

CATCHING A GHOST.

"MY DEAR HORTENSE, I congratulate you on your good fortune," said my Aunt Jerome, as she kissed me fondly and bid an affectionate adieu.

"Thank you," I replied faintly, as I stepped into the old rumbling stage-coach and started on my journey. As we turned the lane I caught one glimpse of my aunt's pale, care-worn face, and turning away I wept bitterly.

"There, child, don't take it so hard," said a kind-faced old lady who sat opposite. "Be a-going away to school," she added.

I could not help smiling at her innocent supposition, for I was fully twenty; but thanks to my aunt's bringing up, I was not dressed in the prevailing fashion of the day. Ah! no; my dress of coarse homely material was by far too short, and the brown hair, that long ago should have been done up into chignon or puffs, was left to hang in bright, clustering curls, so that at twenty I looked like a girl of seventeen.

I was not going to school, but to "Ivy Lodge," as its heiress and mistress. I had lived with my Aunt Jerome ever since I could remember. Life was dull and sad at the old brown farm-house, but I was poor and penniless, and being naturally shy and reticent, I dared not face the world, and lived much like a snail drawn up in his shell, seldom putting out his head to get a peep of the outside world.

One day there came to our quiet home a great sealed letter. Uncle Jonathan, after vainly trying to make it out, called in the village schoolmaster, who, upon examining its contents, exclaimed in his own droll way:

"Well, I declare, if old Barnaby ain't gone and died, and left little Tennie a fortune!"

Barnaby Merritt was my mother's father. He had disinherited her, driven her from his home, for marrying a poor man. He had never seen me, his only grandchild, but, strange to say, at his death left me his entire fortune.

There was a clause in his will which read as follows:

"I give and bequeath my entire property, both real and personal, to my granddaughter, Hortense Clare, on condition that she reside on the estate known as 'Ivy Lodge' for one year. Should she on any condition or for any reason leave said house, she will forfeit all claims to it, and it will then go to my nephew, Reginald Merritt."

On those claims and conditions I started on my journey, but not without many tears and heartaches. I loved dear Aunt Jerome and Uncle Jonathan dearly, and fancied that the very flowers in their diminutive front-garden would miss me.

"Ivy Lodge," in the bright, morning sunlight—this was how I saw it. A grand, spacious mansion, with ivy clambering over its porticoes, casements and ruined towers. I confess to a feeling of real pride as I walked up the white, glistening walks to think that I was mistress of it all.

The very flowers seemed to welcome me, as they lifted their fair faces, and tiny brown sparrows peeped from the branches overhead, chirping a welcome.

"You are welcome to Ivy Lodge," said Betty, the housekeeper, as she stood in the doorway, looking so neat in a bright print dress and new cap; while the other servants peered curiously out from behind doors, all anxious to catch a glimpse of the "new missis."

Oh, the anguish of that moment! I could hear the suppressed giggle of the servants as I, the "new missis," stood before them, with a very red face, a mere child in appearance, dressed in plain jean dress, cotton gloves and great old-fashioned Leghorn bonnet.

"Will I call your maid?" said Betty, noticing my embarrassment.

"I think so—that is, if you please," I murmured faintly, not knowing exactly what to say.

I laid my bonnet aside, and after bathing my flushed face, proceeded to the dining-room, where I met for the first time Reginald Merritt; for he it understood he was an inmate of Ivy Lodge as long as I wished to entertain him.

"Why, Cousin Hortense," he exclaimed, coming forward to greet me; "I am delighted to see you," and he made an effort to kiss me.

But I drew proudly away. Although I was a mere child in appearance, I was still a woman at heart, and, extending my hand said coldly, "How do you do, Mr. Merritt?"

"Well, I declare!" he said, laughingly, "my little cousin is rather indifferent. It was only cousinly, you know. My! what a big girl you've grown to be, Tennie," he resumed. "How old are you now? Let me see—eighteen—nineteen—"

"Twenty," I answered, and the meal was finished in silence.

I did not like my cousin Reginald. There was treachery in his dark, handsome face. I feared him. If I should

dle the property would go to him. Might he not kill me? There was enough of the demon in him to do it, I well knew. Or, worse than death, he might compel me to marry him.

Six long, dreary months passed, and I awoke to the truth, shut my eyes to it as I would, that Reginald was making love to me.

Seated one, cold, wintry evening in the library, gazing into the bright fire, thinking of dear Aunt Jerome, whose letters came regularly to me, like bursts of sunshine, when Reginald came to my side, saying:

"How nicely we could live here all by ourselves, Tennie—not as cousins, but as man and wife."

I silenced him with one scornful glance. I'd grown to be quite a woman; I could not be otherwise, after living in this old, ghostly, gloomy house. Ghostly, indeed, it was. Strange sounds were heard in its vacant rooms, and weird faces peeped in at the casement, while Betty told me, in a confidential whisper, as we stood in the picture gallery gazing at a rare old painting of a sweet Madonna face, that it was "Miss Eunice, who had been found dead in her bed—poisoned, some people said."

"Ever since the house had been haunted," said Betty, "and I've often heard my poor, dear master say," she continued, wiping her eyes on the corner of her apron, "that the woman who would live in the house one year he would leave to her his property. That is why the will reads: 'On condition that she live in said house for one year.'"

What was I to do? The very thought of a spectre in the house was intolerable, yet the servants declared they had seen it gliding through the halls. When I spoke of it to Reginald, he would laugh and say, "Old women's nonsense."—Once he came to me with a grave face, saying, "It is strange, Hortense, very strange; I've seen the spectre."

I was sitting at the window one evening looking out at the ghostly shadows. I had grown restless and nervous of late. I would start at the slightest sound. The old oak tree that stood outside my window seemed to be beckoning its gaunt, bare branches at me. It was a fearful life. "I cannot stand it," I said aloud. "I will go back to the old farmhouse and dear Aunt Jerome, and leave this lonely, ghostly house to Reginald Merritt."

I heard a low, mocking laugh, and turning saw—Betty the housekeeper.

"Shall I bring in the candles, Miss Hortense?" she said.

I looked at her. Could it have been her that laughed? No; she looked quite sober, quite composed. Who then was it? "Did you hear it, Betty? That awful, mocking laugh?" I asked, clutching her frantically by the arm.

"There, child, you are nervous," she said, soothingly; "you had better go to bed. You will feel better in the morning."

I followed her advice, but was aroused from my sleep by a loud piercing shriek. I sprang from my bed, but could see nothing. All was darkness. Suddenly I heard the rustle of garments; the door swung open and a tall form entered. Great Father! was it some terrible nightmare? I saw before me the spectre. It was a woman. She gazed mournfully at me, and, turning, left the room with swift, gliding footsteps. I followed.

Down the broad, oaken stairs past the dim old picture gallery, past the ghostly, vacant parlors, and stood face to face with it in the servants' hall. I reached out my hand and grasped the spectre. It was flesh and blood, for it winced under my cruel grasp. Doors were thrown open, white, scared-faced servants gathered in the hall. Last of all came Reginald Merritt, bearing a night lamp. I turned to view the spectre, and saw neither ghoul nor demon, but—Betty, my housekeeper. "What means this trickery?" I said, turning fiercely to Reginald Merritt. "What plot is this to rob me of my rights? Leave my house this minute, sir; the same roof shall never shelter us."

I had guessed the truth. Betty, who was quite a ventriloquist, had been employed by Reginald Merritt to utter those piercing shrieks and mocking laughs. As a last effort to drive me from the house she had enacted the part of spectre. It is needless to write that I dispensed with the services of Betty. The ghostly shadows soon fled. Peace and sunshine reign, and to-day I am free, undisputed mistress of "Ivy Lodge."

A Learned Canary.

A lady in Saratoga was attracted recently to a beautiful canary bird by its close resemblance to one she had lost last spring. She was informed that the songster had been found one chilly morning perched upon a window-sill. The lady said that her bird had been taught to perform the pretty little feat, when given its liberty in a room, of picking up a pin and sticking it into the carpet. The cage was opened, and, as

the canary flew forth, the lady threw a pin upon the floor. The bird immediately flew down to it, caught it in its bill, dexterously stuck it in a perpendicular position in the carpet, and then it hopped off a step or two and warbled forth some of the sweetest notes, as if in exultation of the feat it had accomplished. It was the long-lost songster.

THE BEACON LIGHT.

IT WAS Sunday evening in a little village lying towards the far West of England, where, on fine, calm days, the gentle murmur of the sea's waves might be heard as softly rippling up they broke in subdued splashes upon the shore; but to-night the wild wind was abroad, rocking the tall trees to and fro, and lashing into fury the boundless ocean, which reared its mighty strength against the dark rocks, while the huge breakers, white with foam, dispersed themselves in quick succession with a loud roar upon the beach.

Above the whistling of the wind and the noise of the waves there rang forth the clear, sweet tones of church bells calling the poor and rich, the young and the old of that hamlet to the house of God; and as friends and neighbors met at the door of the hallowed edifice, many were the remarks passed upon the roughness of the night and the dangers to which those whose lot it was to be tossing upon the ocean's wave that evening would be exposed. There were many among the congregation who, as the sweet tones of the organ rose and fell, breathed a prayer for all who might be in peril throughout the long dark hours of the night, and hard indeed must have been the heart which did not join earnestly in the hymn "for those at sea," with which the service was often closed in this humble village church.

The congregation had dispersed, the sacrifice of prayer and praise had been offered, whether carelessly or fervently, only one could tell, "who alone judgeth the hearts of men," and it was with rather a weary step that the vicar of the parish crossed the burial-ground, so quaintly named by the Germans, "God's Acre."

Suddenly there fell upon the clergyman's ear a distant sound which arrested his steps; he listened attentively, thinking to hear it repeated, but naught could he discern, save the moaning of the night wind as it hurried by and the splash and roar of the waves as they came thundering in upon the shingle. Fancying he must have been mistaken, the vicar moved on, then paused as if irresolute. What was the cause of his hesitation, what the thought which had suddenly crossed his mind? Even this, Was the beacon alight? "You may save brave men, perhaps, from a watery grave this night," urged a still, small voice within.

But selfishness whispered that it was not the vicar's duty to set the beacon alight, and why should he, therefore, delay hastening home to a cheerful fire-side? A moment's hesitation, only one moment's, and then, not long afterwards, a bright light could be seen, far out at sea, shining forth to save, perchance, human beings from a sad death, who else on the morrow's morn would have opened their eyes upon another world.

Some months rolled away, and the vicar often pondered over the distant boom which he fancied had met his ear on the Sunday evening now so many weeks ago, when one morning he received an official letter, requesting information as to who had set light to the beacon in the village, upon that eventful and stormy night.

The letter was answered, giving the information desired, and giving the exact circumstances of the case. Not long afterwards the clergyman received a handsome gift, sent to him by no less a person than the present Emperor of Germany. It was accompanied by a document, thanking the vicar for his act of humanity upon that Sunday evening and affording a full explanation of the sound which had attracted his notice. By the lighting of the beacon the vicar had been the means of saving from utter destruction a man-of-war, and it was the booming of guns in distress which had fallen upon his ear.

During the time of which I write, a fierce conflict was raging between the armies of two foreign countries, and the loss of one of their chief vessels would have been of serious importance to the vast Empire which proved so victorious in the war; but it was not of the brave ship that the clergyman thought as he gazed on the Emperor's kindly gift, but rather of the human beings who had been in such imminent peril that night, and who had been saved from a watery grave.

One thought more before I close this little story, which may teach us many a lesson; we never know the great consequences which may hang upon what appears to us as only a paltry act of love or kindness. In all things, if we would listen to the voice of duty and of conscience, we should daily be the humble means of showing forth a far greater

light than ever shone from any earthly beacon, for it will be a light gathered from the Cross, which was lifted up centuries ago on Cavalry's height, whereon hung One to whom in all ages souls tossed upon the waves of this troublesome world have looked, and in looking have been preserved from eternal death.

AT HAND.

BUSY housekeepers, who feel they have "no time" for personal improvement, might really do a great deal in this line if they would but keep the means always "at hand." A book on the stand, and an easy rocker by the side of it, would often lure her to read a page or two in the little pauses which are constantly occurring in the busiest day. A page carefully read and well thought over, as you go about your duties again, will prove a most valuable means of improvement, far beyond the benefit you would receive from the desultory reading of a whole volume at one sitting. It is not what we eat that makes us strong, but what we digest; and the same is true of our mental food. Do not put the good book you so long to read away on the shelf of the book-case in a distant room, but keep it near you, just at hand, and before you know it you will find yourself at the last page and ready for another. So of your good magazine or paper. Have them handy and take the good of them, even if they get a little soiled and crumpled. It is in a good service.

When the bright evening comes, look out that you secure a cozy nook in which to place your own rocker, and let it always be known and respected as "mother's place." Here bring, not your work-basket, but your reading, and your knitting, if you like, and spend the evening in a way that will both profit and rest you. It will be a saving of time and nerve power and muscle, and every mother has need to husband these resources to their utmost. Life is never too long for the work she has to do, and the best gift she can give to her household is a happy, healthful, intelligent mother. The children from such homes are "living epistles, known and read of all men."

Better than the Presidency.

During the past year, many discoveries were made of high grade ore in Chalk creek, and enough was taken out to continue the operation of the smelter until late in the season, and still leaving much upon the dumps to make an early start upon this spring. There are many mines of exceeding great value in this district, and possibly the most notable is the Tilden, on the summit of Boulder Mountain, it showing a vein from 5 to 9 feet in width, and three classes of ore: first, galena, from 2 to 18 inches in thickness, assaying from one to four hundred ounces to the ton; second, decomposed sulphurets, from 6 to 12 inches thick, assaying two to three hundred ounces; and third, a porphyritic rock carrying native silver, running from one to two hundred ounces. This mine was not discovered until late last spring, and has only been opened to any extent within the past six months. It is owned by five miners, who prior to its discovery were poorer than Job's turkey.—Some months ago they were offered \$100,000 cash for the mine, and negotiations required but the signatures to consummate the sale, when they concluded to retain possession themselves, satisfied that there was much more than a hundred thousand in the property.—The Rocky Tourist.

Who Can Blame Him?

A sensation was produced in the Beech Street Mission Church, at Paterson, New Jersey, Sunday afternoon by a large dog which ran into the church, and after running around for a while, sought out the prettiest girl in the congregation and then sprang on her lap and affectionately kissed her. The girl had never seen the dog before, and her astonishment and fright may be imagined. The dog was put out of the church several times.

A Baltimore pickpocket defeated an attempt to take his photograph for the rogues' gallery by making wry faces.—Thereupon the police labeled him "thief" and marched him up and down a crowded street until he promised to sit quietly before the camera.

A female child was recently born in Salem township, Westmoreland county, which is remarkable from the fact that its eyes are located a considerable distance below their natural places, while the ears resemble those of a cat, and instead of hands the claws of the same animal appear.

In a mass of evidence before the Supreme Court of Indiana is the statement of a woman of that county, who testifies to having had six husbands. Her memory is defective in that she avers she cannot remember the name of her second husband.

Self-denial is a grand virtue; we always delight to see it in other persons.

VEGETINE

IS RECOMMENDED BY ALL PHYSICIANS.

Valley Stream, Queens Co., Long Island, N. Y. Mr. H. B. Stevens: Dear Sir,—I take the pleasure of writing you a small certificate concerning Vegetine prepared by you. I have been a sufferer with the Dyspepsia for over 40 years, and have had the Chronic Diarrhoea for over 6 months, and have tried most everything; was given up to die, and did not expect to live from day to day, and no physicians could not touch my case. Saw your Vegetine recommended to cure Dyspepsia. I commenced using it, and I continued doing so, and am now a well woman and restored to perfect health. All who are afflicted with this terrible disease, I would kindly recommend to try it for the benefit of their health, and it is excellent as a blood purifier. By T. B. FOUNS, M. D., for MRS. WM. H. FORBES.

VEGETINE.—When the blood becomes lifeless and stagnant, either from change of weather or of climate, want of exercise, irregular diet, or from any other cause, the Vegetine will renew the blood, carry on the putrid humors, cleanse the stomach, regulate the bowels, and impart a tone of vigor to the whole body.

VEGETINE.

FOR CANCERS AND CANCEROUS HUMORS.

The Doctor's Certificate.

READ IT.

Ashley, Washington Co., Ill. Jan. 14, 1878. Mr. H. B. Stevens—Dear Sir: This is to certify that I had been suffering from Rose Cancer on my right breast, which grew very rapidly, and all my friends had given me up to die, when I heard of your medicine, recommended for Cancer and Cancerous Humors. I commenced to take it, and soon found myself growing better; my health and spirits both felt the benign influence which it exerted, and in a few months from the time I commenced the use of the Vegetine, the Cancer came out almost bodily. CARRIE DEFORREST.

I certify that I am personally acquainted with Mrs. DeForrest, and consider her one of our very best women. DR. S. H. FLOWERS.

ALL DISEASES OF THE BLOOD.—If Vegetine will relieve pain, cleanse, purify, and cure such diseases, restore the patient to health after trying different physicians, many remedies, suffering for years, is it not conclusive proof, if you are a sufferer, you can be cured? Why is this medicine performing such great cures? It works in the blood, in the circulating fluid. It can truly be called the Great Blood Purifier. The great source of disease originates in the blood; and no medicine that does not act directly upon it, to purify and renovate, has any just claim upon public attention.

VEGETINE.

I regard it as a Valuable

FAMILY MEDICINE.

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The Rev. Wm. McDonald is well known through the U. S. as a minister in the M. E. Church.

THOUSANDS SPEAK.—Vegetine is acknowledged and recommended by physicians and apothecaries to be the best purifier and cleanser of the blood yet discovered, and thousands speak in its praise who have been restored to health.

VEGETINE.

THE M. D.'S HAVE IT.

Mr. H. B. Stevens—Dear Sir—Have sold Vegetine for a long time, and find it gives most excellent satisfaction. S. D. DE PRIEST, M. D., Druggist, Hazleton, Ind. June

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