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BELIEVERS IN WITCHCRAFT

Superstition Very Prevalent in Pioneer Days of Buckeye State.

VIRTUES OF THE SILVER BULLET

Killed the Horse, But Suspected Mischief-Worker Succumbs—Death Probably Due to Old Age.

MYSTERIOUS MALADY ALSO ENDS

[Copyright 1903 by American Press Association.]

One does not always have to go to Africa, nor to Uncle Remus and Daddy Jack for a good tale of witchcraft. Right in this very section of twentieth century civilization there are to be found even now some people who believe in wizards and witches, and a great many who have their doubts on the subject. In the pioneer days there was a more or less belief in the unanny and the mysterious, and witches were often told of as being present and doing their mischievous works in the very community itself.

Almost a century ago there lived in Hamilton county, Ohio, along the Mill creek valley, a wealthy farmer whose acres were broad and fertile, and whose herds and flocks were many. He gave particular attention to the raising of a specially fine breed of horses, of which he had reared a magnificent herd. Just as he was congratulating himself on his success in this venture a strange and baffling sickness broke out among these fine animals, numbers of which succumbed to the malady and died. Not only could they not be cured by any available skill or medicine, but also the nature of the disease remained a mystery.

At length someone whispered a suspicion that the victims had been bewitched. This idea took firm root in the superstitious and worried mind of the owner of the horses, and he at once set about to discover the witch. He consulted with some wisecracks, who told him how to put on a certain mixed-up mess of herbs to brew in an iron pot, and that this brew would tell him by some mysterious means who was the witch. He gathered the ingredients and set the pot to boiling. It happened that while he was at this work he went to his cabin door to get a breath of fresh air. While there he saw his son's wife leave her cabin some 200 feet distant and go to the spring for a bucket of water. To the frightened fancy of the witch seeker this movement appeared ominous. He did not think she was the guilty party, but he thought so much on the matter that he ordered his son to take his family and move away to another locality. The son, fearing his father's frenzy, obeyed.

It is not told whether the pot revealed the witch's identity or not, but anyhow, soon afterward, the excited man got the notion that a certain aged and respectable woman named Garrison, who lived some eight or 10 miles distant, was the cause of all his troubles. He did not hesitate to let his suspicions be known, with the result that the old lady heard of his accusations and was greatly distressed thereat. But the witch mania had taken so deep a hold on the farmer that he could not by any means be turned from his course.

At last he determined to try a method which was told to him for killing the witch. Accordingly he made a silver bullet which he loaded into a musket and fired at one of his sick horses. According to the formula this should have cured the animal and killed the witch, no matter at how great a distance she may have been. The silver bullet did, however, kill the horse. Nothing daunted the witch-finder awaited further developments.

It so happened that not long after this experiment, Mrs. Garrison, from age and distress, did actually die, and the owner of the horses believed firmly to the day of his death that his silver bullet had killed her, the wicked witch who had done him so much injury. About this time the disease which had wrought such havoc among his horses had reached its climax and the trouble was over.

The coincidences in the case were odd and fully convinced the farmer as to the exact nature of his calamity and that he had found and worked an effective cure. No amount of argument ever, even after years, was able to shake his blind and superstitious faith in his belief. It was always his opinion that while for some unexplained reason the silver bullet had not cured the horse, it had rid the countryside of a malignant witch and that the loss of the horse was not to be compared with the gain resulting from her death.

C. L. SMITH.

THE OLD QUAKER ASSEMBLY.

Frontier Settlers Appealed in Vain for Protection Against the Indians.

[Copyright 1903 by American Press Association.]

In the settlement of the colony of Pennsylvania two elements were prominent. One was the Quakers, men of peculiar religious beliefs and fully opposed to war. The other was the Germans, classes of this sturdy people who were imbued with singular communistic notions. These latter were a peaceful agricultural people, who were so deeply absorbed in their own simple pursuits that they could

with difficulty be persuaded to take any large interest in the affairs of people at a distance. These two classes constituted the people, and made up the colonial assembly. They were early set hard in their opposition to the proprietary governors of the colony, and the existence of this long-continued quarrel was a matter of great sorrow and suffering among the settlements to the west of the mountains.

As these settlements were pushed farther and farther to the west, the opposition of the Indians took on a more and more bloody form. In their distress the pioneers called often and loud for the protection which they had a right to expect from the colonial authorities. The proprietaries were always ready to do what they could, but money and men were imperatively needed to protect the frontier, neither of which were easy to get from the assembly.

The Quakers were not in favor of warlike movements, especially when their own scalps were not in any danger of being lifted, while the German farmers in the eastern counties were so much taken up with their crops and stock that they cared but little to spend their money to save the lives of people who had been so foolish as to venture away from a good cleared country out into the wilderness. And besides, both Quakers and Germans were opposed to doing anything the proprietaries wished them to do. As a result of this sad state of affairs we frequently find the appeals of the suffering settlers unheeded, while the governor and the assembly fought over theoretical questions of rights.

In her beginnings Pennsylvania was able to make but a miserable showing in a military way, leaving her exposed outposts to suffer full often unprotected, but in later generations she has redeemed her reputation in this line.

C. L. SMITH.

MASSIE'S SETTLEMENT.

Prosperous Village Founded Through Liberal Inducements to Immigrants.

[Copyright 1903 by American Press Association.]

In Adams county, Ohio, is the town of Manchester, lying close to the Ohio river. Here was made the first settlement in the old Virginia military tract in 1790. It was the only white settlement which was ventured in all the country lying between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers before the year of the treaty of Greenville, in 1795. Colonel Nathaniel Massie was the projector and chief spirit of the enterprise.

Massie was engaged in surveying that portion of the valley, and during the winter of 1790 planned to make a settlement there, in order that better protection might be afforded while the country was being laid out. To advertise his plan he caused it to be noised abroad through the adjoining sections of Kentucky and a general invitation sent out for immigrants.

By way of a material inducement he offered an outlet and inlet and 100 acres of land to each family which would come and settle in the new town which he was to found. These terms were fully attractive enough even at that day of cheap land values, even if they were limited to the first 25 families who should take up the offer. More than 30 families were soon obtained for the new community, and after several consultations and much examination the fertile bottom land just by the lower one of the Three Islands was determined upon as the best place for the settlement. The surveys were soon completed, the promised allotments of land made and the town of Manchester was founded.

Colonel Massie was an active worker and a fine leader of men, so that under his guidance the town was soon well under way. It is related that by March, 1791, all the cabins were erected and a strong palisaded fortification was finished about the whole place, with blockhouses at each bastion.

This was the fourth settlement within the present bounds of the state of Ohio, and was a very highly favored community. Its early years were those of the deadliest Indian warfare on the border, yet so watchful and so fortunate were the Manchester pioneers that they were scarcely ever even interrupted in their pursuits by the great struggles so near at hand.

C. L. SMITH.

A WASTED EFFORT.

Indian's Idea Regarding Eating of the Apple in Garden of Eden.

[Copyright 1903 by American Press Association.]

When the Indian frontiers had become less dangerous by the passage of time missionaries came out to preach the Christian faith to the red tribes. An amusing story is told of the time one of these worthy men had in trying to make himself understood.

He prepared and preached a sermon on the fall of man, telling the Indians in very minute and careful fashion how our first parents got into trouble by eating an apple, and of all the sad consequences of their act, and of the coming of Christ to repair the damage done by sin.

All this was listened to with becoming gravity by the assembled tribesmen, and when the missionary had finished one of the chiefs rose and said:

"What you have told us is all very good. It is indeed bad to eat apples. It is better to make them all into cider. We are much obliged by your kindness in coming so far to tell us those things, which you have heard from your mothers."

The remarks of the missionary in reply are not on record.

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