

SEEN AT THE WINDOW.

A small, low-ceilinged room, with black oak panels: an old-fashioned fireplace, big as the room was small, in which a fire of logs was crackling merrily; around the fire half a dozen people are seated, discussing the unceasing.

I believe that I was the first to start the conversation on its various journey toward the supernatural, by a passing reference to Omar Khayyam. I mentioned Fitzgerald's translation of the poet's "Rubaiyat" as the only piece of literature I knew in which no single line ought to have been written otherwise. They clung to the subject, aroused my enthusiasm, and finally made me read the whole hundred and one verses aloud.

From Persia, we were led, easy and naturally, to the East in general, and thence to India in particular. I eulogized India in a way that provoked Captain Gibson, lately arrived from that country on furlough. He urged that the Hindu had neither pluck or endurance, I brought forward the fakirs, of course, and demanded if any Western nowadays had either the same power of endurance or an equal capacity for turning bodily sufferings to mental and spiritual advantage.

"You refer to their Maskelyne and Cooke performances?" he responded. "Making a rope stand rigid in the air, climbing up it and performing murder at its summit? Pure humbug. You know how that game was shown up not long ago?"

"I know that some one took a camera with him to one of these performances, 'shot' the rope standing upright in the air, with the man and boy on it, and found none of these things in his negative. Well? It one believes the story, what does it prove? You still have the fact that every eye present, except the camera's, saw the man ascend, kill the boy and throw him down."

But Miss Serle, who was seated on the opposite side of the fireplace, and who had seemed curiously interested in the last part of our discussion, carried us both away on a fresh scent.

"I had not heard of the camera experiment before," she said to me; it is interesting."

"Yes?" I prompted gently.

"Only that photography would seem to be the unaccustomed thing in the world. You tell us of a camera that refused to see what was there; I could tell you of one that saw what was not there. But it is not a pleasant story. My friend Lady A. asked me to accompany her to the photographer's one day. We went; the photograph was taken, and the printed copies were to be forwarded to her at the end of the week. They did not arrive either on Friday or Saturday, so Lady A., who was particularly anxious to have them as soon as possible, suggested that we should drive over and fetch them on the Monday. The photographer looked scared when we appeared, and more scared when my friend mentioned the photos. He said that he had printed one single copy, and that nothing in heaven or earth would induce him either to print a second or show Lady A. the first. A woman is affirmed by some people to be neither of heaven or earth, so, perhaps, this account for the fact that the photographer was finally defeated, and forced to exhibit the solitary offspring of his negative. It was brought and laid on the table of the room. Lady A. looked, screamed and fainted. I looked, and, not being in the habit of fainting, I continued to look, with a horror out of all proportion to its cause. What I saw was simply this: Lady A., in conformity with a detestable fashion, had been taken in evening dress, and in the photograph before me there was a slender green snake twined about her neck, foid on told; the head, a livid purple, was drawn back, as if to strike just where the dress came to a point at the bosom.

I took the photograph, placed it on the fire, face downwards, saw it burn to ashes, then turned to the man, who was doing his best to revive Lady A.

"Have you any explanation to offer?" I asked.

"None whatever," he replied; "though it is not the first time this kind of thing has happened within my own experience, and other photographers have told me the same. Generally it is a dagger, dripping blood, that comes out of the center of the forehead; but never have I seen anything to equal that snake. Do you know anything of Lady A.'s history?" he asked, abruptly.

"I did not know much and what little I did know I had no intention of communicating to the photographer—even in camera, so to speak. I went on to say that there was some reason to have been some tragedy in her past, or in that of her parent."

"And is there a finish to the story?" chimed in some one, seeing Miss Serle stumped. "Yes, a very curious finish. Lady A. was sufficiently recovered, in the course of half an hour or so, to reach the carriage with my help; on the way home she insisted on telling me something, although she trembled so at the recital that I wished to prevent it. Her father, it seemed, in addition to being a peer of the realm, was a naturalist, a misanthrope, and three parts a madman; he had an active liking for snakes, and an equally active distrust of his wife, Lady A.'s mother, who happened to be guilty of the double crime of beauty and a fondness for congenial society. Whether some man appeared on the scene; whether he and the wife were to blame I don't know but the husband thought so. Late one evening Lady A., who was nine years old at the time, awoke from a nightmare, and was so frightened that she rushed down into the drawing room; she stopped abruptly soon after crossing the threshold, for on a sofa lay her mother, motionless, her eyes staring upward in awful agony; about her neck was a lithe green snake, coiling and uncoiling itself, bent upon deriving, before it struck, the utmost amount of amusement from playing with its victim. The husband was standing in the middle of the floor, surveying the scene with an air of fustian satisfaction. And I think that is about all; except that the snake, soon after Lady A. entered, drew back its head for the last time and struck home. The father killed himself the same night."

We sat there looking into the fire. No one spoke. The story we had just heard seemed somehow final; there was nothing further to be said.

Captain Gibson was the first to break the pause, with a satirical little laugh. Gibson as we knew him, would rather have died than confess to a belief in anything; his laughter, therefore, was to be expected.

Miss Serle, despite her slight flippancy in narrating the story, flushed. Then she looked him straight between the eyes.

"You do not believe me?" she demanded. "Pardon me, I believe that you and Lady A. imagined you saw it."

"I wonder if any of you know that there is a ghost under this very roof," our host observed. "I have been assured most positively that I am the happy possessor of a haunted house of the first order."

"What does 'of the first order' mean?" I asked.

"Haunted by a phantom that is invisibly horrible. The visibly horrible has been overdone and is commonplace, but this terror which creeps all about you, and touches you otherwise than through your senses, and whispers inaudible tragedies in your ears."

Our host's manner was light, as though the whole matter were an excellent jest to him; but that was his way. I had known him speak just so of heavy personal feelings.

"And where is it located?" was the question. "And do you believe in it?" "In the room immediately above us. As to believing in it, I know that I once spent an experimental night there, and that I am not eager for a repetition of the experience. Before morning dawned I would have given all I was worth to see something, however ghastly, by way of relief."

"Legend attached?" put in Gibson, airily.

"Yes, I will not repeat it, because you can find it all in the last novel that has acquired a vogue. You remember the story of a certain Bishop's daughter and a baronet whom she thought the type of marriage? Also some not very pleasant details of her subsequent death? It was just that story over again. The girl died in the room above us, from the most awful disease known to humanity."

The men present, with the exception of Gibson, were sobered; some of us had cursed aloud on reading of that worthy baronet and the path of chivalry he had pursued.

"The account is overstrained, and muddy reading at the best," Gibson remarked. "It touched him on a tender point."

"Possibly; this happened a hundred years ago, you see, when we were less highly civilized," responded our host.

"There was a perceptible sharpness in his voice, a ring of bitter sarcasm. In a moment, however, he was himself again, and he hastened to lead the conversation into more palatable waters. The entree had been given to ghost stories, great and small, and they followed each other in rapid succession, until an unreasonably late hour.

Three days later, Framley, a new guest, arrived, with a man for a photographer. He photographed everything that he could induce to keep still, and finally suggested that we should form a group in front of the house. After three attempts he pronounced himself satisfied, and went indoors to develop his negative among the imps of darkness. The next day he brought us the printed result; he seemed agitated, and, fearing that he had, by some unlucky accident, spoiled the effect of "the finest light of his life," we crowded round it, prepared with sympathy. Framley, however, ceased to occupy our attention in a very brief space of time.

The window of the haunted room was just above us as we sat on the lawn, and in the photograph it was tenanted. A figure such as wrings tears from the eyes stood there—a figure possessed of that shadow of beauty gone which touches the very heart of pathos. Yes, Framley had contrived to photograph in colors—emphatically. The blotches on the face were peculiarly in evidence.

"Nonsense!" cried Gibson. "No one had spoken, but his remark seemed appropriate. 'The color business I don't pretend to explain; a recent invention, probably.'"

"I know nothing of it," put in Framley. "I tell you," the other exclaimed excitedly, "the thing is preposterous; some chance grouping of lights and shadows, some reflection of the glass."

Our host interrupted him. "It is worth our while to look into this," he said. "Framley shall photograph the house from only; we will give glass no human face to reflect."

Framley did so as soon as there was a favorable light. He looked positively sick as he brought the photograph to us. We looked, and I believe somebody fainted; I was not quite clear myself for a few moments as to what was going on.

I pulled myself together and gave my eyes plainly to understand that they would have to do their duty.

The girl was still there, and had found a companion. Behind her, leaning down upon her, was a thing. Run your mind over all the offspring of original sin you have ever come across, and try to picture therefrom the figure and countenance of the parent that may give you some idea of the figure which clawed at the girl in the photograph.

When I next looked up I saw Gibson leaning against the table; he seemed unwell. Then he got on his feet, stood to his full height and spoke.

"My God, how true it is! The woman and—the representative of some of us, he was not in the first picture—why? Why, you fools?" he repeated with a vacuous laugh. "Because there were other people there. Don't you see, he so respectable! But when the girl is alone—a short life and a merry one," he broke off inconsequently—or was it consequently, in higher degree than the self-evident?"

When I was in—I went to the private asylum there and asked after Captain Gibson.

The doctor informed me that there was absolutely no hope of his recovery.—Halliwell Sutcliffe.

The New Girl in New York.

One of the better table d'hote restaurants up town was nearly filled with diners a few evenings ago when a bevy of young women, unattended by male escort or chaperon, swept into the place. There were six in the party, the oldest possibly twenty-eight and the youngest about twenty. There was no hint of diffidence in the manner of the leader, and as the manager of the establishment came forward to meet the newcomers she anticipated his inquiry by a request for a table for the party. The manager led the way to the other end of the room, where an oblong table was given them. With the selection of the first

course an order was given for a small bottle of light wine for each member of the party, the choice being equally divided between Sauternes and St. Julien. As the meal proceeded the conversation of the young women became more animated, and it was soon apparent from the remarks that were occasionally overheard that the young woman who acted the part of hostess contemplated an early marriage. Each one of the other young women, proposed a toast appropriate to the occasion, and the glasses were drained every time. When the meal was finished and the ice cream had been disposed of, sweet cordials were ordered, and the conversation became livelier than ever, but it all centred upon the hostess. It was the bachelor girl's farewell dinner to her intimate friends, and although it might be thought by many that a public restaurant was hardly the proper place for an affair of this kind, the young women seemed indifferent to their surroundings, and were apparently insensible to the presence of strangers.—N. Y. Sun.

Chinese can do Some Things That Puzzle the Rest of the World.

A Chicago attorney, Mr. L. L. Mills, once had occasion to throw out an indictment which had been returned against a Chinese laundry-man upon the charge of having assaulted a policeman with intent to kill. The evidence proved to be absurd and so the Chinaman got off, very grateful, of course, to Mr. Mills for his act of justice. In pigeon-English he assured the attorney that his kindness would not be forgotten.

Five or six years after this Mr. Mills was visited by a delegation of wealthy Chinese richly dressed in native costume. After presenting the different members of the family with various presents—teas, fans, silk, etc., in recognition of Mr. Mills's kindness to their countryman, the spokesman of the party asked the attorney to let him have a cabinet photograph of the children of the household, which he saw on the mantelpiece. It was a group and very good. Mr. Mills thought the request a strange one, but under the circumstances he could hardly deny it. "By and by you will know why I want it," said the Chinese gentleman.

This incident remained a mystery until quite recently, when there arrived a parcel from Hong Kong containing an enlarged water-color reproduction of the photograph, giving the details of expression and color with startling fidelity.

"This is our present to you," said the Chinaman.

"But how was it possible for that artist on the other side of the globe to know what shade of color to give to the hair and eyes of these children whom he never saw?"

The Chinaman replied that the art of photography was so thoroughly understood in China that it was easy to determine from the revelations of the magnifying glass just exactly what color and what shade and what tint were represented by such and such impressions as the photograph retained and exhibited.

Torture by Water Drops.

The torture this inflicts is proven by an experience of Sandow, the strong man. When he was in Vienna, a school teacher bet him that he would not be able to let a half-litre of water drop down upon his hand until the measure was exhausted. A half-litre of water is only a little more than a pint. Sandow laughed at the very idea of his not being able to do this. So a half-litre measure was procured, and a hole drilled in the bottom just sufficient to let the water escape drop by drop. Then the experiment began. Sandow laughed and chattered gaily—at first. The schoolmaster kept tap upon the number of drops. At about the two hundredth Sandow grew a little more serious. Soon an expression of pain crossed his face. With the entrance into the third hundred his hand began to swell and grow red. Then the skin burst. The pain grew more and more excruciating. Finally, at the four hundred and twentieth drop, Sandow had to give up and acknowledge himself vanquished. His hand was sore for several days after.

The Polite Burglar.

It is said that even the most gentlemanly of our burglars have much to learn from Japan in the way of politeness, if one may judge by a description of the manners of robbers in that country. Three men broke into a dyer's house while he was away, and one of them gently asked the wife how much money there was in the place. She answered that there was just a little in the house. The robber laughed and said:—"You are a good old woman, and we believe you. If you were poor, we would not rob you at all. Now, we only want some money and this," placing his hand on a fine silk dress.

The old woman replied: "All my husband's money I can give to you, but I beg you will not take that for it does not belong to my husband, and was confided to us only for dyeing. What is ours I can give, but I cannot give what belongs to another."

"That is quite right," approved the robber, and he immediately withdrew with his confederates.

"Say 'Your Grace' Boy."

This story of the Duke of Hamilton is given in The Gentleman's Magazine: "At the 'meet' concluding a hunt recently, when the Duke himself was present, the services of a bright Suffolk youth was requisitioned to hold his Grace's horse. The Duke addressed some kindly remark to the boy, who promptly replied, 'Yes, sir!'"

"Why don't you say 'Your Grace?'" interposed one of the attendant horsemen.

"Say 'Your Grace' boy!" Whereupon the youngster reverently put his hands together, and audibly recited the words "For what we are about to receive," etc. Not so bad for silly Suffolk! It need scarcely be said that he presently had due cause for thankfulness.

Blessings of Head Winds.

When Christ directed his disciples to cross the Lake of Galilee on a certain night he did not give them the control of the weather. He knew that a storm was coming, but he did not tell them. They found it out for themselves before they had gone very far, and Peter who was an 'old hand'

on that lake, had never known a rougher night or a surlier sea. The wind is right in their teeth and the waves hammer the bow of their fishing smack like iron sledges. With all their sturdy pulls at the oars they made but little headway. They were learning some lessons that night, and so are some of your readers, who are just now passing through storms of trouble and enveloped by the darkness of a mysterious Providence. They are learning the blessings of head winds.—T. L. Cuyler.

A FAVORITE PRESCRIPTION.

HOW IT CURED MRS. SOMERVILLE, OF BRANTFORD.

Her Case Had Endured Ten Years of Treatment—The Trouble Brought on by an Attack of Typhoid Fever—She is Again Enjoying Good Health.

(From the Brantford Nationalist.)

That Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are a favorite medicine in Brantford and vicinity will be readily borne out by the local druggists, and that much suffering has been alleviated by the use of this wonderful healer, is amply shown by the number of strong statements in favor of Pink Pills from this section. And yet the number of cases published is small in comparison with the total number that have found benefit from the use of this great blood builder and nerve restorer. It is true that Pink Pills are used in many cases to tone up the system, enrich the blood and stimulate the nerves where no serious illness exists; but it is equally true that in many cases in which they have been used, other medicines have failed, and the result achieved by Pink Pills may very truly be characterized as marvellous.

The editor of the Canadian Nationalist came across just such a case recently. It is that of Mrs. S. Somerville, a well-known and highly respected resident of this city. Mrs. Somerville does not seek notoriety, but is willing that for her shall be made public in the hope that some other sufferer may be benefited thereby.

"My illness at first," said Mrs. Somerville, "was a serious attack of typhoid fever. Although I recovered from the fever it left its effects that have caused me many years of misery. The doctor said that my blood had become impregnated with poison and that it would take a long time to radiate it. The trouble seemed to have its chief seat in my limbs, which caused me a good deal of pain. For about ten years I continued doctoring, not continually, but at times, and I tried many remedies without permanent results. This went on until the end of '93, when I became so much crippled up that I despaired of getting relief. I had read much of the remarkable cures through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and became interested in them. One day I asked my physician if I might try them. He gave his permission and I began using them. By the time the third box was finished I found myself very much improved—in fact, the pains had entirely left me and I was growing healthier and more fleshy. I continued using the pills until I had taken six boxes more, when I felt that I was entirely cured, and was enjoying better health than I had done for years. I am satisfied that to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills I owe my recovery, and have implicit confidence in their curative power, and shall continue to recommend them to other sufferers."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People are not a patent medicine, but are a long tried prescription acting upon the blood and nerves. They are of great value as a tonic—recovery from acute diseases, such as fevers, etc., building up the blood and system, preventing the often disastrous after effects of such troubles. Sold by all dealers or sent post paid at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. Refuse all imitations and substitutes.

Clearing the Air.

About every ten years there is a revolution, financial, or political, or topical. Whatever it is, I have come to look upon it as a financial cataclysm, throwing tens of thousands out of employment and dissipating fortunes, is a good thing. But these catastrophes are the result of defects in the legislative or business machinery. They clear the air. Great storms at sea send to the bottom many good ships, many admirable sailors, but they clear the atmosphere, they purify it so that the rest of the world breathes better and is more healthful. In future we will have revolutions as acute as any that have been. They may overturn the existing order of things. Well, if they do overturn it will be because the existing order of things has to be dispensed and overturned to make way for something better.—Chauncey Depew.

Sold Book and Manager.

A good story is told of one of the canvassers of a leading publishing firm in London. He found his way into the parlour of a branch bank, and saw the manager, who as soon as he learnt his business, ordered him out. Very quietly he said:

"I meet with so many gentlemen in the course of the week that I can afford to meet a snob occasionally," and took his departure.

Next day he called at the bank again, and wished to open an account. He was again shown in to the manager, and gave very satisfactory reasons for opening the account, and deposited £270. The manager could not do less than apologize for his rudeness on the day preceding, and ordered a copy of the work, an expensive one, and allowed access to the clerks, several of whom did the same. Two days afterwards every farthing was drawn out.

How They Do in England.

According to a correspondent of Tit-Bits, a certain employee under the post-office wished to insert a nail in the wall of his department in order to hang his coat and hat. The rules in connection with the post-office are somewhat singular, and in order to obtain this boon permission must be asked in writing from the head-quarters in London. This the official in question proceeded to do. Time passed, and nothing was heard. Ultimately, at the expiration of one year and eight months, word was received sanctioning the insertion of the nail. Meanwhile, the employee had taken consumption, and died several months before.

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Illustration of a man and a woman at a desk with a typewriter. Text: Give me Progress please.