A pang went through Robin. Somehow the embrace was more than he could bear.

CLOSING his eyes, he suddenly felt himself rushing through light and space. The next instant he was once more in his body form back in Detla's library.

Robin's first waking breath was a long-drawn sigh of relief. He had the feeling that one has on coming out of a nightmare—a feeling that all the horror had been nothing but a dream. But the next breath told him that it was grim reality. There was Bhanah, stretched on the floor, still in a profound sleep.

He went over to the young Hindu, stooped over his motionless form and waked him gently. He sat up immediately, and then sprang to his feet, seizing Robin by the hands.

"Tell me—tell me what has happened!" he cried. "That you have struggled, I know; for I am very weary."

Robin noticed then for the first time the beads of perspiration on Bhanah's forehead, and the lines of fatigue in his face. He told him swiftly all that had happened.

"I haven't just been dreaming, have I, Bhanah?" he said finally. "I haven't hypnotized myself into believing this?"

Bhanah shook his head gravely.

"I tell you, this kind of thing has been part of my daily life," he said. "No. You saw. You fought. You saved her whom we love. Now she is safe with Parker." His face darkened as if with a sudden grim thought. "Safe till Kala Neo's spirit makes its next move," he added with impressive gravity.

"His next move!" Robin exclaimed. "But the man is dead! You surely don't believe there's any way in which he can carry out his dying vow of revenge, do you?"

Bhanah smiled with a kind of sad tolerance.

"We of India know that the spirit never dies," he said. "You Christians should know it, also, but your faith too often lacks strength. Kala Neo died with a vow of vengeance upon his lips. That vow binds his spirit to this earth till the vengeance he had. Her life and Parker's—will depend upon our foresight and protection."

As he spoke, the telephone rang. Robin went to it. Parker's voice came over the wire:

"Robin! Boy, I've got her! Your dream was as true as a die. I got to her just in time. Something happened that I can't tell over the telephone. Bad stuff, but it served the beast right. We are going to be married as soon as we can get a special license. Then we're off for Maine. I'm going to get Detla away from this unhealthy environment, where she thinks she sees spirits. You'll hear from us, old man. We're taking a car, and we'll stop somewhere on the road."

"Is Detla all right?" Robin asked, trying to keep his voice steady.

"Yes, but she's shaken—terribly shaken. She still talks a bit wildly about what happened. She thinks you came to her rescue, first—won't believe it was just a clairvoyant dream of yours—wanted to see you before we left. I got a room for her at The Touraine. She's there now, resting. Good-by, old man!"

Before Robin could stop him, he had rung off. Robin turned to Bhanah and repeated the conversation. The young Hindu's face turned ashy.

"Quick!" he said. "We must get to them. This Parker is a very obstinate boy. He does not know his danger—or hers. We must warn them. We must make them put off this wedding, and you and I must pass the first night and other nights with Parker till we know what Kala Neo means to do with him in his sleep."

He hurried to the library door, unlocked it and went out. Robin followed, wondering at the young Hindu's terrible earnestness, yet impressed by it and overcome in spite of himself by a feeling of dread.

Bhanah was starting for the garage where Detla's cars were kept, when a group of sweating and disheveled men broke from the woods and came toward them. Robin recognized the Chief of the town police at the head.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed under his breath. "What shall I tell them?"

Bhanah answered quickly: "Tell them that Parker suddenly had a—a—what you call a hunch and dashed off in the car without telling us where he was going. And tell them about the telephone call, but don't say where they are now or where they are going after they are married."

The sweating posse was on them by now. Robin quickly proffered the information that Bhanah had suggested, thanked them all and managed to get rid of them—though the Chief looked pretty well dazed at the news.

A minute or two later they were on their way to Boston in a swift little roadster, Bhanah driving with uncanny skill, and putting the miles behind them rapidly.

In an incredibly short time they were threading their way into the city. The found a parking place on Boylston Street and hurried to The Touraine. But Detla had checked out fifteen minutes before! They rushed to the City Hall—only to find that Parker and Detla had been married five minutes before and had gone away.

They stared at each other in grim consternation.

"We might try to catch them," Robin suggested. "They're sure to take the Newburyport Turnpike."

Bhanah nodded.

"It's the only thing to do," he said. "There is a chance—and we must not leave a single chance untried. Kala Neo's evil spirit is riding with them. We *must* be there when he makes his attack."

ROBIN gazed at Bhanah, impressed as before, but puzzled. He felt that the young Hindu already had conjectured more than he was willing to tell. In that case, what horror did Bhanah believe lay in store for the two who had just joined their lives and who were starting out bravely together to forget the past?

A pang flashed through him. It was not easy to think of Detla as the wife of another man. His soul rebelled, even though he knew that Parker was the man she loved.

Bhanah drove swiftly toward the Turnpike. When they had definitely reached the long, uninterrupted ribbon of cement road, he stopped the car.

"We must not start till we are sure we are not ahead of them," he said. "Let us wait. We still have time."

They had not waited ten minutes when a low, blue car whizzed by and they both recognized Detla and Parker.

"Quick! Catch them!" Robin cried.

Bhanah started the car and then said quietly.

"No," he said, "I have been thinking. Parker will not believe he is in danger. He will insist on sending us back, and going on alone with her whom we love. No. If we would

help them, we must follow—but we must be near when night comes."

Robin felt a feeling of repugnance. To follow the girl he loved—to attempt to be near her at this time above all! It went against the grain. Surely Bhanah was—but no—Bhanah seemed always right. He must do what the young Hindu's judgment urged.

It was early afternoon. They had had no lunch. Neither of them thought of it. Their thoughts were on the blue car ahead, and its two occupants.

All afternoon they kept within sight of it, taking pains not to get so close as to attract attention, but always avoiding any chance of getting separated.

DURING the ride Robin questioned Bhanah about the weird things that he had been through, and found that Bhanah had devoted his whole life to the study of psychic phenomena. The young Hindu not only knew every theory of the scientists, and every claim of the spiritualistic cults of America; he had also gone deep into the most secret orders of his own country. He gave his information quietly and with no effort at effect; but the things he told took Robin's breath away.

Under the spell of Bhanah's deep gravity and the stories he told, it was easy to believe that Kala Neo's spirit still hovered close to the girl whom he had sworn to claim as his bride, and to the man who had taken her from him.

When Detla and Parker stopped for dinner at a wayside station just beyond Portland, Bhanah drove on to a hot-dog stand and the two ate, watching for the blue car. It came by an hour later, but then the growing darkness made it hard to follow it. At eight o'clock the blue car turned off the road to a much-advertised set of overnight cabins. Bhanah drove past, but slowed down immediately and stopped just off the road.

"I will go back," he said. "Wait here until I return."

Presently he came back.

"They are stopping for the night," he said. "We must take the nearest cabin to theirs, and one of us must stay awake all night."

"I don't like it," Robin protested. "It seems like spying."

But Bhanah was already turning the car around.

"We do it for their sake," he said simply. "For that reason it is right."

Five minutes later their car was parked beside a small white building thirty feet from a similar building beside which was the shadowy outline of the blue car.

"Sleep in your clothes," Bhanah said simply, pointing to one of the two beds. "I will stay awake first. I will wake you at midnight."

Glad of any respite from the thing that he found so horribly like spying, Robin lay down as directed, closed his eyes, and tried to sleep.

He was instantly prey to the tortures of jealousy. He found himself actually hating the boy who had been his best friend for years—wanting to go and snatch the girl he loved from him by right of a greater love and greater spiritual understanding. For hours, it seemed to him, he fought it out with his own soul—fought it out till at last the more generous side of him won. He found that he had but one desire: happiness for Detla and Parker. With this thought came peace and sleep.

He was waked from that sleep by Bhanah, shaking him roughly.

"Come!" the young Hindu whispered in his ear, and rushed out of the cabin.

From the other cabin came the sound of Detla's voice crying in stark horror:

"Oh, Parker! Parker! What *has* he done to you! Parker! Where are *you!*"

Is Parker already in the grip of the fiend? Can Bhanah and Robin save Detla from the sinister influence of the dead magician? Don't miss the startling, unexpected climax in the last instalment of this thrilling story! In the May GHOST STORIES, *on all news stands April 23rd.*

The Test that Convinced Sir Edward

ONE of the leading figures of the English bar of the present day was Sir Edward Marshall Hall, K.C., who died in 1927. For acuteness and ability he is probably unsurpassed, and the following is a statement from his pen:

"One Sunday about thirty years ago I was at my sister's house at Hampton, and Miss K. Wingfield was there, and, as it happened, had been giving an exhibition of her powers as an automatic writer. She was a great personal friend of my sister's, and was at the time staying in the house. My sister took me on one side, and implored me to test those messages for myself. . . . What to ask I did not know; but, putting my hand in my breast pocket, searching for a piece of paper on which to write something, I pulled out a letter which I had received at my chambers in the Temple the preceding day.

"As if inspired, an idea came to me. I folded up the letter in its envelope—writing, stamp and postmark inside—and then placed the whole in another envelope, which I sealed with a seal I always carried. There was no writing on the outside of the envelope so sealed, and I handed it to my sister to hand to Miss Wingfield, with the spoken question:

"'Ask her who is the writer of the letter contained in that envelope.' Please note that sex was not mentioned, and my sister did not know who was the writer.

"After considerable delay, the automatic writing brought this message: *The writer of that letter is dead!*

"Wishing to clinch it, I asked another question:

"'When and where did the writer die?'

"Again the answer came back: *He died yesterday in South Africa!* I had mentioned no sex and given no indication of locality; and the answer, though curious, seemed ridiculous.

"My sister asked if I wished to put any more questions, and I said, 'No.' I never told her any of the facts till some weeks later, and I went away, returning to London on that evening.

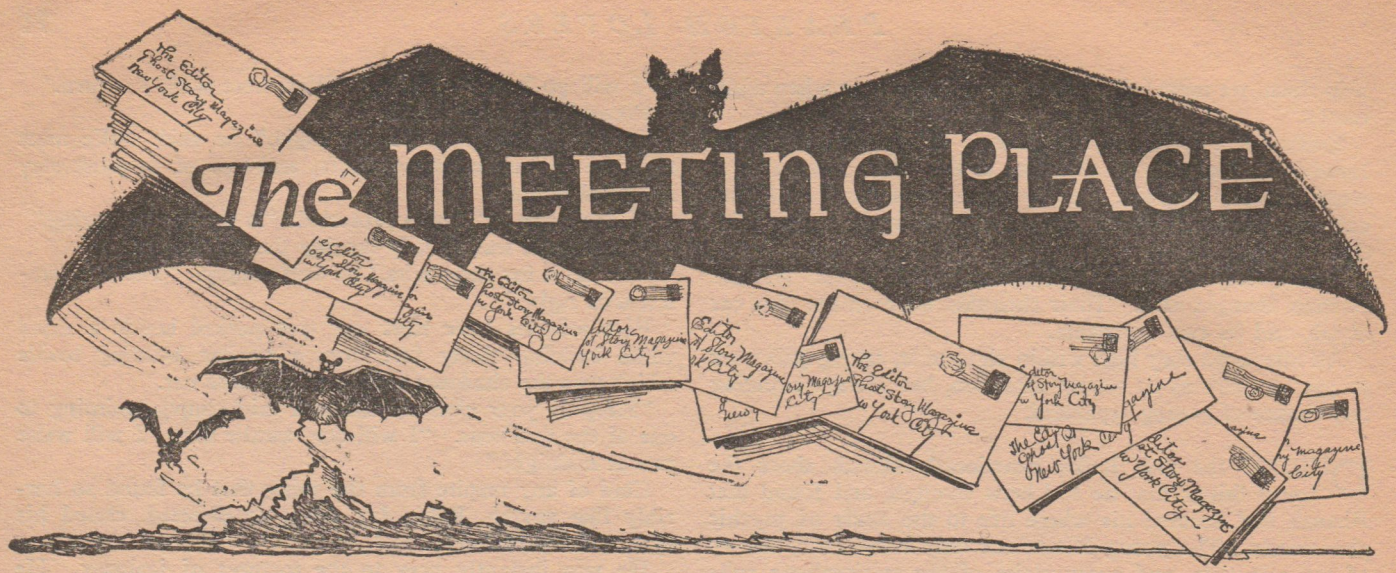
"To say that I was puzzled was to put it mildly. This letter, which I had received on the Saturday preceding the Sunday on which I asked the question, was written by my brother in South Africa some three weeks prior to the date of its receipt. I had not told my sister of this letter and she could not know of its existence.

"The third succeeding Saturday afterwards I received a letter (dated the Saturday immediately preceding the Sunday on which I had asked the question at Hampton) from Archdeacon Gaul, in which he writes:

"'I little thought when I wrote you last mail that I should have to tell you that your brother was found dead in his bed this morning.'

"Of course I could relate many other instances and experiences that have occurred since, but for me this was enough. I was, and am, convinced that there is an existence beyond so-called death, and that there are means of communication between the dead anad us.

"If the phenomenon I have related can be explained by any natural process, I am ready to consider it, but until I am convinced otherwise, I shall continue to believe and believe steadfastly that the message of my brother's death was conveyed to me in mercy by some influence outside this life."



Phantom Finger-Prints

An Editorial By ROBERT NAPIER

MARGERY, the well-known Boston medium, is responsible for the most amazing attempt ever made to prove the existence of ghosts. She has tried to do it by materializing the hand of her deceased brother, Walter Stinson, and obtaining the print of his thumb on dental wax.

Her weird experiments have been carried on for nearly three years with all the tirelessness of scientific research, and the results have been checked by J. Malcolm Bird, research officer of the American Society for Psychical Research, and by John W. Fife, a noted finger-print expert who is Chief of Police at the Charlestown Navy Yard.

The phantom thumb-prints are obtained in the following manner:

The medium is seated before a table, with an observer sitting at her right, holding one of her hands, while another observer sits at her left holding the other hand. On the table is a pan of hot water with a piece of dental wax softening in it. When she goes into trance, the ectoplasmic hand appears in plain view and leaves its thumb mark on the soft wax. Photographs have been made of this process and leave no apparent loop-hole for fraud. In the pictures the medium's feet can be seen in normal position under the table—her hands are firmly held by the observers—and there, upon the table, lies a ghastly, half-tangible hand—without wrist—without body!

Between August, 1926, and April 15th, 1928, more than seventy of these thumb impressions were made. With five exceptions, all are of the same thumb.

If this is a case of fraud, how could the trick be accomplished?

The most obvious answer is that the prints must be made by some living person at the séance. But the facts show that the finger-prints of all persons attending the séances have been recorded—and none of them check with the phantom thumb-print.

Perhaps, then, some confederate slips in from the outside and makes the prints. This possibility is also ruled out. On more than one occasion the prints were made with the medium in a closed cabinet and in a locked room—with no one present except a finger-print expert! The phantom thumb-prints have also been obtained in strange houses—and in the presence of strangers only.

The only other possibility is that the prints are forgeries—that they were made with a die or matrix. This has also been conclusively disproved. The prints have been examined by experts in Boston, Berlin, Scotland Yard and elsewhere—and it has been established beyond doubt that they could not have been made by any mechanical instrument. While the finger-print pattern never changes and is always that of the same person, no two prints are exactly

identical—there is always a slight anatomical variation, such as might occur from day to day in a living hand.

The one essential point yet to be established is: Do the prints actually tally with the thumb-print of the dead Walter Stinson? This, unfortunately, cannot be definitely settled. Walter Stinson's finger-prints were not recorded during his life and only one incomplete print of his thumb has so far been discovered. In this print a part of the pattern is lacking—but *every line present checks with the thumb-print of the phantom!*

What can the skeptics say in reply to this startling evidence? Personally it seems to me the most important evidence of human survival after death that has ever been offered—but I have no doubt that the skeptics will remain skeptics still.

Margery's work, in this instance, seems all the more worthy of serious consideration because it has not been commercialized. She has done it as her contribution to psychic research—and not for money. As the wife of Doctor L. R. G. Crandon, a prominent surgeon of Boston, she has not needed to commercialize her psychic powers. Readers of GHOST STORIES will remember her as the one medium whom Houdini tried to expose without any definite success; the controversy created by his attempted exposè is still raging at the present time.

READERS are invited to send brief accounts of personal experiences with the occult to The Meeting Place. The correspondent's full name and address must be signed to each letter but we will print only the initials or a pseudonym if it is requested. Answers to other correspondents' letters will also be printed.

Here is a chance to get in touch with persons all over the world who are interested in the supernatural!

A Miracle in New Jersey

NIGHT after night a crowd gathers in perfect silence before the door of St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church in Keansburg, New Jersey. Sometimes there are as many as three or four hundred people standing or kneeling there, in the hours just before dawn. All of them have come to see the luminous, white-robed figure of a woman that appears in front of the massive door of the church.

What causes the apparition? No one has yet been able to explain it—though hundreds have seen the weird figure. Most people seem to think that it is an illusion caused by cross-lights playing in odd shadows. But where does the light come from? Nobody seems to know. Many persons have actually touched the mysterious phantom, which is plainly visible both at a distance and from near-by.

The officials of the borough have visited the church and they, too, admit that they have seen the figure. But they can offer no solution of the mystery. Some people assert unhesitatingly that a miracle is taking place—that St. Ann is revealing herself and that it is a portent of great good and hopefulness.

The Reverend Thomas A. Kearney, pastor of the church, is about as much mystified as anyone else. He, too, has seen the figure.

In my opinion, this apparition is one of the most remarkable things that has happened in this skeptical age. It is certainly worthy of serious investigation.

Newark, New Jersey. I. K.

The Ghost of Mrs. Johnson

A very weird thing has happened recently in Berlin, Maryland. A motorist passing the Evergreen Cemetery saw a ghost among the tombstones—and he was so excited that he came into town and told his story. Everybody had a good laugh—but later a number of persons, including Ex-Sheriff Wilmer S. Purnell, went to the cemetery to investigate. And they saw the ghost, too!

On the following night other witnesses claim to have seen the ghost again—and some of these assert that they recognized it as the phantom of Mrs. Margaret Ann Johnson, who died a few years ago.

Friends of Mrs. Johnson have since stated that on her death bed she promised to return to earth and see her friends.

Skeptics, inspecting the cemetery in the daytime, discovered the dim outline of a woman's figure on the marble headstone of Mrs. Johnson's grave. This discovery, of course, has added to the excitement.

Perhaps it will all be naturally explained eventually. The "apparition" may be somebody's idea of a good joke—or it may be due to atmospheric conditions, as some of the residents of Berlin say. And it is entirely probable that the figure on the tombstone is the accidental work of erosion.

But you can't tell anything like that to the people who saw the ghost! They believe in it absolutely—and who can say positively that they are wrong?

Elkton, Maryland. S. C.

How a Ouija Board Saved a Fortune

I used to think the Ouija Board was a joke—but I don't now. I'd like to tell your readers why.

A girl friend and I were playing with an Ouija board one night in the living room of our home in Minneapolis. My father was sitting in a big armchair within a few feet of us, reading a newspaper and listening to our foolish chatter. The girl and I were getting all sort of crazy "messages;" of course, we were pushing the thing and making it spell out anything that came into our heads.

Suddenly my arm began to feel queer and tingly. I quit laughing and I noticed that the (*Continued on page* 82)

Taking Tea with a Spirit

A True Ghost Story

By MARY McCRAW ROBINSON

4318 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas

MY experience with the supernatural differs so radically from the usual ghost story that I believe your readers will be interested in it.

During the first part of the World War I was a day student at S-M's College here. As I was married and keeping house I was kept pretty busy and consequently knew very little college gossip.

During Christmas week my husband, who was at Camp Bowie, 'phoned that he would not be able to come over as we had planned, and suggested that I have some of the girls stay with me. Instead, I decided to spend the days at the college and so get in closer touch with my fellow students as well as enjoy some cooking not my own.

Christmas Eve morning it snowed and we had the rare sport of snow-balling. That night we went to a little dance at the Dean's house and planned to go from there at midnight to St. Matthew's Cathedral to hear the Christmas carols from the tower.

However, after the dance I felt so tired I decided I would retire, and as Miss Foster, the matron, was not in, I asked Miss Brown for a room. She was spending her first year at the college. She hurriedly looked over the room assignments and asked if I would take a chance on the tower-room. I was so tired I didn't note the expression "take a chance," and not having heard much of the college small talk I knew nothing about the tower-room except that it was never assigned to a student. Although used as a sitting-room in the afternoon, it was furnished as a bedroom.

I laughed and declared I was tired enough to sleep in a stable.

After a brief glance she replied: "Well, as you know, I am rather a stranger here, but it seems to me I've heard—well, you take it, but if you begin to feel uneasy, come down to Louise Davis' room and sleep with her."

I went on up and looked the room over. On one side was a small entry hall and on the other there were double windows. I lit the student lamp and the gas log. This part of the school was over thirty years old, and little in the line of renovation had been done except the installation of plumbing and gas. The lamp and gas log cast a pleasant glow over the old-fashioned Brussels carpet. I drew the shades partially down and closed the door.

I had left the girls on account of fatigue; yet, after closing the door, I felt fresh, elated. Curious, I tried to analyze the change. I seemed to be anticipating something. Removing my clothes, I slipped into a kimono and bedroom slippers. I had a strange sensation of being someone else, a feeling as though I were watching the emotions of some unknown person. I sat down and tried to read. Restless, I gave it up and decided to examine the furniture more closely. I began with the old writing desk and found all the pieces in the same condition: very old and spotlessly clean.

As I finished looking into the closet I heard the clock in the hall below strike the half-hour. The curious feeling of anticipation began to increase, and I was thoroughly awake. As yet I felt no fear, merely a great expectancy. Lighting the little alcohol lamp on the table, I brewed a cup of tea. For some reason I did not fathom, I set out two cups.

Without clearing away the dishes, I again sat down to read. I had carelessly glanced through one chapter in my history text-book when I heard the clock below strike twelve. Almost simultaneously with the last stroke came a light tap at my door.

I didn't rise, though I instantly wondered who my visitor could be as I had not heard the girls returning.

Contrary to the usual way of doors in the old dormitory, this door opened silently. A young girl dressed in the fashion of several years ago came in. She looked not at me, but through me, at someone else who seemed to be occupying the same chair. She came in with light, nervous steps, closing the door quickly and locking it. She slipped the key in the bosom of her dress.

"Oh, Fannie, what is this I've heard about you?" she asked, advancing to the edge of the table and standing so close that if I had possessed the will-power I could have touched her.

A voice, also light and girlish and apparently coming from my own throat, answered: "Why, Marguerite, what on earth is this terrible tale? Come have a cup of tea and tell me about it."

To my horrified amazement I saw my own hand extend a still steaming cup of tea to my unknown visitor.

The girl shook her head and, smiling wistfully at me a few minutes, began to speak tenderly and seriously, "Fannie, tell me, darling! You know, I've never had a secret from you in all these years."

"Well, Margie, you are a good girl," laughingly replied my other self, "and I dare say the Lord will bless you."

Marguerite smiled once more, but tears were rising in her pretty, clear-blue eyes.

"Don't tease now, Fannie. You know how we all love you so. Don't be foolish."

AN angry note crept into the other's voice. "If you do love me, why do you fuss so? I have not robbed a bank and I have not committed murder. What is the matter with you, Marguerite?"

A flaming blush reddened the girl's fair face and paled to a jasmine white before she replied, very quietly: "By doing what you have planned to do, you will rob your father, my uncle, of his honor and you will murder him by the shame of such an awful deed. You surely will, Fannie."

"What do you know, Margie?"

"I overheard—unintentionally, you understand—you and Carl Rhodes plan to elope this very night. I was sitting above you on the landing of the stairs. You know he is a married man, divorce or no divorce. You know he will tire of you, Fannie. He has already had two divorces. Oh, think of the shame, Fannie—you a girl of sixteen and he forty."

Fannie's voice turned sulky, yet remained determined. "Well, Miss Priss, since you do know so much, I *am* running away with Carl! Does one remain at home with walking boots like these?" She extended a foot shod in a sturdy, tan walking shoe. "No. And when we get to New Orleans we will marry. His former wives did not understand him. Go away, Margie, and I'll ask you down to see us when we are settled down in New Orleans."

"When are you going and where is he to meet you? I didn't hear it all."

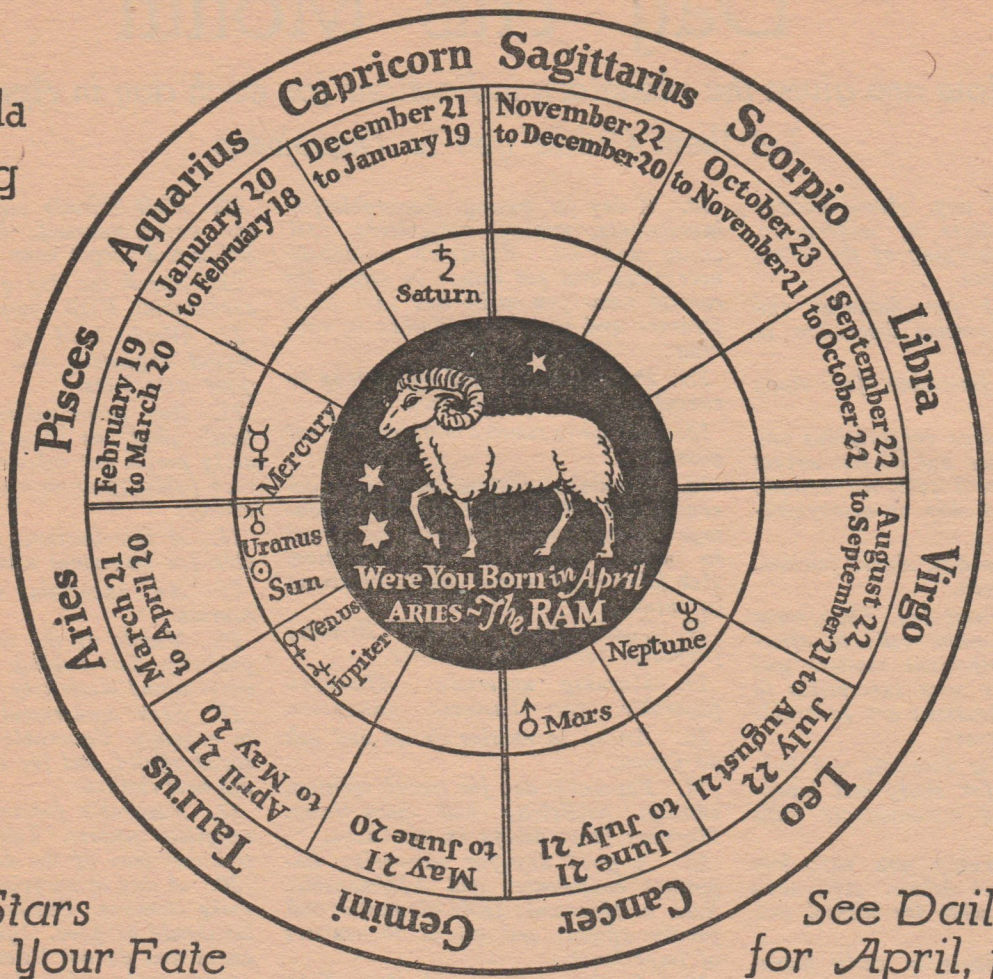
"He is to be among the shadows about the steps below. I'll join him there. I should be starting now," Fannie replied; and I rose and found my fingers holding a cape to my throat.

Still Marguerite didn't move. I went to the window, raised it and looked out.

(*Continued on page 96*)

Were You Born in April?

By Stella King



Let the Stars Indicate Your Fate

See Daily Guide for April, page 76

IT is said that anyone born at noon on the day of the vernal equinox is destined to become great in the world. Those of you who were born on March 21—when the sun enters the sign of Aries and the astrological year commences—should at least achieve more than ordinary success, and the nearer your birth hour was to noon the greater should be your success.

Aries is a fortunate sign because in it the sun is exalted and therefore tremendously powerful. If you were born under this influence you possess a superabundance of vital energy, which gives you courage, enthusiasm, the spirit of adventure, optimism and both physical and mental energy. With such wonderful qualities it would seem that there could be no excuse for failure on the part of a child of Aries. As a matter of fact, your great problem is to learn how to control and direct the forceful vibrations that continually play upon you.

You are so active and impatient that you rush into a situation impulsively instead of first analyzing it and choosing the best avenue of approach. Naturally fearless and optimistic, you minimize the difficulties and dangers that surround you; you play with fire, and sometimes get badly burnt. Yet the world would be a sorry place without the wonderful enthusiasm and the spirit of fair play that animate the more developed children of vigorous Aries and its ruler Mars!

Mars was known to the Greeks as Ares, to the Egyptians as Artes and to the Chaldeans as Nergal or Ben-Nimrod and is so designated in II Kings XVII, 30. The Sanskrit name for this planet was Ava, meaning "a corner or angle, or anything sharp or cutting." Mars is the personification of physical strength and energy, is the ruler of the muscular system and is the god of war. He is associated with fire, iron and all kinds of sharp instruments. His rays are extremely forceful and dangerous unless properly directed and controlled—but let us not forget that they supply us with energy.

This fiery planet revolves round the sun once in every 687 days at a distance of 141 million miles—a comparatively short distance when compared with Neptune whose distance from the sun is more than 2,760 million miles! No wonder it took the astronomers so long to discover it!

Of the weekdays Tuesday is under the rulership of Mars, as is shown in the French word *mardi*.

A vivid imagination and a fund of humor are other characteristics of your type, and children born between March 21st and April 19th are often most amusing and entertaining. They embroider and exaggerate until they can no longer distinguish the real from the unreal. In training such a child, it is necessary to curb any tendency toward deliberate falsehood, but the precious spirit of fantasy should be directed into constructive imagination and not killed.

THE typical child of Aries possesses a generous and warm-hearted nature; and if you were born under this vibration, you are probably just as impetuous in love as in other forms of expression. As a result of this you naturally run the danger of making an imprudent and possibly unfortunate marriage. Other things being equal, the happiest marriages are between opposites, each being the complement of the other. You should therefore look for your true mate among the people born under the Libran ray. Being yourself of the nature of fire, someone of the same elemental nature will understand and sympathize with you. You will find your own warm-hearted and generous temperament in a Leo; and in a Sagit- (*Continued on page 76*)

What the Stars Foretell for Every Day This Month

Below are given the planetary indications for each day in April.

Let them Guide you to Happiness

1. Not a good day. Avoid danger and postpone matters of importance. Attend to the beautifying of the home, but be careful of fire.

2. Fairly good for financial and legal matters. Exercise discretion in regard to writing.

3. Afternoon favorable for study and travel.

4. Deal with large corporations and the public, advertise but do not expect quick results. Avoid cold, do nothing of importance. A day of disappointment.

5. An uncertain day. Avoid friction. Test what is told you.

6. A good business day. Shop, wear new clothes and make calls in afternoon. Discuss important matters and plan or commence new enterprises in evening, when vibrations are favorable to energy and success.

7. Favorable for domestic and public matters, and for study and invention. Travel and communicate with your friends.

8. In the morning you may buy cheaply, but expect delays. Afternoon and evening favorable for mental and artistic endeavor.

9. Avoid accidents in early morning and refuse to enter into agreements or disputes. Seek employment, ask favors, advertise and push business in afternoon.

10. A day for buying. Favorable for investments, mining, agriculture, real estate and oil. Replenish household necessities and put things in order. Be careful what you write and say. Seek pleasure and wear new clothes in evening.

11. Push business, sell and attend to executive work. Do not buy.

12. Attend to routine work and do not gossip.

13. Advertise, sell and get things accomplished. Be energetic, take advantage of opportunities, travel and attend to matters connected with invention. Ask favors and attend public functions in evening.

14. Take care of health. Evening favorable for social activities.

15. Morning uncertain. Afternoon favorable for business enterprise.

16. Attend to routine duties and ask no favors.

17. Favorable day for travel, writing, editing, publishing and advertising. Morning best; delays in afternoon.

18. A good day for enterprise, important conferences and salesmanship. Seek employment, settle domestic and family affairs, and attend to matters of importance.

19. Another very good day. Take advantage of all opportunities and settle important matters. A favorable day for marriage.

20. Visit friends and elderly people and enjoy yourself. Listen to music. Relax and forget your troubles.

21. Spend the day quietly and avoid excitement. Visit sympathetic relatives.

22. Work hard at regular duties. Avoid argument and be tactful with your associates.

23. Buy, carry out investigations and finish what has been begun. Visit elderly people but ask no favors. Do not seek publicity or commence new undertakings.

24. A fair business day. Not favorable for important undertakings.

25. An uncertain day, demanding caution.

26. Middle of the day favorable for publicity, for making changes, for invention and electricity.

27. Seek amusement and relaxation in evening. Favorable for artistic and social affairs, and for buying and wearing new clothes.

28. Favorable for artistic, social and religious matters. Take care of health and rest part of the day.

29. A day of surprises. Better not to make changes. Business with the public should be good. Ignore little annoyances and do not listen to gossip. See agents, write and study in evening.

30. Attend to correspondence, write, study or travel. Avoid heated discussion and do not buy wearing apparel.

Were You Born in April?

(*Continued from page 75*)

tarian you will find the same love of action, outdoor life and adventure as you have.

This common interest and basis of understanding is lacking between people of different elemental nature; fire and water, for instance, cannot blend with each other, nor can the stable earth understand the ecstasies of fire.

Here it is necessary to explain that the date of birth is not the only factor to be taken into consideration. The date determines the position of the sun, but in the horoscope of a person born at some other time of the year the fire vibrations may be very strong either because several planets were in fire signs at the time of birth or because a fire sign was on the horizon.

If, therefore, you find love and understanding in someone not born under fiery rays or the Libran vibration, do not be surprised. A comparison of the horoscopes would indicate the attraction. No generalization can apply to every case.

The amethyst, the bloodstone or the diamond are your talismans. Red is your color, but for very nervous people who may suffer from sleeplessness or neuralgia, red is too stimulating. The various shades of amethyst and mauve would be better.

Countries under the rulership of Aries are England, Denmark, Palestine, Syria and Judea. Among the many successful people born under this sign may be mentioned J. Pierpont Morgan, Charles M. Schwab, Frank W. Woolworth, DeWolf Hopper, Washington Irving, General Booth, Thomas Jefferson and Mary Pickford.

Speaking in London at a dinner of the Royal Society of Medicine on November 15th, Mr. Rudyard Kipling suggested that the doctors might with benefit look to the stars for aid in solving the mystery of healing. To the skeptical this suggestion may sound foolish. It is only when we realize that, as Marcus Aurelius said, "all things are connected with one another and the bond is holy," that any actual link between the stars and human ailments seems possible. Yet—science has demonstrated that the solar rays kill bacteria, and that the violet ray effects cures which were impossible by other methods. The strange hieroglyphics that comprise an astrological chart are symbols of definite vibrations of tremendous power. The stars are not necessarily more passive than the moon, which admittedly controls the tides.

The year 1927 was long ago predicted to be the year of rising waters, and we all remember the terrible floods which occurred in various parts of the world during that year. The year 1929—commencing from the vernal equinox on March 21st—is predicted to be a year of peril, when waters will rise even higher. Those interested in prophecy will find in the *Book of Daniel* statements which seem to apply to the present day.

The planet Saturn has just passed into its own sign, Capricorn, and is very powerful. Those born about the 21st

(*Continued on page 83*)

The Spectral Ship

The Strangest Mystery of the Cattle Country

By J. CHRISTY MacMANUS

THE Platte River, in Wyoming, was the scene of one of the strangest apparitions ever recorded. If the weird spectacle had been witnessed by only one person, we might have reason to doubt the truth of the story—but the dreadful Thing has been seen on three separate occasions—under conditions that almost defy skepticism. Here is the whole story:

In 1862 Leon Webber was employed by the U. S. Government as Indian scout and trail blazer. That fall he selected a site near the Platte River and began the building of a log cabin for use during the winter months.

"Late in the afternoon of the twelfth of September," he says in his official report to the Bureau of Psychological Research at Cheyenne, Wyoming, "I was getting ready to return to my summer camp some two miles down the river, when, glancing up the stream, I noticed what appeared to be a gigantic ball of fog riding on the surface of the water, near the middle of the stream. It was a strange sight and, in my excitement, I ran down nearer the bank in order to get a better view of whatever it might be. My dog came and sat down on the ground behind me, and began to whine and whimper as dogs do when there is something at hand they do not understand. When I would change my position, the dog would do likewise, planting himself directly behind me, where he continued to give vent to a peculiar sort of sound; a sound between a squeak and a whine.

"As the huge ball of mist came nearer, I picked up a stone the size of an egg, which I hurled at the floating mass. As the stone left my hand, the balloon-shaped cloud assumed the shape of a sailing vessel of an ancient type. The mast, spars and sails seemed to be sheeted with sparkling frost or ice.

"As I watched the apparition, sounds, apparently produced by the dropping of heavy timbers upon the deck, came to my ears with chilling distinctness. As the sounds ceased, several men in the dress of sailors appeared upon the deck, standing in a circle of close formation.

"After a few moments the sailors on my side of the circle stepped aside, revealing a large square of canvas spread upon the deck, upon which lay the corpse of a young and beautiful girl, whose wrappings were, like the ship, covered with hoar-frost which glittered in the rays of the afternoon sun.

"The ship suddenly veered over to my side of the river—and I recognized the corpse as that of Margaret Stanley, my best girl-friend—we were to have been married early the following spring.

"'Margy!' I shouted, preparing to descend to the water.

"At the sound of my voice, ship and sailors instantly vanished from view. Although I remained upon the bank until long after sunset, I saw nothing more of the strange phenomenon.

"A month later, I visited the Stanley home and was told of Margaret's death, which took place the same afternoon I beheld the Spectral Ship of Death upon the waters of the Platte."

(Signed) LEON WEBBER.

It will be noticed that, in his report, Mr. Webber has failed to mention the point on the Platte River where his strange experience took place, but it is known to have occurred some six miles southeast of the present site of the Guernsey Dam, and near the present station of Whalan, on the C. B. & Q. Railway.

In the late autumn of 1887 the phantom ship was seen a second time. It appeared to Gene Wilson who was known throughout the cattle country as "Black Wilkes."

"While rounding up some stray cattle along the Platte, some ten miles east of Casper," says Wilson's report, "my dog ran a few rods ahead of me and, while looking up the river, began to raise a terrible rumpus. I tried to ride my horse nearer the bank, but he had evidently seen what the dog was barking at and, try as I would, he could not be made to approach. Throwing the reins over his head, I dismounted, when he gave a loud snort and started to run away. I caught him and tied him to a scrub pine, then approached the bank on foot.

"While gazing out upon the swiftly running water, I saw something that set my nerves atingle. Near the middle of the stream was a full-rigged sailing vessel under full sail, yet it did not move at all! It was held back, apparently, by a stern anchor.

"Walking up the bank that I might be opposite the thing, I saw nine men on board who appeared to be sailors. Ship sounds were heard, but they seemed to be coming from the other side of the river, and not from the ship.

"The man whom I took to be the captain of this strange vessel stood with his arms folded, staring toward the bow of the ship, giving orders to his men without turning his head.

"Stand from under!" came a voice from somewhere among the rigging—but the speaker was hidden from view by the ice-covered sails.

"As the voice was heard, the sailors on deck instantly removed their caps and stood uncovered, while the ship suddenly veered over to a point not thirty feet from where I was standing.

"Let down!" said the captain without a sign of animation.

"AT the captain's command, a square of canvas was lowered to the deck by four ropes attached to its corners.

"Lying upon the canvas and covered with another piece of frost-laden sailcloth was what I surmised to be a corpse. In this my conclusions were correct. As the sheet came to rest upon the deck, one of the sailors stepped forward and, grasping a corner of the sheet, drew it aside, disclosing the face of a woman who seemed to be terribly burned. In spite of the frightfully scarred face, I recognized my wife!

"Overcome with terror, I screamed and covered my eyes. When I looked again, the ship had vanished. After a few moments, I rose and mounted my horse and, with all speed, returned home to relate to my wife what I had seen.

"Topping a hill a quarter of a mile west of my house, my heart stopped beating; my blood froze in my veins. There, in full view, I discovered my home in ashes! Spurring my horse to a run, I was soon beside the smoldering embers, frantically calling to my wife, who, I was certain, was somewhere within hearing of my voice.

"Receiving no reply to my repeated calls, I hastened toward the river which ran within a hundred yards of what had been my home, when I came suddenly upon the remains of my wife, burned to death.

"My supposition is that, upon discovering her clothing

to be on fire, she had run toward the river bank, hoping to extinguish the flames by plunging herself into the water."

(Signed) GENE WILSON.

IN the middle of the afternoon of November 20th, 1903, Victor Heibe, a man of forty-seven, saw the phantom ship on that portion of the Platte known as Bessemer Bend, but he did not make a formal report to the Bureau at Cheyenne until asked by that department for one.

Having a desire to obtain the story first-hand, the writer drove out to Mr. Heibe's home in the Platte valley, where he was shown every courtesy by the now aged gentleman, whose statement in full follows:

"Yes," Mr. Heibe said, as he seated himself and lighted his pipe, "that was a terrible blow, one I shall never forget. What I am about to relate, Mr. MacManus, is partly on record in the court at Cheyenne, in connection with the trial and conviction of my friend, Thomas Horn; and the whole text of my report was filed with the Bureau of Psychological Research at Cheyenne.

"During the day and night of November 19th, 1903, a severe storm swept over this part of the country, accompanied by a heavy sleet which broke down trees, crushed the roofs of many houses, sheds and stables and, in other ways, did a considerable amount of damage.

"Do you see that pile of dirt on the bank of the river, over there?" asked Mr. Heibe, pointing to what I supposed was a huge boulder. "Well, where that pile is, is a large ravine, the only place where the stock can get down to the river for water. It was a small ravine, so I shoveled it out in order to make it easier for the stock, piling the dirt on the bank, as you see.

"Before the storm I mentioned, there stood upon the bank of that ravine, a large pine tree which became so heavily loaded with ice that it broke and fell into the ravine in such a way as to obstruct the passage, shutting off the stock from the water.

"On that fateful day I was chopping the tree in several pieces in order to remove it when, glancing up the river, I saw a huge ball of fog, which, apparently, rested upon the surface of the water. The mass was slowly moving down the stream, but not nearly so fast as the water was flowing.

"Leaning my axe against the stump of the fallen tree, I was in the act of lighting my pipe, when my attention was attracted by sounds as of men quarreling, the voices seeming to come from the opposite shore. This, however, could hardly, be, as the ground beyond the river was level as a floor for two hundred yards and, if there had been men on the other side, I could easily have seen them. No, there was not a sign of a human being in sight. I glanced at my watch. It was exactly three-fifteen.

"Gazing steadily at the approaching fog-ball, I soon discovered that the sounds were coming from it.

"As the gigantic ball drew nearer, it began to assume a definite form—that of an ancient sailing vessel, not unlike the *Pinta,* in which Columbus discovered this country. Although the ship was under full sail, it was moving very slowly. Every inch of its surface was coated with glittering ice, the same being true of the clothing of the several sailors who, judging from their excited actions, were preparing for something somewhat out of the ordinary.

"As I stood on the bank, spellbound, a large sheet of canvas was lowered between the sailors and myself, from behind which came the most horrid exclamations I have ever heard.

"'All right,' said a voice which sounded familiar, but which I was unable to recognize at the moment, 'but I am telling you that you are hanging an innocent man——'

"'That,' interrupted another voice, 'is not for us to determine. You were tried and convicted for the murder of the boy, and it is our business to ferry you across. Men, do your duty.'

"During this time the vapory form of the phantom ship was slowly moving inshore and, as it came to rest some twenty feet from shore and ten feet below me, the canvas wall was again elevated to its former position among the sails, disclosing a scene that burned itself into my brain as with a red-hot brand.

"On the forward deck just to the rear of the captain, who faced the bow of the craft, stood a gallows of the 'L' type, from whose cross-arms was suspended the body of a man they had just hanged.

"As the body swayed to and fro from the rocking of the ship, it turned so that I gazed directly into the face——"

Mr. Heibe's voice faltered, then ceased altogether as he pressed his palms to his temples. When he spoke again, his voice trembled with emotion.

"It was the blackened face of my dearest—friend—he whom I had defended with my testimony in the criminal court at Cheyenne only a few months previously.

"'TOM!' I shouted, jumping from the bank into four feet of ice-cold water. *'What have they done to you, Tom?'*

"As I stood with outstretched arms, the ship silently returned to the middle of the river and slowly faded from view."

"At that time, Mr. Heibe," I ventured to ask, "had you heard that Tom Horn had been hanged in the jail yard at Cheyenne?"

"No," he replied, "I had not the slightest idea. I did, however, hear that he and a fellow prisoner had broken jail, but I had not heard they had been recaptured, much less that Tom had been hanged. It was not until a month had passed that I heard the details of the gruesome outrage. You see, Mr. MacManus, it was on the same day he was hanged that I saw the phantom ship with Tom aboard——"

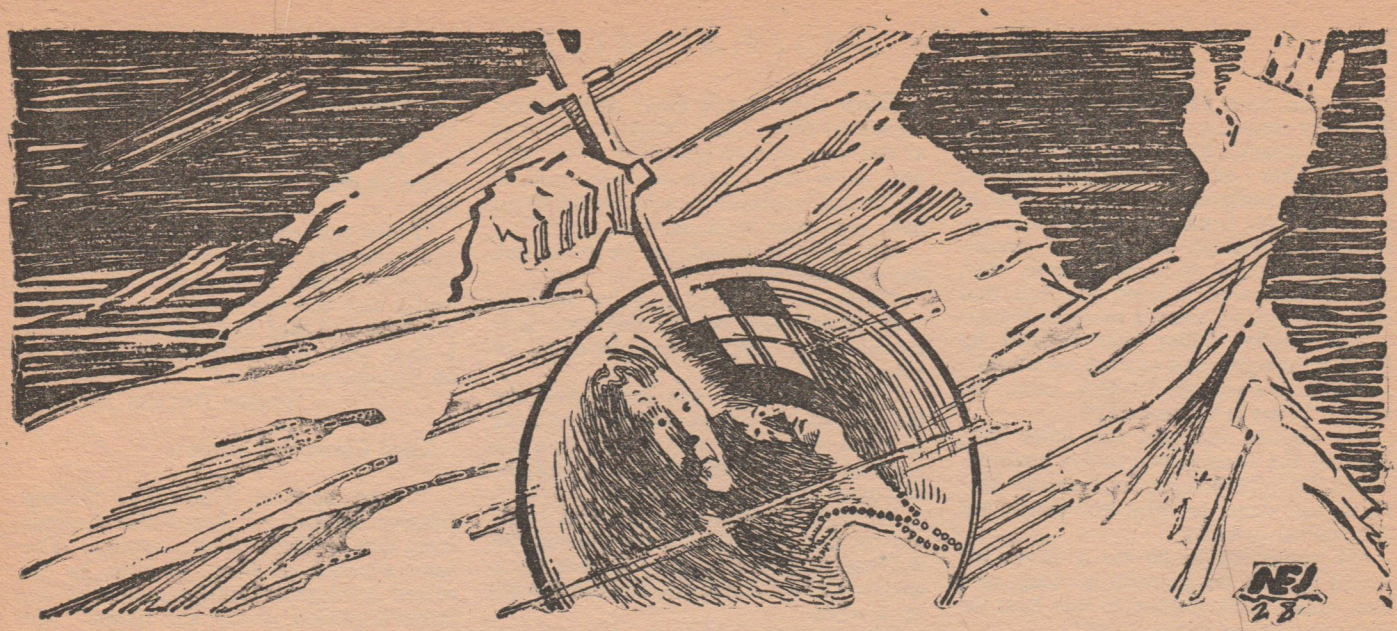
"Did you know that this ship had been seen and reported at two different points along the Platte before you saw it?"

"I afterwards heard that it had been seen before, but not until I went to Cheyenne to make my report."

"Do you, Mr. Heibe, attach any significance to the recurring appearance of this—this phantom ship?"

"Yes, I believe that when a very dear friend meets with a tragic death while you are near the Platte, the phantom ship will appear, bearing the corpse of that friend. Understand—I am not a superstitious man—unless the belief in this phantom ship reduces me to that category. I am certain the ship appeared: I *know* it did. If I did not see it, how can you explain my knowledge of Tom Horn's execution?"

I thanked Mr. Heibe for the story, returning to my home via the Poison Spider dirt road which leads past the dynamite and nitroglycerine factories and a deserted Indian burying-ground, choosing this road through the country in preference to the well-kept, graveled highway which skirts the Platte River more than two-thirds of the way.



SPIRIT TALES

Lord Erskine's Phantom Butler— and Other True Stories

By COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

A REAL, honest apparition is always an interesting thing to hear about, but there are many such in the annals of psychic research; so, the curious thing about this particular tale is not so much the apparition itself as the fact that it imparted a definite piece of information which proved true upon investigation.

The apparition appeared to Lord Erskine—described as "probably the greatest forensic orator that Britain has produced"—and he told the story to Lady Morgan. He told it to her in the presence of the Duchess of Gordon, the Saturday after George (afterward the Fourth) was made Regent, in the year 1811, and she relates it in *The Book of the Boudoir*. The story is given in Lord Erskine's own words, as follows:

"When I was a young man I had been for some time absent from Scotland. On the morning of my arrival in Edinburgh, as I was coming out of a bookshop, I met our old family butler. He looked greatly changed, pale, wan and shadowy.

"'Eh, old boy!' I said, 'what brings you here?'

"He replied: 'To meet your honor and to solicit your interference with my lord to recover a sum due to me, which the steward at the last settlement did not pay.'

"Struck by his looks and manner, I bade him follow me to the bookseller's shop into which I stepped back; but when I turned round to speak to him he had vanished. I remembered that his wife carried on some little trade in the Old Town, and I remembered the house. Having made it out, I found the old woman in widow's mourning. Her husband had been dead some months, and had told her on his death-bed that my father's steward had wronged him of some money, but that when *Master Tom* returned he would see her righted. This I promised to do, and shortly after fulfilled my promise. The impression of this on me was indelible."

It would be hard to tell a lawyer of brilliant reputation that he merely thought he saw an apparition and that the incident only reminded him of something he had forgotten, when that lawyer states definitely that he had no idea of the fraud practiced by the steward on the butler and did not even know that the old butler was dead.

How a Senator's Life Was Saved

THE following very remarkable story concerns Senator Lewis Fields Linn and Mrs. Linn. Senator Linn was a Missouri physician of reputation and a man sufficiently distinguished to find a place in the "Biographical Dictionary" of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Mrs. Linn herself related the story to Robert Dale Owen, a discerning critic and writer, and he incorporated it in his book *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*.

In the discharge of his congressional duties, Senator Linn was residing with his family in Washington, during the spring and summer of 1840, the last year of Mr. Van Buren's administration.

One day during the month of May of that year, Doctor and Mrs. Linn received an invitation to a large and formal dinner-party, given by a public functionary, and to which the most prominent members of the Administration party, including the President himself and the Chief Magistrate, Mr. Buchanan, were invited. Doctor Linn was very anxious to be present; but, when the day came, finding himself suffering from an attack of indigestion, he begged his wife to bear his apology in person, and make one of the dinner-party, leaving him at home. To this she somewhat reluctantly consented. She was accompanied to the door of their host by a friend, General Jones, who promised to return and remain with Doctor Linn during the evening.

At table Mrs. Linn sat next to General Macomb, who had conducted her to dinner; and immediately opposite to her sat Silas Wright, Senator from New York, the most intimate friend of her husband.

Even during the early part of the dinner, Mrs. Linn felt very uneasy about her husband. She tried to reason herself out of this, as she knew that his indisposition was not at all serious—but in vain. She mentioned her uneasiness to General Macomb, but he reminded her of what she herself had previously told him—that General Jones had promised

to remain with Dr. Linn, and that in the very unlikely contingency of any serious attack, he would be sure to apprize her of it. Notwithstanding these representations, as dinner drew to a close, Mrs. Linn's unaccountable uneasiness increased to such an uncontrollable impulse to return home, that, as she expressed it later, she felt that she *could* not sit there a moment longer.

Her sudden pallor was noticed by Senator Wright, and excited his alarm.

"I am sure you are ill, Mrs. Linn," he said. "What is the matter?"

She replied that she was quite well, but that she *must* return to her husband.

Mr. Wright sought, as General Macomb had done, to calm her fears; but she replied to him:

"If you wish to do me a favor for which I shall be grateful as long as I live, make some excuse to our host, so that we can leave the table."

Seeing her so greatly excited, he complied with her request, though they were then but serving the dessert; and he and Mrs. Wright accompanied Mrs. Linn home.

As they were taking leave of her at the door of her lodgings, Senator Wright said:

"I shall call tomorrow morning, and have a good laugh with the Doctor and yourself over your panic."

As Mrs. Linn passed hastily upstairs, she met the landlady.

"How is Doctor Linn?" she anxiously asked.

"Very well, I believe," was the reply. "He took a bath more than half an hour ago, and I dare say is sound asleep by this time. General Jones said he was doing extremely well."

"The General is with him, is he not?"

"I believe not. I think I saw him pass out about half an hour ago."

Reassured in a measure, Mrs. Linn hastened to her husband's bedroom, the door of which was closed. As she opened it, a dense smoke burst upon her, in such stifling quantity that she staggered and fell on the threshold. Recovering herself after a few seconds, she rushed into the room. The bolster was on fire, and the feathers burned with a bright glow and a suffocating odor.

SHE threw herself upon the bed; but the fire, half smothered till that moment, was fanned by the draught from the open door, and, kindling into sudden flame, caught her light dress, which was in a blaze on the instant. At the same moment her eye fell on the large bathtub which has been used by her husband. She sprang into it, extinguishing her burning dress; then, returning to the bed, she caught up the pillow and a sheet which were on fire—scorching her arms in so doing—and plunged both into the water. Finally, exerting her utmost strength, she drew from the bed her insensible husband. It was then only that she called to the people of the house for aid.

Doctor Sewell was instantly summoned. But it was fully half an hour before the sufferer gave any signs whatever of returning animation. He did not leave his bed for nearly a week; and it was three months before he entirely recovered from effects of this accident.

"How fortunate it was," said Doctor Sewell to Mrs. Linn, "that you arrived at the very minute you did! Five minutes more—nay, three minutes—and, in all human probability, you would never have seen your husband alive again."

Mr. Wright called, as he promised, the next morning.

"Well, Mrs. Linn," said he, smiling, "you have found out by this time how foolish that strange presentiment of yours was."

"Come upstairs," she said. And she led him to his friend, scarcely yet able to speak; and then she showed him the remains of the half-consumed bolster and partially burned bed-linen.

Whether the sight changed his opinion on the subject of presentiments he did not say, but he turned pale as a corpse (Mrs. Linn said), and did not utter a word.

What is to be said in the face of such a tale as this?

The Hindu Prince's Vision

PRINCE SINGH, who had the experience about to be described, was a son of one of the reigning native rulers of India. The Earl of Carnarvon, who corroborated the incident, was a son of that Earl of Carnarvon who had been Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The narrative is given in the Prince's own words.

Highclere Castle, Newbury,
November 8th, 1894.

"On Saturday, October 21st, 1893, I was in Berlin with Lord Carnarvon. We went to a theater together and returned before midnight. I went to bed, leaving, as I always do, a bright light in the room (electric light). As I lay in bed I found myself looking at an oleograph which hung on the wall opposite my bed. I saw distinctly the face of my father, the Maharajah Duleep Singh, looking at me, as if it were out of the picture; not like a portrait of him, but his real head. The head about filled the picture frame. I continued looking and still saw my father looking at me with an intent expression.

"Though not in the least alarmed, I was so puzzled that I got out of bed to see what the picture really was. It was an oleograph commonplace picture of a girl holding a rose and leaning out of a balcony, an arch forming a background. The girl's face was quite small, whereas my father's head was the size of life and filled the frame.

"I was in no special anxiety about my father at the time, and had for some years known him to be seriously out of health; but there had been no news to alarm me about him.

"Next morning (Sunday) I told the incident to Lord Carnarvon.

"That evening late, on returning home, Lord Carnarvon brought two telegrams into my room and handed them to me.

"I said at once, 'My father is dead.'

"That was the fact. He had had an apoplectic seizure on the Saturday evening at about nine o'clock, from which he never recovered, but continued unconscious and died on the Sunday, early in the afternoon. My father had often said to me that if I was not with him when he died, he would try and come to me.

"I am not subject to hallucinations, and have only once had any similar experience, when, as a schoolboy, I fancied I saw the figure of a dead schoolboy who had died in the room in which I slept with my brother; but I attach no importance to this."

VICTOR DULEEP SINGH

Lord Carnarvon wrote:

"I can confirm Prince V. Duleep Singh's account. I heard the incident from him on the Sunday morning. The same evening, at about 12 p. m. he received a telegram notifying him of his father's sudden illness and death. We had no knowledge of his father's illness. He has never told me of any similar previous occurrence."

CARNARVON

The Boston Society for Psychic Research investigated this story and found that the Maharajah did die on Sunday, October 22nd, 1893.

Commenting, Doctor Walter Franklin Prince, the president of the Society, says: "Apparently the glass of the picture took the place of the scryer's glass ball, and the phenomenon was that of crystal-gazing. But that term only implies the outer aspect of a phenomenon, and in itself gives no light upon the question of causation. To be conservative, we would say that telepathy was involved."

John Calvin's Ghostly Drums

IN the *Life of John Calvin*, by Theodore Béza, there is recorded a most curious circumstance, containing food for much thought. Béza was Calvin's most intimate associate and succeeded him as teacher of theology and leader of the Calvinist party; so the essential correctness of the account is hardly to be doubted. He relates the incident in question as follows:

"It affords us satisfaction to mention in this place a circumstance which deserves to be stated. On the 19th of December (1562), which was the Sabbath, the north wind having been unusually high for two days, Calvin (although confined to bed by the gout) said in the hearing of a number of friends: 'I know not indeed what it means. I thought I heard last night a very loud sound of drums used in war, and I could not divest myself of the opinion that it was reality. I entreat you to pray, for some event of very great moment is undoubtedly taking place.'

"On this very day, the battle of Dreux, distinguished for its great cruelty, was fought, the news of which reached Geneva a few days after."

Commenting on this account, Doctor Prince, president of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, points out that the battle fought in Dreux on the day of Calvin's utterance was the first great battle of the religious wars of France, wherein the Hugenots suffered a great

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The Meeting Place

(*Continued from page 73*)

girl across the table had grown strangely sober, too. Quite against my will, that little table began to move determinedly from one letter to another. The first three letters were "EXA" and I couldn't for the life of me imagine what it was going to spell.

But the message came swiftly: *Examine your books.* I was so surprised that I cried out and tried to jerk my hand away from the table. But I couldn't! Again the thing began to spell out the same message.

My father, alarmed at my cry and the expression on my face, got up quickly from his chair and stood at my side, looking down at the board.

And now the table moved more swiftly than ever, spelling the same message over and over: *Examine your books! Examine your books! Examine your books!*

It was the strangest experience that ever happened to me. Finally the thing stopped and my friend and I collapsed almost sobbing.

I still did not have the least idea what the message meant—but my father thought he did. He went down to his office that very night, called up an expert accountant who was a friend of his, and started to audit the books of his firm. They hadn't gone far before they discovered a shortage of $10,000.

Next day Dad's bookkeeper was arrested and confessed that he had taken the money. The Ouija board message had probably saved my father from the loss of many more thousands, for the bookkeeper had been making thefts with systematic regularity.

Now, how did that stranage message happen to come to my father? I don't see any way of explaining it on a natural basis. The girl and I were manipulating that Ouija board; my father had nothing whatever to do with it. As a matter of fact, when the message came the first time, he was sitting several feet from the table and was more or less absorbed in his paper. Furthermore, he stated later that he had had no reason whatever for suspecting that anything was wrong with the finances of his organization; certainly he had never mentioned anything of the sort to me. And the bookkeeper was the last person in the world that I would have suspected of being dishonest—he was the superintendent of a Sunday school and was respected by everyone.

Minneapolis, Minnesota. I. B.

ON February 1st, 1928, we moved into a new home—a furnished cottage—and the first thing that annoyed us was a terrific noise in the basement. It sounded as though someone had dropped a heavy iron vessel. We also heard the sound of footsteps. This happened in the daytime, but the basement was dark.

I went to the basement until I was worn out, but never discovered any explanation for what I undoubtedly heard.

The following night I was awakened at 1:50 by a blood-curdling din. It sounded as though the roof was crumbling in. Thereafter, this noise was repeated each night at the same time. Sometimes it would sound like someone pounding on a bunch of tin cans in the attic. Sometimes I was unable to distinguish what kind of noise it was. But always, at 1:50, I would awake, shuddering from head to foot.

A few times the noise awakened my husband, who is a very sound sleeper. But he would always deny that it was anything more than "unusual."

On one occasion I stayed alone in that cottage for two successive nights.

THE first evening I was sitting in the living room, engrossed in a magazine, when something hit the dining-room table such a staggering blow that it brought me to my feet. Where I was sitting, I could *see* the dining-room table shuddering from the blow—and there was no visible cause for the phenomena. The table was a new, heavy, American walnut table.

I spent about two hours, trying to figure out a legitimate reason for what had happened. I finally told myself that it was because the place had been unoccupied two months and the furniture was getting thoroughly warm for the first time. But in my heart I knew this was not reasonable. We had been occupying the house for two weeks and the place had been thoroughly heated during all that time.

That night at 1:50 I was awakened as usual by the din above me.

The next evening I was lying on the divan, reading a story. Suddenly I heard a strange noise from the direction of our radio set. This radio *had not been connected*—no aerial and no batteries. The horn was a large and heavy paper one, and it sounded as though someone took hold of it, bent it and let it fly back in place, as you might do with a playing-card. I know this sounds unreasonable, for it would be quite impossible to do—but I could *not* be mistaken in that peculiar dead sound. I was too frightened to breathe. However, I could not see anything.

I expected my husband home about 12:30 but he did not return, and so I went to bed. I was awakened by someone at the door. It was a Yale lock and my husband had a key. I distinctly heard the key fitted four times and the lock turned. Then someone or something put its weight against the door and shook it hard. At first I was not frightened, for I thought it was my husband, but when the key was fitted the fourth time I knew it was not he, and I turned on my bedroom light, rushed into the living room, turned on the porch light—and there was no one there! I was beaten. When I returned to the bedroom, I saw with horror that it was 1:50!

My husband returned the next evening and I told him what I had experienced. He knew I was *not* a coward and he did not have much to say. We finally went to bed but were neither of us asleep when there were three blood-curdling knocks on our bedroom door. They came from the living-room side. Any one of them seemed hard enough to split the door. My husband was as startled as I was. To test my sense of location I asked what door it was, and we agreed on the details. Just a few minutes afterward, the clock struck two o'clock.

I did not move away from that house, but I did pray that the evil spirits would be removed. And the manifestations gradually ceased—or I became less sensitive to them; I cannot say which. But up until Sptember 17th, when we moved from there, occasionally I would hear a noise. I was awakened at 1:50 A.M. the week before we left—and the lady next door asked me one day if we were up a little before two o'clock that morning. Said she had heard a terrible noise over there.

I would like to hear from anyone who can explain this experience. It has worried me considerably—it has almost decided me to take up the study of the occult, although the church of which I am a member is violently opposed to anything of that nature. I cannot help but feel that if anyone desires to communicate with me from the Great Beyond, it is only for my progress and I will certainly appreciate any help or advice you may be able to furnish.

L. R. M.

St. Louis, Missouri

The Face at the Window

I READ with interest your article in the January GHOST STORIES on *Sweden's Uncanny Mystery.* It may be of more than passing interest to your readers to learn that a very similar case occurred at Lawrence, Massachusetts.

It seems that fifty years ago residents of Lawrence were greatly excited by the apparition of an old man that appeared each evening at sundown in the window of a certain house on Broadway in that city. This man was readily recognized as an invalid who had spent many hours at that window and who had died a short time before. The ghost caused a tremendous sensation and many people visited Lawrence to see the weird apparition.

On October 7th, 1928, after a lapse of half a century, the Boston *Sunday Post* revealed the secret of the "ghost."

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Were You Born in April?

(*Continued from page 76*)

of March, June or December, or on the 24th of September are now being taught the importance of "Today." It is useless for them to attempt to hurry anything just at this time; they must attend to the work at hand and be content to wait for results. For them, this is the time to clean house.

Perhaps such persons have been overworking and not taking sufficient exercise, with the result that their blood is filled with toxins and the machinery of the body is unable to function properly; or they may be mentally stagnant—filled with preconceptions and prejudices so that they are not receptive to new ideas. It is the time for them to sit down quietly and take stock of themselves and their business, to clear away conditions which may be detrimental to progress and to inaugurate a way of living and of eating that will preserve their health. No use thinking of what might have been! Deal with the present and plan carefully for the future.

IF you were born on the 21st of April or the 24th of August, you should now attend to investments and organize business matters. Elderly people will advise and help you. Your money interests should prosper; your gains are likely to be the result of past hard work, but they will be substantial and permanent.

If you happened to be born in 1881, 1893, 1901, 1905 or 1909, this should be a particularly constructive period for you.

Those born in May, 1915, should exercise great care in regard to their health and in connection with possible accidents due to water or fire just at this time. Another birthday which is now specially afflicted is December 22nd, 1885; those born near that date should be more careful than usual in regard to all sorts of dangers.

In a general way this should be a period of expansion for May people, as Jupiter is now making one of his twelve-yearly tours through their sign. They are also receiving helpful vibrations from other planets.

Arians born during the last week of March may expect sudden and unforeseen changes, and should be prepared to meet dangerous situations which may arise through either water or fire. Those who are twenty-three, forty-four or sixty-two years of age are particularly susceptible to these vibrations and will probably experience radical changes.

This also applies to people born during the last week of June, September or December.

August Virginians should be fortunate during the next few months, although those in their forty-fourth year may still be somewhat unsettled due to changes made during the past year.

Owen A. Kenafick, once an apprentice to a photographer in Lawrence, was the man who solved the mystery but he never made a public revelation of the secret until last fall.

At the time when the apparition was causing a great stir, Mr. Kenafick became convinced that it was the result of light striking the window from a certain angle. He secretly removed the panes of glass—and the appearances ceased. He replaced the panes—and the specter again took up its weird twilight vigil.

Then Kenafick discovered the explanation. Soon after the old man's death a glazier had reset the panes in the window and had used glass that had originally been photographers' plates. The glazier had simply removed the collodion coating with hot water and cut the plates down to fit the panes.

A little more sleuthing resulted in the following discoveries: first, that the plates had been sold to the glazier by Kenafick's own employer; second, that the photographer had made several pictures of the old invalid before his death and that the old man had disliked them and testily refused to buy any photographs; and, third, that these particular plates were the ones which had been sold to the glazier and later reset in the window where the apparition appeared.

R. J. K.

Boston, Massachusetts.

NOTE: The Editor is grateful to Mrs. Muriel E. Eddy, 317 Plain Street, Providence, Rhode Island, who also wrote a letter to this department concerning the Lawrence "ghost." She was kind enough to reproduce the entire story from the Boston *Post*, but her letter was unfortunately too long to reprint.

In addition, Mrs. Eddy called attention to still another similar apparition that has just occurred in Sweden—the second case of the sort in that country within recent months. The likeness of Henrietta Hamilton, born in 1750, the daughter of Field Marshal Count Hamilton, has appeared on several occasions in the window of a cottage near Barsebaeck Castle. Many people have seen it. Scientists from Lund University are investigating the apparition and their report is eagerly awaited.

Hearst's Haunted Castle

IF the tales of the Welsh countryfolk have any substance to them, William Randolph Hearst has placed himself in an unenviable position. He has bought a Welsh castle—with a curse upon it! Four hundred years ago Lady Stradling, its owner, vowed that she would return to earth and haunt the castle if it ever changed hands—and, according to the villagers, she is keeping her word. They say that her wraith has been seen wan-

(*Continued from page* 82)

dering around the castle grounds ever since Mr. Hearst bought it.

W. A. C.

London, England.

My Invisible Friends

ABILITY in automatic writing came to me suddenly one day after a terrible experience with a Ouija board, which I burned in fear, and then turned to automatic writing, first with slate and slate pencil and then with paper and lead pencil.

For the past ten years, since the month of October in the year 1918, I have been receiving messages daily. I have been advised about my affairs, warned of danger and entertained with accounts of the spirit world.

Often, at twilight or just before retiring, my invisible friends have gathered around me and have taken turns at giving me messages or chatting with me through this medium of writing.

Sometimes evil ones have tried to take possession of the pencil but they have always been driven away by the good ones, who assure me that the evil ones will not be allowed to molest me.

It is a wonderful experience, this communication with people from another plane who can tell me of their world and of themselves. . . .

As I write this one after another interrupts me with a message of approval or with some piece of news. I am sitting at my desk in the office where I work. The sun is streaming in, warming up the office, for it is a chilly day in November, in the semi-tropical city of New Orleans. Although to all appearances I am busy with worldly duties, for the time being I am in communication with an invisible world of which my coworkers know nothing.

I am practical while moving about on the physical plane but when I sit down to my automatic writing, I forget the things of the physical plane and become a dreamer in another world. Should this pleasure be taken from me, I would be lonesome, indeed.

My invisible friends surround me as I write, waiting for me to devote myself to them, so I will close this and give myself up to an hour's quiet enjoyment with them.

Victoria Lopez

McDonoghville, La.

Magic for Sale

PEOPLE may say that the belief in witchcraft is dead—but it isn't. If the recent "witch killing" at York, Pennsylvania, isn't proof enough, then I would suggest that skeptics take note of the flourishing condition of a certain mail-order house in Chicago that specialize in amulets, charms, talismans and books on magic and occult mysteries. This company prints catalog after catalog, containing hundreds of pages extolling the marvelous virtues of their merchandise and reproducing testimonials from every part of the world.

Offered for sale are crucifixes that "absorb light during the day and shine forth at night;" magic mirrors that reveal the future; pentagrams, which (according to "Rennet, Bishop of Peterborough") "point out the five places wherein the Savior was wounded and therefore, the devils are afraid of it." This organization has also obtained "at great expense" the "world-renowned talisman, Kavacha," which cures any sort of disease and gives success in love, business and gambling. Some fifty testimonials from residents of India, including judges, doctors and clergymen, attest its remarkable qualities. To quote two of these is sufficient:

Mr. M. B. Krishna Chittiar, F.T.S. Union Chairman, District Board, Salem, writes: "My wife who has been suffering from rheumatism for the last nine years has been entirely cured by the use of your talisman. . . . Send three more."

P. Aranachalam, of the Chalai Bazar, says: "I have passed the B.A. degree examination after wearing your wonderful talisman and I am very much indebted to you."

AMONG the books that are advertised is *Egyptian Secrets* by Albertus Magnus, the great magician of the Middle Ages, who gives the proper incantation and magical ceremony to cure every ailment known to man, including cancer, hydrophobia, dysentery and toothache. There are also various spells that are very efficacious in killing flies and bedbugs, and that will make wild animals stand still obligingly so that you can kill them easily.

Another book, which deals with Hindu magic, explains exactly how to make bodies rise in the air without any means of support and how to go into a trance so that you can be buried alive and then rise from the grave. There is a testimonial from Professor W. J. Kerr, "the world-famous hypnotist," who absorbed the information in this book and thereafter was able (he says) to be buried alive without the least harmful effect. The catalog adds cautiously that "the statements in this advertisement are not guaranteed." To me this is the funniest thing in the whole book.

NO matter how much you may ridicule this queer mail-order business, you have to admit that it proves conclusively that the belief in magic is still a powerful factor in modern life, in spite of all the revelations of science. And who would be bold enough to say that this belief is *all* a matter of ignorance and unfounded superstition? Reading one of these catalogs makes me feel spooky myself, and for the moment I am half inclined to believe that my recent run of bad luck is due to some ter-

rible old witch I ought to put out of business by muttering one of the magical formulæ that Albertus Magnus worked out with such systematic altruism.

Philadelphia, Pa. R. F.

"One evening not long after Isadora Duncan's death, I had occasion to perform several dance numbers at a public affair. I was never afraid of appearing on the stage; I was sure of myself, as I always had been. Yet this time, no sooner did I step out on the stage than all consciousness of myself seemed to leave me while a great power entered my body. I was not myself; my own personality was gone. I felt as though I were Isadora Duncan herself.

"As soon as I left the stage, this spirit left me and I became myself again. This happened each time I took the stage that evening. Later, I learned that everyone, even the critics, compared my movements with Isadora Duncan's. I have never danced like that since. Did the spirit of Isadora Duncan really enter my body that evening? Is it possible?"

L. R.

Southampton, L. I.

Skeletons in the Closets of Famous Families

(*Continued from page* 61)

noise of a large and heavy ball descending from the second floor to the first, and jumping from step to step."

On October 19th the parish priest came to observe the phenomena. Auguste, the servant, slept outside the priest's door, but this time there were mysterious footsteps up the stairs.

On November 10th everyone in the house heard a long-drawn shriek, and then a woman's voice plainly calling for help. By this time everyone in the castle was carrying a revolver.

Every night the sounds continued, furniture was moved, windows were mysteriously closed and locked and screams resounded.

ON December 29th Mme. de Regny, hearing a noise in the Abbé's room, hurried there in company with the priest. As she attempted to enter the room, the key turned quickly in the lock and as she tried to stop it, her hand turned with the key. Neither the Abbé nor she could keep it from locking, though they used main strength. Indeed, as Mme. de Regny strained at the key, it bruised her left hand, leaving a blue mark that was plainly visible for two days.

When they succeeded in opening the door, nobody was there. But the room was turned upside down and all the furniture was in disorder.

At six in the morning of December 30th the parish priest heard footsteps crossing his room. He lit a candle. No one was visible though the footsteps persisted. They crept closer to his bed. For a single second he saw a ghastly blue hand—a dead man's hand—reach toward the candle. The candle went out. It did not blow out—it was snuffed out. The coverlet rose on the bed beside the priest's elbow, and he ran screaming from the room.

The next night, Martial, the farm manager, slept with the priest. They both heard the phantom footsteps again, but Martial leaped from his bed and laid about him with a thick stick. The cudgel was snatched from his hands and broken to bits. The candle flickered. The priest reached out to shield it with his cupped palms and felt the pressure of a cold hand against his. The pressure, so he said, nearly broke his wrist. At any rate, his arm was badly swollen the next day.

On January 1st, 1876, New Year's Day, a singular and terrible haunting of the priest began. Wherever he went in the house, ghostly footsteps followed him step by step.

He sent word to a cousin of his, an army officer, to come at once.

The officer came—and laughed at the priest. He went placidly to sleep in the priest's room with six candles burning about his bed and a revolver ready at hand.

At one in the morning he was awakened by footsteps and the rustling of a silk robe. As the phantom steps came closer the coverlet over his feet was drawn away. The officer cried out sharply and the last thing he saw before the six candles wavered was a dead man's hand and a hairy arm lunging out of darkness directly toward his throat.

Up went the revolver and he fired pointblank. When he lit the candles, he found that chairs and tables had been overturned and there was a pool of water on the floor.

All the doors and windows had been locked. There had been no water in the room.

That completely terrified the parish priest. He sent to the bishop, and the bishop sent down the Reverend Father Henri Louvois, one of the canons of the bishopric.

Strangely enough, while the canon was in the castle, the sounds all stopped. The other phenomena did not.

The canon says in his report, "When we were all in the library, I saw before my eyes a massive mahogany table lift itself into mid-air. No one was near it. No one was touching it. The table rose two feet from the ground, and when I put both my hands on it and attempted to force it to the floor, it would not move. It remained in mid-air for ten minutes before it again sank to the floor."

ON January 17th the canon left, after seeing much and hearing nothing. On the 18th the screams began again. There was "a prolonged stampede on the second floor, followed by twenty dull knocks in the same place and eighteen inside the green room."

On January 25th the Abbé was reading his breviary. "Although for three days there had been beautiful weather, a mass of water fell through the chimney onto the fire, extinguishing it. The Abbé was blinded and his face covered with ashes."

All the servants and guests were downstairs. No one was on the roof. No one could possibly have scaled its steep sides and reached the chimney.

On January 28th the house was shaken by gigantic blows from within. A door was smashed to bits before the astounded eyes of a new guest and witness, Mlle. de Benoit. No living thing was near the door.

Naturally, this could not go on forever without the authorities taking some action. After consultation with his bishop, the canon, who had observed the peculiar activities of the table, exorcised the ghosts in a special novena of masses said at Lourdes. That night every phenomenon in the Castle of Calvados abruptly stopped.

Three days later the Abbé, who certainly hoped that the supernatural phenomena had ceased forever, was standing in the corridor when he heard a small organ in his room begin to play a wild, fantastic air. He looked in his pocket: the key to the organ was there. He remembered locking it, so he raced to his room. He opened his door and the music still sounded. No one was at the organ. It was locked. The only key was in the Abbé's pocket.

Shortly afterward "a great noise" occurred in the drawing room all through a Saturday night. The Abbé got the key of the locked room from M. de Regny. He tiptoed down the stairs in terror and flung open the door. Inside, couch and armchairs were moved from their usual places and had been arranged in a horseshoe as if for a council meeting.

The Abbé swore he saw a dark shadow in the largest armchair—a shadow that melted away before his eyes. Perhaps he did, but probably the good man was so frightened that he was likely to see anything.

Anyway, the Abbé sat down and wrote a letter to the famous French lawyer and psychic authority, M. J. Morice, saying, "Here the Devil had held his council and was about to begin again." But in the Abbé's panic-stricken mind ghosts and devils were quite likely to have been confused.

Some days afterward Mme. de Regny locked herself in her room when her husband went away. A thump sounded on her door; a ghastly scream resounded in the corridor. Footsteps were heard near the lamp and the lamp went out. Footsteps moved toward two candles she always kept lighted. Some Thing snuffed the candles. She saw, in the last flicker of light, the bolt on the inside of her door being withdrawn, though no visible thing was near it.

That was enough for the poor Abbé. He took the son of the house with him and fled. Shortly afterward, when the phenomena were renewed, M. de Regny came down to breakfast one morning with his face ghastly white and a blue bruise on his forehead. What horror he had seen in the night he would never disclose—whether the Dead Man's Hand had clutched him, no one knows. But that day he moved his entire family from the Castle of Calvados.

COMMENTING on the grim secrets of the grim castle, Xavier Dariex, French authority on the supernatural and editor of *Annales Psychiques*, declares, "The Castle of Calvados is by far the most remarkable case of haunting we have come across; the entire story rests upon rigorous documents and testimony.

"We can cast no doubt upon these numerous observations; the good faith of those who report the phenomena is undoubted."

M. Dariex, in company with members of a French psychic society, paid a visit to the grim castle and a thorough investigation was made. But the strange mystery of Calvados remains as completely unsolved as ever.

A Bad Half Hour

(*Continued from page 65*)

said, and handed me the paper, after he had glanced at it. I read:

My rash friend: I shall be gone when you receive this, but my ghost will be lingering in the room to enjoy the situation. You destroyed my last hope at the séance—though you meant well—and in return I have planned for you a bad half hour, until the police tell you I am a suicide.

FRITZI SCHNEIDER

A crushing weight of terror was lifted from me, as if by magic. Fritzi's diabolical scheme became clear to me in part. But how had the police been warned? Why had they come? I turned to the officer who had spoken before. He appeared to sense my query in advance of the words.

"She wrote us, too," he muttered. "She sent a messenger to the Station House with a note that told us she was going to kill herself, and that we'd find you here. The message was timed to reach us at ten minutes past nine. We came over as quickly as we could."

"HER note said there'd be a message for me under the pillow?"

"It did!"

"Then I'm free of all suspicion. Can I go?"

"Not so fast. There'll be an inquest, to account for her suicide, if possible. You've got to tell us what your dealings with her have been."

In feverish words that jostled each other, I poured out the story of the meeting at Walter Stanley's house. I omitted nothing that had been done or said, and as I spoke I saw the policeman's face go white.

"My—my God!" he stammered. "I can't be believing in spirits—but, man, do you know who that woman was?"

"I've assured you that none of us knew."

"She was the sweetheart of Otto Brandt, who went to the electric chair at Sing Sing two months ago."

I remembered the case. Brandt had been blond and middle-aged, a similar type to the one the medium, Bertram, had described.

"His invisible ghost was present at our séance," I whispered. "He came with a message for Fritzi."

"I'll not be admitting that," the policeman answered. "But it's a fact that Otto Brandt took twenty thousand dollars from the guy he murdered, and died without telling where he'd hidden the cash. He'd have wanted his girl to have it. And Fritzi Schneider was stony broke. She hadn't paid her rent, and was to have been put on the street. I guess Fritzi could have done very nicely with twenty thousand dollars."

Any further speculations concerning this weird affair would be anti-climax. But I still wonder, now and then, what was the nature of the forecast of happiness for myself, which I missed when my friendly "control" was blocked by the sinister shade of Otto Brandt.

A Medium's Memoirs

(*Continued from page 47*)

the curse, fear doubtless being the cause. But sometimes he died although ignorant of the curse!

The Reverend Richard Taylor, M. A., for more than thirty years a missionary among the Maoris, says:

Many instances have fallen under the notice of missionaries, where those bewitched have died, although unaware of having been cursed.

The missionaries have also come face to face with evidence which supports the native belief that if a curse fails, it will react harmfully on its originator. It is difficult to attribute all these cases to the power of suggestion. In the early days of missions the Maoris tried to destroy the preachers by *makutu*. The attempts were unsuccessful, and the individuals who cast the spells died shortly afterwards. This was ascribed to their having failed.

Mr. Taylor mentions the following examples:

This was the case with two individuals who endeavored to makutu *the missionaries at Otaki and Wanganui. At the latter place one who sought the missionary's death was a head chief. He was the first person killed in the war which immediately afterwards broke out. Two others attempted the same, and they shortly afterwards died. The fact that they have been unable to injure us in this way has caused many to embrace the Gospel, as they ascribe our safety to the greater power of our God.*

The Reverend Richard Taylor conveys the impression that although he despised tohungaism, the native Maori religion, he believed in *makutu*.

Spirit Tales

(*Continued from page 80*)

defeat, and their leader, Conde, was taken prisoner. The slaughter on both sides was very great. So it was no ordinary event that took place on the day that Calvin bade his friends to pray, but one of very unusual character, and one which deeply concerned the group in that chamber, since it seemed to indicate the downfall of the Protestant cause in France.

"Even though we should concede, what would be a matter of mere conjecture, that the beating of war drums was an auditory illusion," Doctor Prince says, "it would not annul the fact that the illusion and oracular utterance of Calvin were vindicated by the news which several days later arrived. Nor will it be claimed in this instance that it was a case of auditory hyperæsthesia, since Dreux is more than three hundred miles from Geneva."

Buried Treasure in England

REMARKABLE stories of her alleged gifts of water and metal divining were told recently to a meeting of agriculturists at Gloucester, England, by Miss F. M. Turner of Bridstor, Ross-on-Wye.

Miss Turner said she discovered her gifts accidentally some years ago. She did not consider divination was due to psychic influences, but to natural forces in the body.

At Cardiff, where a friend asked her to try her powers upon his lawn, she found by the aid of a hazel twig that a volume of water ran beneath. Her host then told her that it was one of the city water mains.

Her gift for divining metal helped a friend to recover a diamond ring which had been lost on a hockey field.

In Derbyshire she divined the presence of seams of lead, and also of iron ore. She could strongly feel lead seams, even though at great depths.

She had also been engaged in several searches for treasure. She went to Ireland to an old castle where, many years before, a quantity of gold plate had been buried by one of the stewards in order to keep it from the hands of William of Orange. The steward had been killed without revealing the whereabouts of the plate.

Every time she tried to exercise her powers, she was attacked by severe sickness—and afterwards learned that it was due to the phosphates in the ground.

Another search was carried out at the Priory Church at Christchurch, where there was a legend that an abbot in the time of King Henry VIII had hidden some gold plate.

Lord Lyttelton's Warning

THE recent death of a prominent member of the Lyttelton family, of Hagley Hall, Stourbridge, England, recalls a remarkable event in connection with the death of the second Lord Lyttelton.

Not feeling at all well, he retired to rest earlier than usual—about twelve o'clock—on the night of November 24th, 1779, and soon after getting into bed and extinguishing the candle, he was disturbed by a gentle fluttering of wings about his chamber. While he listened, he became aware of the sound of footsteps apparently near his bed.

Astonished at these noises, he raised himself up in bed to learn what it all meant—and was surprised beyond measure at the sight of a lovely female, dressed in white, with a small bird perched, falcon-like, upon her head!

While he was struggling for words, the figure addressed him, in grave, authoritative tones, commanding him to prepare himself for the end, for he would shortly die.

The delivery of an articulate message, however dreadful in itself, banished in

Pursued by Outlaws and Officers

ON a road a hundred miles from nowhere Jerry Maguire's swift car is passed by an even swifter motor-cycle and Jerry sighs in relief. He had feared it was a cop. Yet something happened in that split second of passing—something which was to send Jerry driving desperately across the desert, pursued by outlaws and officers alike; by his side the sister of the girl with whom he had hoped to elope and in his tonneau a fortune in one-thousand dollar bills!

Read what it was in *Reckless Roads*, a stirring serial of speed that begins in the April TALES OF DANGER AND DARING.

Eight other stories of action and adventure up and down the earth are in this issue, in addition to two articles about real men who risk their lives every day, and sixteen pages of rotogravure. The April TALES OF DANGER AND DARING, a Macfadden Publication, price twenty-five cents, is on sale March 15th, at all news stands.

Unpublished Chapters About Isadora Duncan

IN the April issue of THE DANCE Magazine there begins the story of the final years of the life of Isadora Duncan—the greatest American dancer who ever lived. Her autobiography did not complete the record of her spectacular life. *The Last Chapter of Isadora's Life*, beginning in the April DANCE Magazine and continuing for the following three issues, tells the dramatic events leading up to her tragic and sudden death. Do not miss the first instalment of this important fact-narrative.

The April issue is also a special edition devoted to costuming and music, and their relationship to the dance. There will be feature articles devoted to various phases of these subjects.

THE DANCE Magazine—A Macfadden Publication. Order your copy of the April issue now. Thirty-five cents at all news stands.

some degree the elements of terror which the vision at first inspired, and Lord Lyttelton found words to inquire how long he might expect to live.

The vision then replied, "Not three days, and you'll depart at the hour of twelve!"

In the morning he recounted his experience at the breakfast table, and at midnight on the third day he died suddenly. Sir Bernard Burke vouches for the accuracy of the above story.

The Drummer of Tedworth

A COLLECTOR of old tales has one about a Drummer which is worth hearing, and it is here given entire just as the account was recorded at the time:

In the year 1661, about the middle of March, a substantial citizen of Tedworth, one Mr. John Mompesson, visited the neighboring town of Ludgarshal and, hearing a drum beat there, he inquired of the bailiff of the town what it meant.

He was told that for some days they had been troubled by an idle drummer who demanded money of the constable by virtue of a pretended pass, which the bailiff thought was counterfeit.

Mr. Mompesson sent for the fellow and asked to see his pass. It was signed by two authorities of the town of Gretenham. But Mr. Mompesson was familiar with the writing of these two gentlemen and knew that the pass was counterfeit. He thereupon commanded the vagrant to put off his drum and charged the constable to carry him before the next Justice of the Peace, to be further examined and punished.

The fellow then confessed, and earnestly begged to have his drum.

Mr. Mompesson told him that if Colonel A——, whose forged signature was on the counterfeit pass, gave him a good character, he should have the drum back, but that meanwhile the drum would be left with the bailiff of Ludgarshal, and the drummer with the constable. The latter, it seems, was prevailed on by the drummer's entreaties to let him go.

About the middle of April following, when Mr. Mompesson was preparing for a journey to London, the bailiff sent the drum to his house. On his return from his journey, his wife told him that they had been much frightened in the night by thieves, who had attempted to break into the house.

He had not been at home more than three nights, when the same noise was heard that had disturbed his family in his absence. It was a very great knocking at his doors and the outside of his house. Whereupon he got up and went about the house with a brace of pistols in his hands. No matter how hard he looked, he could find nothing to account for that strange and hollow sound. When he was back in bed again, the noise was a thumping and drumming on the top of his house, which continued for some time, and then by degrees subsided.

After this, the noise of thumping and drumming was very frequent, usually five nights together, and then it would intermit three. It came as they were going to sleep, whether early or late. After a month of these disturbances

outside the house, the noise seemed to come into the room where the drum lay, starting within half an hour after they were in bed and continuing almost two hours. The drumming was like that of the breaking up of a guard. It continued in this room four or five nights in each week, for the space of two months, which time Mr. Mompesson himself lay there to hear it.

Mrs. Mompesson being brought to bed, there was but little noise the night she was in travail, nor any for three weeks after, until she had recovered her strength. But after this cessation, it returned in a ruder manner than before, and followed and vexed the youngest children, beating their bedsteads with such violence that all present expected the beds would fall in pieces. If you laid your hands on the bedsteads, you could feel no blows but might perceive them to shake exceedingly. For an hour together, it would beat the tattoo, and several other points of war, as well as any drummer. After this they would hear a scratching under the children's beds as if by something that had iron talons. It would lift the children up in their beds, follow them from one room to another and for a while haunted no one particularly but them.

There was a cock-loft in the house which had not been observed to be so troubled, so they removed the children thither, putting them to bed while it was a fair day, but no sooner did they lie down than the trouble began as it had been before.

On November 5th, 1661, it kept up a mighty noise, and a servant, observing two boards in the children's room seeming to move, he bid the invisible Thing to give him one of them; upon which the board came (nothing moving it that he saw) within a yard of him.

The man added, "Nay, let me have it in my hand."

Then the board was shoved quite home to him again, and so up and down and to and fro, at least twenty times together, till Mr. Mompesson forbade his servant such familiarities. This was in the daytime, and seen by a whole room-full of people. That morning it left a sulphurous smell behind it, which was very offensive.

At night the minister, Mr. Cragg, and divers of the neighbors came to the house on a visit. The minister went to prayers with them, kneeling at the children's bedside, where it was then very troublesome and loud.

DURING prayer-time it withdrew into the cock-loft, but returned as soon as prayers were done, and then in sight of the company the chairs walked about the room of themselves, the children's shoes were hurled over their heads and every loose thing moved about the chamber! At the same time a bed-staff was thrown at the minister, which hit him on the leg but so lightly that a lock of wool could not fall more softly; and it was observed that it stopped just where it lighted without rolling or moving from the place.

Mr. Mompesson, seeing that the children were so much disturbed, lodged them out at a neighbor's house, taking his eldest daughter, who was about ten years of age, into his own chamber which had been free of the noise for a month. As soon as she was in bed, the disturbance began there again, continuing three weeks, drumming and making other noises; and it was observed that it would answer in drumming sounds anything that was beaten, or called for. After this, the house where the children lodged out, happening to be full of strangers, they were taken home, and no disturbance having been known in the parlor, they were lodged there; where also their persecutor found them, but then only plucked them by the hair and night-clothes, without any other disturbance.

IT was noted that when the noise was loudest, and came with the most sudden and surprising violence, no dog about the house would move, though the knocking was often so boisterous and loud that it had been heard at a considerable distance in the fields, and awakened the neighbors in the village, which was not very near this house. The servants sometimes were lifted up in their beds, and let gently down again without hurt, and at other times the thing would lie like a great weight upon their feet.

About the latter end of December, 1661, the drumming was less frequent, and then they heard a noise like the jingling of money, occasioned, as it was thought, by something Mr. Mompesson's mother had spoken the day before to a neighbor, who talked of fairies leaving money; that is to say, that she would like it well if it would leave them something to make amends for their trouble. The night after she said this, there was a great chinking of money all over the house.

After this, the Thing desisted from the ruder noises and employed itself in trifling, apish and less troublesome tricks. One Christmas Eve, a little before day, one of the young boys, arising out of his bed, was hit on a sore place on his heel with the latch of the door; the pin that it was fastened with was so small that it was a difficult matter to pick it out. The night after Christmas Day it threw the old gentlewoman's clothes about the room and hid her Bible in the ashes. In such silly tricks it frequently indulged.

Later it was very troublesome to a servant of Mr. Mompesson's who was a stout fellow, and of sober conversation; this man lay within during the greatest disturbance, and for several nights something would try to pluck the clothes off his bed, so that he was fain to tug hard to keep them on, and sometimes they would be plucked from him by main force, and his shoes thrown at his head; and now and then he would find himself bound hand and foot, as it were; but he found that whenever he could make use of his sword, and struck with it, the spirit quitted its hold.

A little after these contests, a son of Mr. Thomas Bennet, whose workman the drummer had sometimes been, came to the house and told Mr. Mompesson some words that he had spoken which it seems were not well received; for as soon as they were in bed, the drum

was beat up very violently and loudly; the gentleman rose up and called his man to him, who was sleeping with Mr. Mompesson's servant, stout John.

As soon as Mr. Bennet's man left the room, John heard a ruffling noise in his chamber and something came to his bedside, as if it had been a person dressed in silk; the man presently reached after his sword, which he found held from him, and it was with difficulty and much tugging that he got it into his power, which as soon as he had done, the specter left him, and it was always observed that it still avoided a sword.

About the beginning of January, 1662, they were wont to hear a singing in the chimney before the rapping started; and one night, about this time, lights were seen in the house. One of them came into Mr. Mompesson's chamber. It seemed blue and glimmering, and caused great pain to the eyes of those who saw it. After the light, something was heard coming up the stairs, as if it had been one without shoes. The light was seen also four or five times in the children's chamber, and the maids confidently affirm that the doors were at least ten times opened and shut in their sight, and when they were open they heard a noise as if half a dozen had entered together, after which some were heard to walk about the room. Mr. Mompesson himself once heard these things.

During the time of the knocking, when many were present, a gentleman of the company said: "Satan, if the drummer set thee to work, give three knocks, and no more:" which it did very distinctly, and then stopped.

Then the gentleman knocked to see if it would answer him as it was wont, but it did not.

For further confirmation, he bade it, if it were the drummer, to give five knocks and no more that night; which it did, and left the house quiet all night after. This was done in the presence of Sir Thomas Chamberlain, of Oxfordshire, and divers others.

ON Saturday morning, an hour before day, January 10th, a drum was heard to beat on the outside of Mr. Mompesson's chamber, from whence it went to the other end of the house, where some gentlemen strangers lay—playing at their door and without, four or five several tunes, and so went off into the air. The next morning, a smith in the village, lying with John, heard a noise in the room, as one had been shoeing a horse, and something came, as if it were with a pair of pincers, snipping at the smith's nose most of the night.

One morning, Mr. Mompesson, rising early to go on a journey, heard a great noise below where the children lay, and, running down with a pistol in his hand, he heard a voice crying: "A witch, a witch," as they also had heard it once before. Upon his entrance all was quiet.

Having one night played some little tricks near Mr. Mompesson's feet, the Thing went into another bedroom where one of his daughters lay; there it went from side to side, lifting her up as it passed under. They tried to thrust at it with a sword, but it still shifted and carefully avoided the thrust by getting under the child when they struck at it.

The night after, it came panting like a dog out of breath; whereupon one maid took a bed-staff to knock, which was caught out of her hand and thrown away, and, company coming up, the room was presently filled with a noisome smell and was very hot, though there was no fire in the room and it was a very sharp and severe winter. It continued in the bed, panting and scratching for an hour and a half, and then went into the next chamber, where it knocked a little and seemed to rattle a chain; thus it did for two or three nights together.

THE next night they strewed ashes over the chamber, to see what impression it would leave. In the morning they found in one place the mark of a great claw, in another the print of a smaller claw, and in still another place some letters, which they could make nothing of, besides many circles and scratches in the ashes.

Then Glanvil (the collector of old tales) went to investigate the truth of this tale, and the account goes on in his own words:

"I went," said he, "to inquire the truth of those passages of which there was so loud a report. The Thing had ceased from its drumming and ruder noises before I came thither, but most of the more remarkable circumstances related above were confirmed to me there, by several of the neighbors together, who had been present at the house. At this time the Thing used to haunt the children, as soon as they were laid in bed.

"The night I was there, they went to bed about eight o'clock. Soon after, a maid servant, coming down from them, told us *it* was come. The neighbors who were there, and two ministers who had seen and heard it divers times, went away; but Mr. Mompesson and I and a gentleman who came with me, went up. I heard a strange scratching as I went up the stairs, and when we came into the room I perceived it was just behind the bolster of the children's bed, and seemed to be against the ticking. It was as loud a scratching as one with long nails could make upon a bolster.

"There were two little modest girls in the bed, between seven and eight years old as I guessed. I saw their hands out of the clothes, and they could not contribute to the noise that was behind their heads. They had been used to it, and had still somebody or other in the chamber with them, and therefore seemed not to be much affrighted.

"I, standing at the bed's head, thrust my hand behind the bolster, directing it to the place whence the noise seemed to come, whereupon the noise ceased there, and was heard in another part of the bed. But when I had taken out my hand, it returned, and was heard in the same place as before. I had been told it would imitate noises, and made trial by scratching several times upon the sheet, as five and seven and ten, which it followed, stopping at my num-

ber. I searched under and behind the bed, turned up the clothes to the bedcords, grasped the bolster, sounded the wall behind, and made all the search that I possibly could, to find if there were any trick, contrivance or common cause of it. I could find nothing.

"Then I was verily persuaded that the noise was made by some demon or spirit. After it had scratched about half an hour more, it went into the midst of the bed under the children, and there seemed to pant like a dog out of breath, very loudly. I put my hand to the place, and felt the bed bearing up against it, as if something within had thrust it up. I grasped the feathers, to feel if any living thing were in it. We looked under and everywhere about, to see if there were any dog or cat or any such creature in the room, but found nothing.

"THE motion it caused by this panting was so strong that it shook the room and windows very sensibly. It continued thus more than half an hour, while my friend and I stayed in the room. During the panting, I chanced to see something (which I thought was a rat or mouse) moving in a linen-bag that hung up against another bed that was in the room. I stepped forward and caught it by the upper end with one hand, and drew it through the other, but found nothing at all in it!

"There was nobody near to shake the bag, or if there had, no one could have made such a motion, which seemed to be from within, as if a living creature had moved in it.

"This passage I mentioned not in the earlier part of this narrative, because it depended upon my single testimony, and may be subject to more evasions than the other I related; but having told it to divers learned and inquisitive men, who thought it not altogether inconsiderable, I have now added it here. It will, I know, be said by some, that my friend and I were under some fright and so fancied noises and sights that were not. I certainly know, for my own part, that during the whole time of my being in that room and in the house, I was under no more affright than I am while I write this relation.

"There were other occurrences during my stay at Tedworth which I published not, because they are not such plain and unexceptionable proofs. I shall now briefly mention them. My friend and I lay in the chamber where the first and chief disturbance had been. We slept well all night, but early before day in the morning I was awakened (and I awakened my bedfellow) by a loud knocking just without our chamber door. I asked who was there several times, but the knocking still continued without answer.

"At last I said: 'In the name of God, who is it, and what would you have?'

"To which a voice answered: 'Nothing with you.'

"We, thinking it had been some servant of the house, went to sleep again. But speaking of it to Mr. Mompesson when we came down, he assured us that no one of the house lay that way, or had business thereabout, and that his servants were not up till he called them, which was after it was day. They all affirmed and protested that the noise was not made by them. Mr. Mompesson had told us before that the Thing would be gone in the middle of the night, and come again divers times early in the morning, about four o'clock, and this I suppose was about that time.

"But to proceed with Mr. Mompesson's own particulars. There came one morning a light into the children's chamber, and a voice crying 'A witch, a witch,' for at least a hundred times together.

"Mr. Mompesson at another time (during the day), seeing some wood move that was in the chimney of a room where he was, discharged a pistol into it, after which they found several drops of blood on the hearth and in divers places of the stairs.

"For two or three nights after the discharge of the pistol, there was a calm in the house, but then *it* came again, applying itself to a little child newly taken from nurse, which it so persecuted that it would not let the poor infant rest for two nights together, nor suffer candles in the room, but carried them away, lighted, up the chimney, or threw them under the bed!

"It so scared this child by leaping upon it, that for some hours it could not be recovered from the fright, so that they were forced again to remove the children out of the house.

"The next night, about midnight something came up the stairs and knocked at Mr. Mompesson's door, but he lying still, it went up another pair of stairs to his man's chamber, to whom it appeared standing at his bed's foot. The exact shape and proportion he could not discover, but he saith he saw a great body, with two red and glaring eyes, which for some time were fixed steadily upon him, and at length disappeared.

"About the beginning of April, 1663, a gentleman who lay in the house had all his money turned black in his pockets; and Mr. Mompesson, coming one morning into his stable, found the horse he was wont to ride on the ground, having one of his hinder legs in his mouth, and so fastened there that it was difficult for several men to get it out with a lever. After this, there were some other remarkable things, but the account goes no farther; only Mr. Mompesson positively asserted that afterwards the house was several nights beset with seven or eight in the shape of men, who, as soon as a gun was discharged, would shuffle away together into the darkness.

"THE drummer was tried at the assizes at Salisbury upon this occasion. He was committed first to Gloucester gaol for stealing, and a Wiltshire man coming to see him, he asked what news in Wiltshire; the visitant said he knew of none.

"'No!' said the drummer, 'do you not hear of the drumming at a gentleman's house at Tedworth?'

"'That I do enough,' said the other.

"'I,' quoth the drummer, 'have plagued him (or to that purpose), and

(*Continued on page 96*)

Was This Impossible?

The True Story of Three Incredible Occurrences in Canada

By GILBERT DRAPER

of the British United Press, Montreal

MY great-grandfather deserted the ancestral home of the Drapers in England early in the Nineteenth Century to establish his law practice in that part of Ontario which comprised a portion of what was known at the time as Upper Canada. He met with success, and before long was enjoying an enviable position in Canadian politics. He served as Chief Justice and afterwards became Prime Minister of Canada.

His daughter, Caroline, was a thoroughly normal girl mentally, though inclined to be rather delicate. Certainly there was nothing eccentric about her, and, during her comparatively short life, nothing occurred to suggest that she possessed one iota of psychic power.

When Caroline was christened, Mrs. Laing, a relative living in England, became her godmother. Circumstances prevented the latter from being present at the ceremony, and, while she always believed that some day she and her goddaughter would meet, it so happened that they never did—in the flesh, at any rate.

One night, unaware even that Caroline was ill, the old lady retired to her room in the big old-fashioned house where she lived in Surrey. She, herself, was in excellent health and by no means a light sleeper, it being her usual good fortune to remain oblivious of everything until awakened the following morning by the maid with her tea. On this particular night, with no thought in her mind of her goddaughter in Canada, she climbed into her great four-poster bed and soon fell fast asleep. I say *climbed* purposely, for it was literally necessary for her to use a small stepladder in order to get between the sheets, the surface of this extraordinary piece of furniture being a good four feet above the floor.

Early the next morning, or, to be exact, at precisely twenty minutes to three, London time, she woke from a dreamless slumber to find herself in a state of uncanny expectation: that is to say, she felt perfectly certain something unusual was about to occur. And it did.

Gradually, the curtains at the foot of the bed—it was one of those unhealthy beds completely enclosed in draperies—began to part, revealing the figure of a young girl in a white night dress, with her hair in two braids over her shoulders.

Far from being paralyzed at the sight of this apparition, for there could be no doubt that what she saw was not mortal, Mrs. Laing sat up in surprise and said: "Oh, I know who you are! You're Caroline Draper." She had recognized her goddaughter from the photographs which had been sent to her at various times.

For a moment the spirit, or ghost made no reply. Then it spoke the following beautiful passage from the Bible (Corinthians 1, Chapter 2, verse 9):

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

A few minutes later, the amazed but by no means frightened watcher realized she was staring at nothing but the now-closed curtains. Before lying down again, she glanced at her watch and saw that it was between twenty and a quarter to three.

One of her first acts on arising the following day was to write a careful account of her strange experience to Caroline's mother—my great-grandmother. Even then she did not suspect that the nocturnal visitation might have presaged some unhappy event; so her feelings can readily be imagined when, a few weeks later, she received a letter from Canada saying that her goddaughter had died on the night and at the exact time she had mentioned seeing the spirit of the poor girl, whose last words had been the above-mentioned quotation.

Incidentally, this text was engraved on Caroline Draper's tombstone in St. James' Cemetery, Toronto, where it may be seen today by any who care to examine the Draper plot.

That is the story as it was told by Caroline's own mother; and while it does not convert me to a belief in spiritualism, it at least prompts me to believe there must be a great many things in and around this world that are "undreamed-of in our philosophy." People who deride the existence of spirits and who do not accept the true Christian's conviction that death is nothing more than the departure of the soul from the body, will probably be inclined to think that Mrs. Laing's momentary glimpse of her dead goddaughter was a dream. But even granting that the dream explanation is a feasible one, how are we to account for the fact that the "dream" occurred just at the time of Caroline's death and that Mrs. Laing overheard her goddaughter's last words? There has never been a spiritualist in my family, yet each member, very wisely, I think, has accepted the Caroline incident as one of those happenings which nobody can explain.

Still another uncanny incident occurred more recently in my family, and I am personally able to vouch for its authenticity.

In 1907, a cousin of mine, who has since died, was a student at a young ladies' seminary in Compton, Quebec. Unlike her distant relative, Caroline, this girl was as healthy a specimen of Canadian girlhood as one could imagine. Indeed, her athletic proclivities had made her a popular figure in most branches of sport. She was a good student, too, and consequently popular not only with her classmates but with the teachers as well. If there was anything "queer" about her, it had never been apparent to her friends or family.

TOWARDS the end of the fall term, on a bleak Saturday afternoon, Deedee (as she had been nicknamed by her friends) and a number of the other pupils asked and received permission to organize an expedition to a deserted farmhouse about a couple of miles from the school. They planned to take their tea with them and return by moonlight. One or the teachers, a Miss Shaw, who retired a few years ago, but who can be reached by anyone wishing to verify this story, volunteered to accompany them as chaperon. Her offer was gladly accepted, and the party, numbering about a dozen, set off on what promised to be a very enjoyable picnic.

When they reached the farm, it was unpleasantly cold and so they decided to have their tea inside the building instead of on the veranda, as originally planned. They gained access to one of the lower rooms by reaching through a broken window and forcing back the rusty catch. Inside, they were delighted to find a huge old-fashioned stone fireplace, so wide that it took up most of one wall. The floor was covered with straw and newspapers, which were promptly utilized in getting a fire going, and before long a merrier group would have been hard to find.

After they had eaten, someone suggested that it would be no end of a lark to explore the whole house. It was beginning to get dark at this time, so Miss Shaw warned they would have to hurry, as they still had a two-mile tramp ahead of them.

Laughing heartily at Deedee's joking remark that the upper floors might be haunted, at least half the party passed into the gloomy hall and started to ascend the creaky stairs. The fallen plaster cracked ominously beneath their feet, and it almost seemed as though there might be something sinister lurking in the dim shadows higher up. Voices were involuntarily lowered, and hand instinctively sought hand as the little band of trembling, expectant girls approached the unknown mysteries around the bend at the top of the staircase.

Suddenly Deedee, who was fourth or fifth from the front, uttered a shrill scream that brought the others to a startled halt. At first her companions thought she had cried out in fun, but when they saw her ghastly pallor, they became seriously alarmed. Retracing their steps to the cheery warmth and light of the fire, they were met by Miss Shaw, who was rather vexed at being so rudely frightened by what she thought had been some stupid girl's idea of a joke.

It did not take her more than a second, however, to perceive that Deedee was unquestionably in some kind of trouble. The girl was shaking as though with ague, her hands were clenched together over her breast and her eyes darted this way and that as if in search of something. But in a little while, greatly to the relief of everyone present, she became more composed, and, before they started back to the school, she described the uncanny sensations that had brought the cry from her lips.

When about twelve steps from the top of the stairs (so my cousin's story ran) she became stricken with an awful feeling that something horrible had once happened to her in one of the rear rooms on the second floor, and the stabbing realization that she was heading straight for the scene of that strange ordeal had caused her to scream aloud.

In answer to a question from Miss Shaw, Deedee stated positively she had never been inside the house before in her life—but she amazed her uneasy hearers by describing the room in detail, even going so far as to mention a moldy mattress stuffed away in one corner of the forbidding cupboard, which was filled with all sorts of rubbish. She could not help feeling, ridiculous as it sounded, that there was something sinister about this mattress, and she begged her friends not to think of examining it.

Following Deedee's recital, Miss Shaw refused the request of a few of the more venturesome of her charges that they be permitted to look at this "chamber of horrors," and ordered them all out of the house.

The next day, however, so impressed had she been by my cousin's experience that, unknown to her colleagues and pupils, Miss Shaw went into the village and repeated the details to the chief constable, who, more to satisfy her than because he expected any results, agreed to accompany her to the farmhouse.

WHEN they had ascended to the room in question, they discovered that the door was locked, a surprising fact considering that every other door they had seen had been either ajar or else hanging crazily by its hinges.

Idly remarking that "this is beginning to look interesting," Miss Shaw's escort solved the problem by smashing in one of the panels with his shoulders. This enabled them to see the interior, and the expression on their faces can be imagined when they perceived that everything was precisely as Deedee had described, even to the opening at one side which presumably led into the mysterious cupboard!

The revelation spurred them to a renewed attack on the insecure door, and in less than a minute they had forced it open.

Half an hour later they were on

their way back to the village, the constable carrying a suspiciously streaked mattress over his shoulder. An analyst was summoned from Montreal, and a careful examination of the stains revealed the gruesome fact that they had been made by human blood, which, according to the expert, must have been spilled in a sufficient quantity to warrant the assumption that murder had been committed. But although the case was thoroughly investigated by competent detectives, no further light was ever shed on this singular tragedy; and my cousin's strange premonition of evil while ascending the stairs, together with her startling description of the locked room's contents, will, I fancy, remain unexplained for all time.

I may add that Deedee was never able to explain her overwhelming aversion to setting foot on the second floor of that old farmhouse. Furthermore, she always remained completely mystified concerning her knowledge of the interior of the room, where, if the investigators are to be believed, someone had been stabbed to death.

Is there any scientific explanation? The power of "second sight" is the only one that suggests itself to me, but if Deedee was thus gifted, she never again gave a similar demonstration.

AND now, in conclusion, I will tell you as briefly as possible about an old miner named Bill Skinner, who came into my office the other day with as weird a tale as any reader of the old "penny dreadfuls" could desire. Before his adventure, this man was a confirmed atheist, having been brought up in the wilds where religion is often neglected. Strangely enough, his brother Alec was a devout Presbyterian, so it was only natural that the latter should be distressed at his failure to convert the godless Bill.

"Some day you'll learn I've been no fool," had been his parting shot after their most recent argument on the subject.

Today there is no more ardent Christian than Bill Skinner!

Employed in a gold mine near the town of Rouyn, Quebec, Bill and his brother had worked for years in treacherous caverns far from the light of day. At the time of Bill's strange experience the two men were laboring with three others in one of the deepest sections of the mine, a couple of hundred yards from the shaft that led to the surface. They were engaged in the hazardous business of blasting some rock which separated them from another band of toilers who were attacking the same obstacle from the other side.

Bill was sent by the foreman on some errand back along the passage towards the elevator. He picked up what he had been told to get and was returning with it under his arm, when a terrific explosion knocked him almost senseless. Unfortunately, in falling, he rolled down the far side of a pile of débris, which hid him from the foreman and two other men who ran by the next instant, carrying, as he afterwards learned, the body of another man, whose life had been snuffed out with merciful quickness. In vain he tried to shout after them, only to find his voice paralyzed.

After a while, feeling sick and giddy, he managed to scramble out of the little trench into which he had fallen. The tunnel was fast filling with suffocating fumes that warned him he had not a moment to lose if he hoped to escape from this death-trap alive. It was as dark as the interior of a tomb, and for several seconds the dazed man could not determine in which direction lay the lift. As he stood there trying to collect his scattered senses, the darkness was relieved by a sickening glow. Fire!

Goaded into action by this new danger, he began to hurry away from where the flames were beginning to crackle. He did not know or care whether he was heading for the shaft or in the other direction, his panic-stricken mind being obsessed by only one thought—to escape the torture of death by fire.

BILL had proceeded but a little way when he encountered Alec, standing at a turn in the tunnel. Strange to relate, the latter seemed to be perfectly calm and in no wise disturbed at the prospect of a cruel death. At sight of him the panic-stricken man stopped short, but he was too upset to notice anything unusual about his brother's appearance. Then, to his amazement, the other walked past him back towards the fire, motioning him to follow.

Too weak from fright to argue, and convinced somehow that Alec's equilibrium could only mean there was no immediate danger, he stumbled after him along the passage to where it was brilliantly illuminated by the fire, which he soon perceived was nothing worse than a burning pile of waste paper. Beyond it was the shaft! The lift was just coming to a stop at their level, and with a hoarse cry, Bill fell forward into the strong arms of a burly rescuer, whom he dimly recognized as a fellow worker named Hans Luckner.

When he regained consciousness above ground a few minutes later, he was surprised not to find his brother in the group bending over him.

"Where's Alec?" he demanded, getting unsteadily to his feet.

For answer, they led him over to where a motionless figure lay stretched out beneath a blanket.

"He was stone dead when we picked him up, and never knew what hit him," the grizzled old mine boss explained. "We were coming back after your body when you ran into Hans here. Lucky you were near the lift, for the whole roof of that tunnel gave way as we were bringing you up."

At first Bill was too astonished to make a reply. Then he muttered: "You win, Alec"—a speech which caused the men to look at him pityingly, believing him crazed by grief.

And the rough miners up in that part of the province are still talking about the strange case of "that old heathen, Bill Skinner, who got such a scare the day his brother was killed that he took sudden to religion."

Spirit Tales

(*Continued from page 92*)

he shall never be quiet until he hath made me satisfaction for taking away my drum.'

"Upon information of this, the fellow was tried for a witch at Sarum, and all the main circumstances here related were sworn at the assizes by the minister of the parish, and divers others of the most intelligent and substantial inhabitants, who had been eye and ear witnesses of them, time after time, for several years together.

"THE fellow was condemned to transportation and accordingly sent away; but by some means (it is said by raising storms and affrighting the seamen) he made shift to come back again. And it is observable that during all the time of his restraint and absence, the house was quiet, but as soon as he was set at liberty the disturbance returned.

"He had been a soldier under Cromwell and used to talk much of gallant books he had of an old fellow, who was accounted a wizard.

"This is the sum of Mr. Mompesson's disturbance, partly from his own mouth, related before many persons, who had been witnesses of all, and confirmed his relation; and partly from his own letters, from which the order and series of things is taken. The same particulars he sent also to Doctor Creed, who was at that time Doctor of the Chair in Oxford.

"Mr. Mompesson suffered by it in his name, in his estate, in all of his affairs and in the general peace of his family. The unbelievers in spirits and witches took him for an impostor. Many others judged the visits of such an extraordinary evil to be the judgment of God upon him, for some notorious wickedness or impiety. Thus his name was continually exposed to censure, and his estate suffered by the concourse of people from all parts to his house, by the diversion it gave him from his affairs, by the discouragement of servants, by reason of which he could hardly get any to live with him.

"The Drummer of Tedworth met with great opposition when first narrated, and several violent controversies took place."

Such is the old tale of the Drummer of Tedworth.

Taking Tea with a Spirit

(*Continued from page 74*)

"See," I said, "I have made a rope of the sheets—oh, Margie, there is Carl! I saw him go behind the hedge."

Marguerite answered, still quietly, "Don't do such a thing, Fannie."

I turned and said with passion and anger: "Oh, child, your heart is not awake. When I feel Carl's warm hand slip over mine, I'd die for him. I don't believe I knew what living was until I saw him." I looked out and put one hand on the window-sill. "Kiss me once more, Margie. Next time you see me I'll be an old married lady. You must still be my best friend."

Marguerite came to me and, seizing both my hands with an amazing strength, cried out: "I am your best friend, and I'll never let you go to that scamp waiting there! Oh, Fannie!"

There came a horrible struggle, a clutching at my throat, a sickening, falling sensation—and the next thing I knew I was lying in the infirmary, the pale December sunlight struggling across the coverlid.

During the weeks of convalescence—I had fallen in a faint due to overwork and a condition that I had not even suspected—I heard about the tower-room.

Fannie Wells and Marguerite Liggett, cousins, had occupied the tower-room from the time they were seven until they were sixteen, the age they were at the time of the tragedy I saw re-enacted. They came from W——, a town near Dallas, and both were pretty, popular and rather studious girls. Early in 1920 Carl Rhodes, a boyhood friend of Mr. Wells and a man who had been divorced twice for adultery and desertion, began to notice Fannie when she was back home on week-ends.

THE affair culminated in tragedy before it became public property. Fannie and Carl had arranged to elope. Marguerite got an inkling of the matter and surprised Fannie into admitting the plans. In a struggle Marguerite tried to keep Fannie from meeting Carl and was literally thrown at the feet of Carl Rhodes. She fell from the third story, but the snow-laden branches broke the fall a little and saved her life, although both legs and an arm were broken. She finally recovered. Carl Rhodes repented so thoroughly that he mended his ways and actually re-married his second wife. Fannie attended her cousin faithfully and did not marry until many years later.

The affair was hushed up. The girl's fall was given out as an accident, and very few know about it even now. The older people at the college vow and declare that the tragedy is re-enacted every Christmas whether the room is occupied or not. People in the room below can hear the struggle and the raising of the window, which is found open every Christmas morning regardless of weather.

I don't know about that, but I do know that I don't care to make a personal investigation of the matter.

Thousands Are Throwing Their Glasses Away

Why Don't You - You Can

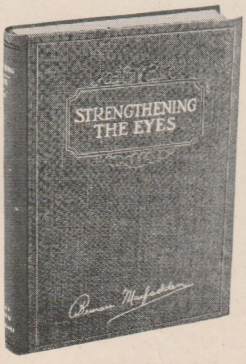
GLASSES are only eye crutches. They simply bolster up the eyes—they cannot cure or eliminate the conditions responsible for the trouble. They are useful just as crutches are useful for an injured leg, but they can no more restore your eyes to their former strength than crutches can mend a broken limb. The real help must come from other sources. In the case of the eyes it is exercise.

Over 20 years ago Bernarr Macfadden, father of Physical Culture, had a most trying experience with his eyes. Due to many nights of hard literary work under poor artificial light, they became terribly strained. The idea of wearing glasses was intolerable, so always willing to back up his theories by experimenting upon himself, he immediately started in upon a course of natural treatment that he fully believed would help him.

The results were so entirely satisfactory that he associated himself with one of the few really great eye specialists and together they entered upon a period of research and experiment covering many years.

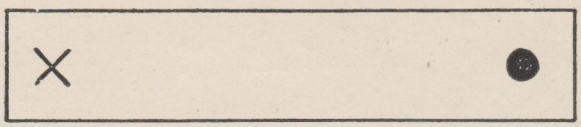
A Startling Revolutionary System of Eye Training

Upon their findings has been based a remarkable new scientific system of eye-training which quickly enables you to train these muscles of the eye so that you can make them work properly at all times, and without effort or strain. This new system has been prepared by Bernarr Macfadden, in collaboration with the eminent ophthalmologist who discovered the real truth about eyes.



Although this remarkable system has only recently been introduced to the public, it has been in use for more than twenty years, and it has been conclusively proven of inestimable value.

If you already wear glasses, find out how you can discard your glasses—and see better without them. If you do not wear glasses, but feel that your sight is failing, then find out how a few minutes each day assures you perfect sight without the use of glasses. If you are a parent send at once for this method, and learn how to save your children from the scourge of near-sightedness, how you can save them from the slavery of eye-glasses, and how you can train their eyes so they will always have perfect, normal vision.



Make This Test of Your Eyesight

Do you know that there is a spot in your eye where you are totally blind? Prove it now. Hold this diagram about 10 inches directly before you. Close the left eye, and fix the right eye on the cross. Then bring the diagram gradually closer and about 7 inches the black spot will suddenly disappear. This is but one of the important points of information about your eyes which you should know, particularly if you have any eye trouble.

For What Price Would You Sell Your Eyes?

The benefits which you can derive from this new method of eye training may seem too surprising to be true. Yet you cannot doubt its efficacy when you read the letters from the people who have found it of immeasurable value when you know that it has helped over 2,000 children to regain normal vision in a short time. Your eyesight is your most important possession. It can never be replaced if it is lost. And since no amount of money could make you sacrifice your eyes, you owe it to yourself at least to investigate what this new scientific method can do for you.

Here is a man who writes: "Strengthening the Eyes has enabled me to completely forget the optician. It has practically cured a bad case of astigmatism."

And here is another who says: "By faithfully following the directions given in your Eye Course I have discarded glasses worn for years, and have had absolutely no trouble for the past two years."

Another grateful reader of this helpful book writes: "I had been wearing glasses since I was eight years of age and could not go a day without them. I am now twenty-four and with just a little effort in practicing the Eye Exercises each day for a period of two months, I have been able to stop wearing glasses entirely."

These inspiring results bring a message of hope to everyone who is troubled with weak eyes or poor sight. There is hardly any condition that is beyond the reach of Bernarr Macfadden's revolutionizing method of eye training. Even the hopeless cases, as shown in the letter reproduced here, respond with almost unbelievable results to the treatment outlined by the noted physical culturist.

You Can Try This Course At Our Risk

We want every reader of this publication afflicted with eye-trouble to examine Mr. Macfadden's wonderful course and try the eye exercises that it prescribes. In order to bring this about we are willing to send the entire course on approval, giving you the privilege of returning it within five days after receipt if not satisfactory. The price of the course has been placed within the means of everyone—only $3.00, plus delivery charges. It is less than you would pay for a single pair of glasses. Can you afford not to take advantage of this offer and all it may mean to you? Not if you value strong eyes. So mail the coupon now, before it slips your mind, and you will never have to wear glasses again.

Macfadden Publications, Inc.,
Desk G. S. 4, Macfadden Building,
1926 Broadway, New York City.

Entirely at your risk, you may send me your course of Eye Exercises. Upon receipt I will pay the postman $3.00, plus delivery charges. It is understood if after trying the course for five days I decide not to keep it you will immediately refund my money upon return of the course.

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