

## THE WRAITH OF MCCOY.

When I was sixteen years of age I paid a visit to an uncle and an aunt of my father's who lived on the family estate in Scotland. My granduncle was well-to-do in this world's goods, and had leisure to devote his life to scientific pursuits and to write about his ideas and discoveries. He had an exceedingly well-arranged laboratory, and dabbled in everything. He was, perhaps, of a more practical turn of mind than most scientists, for he not only theorized and experimented, but turned his knowledge to account, and thereby made his home rather alarming to ignoramuses. Doors opened and shut, and bells rang, seemingly as he willed them. He had made of electricity a sort of servant-of-all-work.

The Scotch domestics gave warning in a body the first evening that the hall lamp lighted itself. They considered the proceeding "uncanny," and my aunt confided to me that it was a most expensive illumination.

"However," she added, "a man should be master in his own house, and has a right to spend his money as he pleases, so I say nothing."

For her part she liked to go about 'among the poor'—not to give alms, Scotch poor folk seldom want that. She helped them to work for themselves: started poor widows in little penny shops; put boys to trades; found places for young housemaids and lent small sums of money to be paid back in dribbles when the honest folks could do it.

She worked in the right way, and left them their self respect. Mere charity never does that.

The house was well furnished with articles that would capture those who are bitten with the present madness for "old things." Square rugs lay on the polished oak floors, and great orange trees grew in tubs in each of the six windows of the drawing room. Outside, in summer, was a gay little flower garden.

It was, however, not a pretty part of the country. It was grand and solemn. Beyond lay mountains apt to be covered with dim, gray mist. Near by a loch, the water of which seldom sparkled, and in dull weather seemed perfectly black, and from the heights on which my uncle's dwelling stood, a road descended into a valley, walled about with great rocks, its vegetation sparse and coarse, and lying here and there so many mighty boulders that each other in the course of some tremendous fight. Far away, above all, arose a tall, curious shaftlike object, which one could scarcely believe the work of nature. Its local name was Daffy's Darning needle, and on its summit was an eagle's nest. The eagles swooped down upon the sheepfolds to their owner's cost at lambing time, but were perfectly safe, as the needle was inaccessible even to the Scottish boys, who can climb anything climbable.

It was my delight to mount my pony, Jackanapes, and go galloping off over the country. No one objected to my going alone. I was quite safe. There was nothing improper in it. Every one I saw knew me, and I gained health and strength by it. What with oatmeal for breakfast and these rides, my cheeks grew round and rosy and spirits high. I forgot at last even that it might be possible for me to lose myself, until one day I actually did it—at five o'clock in the afternoon too, with the autumn day suddenly drawing to a close under a cloudy sky, which threatened one of those furious mountain rain storms which only those who have experience can appreciate.

Lost—I laughed to myself—but all I have to do is to trust to the pony, Jackanapes, certainly could not lose himself so near home. However, Jackanapes had either done that very thing, or was obstinate and determined to make me find my own way. The storm came on. The way grew perfectly dark, and I fancied that I heard a torrent roaring somewhere near me, dashing over a precipice. There was no such thing in the neighborhood, I knew. Life was as sweet to me then as any human being who ever lived, and I succumbed to terror, soaked to the skin, shivering from head to foot, daring to move neither to the right nor to the left, and expecting death every moment. I threw my plaid over my face and burst into tears. In fact I cried like a baby.

"Oh, me! Oh, me!" I moaned. "I shall never see any of them again! What a death to die!"

At this instant I felt my pony trembling beneath me. He trembled as a human being does in mortal terror, quivered all over, and seemed about to fall to the ground. I uncovered my face. All had been dark when I veiled it in the great horror of seeing nothing, but now I saw something—a light which resembled very cold moonlight, so white that one might almost call it blue. It shone, strangely enough, at about the height of a man's head.

What was it? My blood curdled. I was conscious of that curious condition of skin which either cold or terror will produce, which children call "goose flesh." I could not have spoken a word to save my soul, for the object before me appeared to be a human figure, formed of some transparent, luminous substance, and was a more perfect ghost than is pleasant to contemplate in a lonely spot at nightfall.

Almost instantly, however, I saw with a sudden flush of joy that my blood in motion on the instant, that my terror had deceived me. It was a man that stood there, clad in what seemed to be a white flannel suit and holding a lantern over his head.

"This is Miss Maisie?" said a voice that was the voice of a gentleman.

"Oh, yes!" said I. "I'm lost. I thought I should die. Oh, I am so glad! So glad! Quiet, Jackanapes!" For the pony trembled more than ever.

"The animal is afraid of me," said the figure. "Can you dismount? I dare not approach you otherwise, for if I do Jackanapes will run away and, perhaps, dash you over the precipice. I will retire; dismount, and I will return. Do not fear anything, I will take care of you."

He was gone. Doubtless he only shut the lantern, but he appeared to vanish. Jackanapes ceased to shudder. I left the saddle, though I was hardly able to move for my wet skirts, and stood by his side. Instantly the stranger was at mine, and as he appeared my pony kicked up his heels and dashed away up the road.

"Never fear; he would take care of himself," said the stranger. "Follow me."

He led the way. The darkness had concealed from me the fact that I was very near a house. A wide door was flung open. Within I saw a deep hall floored with oak, at the end of which a fire roared in a great chimney. I was seated in a huge chair, my garments drying with curious rapidity. My host stood near me—a handsome man with his long, curling golden hair and beard, and a sort of hunting dress of white flannel. He smiled on me, but said nothing until I spoke.

"They will be frightened at home," I said.

"I will not be long," said he coldly.

"I am thankful to you," I hastened to add. "So very thankful."

He did not answer in any conventional manner. His reply was this:

"You have good reason to be. A death in the cold waters of the torrent is not to be desired, nor is a violent death of any sort. Nature seems to forbid it. Thank heaven for life, little girl."

And afterward you," said I.

He bowed gravely, then went toward some great piece of furniture, on which silver seemed to shimmer in the firelight, and brought thence a goblet of wine.

"Drink," he said.

I drank. I was warmed, comforted; a sort of dreamy delight stole over me. I heard music; I saw figures pass to and fro. I did not quite comprehend what I saw; a delicious slumber came on the wings of the music and enticed me. For awhile I was delightfully conscious that I slept. Then I was obliterated.

Cries and shouts aroused me. I struggled to open my eyes. I heard my name.

"Maisie! Maisie!" shouted from afar. I heard the clatter of hoofs.

"There? There she is! There she is!" in my uncle's voice.

I saw half a dozen mounted riders approaching over the fresh, sunlit slope of a great hill, and I saw that I sat among ruins, close to the time worn, weather bleached wreck of an old chimney, the high mantel of which projected over my head. The roof of the house was gone; only one wall remained. About me lay stones and mortar, blackened wood and all the tokens of a dwelling destroyed by fire and abandoned for years to the elements.

There was no wide hall, no glowing fire, no sideboard laden with silver, no host attired in white to offer me beakers of wine; but I was dry, warm and comfortable, notwithstanding.

My uncle burst into tears, clasped me to his heart, and in doing so changed his tone and lectured me for losing myself. Jackanapes had come home riderless. My aunt thought me dead on the road, and was ill with grief and terror. And how did I find the ruins? And what a mercy that I had not gone over the precipice near by! So they bore me home. And I kept my own counsel, said not one word of my experience until our kindly neighbors had breakfasted and gone their way. Then I related it.

"It must have been delirium," I said.

"Yet it seemed so real."

"My dear Maisie," said my uncle, "in Scotland we are astonished at nothing. I have myself heard this story before from four people who were rescued in the same way, and saw the same wraith and the same restoration of those ruins you describe. My grandfather, a poor country woman with her babe in her arms, Mrs. McLynn of the Heights and sister Constance have narrated the same adventure. Everybody knows the haunted ruins, but we have a special interest in it. Long ago a handsome young man, by name Alexander McCoy, was sole heir to the place, then the handsomest residence hereabouts, as one may well imagine, but chose to fall in love with an ancestress of ours who flirted with him and jilted him. Her portrait hangs on the library wall, a saucy, dark eyed girl in her teens. He thought life worthless without the jade, and the night she married some one else, set fire to his old house and committed suicide by jumping over the precipice into the torrent. It is said he also appeared to her at midnight, but that he said, 'I forgive you.'"

"The fancy is that it is the spirit of the suicide, who thus expiates his sin, and that when he shall have rescued a certain number of persons he will be permitted to rest. The story is always the same. The luminous object, the figure with the lantern, the great hall, the delightful fire, the wine, the handsome host with his white costume and gold beard, the awakening among the ruins. It is a horse or a dog he presents the animal quivers in alijest terror as your pony did. Horses assuredly have more supernatural terrors than men or women."

"But, uncle," said I, "I really am afraid I am not quite Scotch enough to understand all this. The ghost of a suicide is all very natural, but the ghosts of a house of an oak floor, of a blazing fire, of glimmering silver; the ghosts also of delicious wine, and of a great armchair in which I slept delightfully—can these things be? Had I not better call it a dream?"

"You can call it what you like," said my uncle. "Science has yet found no name for these mysteries, though I believe she will some day. But what the people here about will say will be just this. 'Miss Maisie has seen the wraith of the McCoy. That is what they call it, my dear.'"

An Object Lesson.

M. Clemenceau, the famous French Deputy, was originally a doctor, and like our English Dr. Abernethy, was rough and abrupt with his patients.

One morning a man entered his consulting room.

"Take off your coat, waistcoat, and shirt," said the physician, as he went on writing.

"I'll attend to you directly."

Three minutes later, on looking up, he found the man stripped to the waist. He examined the patient carefully.

"There's nothing the matter with you," he said at last.

"I know there isn't," was the startling reply.

"Then what did you come for?"

"To consult you on a political question."

"Why did you strip, then?"

"Well," said the guest blandly, "I thought you wanted an illustration of the emaciated body of the man who lives by the sweat of his brow."

She had the last word.—She—we girls are thinking about starting a baseball club.

He—Pho! Girls can't even throw a ball.

She—Anyhow, we could beat you talking back to the umpire.

## SENSATIONAL NOVEL-WRITING.

Extracts From a Forthcoming "To Be Continued" Story.

The great desideratum in writing sensational-to-be-continued stories is to find an original and startling climax for the end of each weekly installment—to leave the hero, or heroine, in a situation so thrilling that the reader is kept in a feverish suspense until the appearance of the next issue of the paper containing the story. This sort of composition may appear difficult, and seem to require much mental ingenuity, but it is a gift easily cultivated. As a specimen of this style of lurid fiction, we make a few excerpts from the forthcoming story, entitled: "The Villain Foiled; or, Reginald Harcourt's Charmed Life," giving only the climaxes and their unravelment.

CHAPTER III.

Blanche Dreeme sat in her luxuriously furnished apartment, with her shapely head resting upon her blue-blooded left hand, while her right toyed nervously with a Jacqueminot rose. Her thoughts seemed far, far away; while her mother was in an adjoining room, darning a pair of her husband's socks!

It was a dark night, the stars having evidently gone on a strike, and refused to shine at the per diem compensation agreed upon three weeks previously. Reginald Harcourt had just left the wild revelry of a masked ball, and was hurrying through a lonely street to his abode, several blocks distant. The torchlight bilarity in which he had been indulging had shifted the bow of his cravat under the left ear and his breath was tainted with cloves.

Hark! Footsteps approach—and his heart almost stopped beating when he was suddenly confronted by Luke Babster, the hired tool of his hated rival, John Percy Hamilton, whose acquaintance we made in the first chapter. With a suppressed exclamation of fiendish delight, Babster drew a long, gleaming dagger and plunged it to the hilt into the left breast of our hero. He then quickly melted away in the darkness, leaving the weapon sticking in the victim!

(To be continued.)

CHAPTER IV.

In our last chapter, we left our hero, Reginald Harcourt, with a long-gleaming dagger sticking up to the hilt in his breast. After the commission of the foul deed the assassin repaired to his employer, John Percy Hamilton, with the information that the voice of his rival was hushed forever. But the villain was foiled again.

"It was a mighty lucky thing for me," said Reginald Harcourt, "that I went to the masked ball in the character of Falstaff. This ugly-looking knife has penetrated six inches of the padding necessary in the 'make-up,' without touching my flesh. A wonderful interposition of Providence, truly! If I had gone to the masquerade in the role of a 'living skeleton,' the dagger would have gone clear through me!"

CHAPTER VI.

Blanche Dreeme, looking lovely in an evening gown of pink silk, with short basque bodice, silk crape drapery and trimming, and pleated lace and bows, patiently awaits the arrival of her lover, Reginald Harcourt. A dainty note, which she is perusing for the twenty-seventh time, informs her that he will be with her at eight o'clock, precisely. She glances at the \$500 French clock—one dollar a week, on instalments—and impatiently murmurs: "It is now half-past eight, and still—"

[In order to rapidly reach the climax, we must omit several columns.]

The balloon ascension, having been judiciously advertised in a dozen papers—each of which had the largest circulation—drew a large concourse of people; and as the inflated monster shot upward like a huge bird, it was greeted with cheers from thousands of throats. Higher and higher ascended the balloon, with its two passengers, until it appeared to the spectators below to be no larger than a base-ball.

"Ah! I have you in my power at last!" hissed one of the aeronauts, throwing off a wig and a false pair of whiskers, and seizing his companion in his vice-like grasp. Reginald Harcourt, almost paralyzed with fear, saw that he was again at the mercy of his old enemy, Luke Babster; and before he had recovered from his surprise, he was hurled from the car of the balloon, now at a height of 15,000 feet, and went down—down—down!

(To be continued.)

CHAPTER VII.

When Luke Babster threw our hero from the balloon, as described in our last chapter, he firmly believed that he would never see him again in this life; but "the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a-gley," as the bard so truthfully observes. In his rapid descent, Reginald had a mental panorama of his past life; with a prayer on his lips, he awaited the end. It soon came. A favoring air current had carried them over the snow-capped peak of Mt. Washington. He landed on a snow-drift, 100 feet thick, which broke the force of his fall. He tunneled his way out and spent the night at the Crawford house.

CHAPTER X.

"You shall not escape me this time!" cried Luke Babster; for it was he. And with a sulphurous oath and the aid of confederate, Reginald Harcourt was securely bound to a railroad track. "I've heard of men being secured to a down-track, and the express running past on the up-track; but I understand my business better than that. In five minutes the lightning express is due, and it is coming on the track on which you are bound. You'd better devote the interval to praying."

And with this heartless injunction, the villain and his companion left our hero to his horrible fate. Hark! the rumble of the train is heard in the distance. It comes nearer—nearer—nearer!

(To be continued.)

CHAPTER XI.

When Reginald Harcourt recovered consciousness, he found himself surrounded by a crowd of people, and the wildest excitement prevailed. The lightning express had crashed through a frozen bridge twenty feet of our hero. A dozen persons were killed, and many wounded, but, fortunately, the life of our hero was thereby saved.

A detective advanced the theory that Reginald had tampered with the bridge, and then bound himself to the track to avert suspicion; but seven other detec-

tives, each of whom had a theory of his own, ridiculed the idea of our hero being implicated, and he was released.

"S death!" cried Luke Babster through his clenched teeth. "You have escaped me for the last time, Mr. Harcourt. I'll bet you five dollars that your death is close at hand!" But Reginald was not in a betting mood. He had conscientious scruples against engaging in the reprehensible practice in any way. John Percy Hamilton's hired assassin and accomplice had prepared a grave six feet deep, and, despite our hero's piteous appeals for mercy, tumbled him into the excavation and buried him alive!

(To be continued.)

CHAPTER XV.

Luke Babster and his companion in crime had not proceeded fifty yards from the scene of their diabolical deed, when they felt a peculiar tremor of the earth, accompanied by an ominous, rumbling noise. The guilt-hardened wretches, with terror depicted on their faces, took to their heels and fled toward the city. As the reader may have already surmised, the Charleston earthquake had arrived. One of the chasms made by the seismic disturbance saved the life of our hero. It split his grave wide open before the vital spark had fled; and when he reached the city, the worst was over. In the list of casualties next morning, he read the names of John Percy Hamilton and Luke Babster. What a fortuitous combination of circumstances!

The last chapter of the story is devoted to straightening things out, and telling who is who; and all those who have not been killed, get married; and the reader doesn't know which deserve the most sympathy.

## BABY'S WEIGHT.

IS YOUR LITTLE ONE LOSING OR GAINING FLESH?

If the baby is healthy and well fed, it should increase very steadily in weight. Too often, however, the summer weather retards growth and development; this is always the case when the baby is improperly nourished.

If the little one cannot be sustained fully and regularly on a bountiful supply of healthy milk from its mother's breast, it should receive a daily diet of pure Lactated Food.

When the little one is kept on Lactated Food there is a perceptible daily growth, and a guarantee that no summer troubles will endanger health or life. The manufacturers of Lactated Food have on file hundreds of letters from thankful mothers, testifying to the fact that the good Food is a preventive of dysentery, diarrhea and cholera infantum.

This summer we hear of hundreds of mothers using Lactated Food who never used it before.

A grand work is being done; the babes who are fed on the Food are progressing famously; they are increasing in weight, and rest and sleep well. Are you using Lactated Food, dear mother, for your weak and sickly infant? Give it a trial for one week, the results will surprise you.

## BORN.

Trumanville, to Mrs. Fraser, a daughter.

Amherst, to the wife of Albin Ripley, a son.

Truro, June 30, to the wife of J. D. Ross, a son.

Digby, July 4, to the wife of J. Fred Rice, a son.

Windsor, July 6, to the wife of James Goss, a son.

Yarmouth, July 6, to the wife of Elias Smith, a son.

Smithfield, June 27, to the wife of P. W. Hunt, a son.

Amherst, July 3, to the wife of Simon Travis, a son.

Digby, July 3, to the wife of Brian Convis, a daughter.

Liverpool, July 3, to the wife of Simon Hunter, a son.

Dartmouth, July 4, to Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson, a son.

Halifax, July 5, to the wife of Mr. Whittingham, a son.

Weymouth, July 4, to the wife of Ellis Bartlett, a son.

Truro, July 3, to the wife of Leonard Johnson, a son.

Amherst, July 5, to the wife of Albert Brown, a son.

Yarmouth, July 7, to the wife of W. H. Brackett, a son.

Yarmouth, July 7, to the wife of Hector Golden, a son.

Lower Truro, June 29, to the wife of Fred Johnson, a son.

Margaret, C. B., July 4, to the wife of J. M. Smith, a son.

West River, N. S., July 2, to the wife of J. E. Watt, a son.

Windsor Forks, July 1, to the wife of Isaac Gormley, a son.

Windsor Forks, July 3, to the wife of Albert Beach, a son.

Truro, July 10, to the wife of G. O. Fulton, a daughter.

Avondale, July 6, to the wife of J. J. Warner, a daughter.

Amherst, July 2, to the wife of Thos. Trenholm, a son.

Louisburg, C. B., June 28, to the wife of A. W. Harris, a son.

St. John, July 5, to the wife of James H. Hayter, a daughter.

Canning, N. S., to the wife of William Rand, a son.

Point du Chene, June 24, to the wife of James Sutton, a son.

St. John, W. E., July 11, to the wife of Samuel McLeod, a son.

Windsor, N. S., June 27, to the wife of Harvey Wilson, a son.

Cornish, Me., June 27, to the wife of Rev. J. B. Saer, of St. John, a son.

Liscombe Mills, N. S., July 3, to the wife of John W. Riley, a daughter.

Windsor, N. S., June 26, to the wife of Spurgeon Dodge, a daughter.

Burlington, N. S., June 29, to the wife of Edward Young, a daughter.

Windsor, N. S., June 25, to the wife of Thomas Purcell, a daughter.

West River, Sheet Harbour, July 5, to the wife of M. Neilligan, a daughter.

Halifax, July 4, by Rev. Mr. Chute, Jas. H. Castree to Margaret Balfour.

Fredericton, June 27, by Rev. F. C. Hartley, Allison Riley, a daughter.

St. John, July 11, by Rev. T. Casey, Edward Higgins to Kate Lane.

Truro, June 2, by Rev. T. Cummings, Alex. F. Ross to Mary S. Carter.

Burlington, N. S., June 30, by Rev. W. Ryan, Arthur Lake to Bessie Sandford.

Parrsboro, July 6, by Rev. W. H. Evans, Bent Hatfield to Minnie Fletcher.

St. John, July 4, by Rev. C. H. Paisley, James E. Cowan to Ellen P. White.

Chatham, July 2, by Rev. Neil McKay, Everett Bell to Wilhelmina Moratt.

Lunenburg, July 4, by Rev. D. McElvray, Capt. Ed. Love to Jessie Oxner.

Bathurst, July 5, by Rev. A. F. Thompson, Daniel Morrison to Jessie Murray.

Hopeville, June 28, by Rev. Homer Putnam, Alex. Chisholm to Jane Chisholm.

Halifax, July 4, by Rev. A. Gaudier, J. H. Burton to Caroline E. L. Duncan.

Halifax, N. S., July 4, by Rev. Dyson Hague, John S. Adams to Maggie Fraser.

Windsor, June 27, by Rev. P. A. McEwen, Lawrence Johnson to Eva Gould.

St. John, July 11, by Rev. Job Shenton, Isaac N. Middlemas to Clara D'Orsay.

Marblehead, June 27, by Rev. Frank Sleeper, Wm. H. Hayden to Ella L. McNell.

Campobello, July 2, by Rev. W. H. Street, Arthur W. Hickson to Alice B. Taylor.

Brooklin, N. S., July 5, by Rev. James Sharp, John Bailey to Ellen Rockwell.

Somerset, N. S., July 2, by Rev. T. McFall, Wm. Saunders to Annie M. Phinney.

Yarmouth, July 5, by Rev. E. D. Miller, Chas. Prime to Mrs. Lizzie Stephens.

Fredericton, June 6, by Rev. D. W. Pickett, Charles W. Short to Margetta May Short.

Burlington, N. S., July 3, by Rev. Wm. Ryan, George Salter to Adella Barrett.

Halifax, July 7, by Rev. John McMillan, Zachariah Beaver to Hannah M. Boutilier.

St. John, July 11, by Rev. Monsignor Connolly, Michael Burns to Ellen J. Duffy.

Marystown, July 4, by Rev. J. T. Parsons, Charles W. Dennison to Annie A. White.

Fox River, N. S., July 5, by Rev. W. H. Evans, Isaac Morris to Ellen M. Lewis.

Bathurst, N. S., June 29, by Rev. S. E. Sprague, Ezekiel DeMerchant to Harriet Grey.

Yarmouth, June 26, by Rev. J. H. Foshay, Edgar C. Porter to Guineana Churchill.

St. Stephen, June 27, by Rev. W. C. Goucher, W. O. Garcelon to Ella M. Cuthbert.

Halifax, July 3, by Rev. John McMillan, Daniel McDonald to Christie McDonald.

Alberton, P. E. I., July 4, by Rev. Geo. Harrison, Matthias Hoyt to Marilla Haynes.

Fredericton, July 4, by Rev. F. C. Hartley, John W. Culliton to Josephine Downey.