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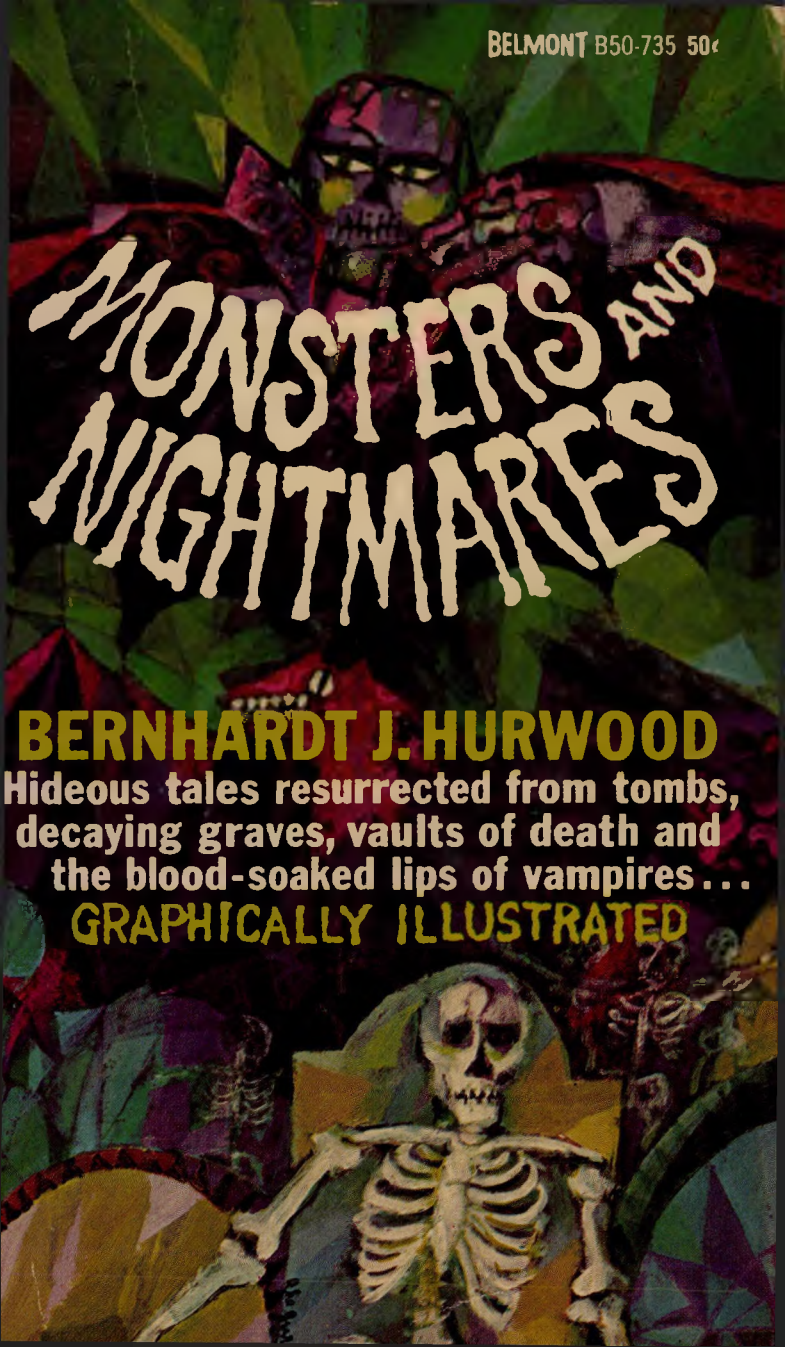

MONSTERS AND NIGHTMARES

BERNHARDT J. HURWOOD

Hideous tales resurrected from tombs, decaying graves, vaults of death and the blood-soaked lips of vampires...

GRAPHICALLY ILLUSTRATED

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Graphically Illustrated

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MONSTERS AND NIGHTMARES

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A man named Mullins was passing a graveyard when he noticed a huge, luminous white object oozing from the grave of a recently buried Mr. Peters. This glowing monster-sized maggot with disconcertingly human eyes began to glide over the ground with the rippling motion of a caterpillar until it reached the front door of the vicarage. The next day the vicar and his entire family were dead.

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MONSTERS AND NIGHTMARES

The Monstrous Maggot of Death

ONE OF THE MOST hideous and malevolent apparitions ever reported to have been seen was a maggotlike thing alleged to have haunted the churchyard of a little Yorkshire village many years ago. It was first seen on a clear moonlit night by the local postman, a man named Mullins. He was on his way home at the time and passing the graveyard, when he noticed a huge, luminous white object that seemed to be oozing from the grave of a recently buried Mr. Peters. It wriggled about like a gigantic worm. Horrified yet fascinated all at once, Mullins stood and stared at the thing in disbelief. As his eyes became more accustomed to the gloom he soon realized that what he saw was apparently a monster sized maggot that glowed like some hideous, gargantuan glow worm. Most disconcerting of all were its eyes. They were malignant, vicious, and eerie, for there was a decidedly human look to them. It glided over the ground with the rippling motion of a caterpillar and left in its wake a saliva-like trail of slime, similar to that deposited by snails or slugs.

Frightened as he was, Mullins followed the ghastly thing, making sure to keep at least ten yards behind as it glided in and out among the tombstones. When it left the churchyard it headed straight for the front gate of the vicarage, went up the path straight for the front door of the house, then disappeared from sight on the threshold.

Thoroughly shaken by what he had seen Mullins turned and hurried home as fast as he could walk, not feeling entirely safe until he was sitting before his own fire.

He told his wife all about his weird experience and repeated it again for his best friend, but said nothing to anyone else. Then, on the following night the three of

them went to the churchyard to see if they might encounter the awful thing and find out what it was. They had been waiting for some time when it finally made its appearance. It issued from the same grave as before. They followed it along approximately the same route it had taken before until it disappeared on the threshold of the vicarage.

The next day the vicar and his entire family became violently ill and died before sundown. The physician who examined them diagnosed their fatal seizures as ptomaine poisoning.

Again that night Mullins, his wife, and their friend returned to the churchyard and waited to see if the hideous apparition would turn up again. It did. This time, however, they followed it to the house of the local blacksmith. It did not have to visit him a second time, for within twelve hours he became ill and died of the same "illness" that had wiped out the vicar and his family. For the next few nights nothing happened at all. Mr. & Mrs. Mullins and their companion concluded that the phenomenon, whatever it had been, would be seen no more. Just to be on the safe side, however, they decided to maintain their nightly graveyard vigil for at least another week. On the tenth night it appeared again. This time, to their horror, it went straight to the Mullins' own house. The next day their only child, a five year old boy was seized with a violent fit of vomiting and died within an hour after the attack.

Filled with emotions of grief, and hatred for what he was now convinced was a definite malevolent entity, the postman determined to take matters into his own hands. The night after his son had died Mullins accompanied by his wife and friend went once more to the cemetery. This time they took special precautions to make sure that no one saw them as they went about the task they had set for themselves that night. While his wife held a hooded lantern, Mullins and his friend grimly dug up the grave of the late Mr. Peters. When they reached the coffin itself Mullins pried off the lid. The contorted features of its occupant were so unspeakably horrible to look upon, so inhuman, Mullins let out an involuntary gasp and almost fainted from the shock.

Slamming the lid down again it took him a few minutes to compose himself. Then with the aid of his wife and friend Mullins, the strongest of them, dragged the coffin out of its grave. Once it was on the ground they rested for a few minutes, then carried it to a field where they saturated in with kerosene and burned it to ashes. After that they returned to the churchyard and refilled the grave. To make certain that they had eliminated the source of the malignancy they returned to the graveyard for a number of nights afterwards, but the ghastly maggot was never seen again.

Mullins reported later on that he was never able to understand one strange aspect of the affair. He recalled that the dead man, Peters, had been on very bad terms with the vicar before he died, and had similarly regarded the blacksmith as his enemy. Although he himself had been acquainted with Peters there had never been any bad blood between them. Why then, had the maggot thing visited death upon his house? He never learned the answer to this cruel riddle.

Time Out From Her Tomb

THE FOLLOWING story is one of the oldest detailed accounts of a vampirelike creature, although certainly not a malevolent one. The only resemblance to a vampire as we know one is that the dead girl in the story came back from her tomb in the flesh. Her motive, however, was anything but deadly.

The story is fragmentary, for the beginning has been lost. The author, Phlegon, was a freed Greek slave who lived in the Second Century AD, and his tale is taken from a work called *De Miribilia,* or *On Marvels.* It contained a number of similar stories dealing with ghosts, monsters, and strange births. Of course, Phlegon wrote his anthology as fact, despite what any modern critic may say of its validity. So it is presented here without comment as to whether it actually happened or not.

Since the first part of the tale is missing, it is difficult to say why Philinnion, the dead girl, behaved so strangely when she returned. The remaining fragment begins with a strange scene in the house of the girl's parents, Demonstratus and Charito, six months after their daughter's death.

Knowing perfectly well that Philinnion had been dead and buried for six months, her old nurse was astonished to see the girl creep into the house one night and slip into the guest room where a young man named Machates was staying.

Upon seeing the girl apparently alive, the woman ran at once to Charito insisting that she come up and see for herself. The news so shocked the poor woman that she became hysterical and fainted. When she recovered she angrily ordered the nurse to get out. Not one to be put

aside so easily, the nurse finally convinced Charito to accompany her to the guest room.

When the two women softly approached the chamber all was silent. But upon peeking through a crack in the door both of them could clearly see that the girl—whoever she was—lay in bed with her arms about Machates. In the dim light it was impossible to make a positive identification, but Charito was reasonably certain that she could recognize her daughter's clothing. Just to be safe, however, she decided to wait until morning and question Machates when he awakened.

Although the girl slipped away from the house before sunrise Charito confronted Machates with the matter and begged him to tell her the truth. He was quite willing to do so, but unfortunately, he was unable to shed much light on things. To begin with he did not know that Charito and her husband had recently lost their daughter. But when he learned that her name had been Philinnion he turned pale, for that was the name of the girl who had just left his bed. Furthermore, he revealed nervously, she had been coming to him for many nights. She had told him, he said, that she had to visit him on the sly because it was without the knowledge of her parents. To prove what he said Machates showed Charito a gold ring and a breastband that the girl had left behind. At the sight of these objects the woman almost collapsed, for she recognized them at once as belonging to her dead daughter.

Loosening her hair and wailing mournfully, she threw herself to the floor and tore her clothes. Soon the other members of the family followed her example until the household sounded as if a funeral were in progress. Poor Machates was beside himself and begged them all to be quiet, promising that if the girl came back to him he would let them know at once.

His words seemed to satisfy them and soon they regained their wits. That night, however, they kept a careful watch. Before it had grown too late the girl came to keep her rendezvous with Machates. She slipped into his room and sat down in the bed. Thoroughly upset by now, Machates wanted to know the truth. He could hardly believe that the girl who had been coming to him nightly

was a corpse, for they had eaten together, drunk wine together, and made love until dawn. He was convinced that Philinnion's tomb had been vandalized; that the ring and other tokens had been sold to his mistress's father.

He was just about to ask her to tell him the truth, but desiring that her parents also hear what she had to say he signalled to them.

They burst into the chamber and were struck dumb with amazement, for there before them was their dead daughter. Unable to restrain themselves they rushed to her and embraced her, weeping, crying aloud, and covering her with kisses. Then Philinnion drew back, looking at them mournfully, and said,

"Oh, mother and father, it was wrong of you to grudge me these days with this man. It was in my own home, and we did no harm. Now, because of your meddlesomeness, you shall mourn for me once more, for I must return to my appointed place. It was by the consent of the gods that I had done thus, but now it is denied me."

She had barely spoken when she fell to the floor, again a corpse, at which time everyone became nearly hysterical with grief, terror, and confusion. They carried on so loudly that soon the neighbors heard what had happened, and in no time at all the story spread throughout the town.

A report of the matter soon reached Phlegon, the author, who apparently had some status then as an official. It was his job to keep order, for by now the townsfolk were so frightened by what had happened, they were on the verge of committing some mass disorder.

The next day Phlegon presided over a town meeting at the local amphitheater. It was decided there to examine Philinnion's tomb at once. A delegation of official witnesses went there, the vault was opened, and on all the niches were found bodies, or bones belonging to various members of the family. In the portion which had been allocated to Philinnion, however, there was nothing but an iron ring and a golden cup—both presents Machates had given her on the first night she had come to him.

Severely shaken by what they had seen, the delegation went to the house of Demonstratus to see the body of Philinnion, which was still lying in the guest chamber.

After this they held another public meeting to discuss the matter. The principal speaker was Hyllus, a seer and diviner. He recommended that the girl's body be taken beyond the limits of the town, and there be burned to ashes. Under no circumstances, he said, should the cremation be performed within the town itself. Furthermore, he specified certain ceremonial rites which he insisted must be performed. His recommendations were accepted unquestionably by the townsfolk, but Machates, unable to bear the thought of losing his mistress forever, committed suicide.

The Philosopher and the Ghost

THERE WAS once in Athens a large and stately house, which had unfortunately acquired the reputation of being haunted. It was well known as a place where, in the dead of night dreadful sounds were heard, piteous howls, clanking of chains, heavy footfalls, shrieks and moans. Furthermore, it was whispered that the sounds were accompanied by the appearance of a ghostly old man who was the personification of misery and filth. His hair was wild, his beard was long and tangled, his robes were tattered and mangy. He was shackled and chained by heavy fetters which rattled and clanked as he dragged them wearily about, moaning hollowly with every step.

Sometimes when he was seen he would glare balefully at the spectators and shake his arms with furious impotence. On more than one occasion skeptics offered to spend a night in the house and invariably they were terrified to the brink of madness. Worse yet, it was the fate of nearly everyone who ventured to the dreadful spot after dark to be stricken fatally soon after their frightful vigil.

In time the house was avoided by all persons. Efforts to rent it proved utterly vain, and as the years passed the place deteriorated into a crumbling ruin overgrown with vines and weeds.

Now it happened that the stoic philosopher Athenodorus, while visiting Athens, passed this lovely spot one day and looked upon it as an ideal place to live, study, and work in solitude. Upon inquiring about the place and learning that it was for rent at an exceedingly low price, he offered to move in at once. The owners were honest men and they told him about the dismal reputation of the house. It did not bother the philosopher in the least. He

signed a lease and asked that a single room be furnished for him. He required only the barest essentials, several chairs, a bed, a table, and a lamp.

Since his needs were so meager, he established himself before the end of the first day. He had all that he needed to pursue his contemplations, his studies, and his writing. On the first night, however, he decided to do nothing but observe and see if the story of the dreadful phantom were indeed true. For hours nothing happened, and eventually Athenodorus became so absorbed in his philosophical reveries that he completely forgot the fact that he was in a haunted house. He took out his writing instruments and began to work. Suddenly he began to hear the sound of a rattling chain in the distance. It came closer and closer, growing louder with every passing minute. Soon the disturbance became worse. The clankings of the chains became interspersed with dreadful moans and piteous cries. It was more than he could bear, he looked up from his writing and saw before his eyes the very figure of the apparition which had been described to him.

The phantom fixed its blazing eyes on him and beckoned with a long bony finger. To what must have been the ghost's utter consternation the philosopher signaled with his hand that he was too busy and he returned to his writing. Obviously determined not to be put off so easily, the ghost began shaking its chains and moaning so continuously that it was impossible for Athenodorus to concentrate. Realizing that there was nothing for him to do but give the apparition his undivided attention he gazed at it intently. He realized at once that it was trying to lead him out of the room. With a sigh of resignation he rose from his chair, took his lamp, and indicated to the spirit that he would follow it. With that, the thing turned and proceeded to lead the philosopher through decaying, dust filled chambers, creaking, cobweb filled corridors, and finally through a door leading out into the garden. Moaning all the while, it led the way to a dense clump of shrubs, then sighing with a shuddering final groan it vanished into the blackness.

Athenodorus, seeing that he was now quite alone made a little cairn of stones to mark the spot, then he returned

to the house where he went to bed and slept without interruption until sunup.

The moment he had dressed he went to the authorities and told them in detail what had happened the night before. An investigation was decided upon at once. Magistrates, workmen, and witnesses were dispatched to the garden and Athneodorus led them to the spot he had marked the night before. The workmen began to dig. Several feet beneath the surface they struck something hard. Eagerly they cleared away the earth and gasped when they found the mouldering remains of what had once been a man. The skeleton was chained and shackled in fetters so ancient that on exposure to the air they crumbled to dust. The bones were carefully taken away and placed into a proper grave, and the house was never troubled by a nightwalking phantom of any kind again.

The Old Woman and the Tiger

THE FOLLOWING TALE was originally told by a great 17th century Chinese author, P'u Sung-Ling, who has been called "the last of the immortals." Many of his stories were pure fancy while others were true. They were filled with wonder, dealing with ghosts, vampires, demons and other fantastic subjects. All of them, however, came from the heart and soul of China, and P'u Sun-Ling rendered them in poetic form of the highest órder. How much of this one is true, and how much is fantasy must be decided by the reader.

In the village of Chao Cheng there was once an old woman who lived in a modest cottage with her only son. He was her sole support and the source of all her pride and love. One evening he did not return from the hills, for he was attacked and devoured by a ferocious tiger. Upon learning of her son's fate, the old woman's grief was so unbearable that she wanted to die. With tearful wails of lament she went to the local magistrate and demanded that the tiger be arrested and punished as a murderer. At first the judge laughed and said that the request was both foolish and impossible. But the woman paid no attention and continued her exhortations. Losing his patience at the woman's seeming stupidity, he ordered her to leave his office. Still she remained firm and refused to go. Finally, realizing that the old woman was deranged by grief and old age, he took pity on her and promised that he would have the beast arrested. That was not good enough for her. She would not go home until she had seen that a warrant was indeed issued.

At first the magistrate was taken aback, and he asked which of his underlings would be willing to take on this difficult task. It presented a thorny problem, for in those

days Chinese constables and detectives received no pay. Their entire income was dependent on a complicated system of bribes. Still, it was necessary for them to produce tangible results of some sort, for if they did not they were either beaten at periodic intervals or forced to pay for the quarry's crime themselves.

To the magistrate's surprise one of his men, Li Neng, stepped up and said that he would undertake to arrest the tiger. It was obvious that he would never have made such a brash statement under ordinary circumstances, but at the time he was magnificently drunk. Delighted at this, the magistrate issued the warrant and was finally able to talk the old woman into going home.

The next day when Li Neng sobered up he bitterly regretted what he had said about arresting the tiger, but consoled himself with the assumption that the judge had issued the warrant merely to get rid of the old woman. Handing the warrant to his superior, he took it for granted that the matter was ended.

"Oh, no you don't," said the magistrate sternly, "You said you were going to arrest the tiger, and arrest the tiger you will!"

Li Neng was horrified. He dropped to his knees and pleaded to be excused from serving the warrant, but the judge would not relent. Finally the unhappy constable asked for permission to conscript some of the local hunters in order to help him catch the tiger. The permission was granted and within twenty-four hours a full scale hunt was under way.

After a month of unsuccessful searching, Li Neng was beaten several times in accordance with local custom, for he had so far failed to turn up so much as a tiger whisker. By now in a state of utter despair, he went to a holy shrine nearby where he prostrated himself alternately weeping and praying to the gods for help. Hearing a strange sound near the entrance, Li Neng turned, and to his terror saw a huge tiger staring at him with great yellow eyes. Thoroughly convinced that he was about to die he braced himself, but when he saw that the tiger did nothing but sit quietly in the doorway staring, Li Neng's courage returned. He rose, and addressed the tiger, saying,

"Oh tiger, if you are the one who slew the old woman's son then you must let me put this rope around your neck and bring you before the magistrate."

To his amazement the tiger lowered its head, drooped its ears, and allowed the rope to be put around its neck. Then without protest the great creature let Li Neng lead it to the magistrate.

The magistrate, of course, was as shocked as had been Li Neng but he was a dignified old man filled with wisdom befitting his years. Composing himself, he looked the tiger firmly in the eye and asked,

"Did you indeed eat the son of that old woman?"

The tiger nodded its head affirmatively. To this the judge said,

"It is the law that murderers should pay with their lives. Not only was that son the old woman's sole support, he was her only child and the flower of her heart. Now she is alone in her old age and will die if no one cares for her. If you will be as her own son you will be pardoned for your heinous crime."

Once again the tiger nodded affirmatively, and with that the magistrate ordered that he be released. Naturally, when the news of this reached the old woman she was furious, for she felt that the tiger should have been put to death.

However, on the following day, when the old woman opened her cottage door, she saw a dead deer lying before the threshold. By selling the venison and pelt she was able to obtain enough money to buy food. From that day on the tiger brought her something every morning. Sometimes he even brought her money and other valuable objects, so that in time she became very wealthy and lived even more comfortable than she would have had her own son lived to care for her. She was able to have a larger house built for her, a house with fine furnishings and an elegant verandah. She came to love the tiger dearly and often he would come and spend the night, sleeping peacefully on the verandah when he was tired.

Eventually the old woman died. The next day the tiger came down from the hills, entered the house, and roared piteously until the very walls shook. Fortunately enough money had been saved to provide the woman with a fine

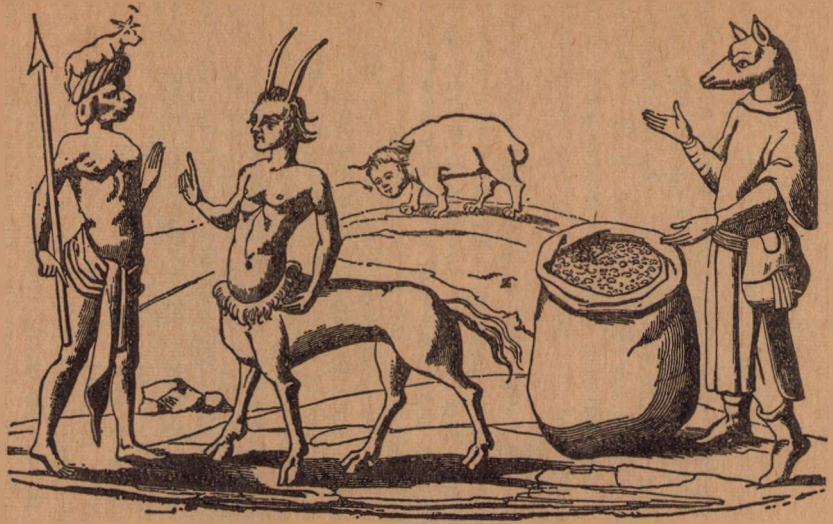
funeral, an event that was never forgotten by a single person who attended. As all the friends and relatives were standing about the grave, a tiger appeared as if from nowhere, causing everyone to flee in terror. But the mighty creature paid attention to no one. Instead he stalked up to the mount, raised his head to the skies, and roared like the thunder itself. Then he turned, ran off, and was never seen again. Because of this the people of the district erected a shrine honoring the faithful tiger, and as far as anyone knows it is there today.

The Wer-Hyena

In a Nyassaland village there lived a girl who refused to have anything to do with a single suitor who came her way. At last a handsome stranger, who came from a far off land, aroused her passions and upon obtaining the consent of her parents, agreed to marry him. What she did not know was that he was a hyena, masquerading as a human being.

Several days after the wedding had taken place, the girl made ready to journey with her bridegroom to his home village. Her younger brother, however, suspected that there was something evil about his new brother-in-law, and asked to be taken along on the wedding trip. Naturally, his sister refused. The youth said nothing. He merely waited until the couple had departed, then, after a sufficient length of time had elapsed, he began following them. By crouching down and hiding in the tall grass whenever he came too close he managed to keep the pace without any difficulty. Finally, when he felt that they had travelled too far to send him back he revealed himself to the surprised couple. But instead of being allowed to remain with them the poor lad was driven back by his sister's husband with severe blows and dire threats. He pretended to go back, but in reality he dropped out of sight and continued to follow them in secret.

When the couple finally reached the village of the bridegroom neither was aware that the young brother was still with them. The youth, after making his presence known to the other villagers, was permitted to remain and was given a place to sleep among the chickens. He remained awake, however, and waited until after dark. Then he crept out to see what was the cause of a certain commotion going on outside. He saw at once what appeared



to be a convention of hyenas. They formed a ring around the house in which his sister slept and chanted,

"She is our game, and we will eat her when she is fat enough."

His suspicions confirmed, he slipped back into the hen-house and waited until morning. Then, when the hyenas had once again taken human shapes, he went to his sister and told her what he had seen and heard the night before. At first she was very angry with him and refused to listen. No matter how hard he tried to convince her of the danger she remained firm and closed her ears to his words. Finally he had to leave. When it grew dark he returned to his sister's hut and asked her to allow him to prove the truth of what he had been telling her. When she finally consented he tied a long piece of string to one of her toes. Unrolling it carefully, he took the other end with him as he went back to the chicken coop. Late that night when the hyenas began dancing again the boy pulled on the string and woke his sister up. This time she was able to see and hear for herself, and recognize the mortal danger she was in.

The next day the young brother borrowed an adze from one of the hyena-men, explaining that he wanted to make himself a toy top. Instead he cleverly fashioned a magical wooden bowl. When it was finished, he and his sister climbed into it, and upon his chanting a certain incantation the bowl began rising up into the air. Thus, despite the angry pursuit of the hyenas the two were arried safely back to their home village.

Tales of the Russian Vampire

WHETHER or not the Soviet Russians of today believe in vampires is hard to say. Officially they undoubtedly deny such things as vigorously as they deny the existence of God. Their ancestors (many of whom are still alive) did believe.

Specific characteristics of Russian vampires varied according to district. But regardless of minor differences they all had a major similarity—they were ghastly, terrifying, and loathesome. The following are typical of the tales circulated among the Russians at one time, and firmly held by all who told and heard them to be true.

The Peasant and the Coffin Lid

A peasant was driving along one night with a cart full of clay pots. His horse became tired of pulling such a load and unexpectedly came to a halt in front of a graveyard. The peasant unhitched the horse to let it graze for a while and took the opportunity to get a little rest himself. He lay down atop one of the graves, but somehow, was unable to fall asleep.

He lay there for some time. Suddenly the grave began to shake, for it was opening beneath him. He felt the movement and sprang to his feet immediately. He watched as the grave gaped open and its occupant, a corpse wrapped in a white shroud, emerged with the coffin lid clutched in its hands. It paid no attention to the terrified man as it ran to the nearby church and laid the coffin lid at the door, after which, it began walking toward the village. Being essentially a brave man, the peasant regained his composure. Besides he was curious. Pick-

ing up the coffin lid he took it to his cart and waited there to see what would happen next.

In a little while the corpse returned, and was just about to snatch up its coffin lid when it realized that it was gone. Frantically the corpse began searching and finally tracked it down to the peasant and said to him,

"Give me my coffin lid, for if you don't I'll tear you to bits."

"Do you see this hatchet?" replied the peasant, brandishing it before him, "If there's any chopping to be done, I shall do it."

With that the corpse changed its tune. "Please, my good fellow, give me back the lid."

"I'll give it to you when you tell me exactly what you've been up to."

"Well," answered the corpse reluctantly, "I've been to the village where I killed a couple of children."

"In that case," said the peasant, "You had better tell me how they can be brought back to life."

The corpse hesitated, then finally said, "Cut off the left skirt of my shroud, take it with you to the house where the youngsters lie dead, and pour some live coals into a pot. Put the piece of shroud in with them, then lock the door. The boys will be revived at once by the smoke."

The peasant followed the corpse's instructions and gave the coffin lid back. The corpse immediately returned to its grave and was just in the process of climbing back in when the cocks began to crow. This prevented the dead man from covering himself completely. As the dawn rose one end of the coffin lid remained sticking up out of the ground.

The peasant saw this and made a careful mental note of it. As it grew lighter he rehitched his horse and drove back into the village. From within one of the houses he heard loud cries of mourning. He went inside and there saw the two dead boys.

"Don't cry," he said, "I can bring them back to life."

"If you can do that," said the family, "We'll give you half of everything we own."

The peasant did everything the corpse had told him, and accordingly the boys soon returned to life. The fam-

ily was overjoyed, but instead of keeping their promise, they seized the peasant and tied him with ropes, saying,

"Oh no you villain, we're turning you over to the authorities. If you knew how to bring them back to life, then it must have been you who killed them in the first place."

"What are you talking about?" cried the peasant. "In the name of God, I tell you that you are mistaken!"

With that he told them everything that had happened to him the previous night. Naturally, the news of this spread rapidly through the village and soon all the townsfolk gathered in the churchyard. They found the grave that the peasant had spoken of, dug it up, and drove an aspen stake through the heart of the corpse so that it might never rise again. Realizing that the peasant had spoken the truth, they heaped praise and rewards on him before sending him with great honor.

The Corpse and the Dog

A thick-headed peasant went out hunting one day and took his favorite dog with him. He walked and walked over forests and bogs, but could find no game. At last the darkness of night descended upon them. When it was nearly midnight they passed by an old churchyard, there, at a crossroads, the peasant saw a hideous corpse standing before him in a white shroud. The man was terrified. He did not know whether he should keep right on going or to turn around and run.

"Whatever happens," he finally decided to himself, "I'll keep on going."

Ahead he went with his dog trotting along at his heels. When the corpse saw the pair it began to pursue them, its feet not even touching the ground, its shroud fluttering in the cold night air. When it caught up with the hunter, it rushed at him with a fearful howl. But the dog seized it by the bare calf of its leg and began struggling furiously. When the peasant saw the dog grappling with the corpse he was delighted to have escaped himself, and he started running towards home as fast as he could. The dog kept fighting with the corpse until the cock crowed at which time it fell lifeless to the ground. Then the dog

ran off in pursuit of its master. It caught up with him just as he reached his house. Rushing at him angrily, the dog attacked the man savagely. It was so persistent that it was all the peasant's family could do to prevent him from being slaughtered.

"What has come over the dog?" asked the man's old mother, "why on earth should he suddenly hate his master so?"

When she was told what had happened she furrowed her brow, shook her head anxiously, and said, "A very bad thing, my son. The dog is disgusted at you for not having helped him. There he was fighting the corpse all alone, only to learn that he was deserted by his master, who thought only of saving his skin. Now he will hold a grudge against you for the rest of his life."

The next morning while the rest of the family was about, the dog remained perfectly quiet. But the moment his master appeared the hackles arose on the creature's neck, he bared his teeth and began growling with rage.

The only thing the family was able to do was chain the dog up. Whenever the master was out of sight he was a perfectly calm dog, but the moment the man came near him he would snarl, growl, and bare his fangs. For no matter how much time passed he would not forget how his master had deserted him in his moment of need. One day, breaking loose from his chains, the dog leaped at his master's throat, determined this time to finish him off, and the only way the peasant was able to save himself was to kill the dog instead.

The Soldier and the Vampire

Once a soldier of the Czar went home on a furlough. He trudged and trudged for many days, finally coming near to his native village. Not far from there lived a miller who had been the soldier's best friend in the days before his military service. Since it was along the way the soldier decided to pay his old comrade a visit. The miller was delighted, and brought out food and liquor. The two men began drinking, eating, and talking about old times. Soon they completely forgot about time and before they knew how late it was darkness had fallen.

Realizing that he must be off, the soldier rose and announced that he must take his leave. But the miller exclaimed, "Spend the night here, my friend. It's late and perhaps you might get into trouble if you venture out now."

"What do you mean?" asked the soldier.

"God is punishing us. A terrible warlock died here recently, and every night he rises from his grave as a vampire, and wanders through the village. He does such dreadful things that the bravest of us dare not go out after dark. Even you must beware of him."

"Not at all," said the soldier with a smile, "I belong to the Czar, and as you know, the Czar's property cannot be drowned in water or burned in fire. So don't worry about me. Besides, I'm anxious to see my family as soon as I can." With that he left the miller's house. Now it happened that the road he had to take home passed by the very graveyard in which the dreaded warlock lay buried. As he passed he noticed what appeared to be a fire blazing on one of the graves. Deciding to investigate for himself the soldier vaulted the fence and approached it. When he was close enough to see what it was he saw that it was the warlock, sitting alongside the fire calmly sewing his boots.

"Halloo there!" cried the soldier.

The warlock looked up with a malignant scowl on his face and said, "What do you want here?"

"I want to see what you are up to."

Surprised at the soldier's boldness, the warlock threw his work aside and said, "Come with me, we shall go into the village and make merry tonight. There's a wedding going on, we'll find mountains of food and oceans of vodka."

"Fine," agreed the soldier, "Let's be on our way."

They came to where the wedding party was in progress and they were treated as honored guests. As the warlock had predicted there were immense quantities of food and drink. He guzzled so much vodka, however, he became frightfully drunk. He howled and roared, bared his fangs, and chased all the family and guests from the house. Then he cast a spell over the bride and groom which threw them into a deep sleep. With that he took

out two vials and an awl. Piercing the hands of the bride and groom with the awl, he drew off enough blood to fill each vial. When he was finished he said to the soldier, "Alright, now let us be off."

Away they went and soon the soldier said, "Tell me, why did you draw those two vials of blood?"

"In order to kill the bride and groom," said the warlock, "Tomorrow morning no one will be able to awaken them. I am the only one who could possibly bring them back to life."

"How the devil could you manage to do that?"

"Oh, that's easy, all one has to do is cut each one of them in the boot of their heels, then just pour the blood from the vials back into the wounds. I have the groom's blood in my right pocket and the bride's in my left."

The soldier listened carefully without letting a word escape his attention. Then the warlock began boasting again. "I can do whatever I wish," he said.

"I suppose," said the soldier, "it would be absolutely impossible to get the better of you."

"Not at all," answered the warlock, "If anyone really wanted to get rid of me, all he would have to do would be to build a pyre of aspen wood and burn my body on it. Of course, he would have to watch very carefully while the fire was burning, for snakes, and worms, and dreadful reptiles would creep out of my guts, Crows, magpies, and jackdaws would come flying out of my breast. All of these would have to be caught and flung back onto the pyre. If so much as a single maggot were to escape then there would be no help, for in that maggot I should escape."

The soldier made silent note of all these details carefully. He and the warlock kept on talking and finally they arrived at the grave. "Well, my friend," said the warlock, "now I must tear you to pieces, otherwise you might decide to reveal my secrets and be the end of me."

"Don't be ridiculous!" the soldier sneered. "I serve God and the Czar, my person is inviolate."

The warlock laughed nastily, gnashed his teeth, then sprang at the soldier with a frightful roar. The soldier had no intention of being overcome quite that easily. He drew his sword and began slashing at the warlock with

broad sweeping strokes. They struggled and fought fiercely. Soon the soldier was ready to drop with exhaustion.

"Oh God!" he thought to himself, "I'm almost lost, and for nothing!"

But suddenly, a rosy glow began creeping across the sky and the cocks began to crow. A glassy look came over the warlock's eyes, he went limp and fell to the ground in a heap—a lifeless corpse until the following sundown.

Sheathing his sword, the soldier took the vials of blood from the warlock's pockets and went straight home. His family was delighted to see him. They asked him if he had seen any disturbances during the night, but he replied that he had not.

"You are very fortunate," they said, "We have had terrible things going on here in the village. A warlock has taken to plaguing our peace."

They talked and feasted and soon it was night again and they went to sleep. The next day when the soldier woke up he said, "I understand there was a wedding here in the home of one of our townsfolk."

"There was indeed," replied one of his relatives, "But the bride and groom died mysteriously."

"Where is the house?" asked the soldier.

They told him, and without saying another word he went to the place at once. When he got there he found the entire family and most of the neighbors weeping profusely.

"Why are you mourning?" he asked them.

"Because the unhappy bride and groom have died," said the relatives.

"What would you give me," asked the soldier, "if I brought them back to life?"

"If you could do such a thing," they said, "we would give you half of our worldly goods."

At once the soldier did exactly as the warlock had instructed him, and in no time at all the young people were alive again. Instead of weeping there was now great rejoicing in the household. The soldier was treated like one of the family and rewarded richly.

With that he left and went directly to the house of the magistrate, telling him that if the villagers followed his

directions they would be able to rid themselves forever of the troublesome vampire. His offer was received with enthusiasm. The first thing he did was order the peasants to bring a hundred cartloads of aspen wood to the graveyard. There they dragged the warlock from his grave, placed him on a pyre, and set it afire. Meanwhile the peasants formed a circle around the blaze with their brooms, shovels, branding irons, and pitchforks. Soon the pyre became completely enveloped in flames. The warlock began to burn. His corpse burst open and out crept worms, snakes, and other loathsome reptiles. Out came flying crows, jackdaws, and magpies. But the peasants were ready for these creatures. They knocked them down and flung them into the fire, not allowing so much as a single maggot to creep away. And so the warlock was thoroughly consumed. The soldier collected the ashes and strewed them to the winds, after which there was peace in the village.

Naturally the hero received the gratitude of the entire community. He stayed at home for a while and enjoyed himself immensely, feasting, rejoicing, dancing, and making love to beautiful girls. When he went back to the service of the Czar he was a rich man. Thus, after he had served his time in the army he was able to retire, come home, and live the rest of his life in peace, comfort, and contentment.

A Russian Rip Van Winkle

Many many years ago there lived in a small Russian village two young men. They were great friends and inseparable companions, in fact, they regarded one another as brothers. One day they made a mutual vow. Which ever of the two would marry first was to make certain that his comrade came to the wedding, even if the bachelor was dead.

About a year after this one of the two fell ill and died. A few months later the survivor decided to get married. On the day of the wedding he gathered together all his relatives and friends, and set off to get the bride. Now it happened that they had to drive past the cemetery in which the bridegroom's old friend lay buried. Re-

membering his old vow, the young man stopped the wedding procession and said,

"I am going to my old comrade's grave. I shall ask him to come and enjoy himself at my wedding. He was a great friend and I must keep my word to him."

So he went to the grave and called aloud, "My dear comrade, I invite you to my wedding!"

Suddenly the earth began to tremble, the grave yawned, the dead man rose up and said,

"Thank you, brother, for remembering your promise. And now that we may take advantage of this happy occasion, enter my abode and we will drink a glass apiece."

"I cannot, my friend, the whole wedding procession has stopped outside, and everyone is waiting for me."

"Oh, come brother," said the dead man cajolingly, "surely it won't take long to have a single drink."

Thus persuaded, the bridegroom jumped into the grave. The corpse poured two drinks and they tossed them down as in times gone by. What the bridegroom did not know was that a hundred years passed by.

"Have another drink, dear friend," said the dead man.

They drank again—and another hundred years passed.

"And now dear comrade, let us have a third cup, "said the dead man, "then go in God's name and celebrate your marriage."

They drank the third cup—and a third hundred years passed away. With that the dead man took leave of his friend. The coffin lid fell shut and the grave closed.

The bridegroom now looked about him. Where the graveyard had been was now a piece of wasteland. There was no road, no wedding procession, no relatives. All around were tall weeds, nettles, and ruins.

He ran to the village, his heart filled with alarm, but the village was not what it had been. The houses were different, the people were all strangers. Frantically he sought the priest, another stranger, and told him everything that had happened. The priest searched through the old record books and found that three hundred years before, a bridegroom had gone to the cemetery on his wedding day, and disappeared. His bride, after waiting an appropriate period of time, had married another man.

The Traveller and the Corpse

MANY YEARS ago a man who lived in Rome received word that a very dear friend residing some distance away had died. He journeyed at once to the town where his deceased friend had lived and personally attended to the funeral. The day after his friend had been buried the man sadly set out for the trip back to Rome.

That night, depressed over his loss and weary from the day's travel, he stopped at a wayside inn. He had barely gone to bed when he heard a peculiar sound. Looking up he was horrified to behold the sight of his dead friend pallid, silent, and clad in his shroud.

"What do you want?" he cried out in terror.

But the dead man remained silent, making no noise other than the scraping of his feet upon the floor. He shuffled stiffly to the bedside, his dead eyes open and staring. Speechless with terror the Roman watched the corpse take off its cerements and climb into bed alongside him. Nearly insane with fright he tried to pull away, but the dead man turned and reached out to embrace him. Savagely and with desperation he tried to repel the clutching hands of the corpse, which were rigid and cold as the tomb. The dead man grimaced horribly and glared through withered eyelids. Then, still without uttering a sound, the corpse climbed stiffly from the bed, put on its winding sheet once more and departed. The unfortunate man was so mortally frightened that he became severely ill and nearly died himself. He recovered, however, but until his dying day never forgot that one dreadful night.

The Vampire Count de Moriève

IN *Another Grey Ghost Book,* by Jessie Adelaide Middleton, we find the following account, which she claims to be true:

"A French viscount—de Moriève by name—was one of the very few French noblemen who managed to retain their estates through the troublous times of the French Revolution. He was an extraordinary looking man, very tall and thin, with a high, almost pointed, forehead, and protruding teeth.

"Under an air of suave courtesy and kindness he concealed a ferociously cruel disposition, which showed itself when the fires of the great revolution had burned themselves out, and all was once more quiet. To get level as it were, with the working classes, he sent for his retainers and workpeople one by one, and, after he had interviewed them, cut off their heads. It is not surprising to hear that, in return, he himself met his death by assassination at the hands of some of the peasantry.

"No sooner, however, was the viscount laid in the grave than an appalling number of young children died in the neighborhood, all of whom bore the vampire marks at their throats. Later on, when he had buried for some time, and while the tomb was being repaired, there were nine more cases in a single week. The awful slaughter went on until seventy-two years passed away, and the viscount's grandson succeeded to the title.

"Young de Moriève, hearing the appalling stories of his grandfather consulted a priest with the idea of laying his horrible ancestor's ghost, and, after some discussion and delay, it was decided to open the tomb. The services of a man specially successful in such cases were ob-

tained, the vault was opened in the presence of the authorities.

"Every coffin was found to have undergone the usual process of rotting away, except that of the old viscount, which after seventy-two years, was perfectly strong and sound. The lid was removed and the body was found quite fresh and free from decomposition. The face was flushed and there was blood in the heart and chest. The skin was soft and natural. New nails had grown on both hands and feet.

"The body was removed from the coffin and a white thorn was driven by the expert through the heart of the corpse, with the ghastly result that blood and water poured forth and the corpse groaned and screamed. Then the remains were burned on the seashore; and from that day the child-deaths ceased and there were no more mysterious crimes in the neighborhood.

"The family archives were searched and it was found that the old viscount had come originally from Persia, where he married an Indian wife, and afterwards took up his residence in France, where he became a naturalized subject. The vampiric taint was in his blood."

The Legend of the Screaming Skulls

CALGARTH was the name of an ancient home and farmstead which once stood near Ambleside in the English Lakes District. It is said that one was afforded an excellent view of the countryside from the house, but it was not considered picturesque enough to be included as a tourist attraction. If we look through the old guidebooks of the region it is not mentioned, although the residents of the area know the name well. The reason that they still remember the name is that it has associated with it one of the weirdest legends of the entire region.

It was once owned (probably in the 15th or 16th century) by a rather unpretentious farmer named Kraster Cook. He and his wife, Dorothy, worked the land themselves and lived a simple, productive life. There was a single cloud over their well being, however. Their nearest neighbor, Myles Phillipson, desperately wanted to own Calgarth himself, in order that he might add it to his own considerable holding. Phillipson, in addition to being the head of an old and powerful family, was also the local magistrate.

Time and again he approached Kraster Cook and tried to buy Calgarth. But the farmer steadfastly refused, insisting that he would never part with his land. Eventually, Phillipson became angry and told Kraster,

"I'll have this damned piece of ground, Kraster Cook, whether you sell it to me or not!"

From that time on the Cooks and the Phillipsons were daggers drawn, as the expression went, and did not speak to each other. After several years had passed the Cooks were taken completely by surprise when they were invited to attend a Christmas banquet at the Phillipson manor.

It was an opulent feast with elegant trappings, for the Phillipsons being immensely wealthy were in the habit of always laying a magnificent table. There were whole suckling pigs, stuffed pheasants, thrush pies, and venison roasts. There were kegs of mead and ale, crystal decanters of fine wines, and golden flagons of brandy. These and scores of other succulent dishes were spread out on hand woven linen tablecloths, and served on gold and silver plates and goblets.

Kraster Cook was especially impressed by a large sterling cup that was set before him. He was especially known in the district as a horse lover, for he bred the finest steeds, and the cup, a magnificently wrought work of art, had a finely detailed horse skillfully worked into the decoration. He praised it openly and discussed its merits at length with Myles Phillipson and several of the other guests. All in all it was a pleasant evening and the Cooks did not return to Calgarth until very late that night.

The following morning they arose with a feeling of considerable well being, for they were the sort of people who were much happier being on good terms with their neighbors. Imagine then, Kraster Cook's shocked amazement when he answered a knock at his door only to find himself seized by a half dozen armed men whom he recognized as officers of the law.

"What are ye doing here?" he cried. "What do ye want with me?"

"Thou knowest well, Kraster Cook." said one of the men menacingly, "And it will do no good to struggle, for we have orders to take thee and thy wife to prison."

"To prison!" gasped Kraster, "What sort of foul jest is this?"

"A sorry jest 'twil be for thee, Mr. Cook, as ye'll soon learn," added one of the others.

As it developed, the Cooks were arrested on the charge of having stolen a silver cup from the Phillipson's house—the very same cup which Kraster had so openly admired the night before. Of course, it had been planted at Calgarth by one of Myles Phillipson's henchmen during the night.

The trial was a travesty and a farce. There was no question as to its outcome. The judge was none other than

Myles Phillipson; the jury and the witnesses were all in his pay. Kraster and Dorothy were doomed before the court was convened. It took very little time for them to be found guilty and condemned to the gallows. Just before they were led from the courtroom, Dorothy stood up, glared at the judge, and said in a low but penetrating voice,

"Guard thyself Myles Phillipson! Thou thinkest thou hast managed grandly; but that tiny lump of land is the dearest a Phillipson has ever bought or stolen; for you will never prosper, neither your breed; whatever scheme you undertake will wither in your hand; the side you take will always lose; the time shall come no Phillipson will own an inch of land; and while Calgarth walls shall stand, we'll haunt it night and day—never will ye be rid of us!"

A few choked gasps could be heard in the courtroom. Myles Phillipson coughed nervously and said,

"Take them away."

Several weeks later Kraster and Dorothy were hanged after which Myles Phillipson seized Calgarth "in payment of debts." Then, after considerable alterations were made in the main house, he and his family moved into it themselves.

Some months after they had moved into the house everyone was awakened one night by a series of shrill, ululating screams that reverberated through the halls and shook the window panes till they rattled. Myles was chased out of bed by his wife to see if he could determine the cause of the disturbance. But it was no use. After timorously searching the entire premises he returned to the bedroom saying that he had been able to find nothing. The next day while Mrs. Phillipson was alone she thought she heard the sound of one of her children crying upstairs. She went up to look in the nursery, but on her way she heard a peculiar noise coming from the attic. Going aloft to investigate she suddenly froze in her tracks. There on a ballustrade at the next landing above her were perched two hideous skulls side by side. They were unutterably filthy looking—covered with green mould, vermin crawling from the eye sockets, and matted with scraggly maggot infested hair. As she stood there swaying, gasping in horror, the loathesome things opened their

grinning jaws and began screaming. The shrieks were so bloodcurdling that she whimpered like a baby and collapsed in a heap.

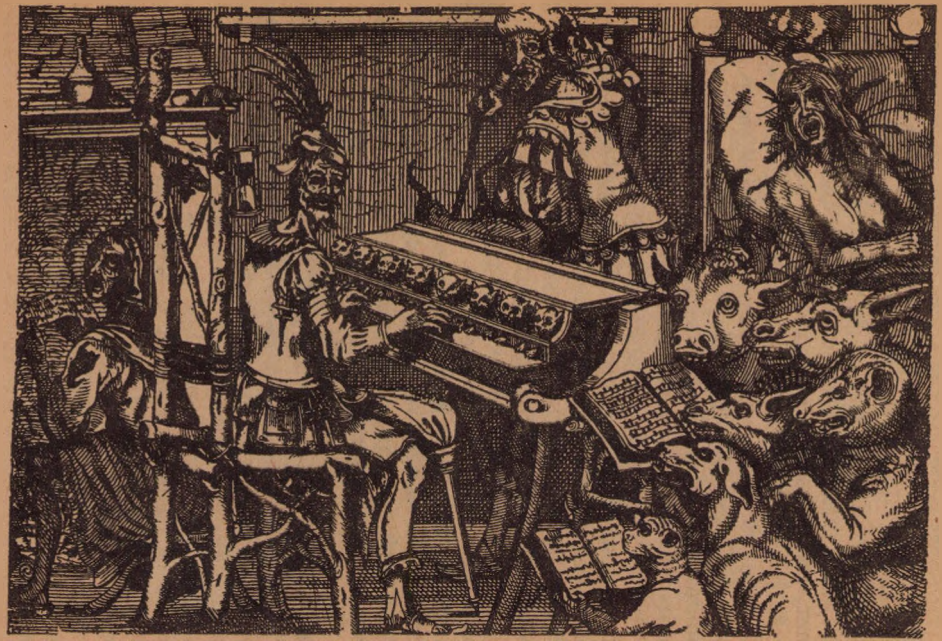
Downstairs her husband had returned in time to hear the thud as she fell down. Summoning several servants to join him he dashed up the stairs to see what had happened. When they arrived Mrs. Phillipson was still unconscious, which was just as well, for the skulls were still there, wailing, and howling like a pair of banshees.

A closer investigation revealed that the skulls were not insubstantial. They were quite solid. When the bodies of Kraster Cook and his wife were disinterred by Myles Phillipson's order, they were found to be missing their heads. He next instructed that the two skulls be reunited with their bodies, and assumed that this would be the end of the matter. But it was not. From that time forth the peace and quiet of the Phillipson household was shattered nightly by the hideous screaming and howling of the skulls. They refused to stay buried.

Again and again Myles Phillipson tried to get rid of the ghastly objects. He had them thrown into one of the lakes. He had them burned, broken into pieces and scattered to the winds, but nothing helped. Every night they came back to plague and distress anyone who dared to enter Calgarth after dark.

Eventually old Dorothy's curse was fulfilled in every detail. The Phillipsons fell into poverty, were forced to sell the property, and eventually disappeared. Whether the skulls continued to haunt the house after that is difficult to say. In any event few occupants ever remained in Calgarth for very long. One of the last, Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, claimed to have laid the two ghostly skulls, but it was said that after he left the disturbances recurred again.

Today, of course, the house no longer exists and it can be assumed that the skulls have finally closed their gaping jaws forever.



The Haunted Vault of Hackenthorpe

IN THE SLEEPY little village of Hackenthorpe, England, many years ago there were two brothers named Richard and Ralph Leigh. For some reason Ralph and his sister-in-law developed an intense mutual hatred. It was so powerful that Ralph moved away from the ancestral home, Hackenthorpe Hall and did not return until his brother's wife and daughter were dead.

Since Richard Leigh was now alone, Ralph did not hesitate to take up residence again at Hackenthorpe Hall. He was not destined to remain there for very long, however, for after two years he contracted a fatal illness and began to sink rapidly. On the night that he died he sensed that he would not live to see another sunrise. He called his brother to him and begged that he not be buried anywhere near the remains of his sister-in-law or niece, saying,

"There was something evil about that woman. If you put my body near hers I shall never rest."

Richard, however, regarded Ralph's dying request as the ravings of a man who has lost his reason. He scoffed. He could see no earthly reason why Ralph should not be buried in the family vault.

"Really," he remarked to a friend, "I don't see what difference it makes where Ralph is buried. I certainly won't care where they put me when I'm gone."

After the service the crypt was opened and Ralph's coffin was placed inside, not more than a few feet away from that of his hated sister-in-law. That very night after dark, a number of persons passing the church reported having heard dreadful shrieks and horrible cries that seemed to issue from within its walls. Word of this frightening manifestation spread and before the night was out, a crowd of curious villagers had gathered in the churchyard to see if they could learn exactly what was going

on. Richard Leigh was informed of the matter and though it was with a certain degree of reluctance, he came to join the crowd. When he arrived Leigh's emotions were a mixture of anxiety, anger, and disbelief.

Then, before the little cluster of people could disperse, the cries and shrieks began again. They were so horrible that everyone agreed they had never heard anything quite so terrifying. Leigh broke into a cold sweat. "Good God!" he said, "Those voices aren't human!"

By now everyone was thoroughly alarmed. They huddled together for mutual protection, trembling like a flock of lambs on their way to the slaughterhouse. Over and over the shrieks echoed through the night shattering the stillness and causing everyone within earshot to shudder and grow pale. There were curses, moans, howls, and threats, intermingled with ear-splitting clatterings and crashings. It was impossible to distinguish all the sounds, but everyone present agreed that the voices, unearthly as they seemed, bore a very close resemblance to those of the three most recently deceased occupants of the Leigh vault.

Richard Leigh immediately recalled what his brother had begged of him before he died. The next day the vault was unsealed in the presence of several witnesses. At one end of the vault Ralph's coffin stood upright. At the other end the coffin of Richard's daughter lay crosswise atop that of her mother. Shocked as he was at the sight, Leigh merely ordered that the coffins be placed in their former positions and that the vault be resealed.

That night, however, the peaceful village was disturbed once again by the weird screams, curses, crashes, and howls. The crypt was opened a second time when daylight had come. The coffins were tumbled about as they had been the day before. Still Leigh stubbornly refused to do anything more than have the coffins replaced and the crypt resealed. But after the third night of uproar in the churchyard he yielded to public pressure. This time after the coffins were straightened out a brick wall was hastily constructed between Ralph's coffin and those of the two women. This apparently satisfied the uneasy parties, whoever, whatever, and wherever they were, for similar disturbances never took place again.

The Vampires of Old China

IN CHINA the vampire was called *Chiang Shih.* He was a demon who inhabited corpses and prevented them from decaying by preying upon other corpses or living people. He was a cross between a ghoul and a vampire as we know them in the west. He was considered to be the inferior, or animal soul which sometimes remained with the body of the deceased instead of joining his ancestors. He was capable of appearing perfectly whole one moment, then dissipating into vapor the next. *Chiang Shih* was feared by the Chinese more than any other ghost, goblin, or supernatural being. The following tales tell why.

A lower grade scholar named Liu, who was tutor to a family living some distance from his home, once obtained some time off in order to perform some necessary tasks at his ancestral tombs in Ching Ming. On the day that he returned his wife entered his room to waken him in the morning only to find his headless body lying on the bed without a trace of blood anywhere about it.

She ran from the room screaming in alarm and was promptly arrested on suspicion of having slain her husband. While she was in jail awaiting trial, a neighbor, who was out gathering firewood on a hill, noticed a coffin lying near a neglected grave. He was suspicious, for the lid was partially open. But instead of investigating by himself, he went home, told several friends, and together they went to see what they could discover.

Approaching the open coffin cautiously they removed the lid. To their horror they found a corpse inside that had the face of a living man. Its body was covered with hideous white hair, and clutched in his hands was the severed head of the unfortunate Liu. The corpse held the head so tightly that they had to chop off its arms in order to free it. When this was done fresh blood gushed from the sockets. Liu's head, however, was completely

dry. When the local magistrate learned the news he ordered the corpse burned, Liu's widow released, and the charges of murder against her dropped.

During the 18th century an important Tartar family living in Peking arranged for their son to marry a girl of similar rank according to custom.

While the wedding procession was under way, the closed sedan chair of the bride was carried past an ancient tomb just as a whirlwind rose, spreading a cloud of dust so thick that all the attendants were temporarily blinded. When the sedan chair reached the husband's house, two identical brides emerged. The parents of the young man were astonished. It was impossible, however, to make any inquiries without offending anyone at such an advanced stage of the affair, so the proper rituals were performed, the necessary offerings were made, and the ceremony was completed. The young bridegroom's feelings of concern were soon dissipated and he thought to himself, "perhaps it may be better to have two wives than one, who knows?"

Later that night, dreadful cries were heard from the bridal chamber. The door was forced open at once. On the floor lay the prostrate form of the husband, while on the bed lay a single bride, her eyes torn from their sockets, and blood streaming down her face. There was no other bride to be seen anywhere. Upon searching the house, the servants discovered a large black and gray bird with a sharp beak and claws, perched on a roof-beam. As they searched for weapons to attack the creature, it flapped its wings and flew out the window.

When the young man regained consciousness he told how one of the brides had struck him in the face with one of her sleeves and blinded him. Immediately afterwards, a great bird had flown at him and pecked out his eyes with its terrible beak.

This demon, a *Kuei,* or ghost that committed evil deeds for evil's sake, was helped in its malicious intents because the bride was taken home in a sedan chair that was entirely closed.

In the year 1741, an especially ghastly event is said to

have occurred in a temple dedicated to three legendary, deified heroes named Kwan Yu, Chang Fei, and Liu Pei.

Except during Spring and Autumn sacrifices, the temple was kept shut by day and even the priest in charge dared not to sleep there at night.

One evening a shepherd with a huge flock of sheep asked for permission to rest overnight in the temple. He was told that the place was haunted, and warned against staying there, but he said that he was not afraid. He gathered his sheep together beneath the verandah, then entered with only a large whip and a candle. He felt uncomfortable almost the minute he entered, but he was determined to remain. About midnight he heard a peculiar noise coming from beneath the pedestal of the three heroes' statues. Suddenly a huge man rose from the ground at that spot. He had hollow, black eyes that flashed fiercely, and a powerful looking body that appeared to be covered with a greenish, moldy looking fleece. He glared ferociously at the sheep herder, leaped at him, breathing foul graveyard breath in his face, and tried to seize him with long, sharp talons.

The shepherd stood his ground bravely, lashing at the demon with his whip. The latter, however, seemed to feel nothing and he merely bit through the heavy leather thong as if it were paper. That was enough for the shepherd. He turned, fled into the courtyard, and climbed a large tree. The vampire continued to glare at him, but did not follow.

At daybreak when other people began to appear the vampire vanished. Half dead with terror, the shepherd told what had happened to him during the night. At once the base of the statues was carefully examined. Someone noticed a dark mysterious vapor rise from cracks in the stonework, and the matter was reported to the magistrate of the district. He ordered that the pedestal be broken and further examination be made.

When they dug beneath the ground they discovered the corpse of a huge man. He was wrinkled and dry, but covered from head to foot with a green fleecy growth. A pyre was hastily erected outside the temple and the body was burned immediately. Before it was consumed by the

flames blood began pouring from it and it whistled and shrieked. Its bones cracked and the skin shriveled up. Soon it was gone and the temple was never haunted again.

The Shoeless Ghost of Rathaby Church

ONE HOT SUMMER night a little over fifty years ago the Rev. C. Bodkin, vicar of a church in the little English town of Rathaby, sat down alone in the vestry and took off his shoes. They were brand new and had blistered his feet quite badly. As he was rubbing them to obtain a little relief before putting on a more comfortable pair of older shoes, he suddenly noticed that he was not alone. Standing before him was a little old lady wearing a brimmed bonnet and a voluminous violet silk gown. Since it was rapidly growing dark and the shadows were deepening, the vicar could not see her face very clearly. The brim of the bonnet was so large that it obscured the details of her features, although he was able to distinguish clearly a rather prominent chin. He could see her well enough, however, to realize that she was not a member of his parish. A slight tinge of annoyance came over him. He would have preferred it, if she had knocked before entering. But since she was already there he decided to make the best of the situation. Slipping on his old shoes he rose and asked,

"Is there anything I can do for you madame?"

She did not answer. Raising his voice slightly he repeated the question. Although she still did not answer him, the woman hoisted her floor length skirts slightly and pointed to her feet.

Looking down the Rev. Bodkin noticed that she was wearing only one shoe. He could see it clearly. It was a small, patent leather model with Louis heels and a bright, shiny, silver buckle. The other foot was shoeless and clad only in a violet stocking.

"Oh, I see," said the vicar, "Have you any idea where you dropped it?"

He took a step toward her saying, "Why don't you sit down while I go look for it."

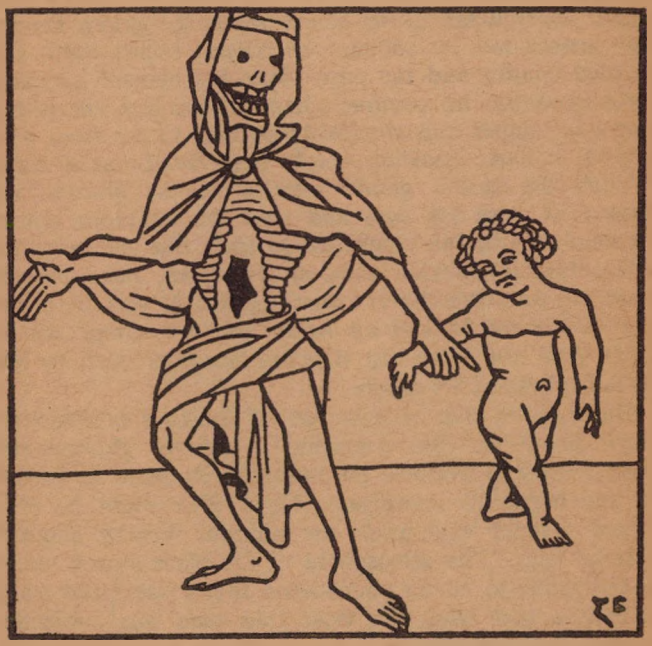
At that precise instant she vanished from sight and the Rev. Mr. Bodkin found himself staring at a blank wall.

He was thoroughly shaken by the experience, but assuming it to be a hallucination brought on by overwork, he said nothing about it to anyone and tried to put it out of his mind.

Ten days later he saw the apparition again. This time, however, he was not alone, for he was on the pulpit conducting evening services. The worshipers were kneeling when suddenly the vicar became aware of a very wanton sounding feminine laugh. He was a stuffy sort of man so this both shocked and displeased him. Looking angrily in the direction of the voice with full intention of ordering whoever it was to leave at once, he froze with alarm. Staring at him from directly below the pulpit was the face of an old woman with bleached blonde hair meticulously arranged in curls on either side of her forehead. She had slightly aquiline features, a rather pronounced chin, and a mouth full of perfect, pearly teeth, obviously false. She wore a mauve, silk dress with silver buttons, and was wrapped in a rich, cream colored shawl of cashmere. There was something about her eyes, however, that sent chills down the vicar's back. They were pale, wide, and limpid. They had a quality of incredible lasciviousness that both attracted and repelled him at the same time. They reminded him of the streetwalkers he had seen so often during his student days many years before at Cambridge.

He recognized her as the intruder he had encountered in the vestry ten days earlier. When she rose and began gliding noiselessly toward him he saw once again that she lifted her skirts and pointed to her feet, one of which had a shoe on, and the other, a violet stocking. Thoroughly unnerved by the sight, and fearing that she, or it, would soon be in the pulpit, he picked up the nearest object handy—a box of matches—and hurled it at her. Although she vanished immediately, the poor man collapsed on the spot and went into a state of shock.

Of course he was taken home at once by a group of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sympathetic parishioners who attributed the unexpected collapse to fatigue. Conversation revealed that they had not seen the apparition.

For nearly a year the church was free from further visitations by the ghostly old woman. Then, on St. Martin's Eve, as the Rev. Mr. Bodkin was getting ready to leave the church and go home for dinner, an icy blast of air hit him in the face. Suddenly he saw before him the terrifying figure of the old woman with the bonnet and shawl. Every detail of her stood out in the gloom for she was surrounded by an aura of baleful bluish light. She scowled angrily and the poor vicar felt himself go limp. He experienced no comfort when she reached out with a long bony finger and vigorously pointed to the floor with a wild, hollow, cackling laugh that reverberated eerily through the gaunt, gothic interior of the church. He wanted to close his eyes and shut the phantom out of his mind, but he felt compelled to look. She still wore the patent leather buckled shoe on one foot, but now the other did not even have a stocking on. It was bare and pale. When he looked up again she was gone. All he could now see were the dancing shadows cast by the flickering light of his candle.

Shortly after this incident one of Bodkin's parishioners heard about it. She contacted a nearby ghost-hunter named Elliot O'Donnell. He immediately came to Rathaby and began to investigate. Night after night he conducted a silent vigil inside the church. Writing about it later he said, "The atmosphere of the place struck me as so conducing to occult phenomena that I was quite ready to believe that what the vicar had seen was subjective and not hallucinatory."

O'Donnell now began to make inquiries in the neighborhood to see if he could unearth any clues as to the identity of the ghost. He finally discovered that approximately forty years earlier an old woman fitting the exact description given by the vicar had been visiting a farm house about three miles out of town. One morning while on a solitary walk she had fallen into an abandoned quarry and been killed. The man who told O'Donnell about it remembered the tragedy quite well, for he had

helped to recover the body. He added a very significant piece of additional information, saying,

"When I helped raise her body she had on only one shoe—a shiny leather thing with a bright buckle. We couldn't find the other one anywhere and assumed that it had fallen into a crevice."

The man went on to recall that the old woman's family, consisting only of a niece and nephew were summoned at once. They requested that she be buried in Rathaby churchyard. Accordingly a simple funeral had been conducted and she was interred wearing the very clothes she had worn at the time of her death.

There was no question now in O'Donnell's mind that what the vicar had seen was the ghost of this old woman. But when he accidentally managed to get his hands on the missing shoe, he knew that his task was almost completed. In the course of his investigations he had encountered an old man who showed him a small black leather shoe that looked as though it was the mate to the one the old woman had been wearing.

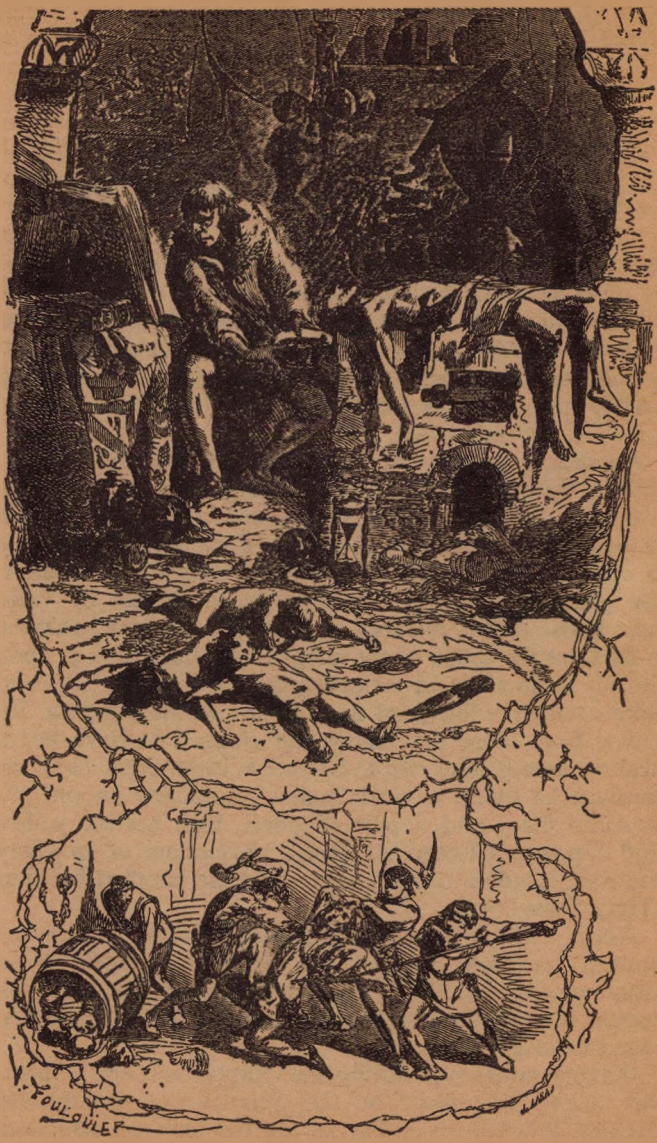
"I found that," the old man said, "in the quarry where the old lady broke her neck. It got wedged into a hole."

O'Donnell gave the old man a few shillings for the shoe and took it with him. It was his theory that the haunting had a very simple explanation. The dead woman wanted her shoe back. He went to the Rev. Mr. Bodkin and brought him up to date on the matter. Furthermore he recommended that they open the coffin and place the shoe inside. The vicar, however, adamantly refused. He could not possibly do such a thing, he said, unless he were given permission by the relatives of the deceased. Unfortunately there was absolutely no way of tracking them down to obtain such permission, thus, as far as the vicar was concerned, the matter was closed.

O'Donnell was furious, but there was nothing he could do but leave things as they were and go home. Three nights after returning to his own house, he was awakened well after midnight by what he described as a "violent knocking" at his bedroom door. Sleepily he climbed out of bed and peered out to see what was causing the commotion. He stared and gradually became aware of the shadow of an old woman in a brimmed bonnet. He

looked into the darkness for a few seconds then remembered that he had taken the shoe with him. He got it out of the closet and gently tossed it into the hallway approximately where he thought the ghost might be standing. The shadow opposite the doorway disappeared. Then, said O'Donnell, ". . . From along the passage, down the narrow winding staircase, and from the hall beyond there came the clearly unmistakable tappings—the sharp resounding tap-tap-tap of a fast, a joyfully fast receding *pair* of Louis heels."

Shortly after that he heard the front door slam, the barking of a neighbor's dog in the distance, and the pealing of a churchbell. Then, silence, and from that time on the shoeless ghost of Rathaby Church was never seen again.


V. POULBOT

The Horrible Legacy of the Cannibal Chef

ALTHOUGH the truth is often more incredible than fiction, the two at times become so intertwined that it is frequently impossible to distinguish between them. When the truth is a horrible one, one which people would prefer not to believe, it becomes seasoned in time with fantasy. The terrible history of Gaston Donnet (if indeed that was his name) is just such a tale.

According to newspaper accounts of the time, beginning in the year 1849 a New Orleans store on Common Street not far from Saint-Charles, was said to be haunted by a horrible collection of ghosts. They were apparently so evident that crowds of frightened neighbors occasionally gathered in front of the place to protest or voice their fears. About twenty-five years later a man, anxious to find out the cause of the alleged hauntings took it upon himself to do some investigating on his own. He began to poke around in the third floor rooms of the building, for it was from there that many had claimed to have heard strange sounds after dark. Behind a loose brick near the fireplace he found a small hollow containing an old red morocco diary and a pair of small, high heeled, yellow gold slippers. Between the ghastly revelations of the diary and long standing rumors concerning the haunted building a legend was born.

About 1828 a young cook named Gaston Donnet had learned his trade so well that he was engaged as an assistant chef by the Palais Sauvinet, one of the best known restaurants in the city. It was at this time that he began to keep a diary.

Having grown up during the Napoleonic era, Gaston was deeply impressed by the grandeur of royalty and nobility. Whenever possible he exerted his most strenuous

efforts to ingratiate himself to the restaurant's most distinguished guests. Consequently by 1830 he had risen to the position of head chef. Not long after his elevation to *maitre de cuisine* the establishment was visited unexpectedly by a certain count along with a party of distinguished companions. Gaston was overjoyed. Working like a demon he prepared a feast that would have drawn the praises of an emperor let alone a mere count. Consequently, when the pantry boy, Pierre, whispered much later that *Monsieur le compte* had criticized one of the dishes poor Gaston was devastated. This affront to his artistic talents whipped him up to a frenzy of rage. He swore that if that nobleman ever dared set foot in the place again he would be fed on the entrails of dogs. Gaston's curses, however, did not assuage his temper.

That night he fought with everyone who crossed his path, but especially with Pierre. They had a terrible row. The shouts and oaths echoed through the dimly lighted kitchen and finally culminated with a piercing scream as Pierre slumped to the floor with a huge knife protruding from his chest.

The rage drained from Gaston in a flash. He had to get rid of the body. Suddenly he was struck with a brilliant though diabolical idea. Dragging the boy's limp body into his private *petit cuisine* Gaston locked the door and set to work feverishly. As long as he remained enclosed in this tiny chamber he knew that he was safe, for it was the chef's personal retreat, off limits to everyone, even the owners of the Palais Sauvinet.

First he got rid of Pierre's clothes and burned them in the little fireplace which was used to incinerate discarded scraps of bone, skin, feathers, and other debris. Next he dismembered the body with the skilled hand of an experienced butcher. Using sharp knives designed exactly for that purpose he deftly removed every bit of flesh from the skeleton. After charring the bones beyond recognition in the fireplace, he prepared the flesh in a number of ways—some he pickled, portions were stuffed, marinated, chopped, and a little was even made into little sausages. As for the blackened bones, Gaston broke them up, placed them in a sack, and dumped them into the Seine just before dawn.

A little later, as Paris began to awaken, Gaston put on a convincing act. He began to search for the missing Pierre. He ranted, he cursed, he screamed and shouted epithets at the absent scullery boy. He carried on so that before the day was half over a replacement had been hired. That evening a familiar guest appeared. It was the count who had dared to speak disparagingly of Gaston's culinary ability. Delighted at the opportunity thus presented him, the cunning chef laid out a sumptuous feast. The count and his friends agreed to a man that what they had eaten was superb, and made a special point of sending their compliments to Gaston. What they did not know, of course, was that they had consumed the mortal remains of the late Pierre.

Unfortunately, Gaston Donnet outdid himself. *Monsieur le Compte* had been so favorably impressed with the banquet that he returned in less than a week in hopes of attending a repeat performance of the amazing chef's gastronomic symphony. Gaston succeeded in convincing his distinguished admirer to return on the following night, explaining that such a repast could not be whipped up on a moment's notice. The excuse seemed satisfactory and the count agreed to come back the next evening. Although he did not like the idea, Gaston knew that there was only one thing for him to do, and in that moment the fate of the new pantry boy was sealed.

That night Gaston repeated his bloody preparations, only this time with far greater efficiency than he had on the previous occasion. For now, he had a degree of experience to guide his hands.

The count's dinner party was a huge success, of course, if anything, it was even more so that than it had been the first time.

On the following day, fortunately for Gaston, there were two developments which forced him to make a fast decision. The mothers of the two missing pantry boys had, in the course of their frantic searching, turned up a pair of clues connecting the two deaths—a shoe belonging to one, a lucky piece that had been carried by the other. Shortly after hearing about these disturbing discoveries Gaston received a royal summons from King Louis Philippe to appear at the palace. Obviously it was not

going to be so easy to obtain the necessary ingredients to provide banquets similar to those which had enchanted the count and his friends. Thus it was that the talented head chef of the Palais Sauvinet disappeared from Paris forever.

Several weeks later there arrived in New Orleans an emigrant calling himself Lucien Feraud. He said that he was a shoemaker and within a few years he proved to be a very good one. In time he married and rented a three story building on Common Street. Living comfortably with his wife on the top floor the shoemaker maintained his thriving shop on the street level. Between the two, on the second floor, was a small but elegant private dining salon known as La Petite Coquille. It was run by a gastronomical genius from Paris named Valentin Dumestre. His prices were stratospheric, his clientele limited to the extremely wealthy, and his reputation as a superb chef widespread.

What nobody knew was that the silver haired, taciturn shoemaker and the mustachioed, raven haired M. Valentin were one and the same man. Similarly not a single aristocratic patron of La Petit Coquille had an inkling that he might be an unwitting cannibal—yet such was the case. For the truth was that Valéntin, or Feraud if you will, had been serving the flesh of carefully selected slaves whom he had bought cheaply, fattened for a pittance, and slaughtered secretly for the table. Being a thrifty man, he did not let the skins of his negro victims go to waste. By carefully curing and tanning them he was able to create the most exquisite slippers that ever graced the feet of a wealthy Creole belle.

One night in 1848 the shoemaker's wife, who by now had grown weary of being left alone every night, decided to take a little peek into the exclusive *salle á manger* downstairs. Imagine her shock, then, when she recognized the proprietor, Valéntin Dumestre as none other than her husband, Lucien. Her initial reaction to this deception was one of furious outrage. Determined to prevent an embarrassing scene that might reveal his true identity he ushered her into the kitchen on a pretext of some sort and coldly bashed her skull in with a heavy mallet. He could take no chances. This man of many

names liked being rich and he thoroughly intended to become richer. Laughing sardonically to himself as he returned to his paying guests, he determined to prepare a very special dish on the following night.

Now it so happened that Feraud the shoemaker shared a number of customers with Valéntin the restaurateur. One in particular had recently ordered a special pair of dancing slippers for his daughter, one of the prettiest girls in New Orleans. It suddenly occurred to the shoemaker, just as he was about to retire, that he could now fashion the most beautiful slippers of his career, for he now had available a fine white skin of which to make them. He fell asleep dreaming of every detail, how he would cure it, finish it, and rub it with real gold dust until it gleamed like the settings of royal jewels.

It is at this point that fact and fantasy became so inextricably enmeshed that it is difficult to say for certain what actually happened. Did the crushing burden of Gaston Donnet's guilt finally overwhelm him and cause him to crack, or did the events recorded in his fantastic diary actually take place? Whatever may be the case, the only thing that can be done here is to retell what he wrote there.

When the shoemaker finished the golden dancing slippers even he had to admit that they were the crowning achievement of his career—at least in this particular career. He was convinced therefore, that the young lady who was to wear them would be equally entranced by his handiwork. But she was not. Several days after they had been delivered, the girl's father angrily stormed into Feraud's shop and hurled the slippers into their startled maker's face.

"Take these cursed things back, you scoundrel!" he roared. "They are the spawn of Satan! They whine, they moan and dance by themselves. They cry aloud that they were worn by another for an entire lifetime!"

Pausing briefly at the door before leaving he crossed himself and said,

"I'll never set foot in this damned place again!"

With that he turned and disappeared into the street, slamming the door behind him so hard that the walls rattled.

By now Feraud was trembling all over. Chills coursed up and down his spine. He looked at the slippers incredulously as they jumped unassisted from the table and began moving towards him, moaning in a voice strangely reminiscent of his murdered wife. He stumbled backwards and fell to the floor, as the shoes kept coming nearer, then climbing upon him and digging their heels into his throat. Tearing them away he flung them across the room with all his might and sprang to his feet. When he saw them come after him again he turned and bolted up the stairs, taking refuge in the dimly lighted parlor of his living quarters on the third floor. He tried to keep the shoes out but it was no use. No matter what he tried it was impossible to imprison or destroy them.

Just then his mounting fear was interrupted by a loud knocking on the door of the shop below. Composing himself as best he could he ran downstairs again to see who it was. He opened the door and found himself face to face with two strangers. One was looking for Gaston Donnet and the other for Valéntin Dumestre.

"Good God!" he thought to himself, "They've finally caught up with me."

Fighting to maintain an outwardly calm appearance he told the men that he would go upstairs and summon the gentlemen they sought.

Locking himself once more in his apartment he opened the door to the secret back room and selected a long, sharp knife. While he was contemplating it he heard a hideous concert of wails, moans, shrieks, and cries that suddenly filled the gloom as if they had suddenly risen from the depths of Hell. Whirling around in terror he brandished the knife. There before him were dozens of raw, slimy, stinking shapes that dripped blood as they closed in on him. They pointed accusing fingers at him as their dangling eyeballs glistened horribly like peeled, bloodshot clams. He dashed back to the secret room and seized another knife, why he did not know. Certainly one was all he needed to cut his throat. It was better that way than to succumb to the slimy terrors that now closed in around him. But there was no escaping them. They snatched the gleaming knives from him and

flung them aside. Howling now like all the fiends of the underworld turned loose, they fell upon him and began tearing him to pieces, drowning out his agonized screams with their gurgling, squishing, snarling, and gasping. And there, slicing at his burning flesh were the slippers giggling demoniacally as they slid down his back.

Next, says the diary, the hideous forms receded. A strangely transformed figure—that of the young Gaston Donnet—glided silently towards the fireplace, took away a loose brick, and removed a little red morocco bound book from the cavity. After reading it over he sat down, reached for his pen, and added two final pages of writing. Then closing the book for the last time, he put it back into the secret niche, but just before he could replace the brick which concealed it, the golden shoes danced into the hole, and perched atop the diary. Suddenly the place became a screaming madhouse again. As the slimy red shapes of things that were once human pressed in again on their victim he disappeared.

For several weeks Lucien Feraud the shoemaker was seen by no one. When the authorities finally broke into the rooms on the third floor of the building on Common Street the stench of death assailed their nostrils. After they had overcome their shock they discovered that the corpse—completely skinned—had once been Lucien Feraud. They concluded that he had gone mad and flayed himself alive, of course, they had not read his diary, for it told a far different story.

An ironic footnote must be added at this point. The two men who came seeking Gaston Donnet and Valéntin Dumestre were not policemen. One came bearing an offer to buy the Petit Coquille for an outrageously high sum. The other had come to New Orleans all the way from Paris after searching for months. It seems that a certain wealthy count had died and left a large quantity of money to a certain Gaston Donnet, a wonderful chef he had once known years before . . .

The Ghost Who Refused to Be Guilty

A NUMBER of years ago a British artist named Shadwell spent the summer as a paying guest in the household of a country clergyman. Although Shadwell kept fairly much to himself, he was on quite cordial terms with the family, especially the children. One evening while sitting in his room reading after dinner, the door opened and a little girl he had not seen before walked in. Assuming that she was a daughter he had not met he merely looked up, smiled, and said,

"Good evening, my dear, I don't think I've seen you before."

Instead of answering, however, the child walked solemnly across the room and placed her hand on the wall, then turning around, she slowly walked out again without ever having said a word. Although it was a trifling incident, something about it disturbed the artist. There had been a somberness about the child and her demeanor that was somewhat unnerving. The more he thought about it the more uncomfortable he became.

The next morning he remarked to his host after breakfast, "I didn't know you had another daughter. She came into my room last night and took me quite by surprise."

To Shadwell's amazement the rector turned pale. "I'm afraid that was no living child you saw last night," he said, "but an apparition which has been seen here before. I would appreciate it if you wouldn't mention this to my wife. You see, to this day she partially blames herself for the death of our oldest daughter. And what you saw last night was apparently the unhappy child's spirit."

In order not to leave his guest dangling, the rector proceeded to tell Shadwell the entire story.

A few years earlier, he explained, some workmen had

been called in to do some plastering and papering in the house. While the work was in progress the rector's wife was called upon to pay a half crown to a delivery boy who came to the door with some groceries. Remembering that she had a half crown piece on her vanity table, she asked her eldest daughter to go upstairs and bring it down.

Quite a bit of time passed and the girl did not come downstairs. Finally she appeared and told her mother that the money was not there. The woman became annoyed for she distinctly remembered having left the coin there. She accused her daughter of either playing a trick or having taken the half crown herself. The child became terribly upset and vigorously denied any knowledge of the money. Her mother, refusing to back down, became even more insistent and finally sent the girl to bed as punishment. She was so upset by this that she fell into an uncontrollable fit of sobbing. She became so hysterical that she went into convulsions, lost consciousness, and died before morning.

Naturally, the mother was upset beyond even the normal bounds of grief. She was thoroughly convinced that she had hastened her daughter's death, for had she not accused the child of misappropriating the money, possibly without justification, the tragedy might not have occurred. Consequently, the woman had never quite been able to rid herself of the torturing doubt and oppressive guilt, for the coin had never been found.

After listening to the rector's story, Shadwell asked if the family had ever examined the spot on the wall that the little apparition always touched. When his host answered negatively the artist's curiosity was thoroughly piqued. He asked for permission to investigate the matter further. The rector assented, and with that the two of them broke the wall open. There, imbedded an inch or so beneath the surface, was a half crown piece. Had the child actually placed the coin there while she was alive? Whatever the case, after the missing half crown was found the little ghost was never seen again.

The Incubus and the Virtuous Lady

THE ANNALS of the supernatural are full of accounts detailing the miseries of persons who have been plagued by various inexplicable phenomena coming under the general heading of demonaic possession. Although most persons regard the idea of possession with skepticism, the fact remains that the rites of exorcism are retained by all major religions.

According to demonologists, one of the most troublesome evil spirits was the Incubus, a night-stalker which seemed capable of defying all attempts to exorcise it, and which devoted its energies primarily to the seduction of unwilling females. Incubi were known by a number of names, depending on the country in which they were found, and were the absolute bane of the exorcists' lives, for they failed to respond to the sternest injunctions to depart. In Italy they were known as *Folletti,* and like their cousins in France, Spain, and England, the only way they could be resisted was by sheer superior will power.

Father Ludovico Maria Sinistrari, the eminent 17th century Franciscan theologian, tells the fascinating story of a struggle between Hieronyma, a virtuous woman of Pavia, and one of these vexatious demons.

Instead of appearing to her suddenly in the night, he apparently decided to soften her up in advance by sending her a gift in the form of a Venetian pastry. After being persuaded by the baker who delivered it to her house that the dough had come from her kitchen, she accepted it and ate it, sharing it with her husband, her three year old daughter, and maid.

The following night while in bed with her husband, Hieronyma was suddenly awakened from a sound sleep

by a tiny voice that sounded like a shrill hissing in her ear, which said,

"Did you like the cake?"

Thoroughly frightened at this she fervently crossed herself and repeatedly called upon Jesus and Mary.

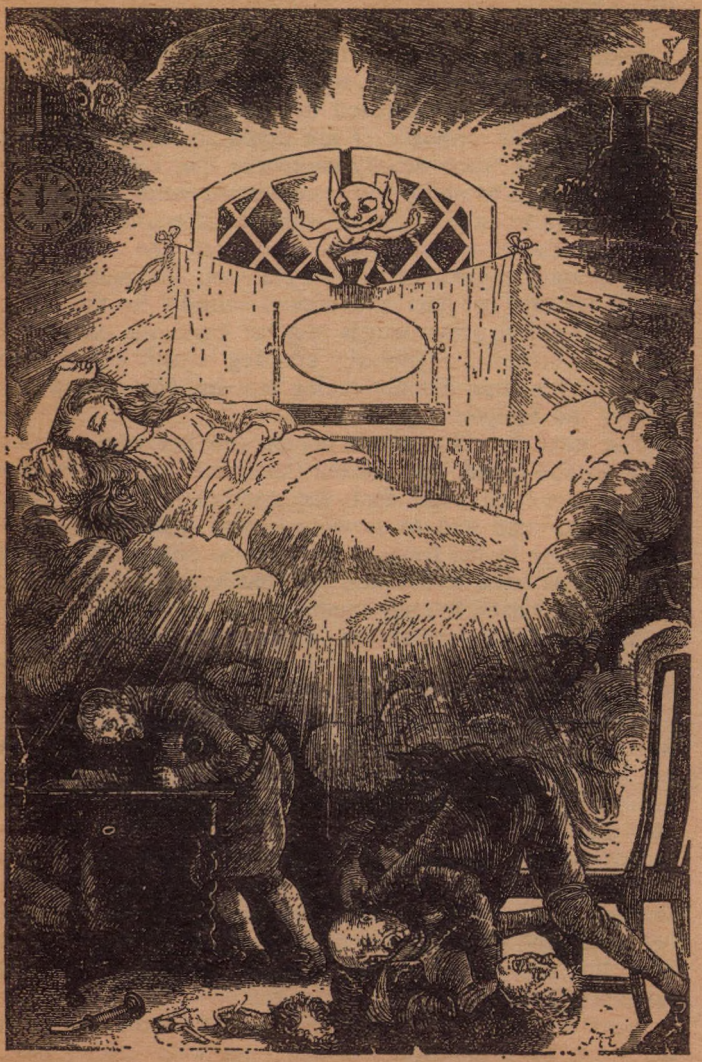
"Don't be afraid," insisted the voice, "I mean you no harm, quite the opposite, I am prepared to do anything to please you. Your beauty captivates me, I desire nothing more than to enjoy the sweetness of your embraces."

Hieronya became aware of what felt like someone kissing her cheeks softly. It was as though she was being stroked by the finest of downy feathers. Throughout the entire episode her husband snored soundly as the voice kept whispering sweet words into her ears. She continued to resist, however, repeatedly crossing herself and calling upon holy names. Finally seeing that he was getting nowhere, the tempter left the room.

The next day Hieronyma sought out her confessor as soon as she could. She related the entire incident to him and he recommended that she continue to resist with all her strength and to provide herself with some additional armor in the form of holy relics. Night after night the incubus came to her and tempted her with soft words and tender kisses, but she continued to rebuff him.

After several weeks of such wearying nocturnal struggles, it was decided by her confessor and several other learned men that Hieronyma have herself exorcised. The rites were performed but it was determined that she was not possessed by any demon. The priests then blessed her house, her bedroom, her bed, and sternly ordered the incubus to get out and leave the poor woman alone. But they might just as well have been talking to the walls. His nightly visits continued and lasted until the small hours of the morning. He wept, he moaned, he cried out with lovesick wails, pleading with Hieronyma in order to melt her heart and persuade her to bestow her embraces upon him. But she remained steadfast and continued to resist his exhortations.

Next he tried a new approach. He appeared to her in the form of a handsome young man with golden hair, sea green eyes, and rich Spanish attire. He even began appearing to her during the day, when she was in the



company of others. Of course, she was the only one who saw or heard him, for the rest of the group he always remained invisible.

She continued to spurn him, until after many months of wooing the incubus became angry and started a new form of persecution. He stole all of her holy relics, things which she had always carried on her person, in addition he made off with all of her rings, jewelry, and other baubles which were locked securely in a solid chest. The latter feat he accomplished without tampering with the locks.

He began to beat her. He would snatch her child away while the girl was on her lap. He began to act like a poltergeist, knocking over furniture, smashing dishes and other utensils, which, when he felt so inclined, he would put back together again. One night while Hieronyma was in bed with her husband the incubus came and made his usual demands. This time upon being refused he flew into a rage, disappeared, and returned with a load of heavy flagstones. He then proceeded to build a solid wall around the bed so that the couple were unable to get out in the morning without the aid of a ladder. Fortunately the wall was not cemented, so it was relatively easy to take it down. The stones were piled up in a corner where they remained for two days. Many friends came to the house and saw them, but after the two days the stones mysteriously vanished.

Not long afterward when Hieronyma and her husband were having a dinner party, the dining table, which was freshly laid for the meal, and laden with utensils and food disappeared from sight. Everyone in the house began searching frantically for the table, but it was nowhere to be seen. Embarrassed and upset, the husband offered to take his friends out for their meal, when suddenly a mighty crash was heard from the dining room. Rushing in to see what had happened, the company found that a different table had been returned to the former one's location, but now, instead of having upon it the same things which had been there before, it was, in Sinistrari's words, "laid with napery, napkins, salt cellars, silver cruets, castors, trenchers and trays that did not belong to the house, and groaning with rich meats, tasties,

pullets and puddings, which certainly had not been cooked there." In addition, on the sideboard there were strange and beautiful flagons of silver and crystal, golden cups, decanters and bottles, all filled with exotic wines from the far corners of the world.

At first Hieronyma and her husband feared to let their guests touch anything, lest they be tainted with diabolical influence, but caution gave way to hunger and they finally sat down and ate heartily. Everything proved to be magnificent. Then, after dinner, as they were sitting about the fire and discussing the amazing things that had taken place, the strange table with all of its wonderful utensils, vanished from sight and in its place reappeared the table which had been there in the first place, laid with the identical foods and dishes placed there by the servants.

In desperation the unhappy Hieronyma went to a nearby church where the body of a saint lay to be venerated by parishioners. She vowed that should he intercede on her behalf she would dress in "a sad colored frock, girt about her waist with a cord" for an entire year. This extreme measure, she felt, would certainly rid her of the incubus.

The following day while attending mass in her own church, she had barely crossed the threshold when all of her clothes and jewels fell to the ground and disappeared in a blast of wind, leaving her as naked as the day she had been born. Blushing with embarrassment she let out a heart rending scream. Fortunately, two gentlemen who were standing by, seeing what had happened, immediately took off their cloaks and covered her nudity. They hurriedly took her from the church, put her in a coach and escorted her home. Six months passed before the incubus returned the clothing and jewelry he had taken that day.

The irksome spirit continued to plague Hieronyma for many years before he eventually grew tired and came to realize that no matter what he did, she would never succumb to his amorous demands. When he came to this conclusion he left her alone and she spent the rest of her life in peace.

The Berwick Vampire

ACCORDING to the twelfth century English chronicler, William of Newburgh, the Scottish town of Berwick, which lies at the mouth of the River Tweed, was once caused untold suffering by a vampire of a most curious sort.

It all began with the death of a man who in life had been very wealthy, but had attained the reputation of being a "most infamous villain." William tells us that shortly after the fellow was buried, he would issue from his grave nightly and "rush up and down the streets of the town, whilst the dogs howled and bayed in every direction what time this evil thing was abroad." He would stalk through the darkness, attacking and terrifying all who crossed his path. Worse yet, he would breathe his foul corpse breath in their faces.

What frightened the townspeople most was the possibility of an epidemic arising "unless some speedy remedy were found, owing to the fact that the black decomposition of this foul body horribly infected the air with poisonous pollution as it rushed to and fro." The authorities finally decided to take drastic action. Ten brave young men, chosen for their strength and courage exhumed the corpse, cut it into small pieces, and threw it into a furnace where it was soon consumed. This alleviated the fear, for those who had encountered the "fatal monster" had reported having heard it threaten that there would be no rest in Berwick until its body was burned.

Unfortunately, however, after a short respite, a terrible plague did break out in Berwick, killing a major portion of the populace. The chronicler notes "And nowhere else did the plague rage so fiercely, although, verily, about the same time there was an epidemic in several districts of England."

The Demon Drummer of Tedworth

ONE OF THE MOST celebrated haunts in the annals of supernatural literature is (or was) a phenomenon known as the Demon Drummer of Tedworth. Probably the best account of it was the earliest one, written towards the end of the seventeenth century by Dr. Joseph Glanvill, noted philosopher and chaplain to King Charles II of England. The following narrative is exactly as Glanvill wrote it with only minor alterations in punctuation and occasional changing of archaic terms.

Mr. John Mompesson of Tedworth, in the county of Wilts, being about the middle of March, in the year 1661, at a neighboring town called Ludgarshal, and hearing a drum beat there, he inquired of the bailiff of the town, at whose house he then was, what it meant. The bailiff told him, that they had for some days been troubled with an idle drummer, who demanded money of the constable by virtue of a pretended pass, which he thought was counterfeit. Upon this Mr. Mompesson sent for the fellow, and asked him by what authority he went up and down the countryside in that manner beating on his drum. The drummer answered, he had good authority, and produced his pass, with a warrant signed by Sir William Cawley and Colonel Ayliff, of Gretenham. Mr. Mompesson, knowing these gentlemen's signatures, recognized that the pass and the warrant were counterfeit, and thereupon ordered the vagrant to cease his drumming 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 begged earnestly to have his drum. Mr. Mompesson told him, that if he understood from Colonel Ayliff, whose drummer he said he was, that he had been an honest man, he should have

it. But in the meantime he would hold it for safekeeping. With that he left the drum with the bailiff and the drummer with the constable, who it seems succumbed to the fellow's entreaties and thus released him.

About the middle of the following April, when Mr. Mompesson was preparing for a journey to London, the bailiff sent the drum to his house. When he returned from that journey, his wife told him that they had been much affrighted in the night by thieves, and that the house was like to have been broken up. He had not been at home more than three nights, when the same noise was heard that had disturbed his family while he was absent. It was a very great knocking at the doors, and at the outsides of the house. Hereupon he got up, and went about the house with a brace of pistols in his hands; he opened the door where the great knocking was, and then he heard the noise at another door. He opened that also, and went out round the house, but could discover nothing, only he still heard a strange noise and hollow sound. When he got back to bed, the noise was a thumping and drumming on top of his house, which continued a good space, and then by degrees went off into the air.

After this, the noise of thumping and drumming was very frequent, usually five nights together, and then it would cease for three. It was on the outsides of the house, which was mostly of board. It constantly came as the family was going to sleep, whether early or late. After a month's disturbance outside, it came into the room where the drum lay, four or five nights out of seven, within half an hour after all had retired, continuing almost for two hours. The sign of it just before it came, was, that they still heard a rushing in the air over the house, and at its leaving, the beating of a drum, like that at the breaking up of a guard. It continued in this room for the space of two months, at which time Mr. Mompesson himself lay there to observe it. In the early part of the night, it would be very troublesome, but after two hours all would be quiet.

During a period when Mrs. Mompesson was brought to bed with child there was but little noise, or any for three weeks after till she had delivered and regained her strength. But after this civil 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 when they would fall in pieces. In laying hands on them, one should feel no blows, but might perceive them to shake exceedingly. For a full hour it would beat a number of well known military tattoos as well as any drummer. After this, all 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 none particularly but them.

There was a cock-loft in the house, which had not been observed to be troubled, thither they removed the children, putting them to bed while it was still daylight. They were no sooner put in bed, but their trouble was with them as before.

On the 5th of November, 1661, it kicked a mighty noise, and a servant, observing two boards in the children's room seeming to move, he bid it give him one of them. Upon this the board came (nothing moving it that he could see) within a yard of him. The man added, "Nay, let me have it in my hand." Upon this it was shoved toward him again, and so up and down, to and fro, at least twenty times together, till Mr. Mompesson forbid his servant such familiarities. This was in the daytime, and was seen by a whole roomfull of people. That morning it left a sulphurous smell behind it which was very offensive. That night the minister, one Mr. Cragg, and several of the neighbors came to the home on a visit. The minister went to prayers with them, kneeling near to 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, chairs walked about the room by 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 favorably, that a lock of wool could not have fallen more softly, and it was observed, that it stopped just where it lighted without rolling or rolling from the place.

Mr. Mompesson perceiving that it so much persecuted the little children that they lodged them out at a neighbor's house, taking his eldest daughter, who was about ten years of age, into his own chamber, where it had not been for a full month. As soon as she was in bed, the disturbance began there again, continuing for three weeks running, and making other noises, and it was observed, that it would answer exactly in drumming anything else that was beaten or called for. After this, the house where the children were 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 nightclothes 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 rude that it hath been heard at a considerable distance in the fields, and awakened the neighbors in the village, none of whom are very near this house. The servants were sometimes lifted up with their beds, and let down gently again without being hurt, at other times it would lie like a great weight upon their feet.

About the latter end of December, 1661, the drumming was less frequent, and when they heard a noise like the jangling of money, occasioned as it was thought, by something Mr. Mompesson's mother had mentioned the day before to another who talked of fairies leaving money, namely that she should like it well, if it would leave them some 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 it desisted from the ruder noises, and employed itself in little apish; and less troublesome tricks. On Christmas Eve, a little before daybreak, one of the little boys, arising out of bed, was hit upon a foreplace upon 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 was frequent.

After this it was very troublesome to a servant of Mr. Mompesson's, who was a stout fellow, and of sober conversation. This man slept in the house during the greatest disturbance, and for several nights something would endeavor to pluck his clothes off the bed, so that he was fain to tug hard to keep them on, and sometimes they would be plucked from him by great force, and his shoes were thrown at his head. Now and then he would find himself forcibly held, as if bound hand and foot, but he learned 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 once been, came to the house, and told Mr. Mompesson some words that he had spoken, which it seems had not been well taken. For as soon as they were in bed, the drum was beat up very violently and loudly, the gentleman arose and called his valet to him, who was sharing quarters with John, the aforementioned servant of Mr. Mompesson. As soon as Mr. Bennet's man was gone, John heard a rustling noise in his chamber, and something came to his bedside as if it had been one in silk. The man presently reached after his sword, which he found held from him, and twas with difficulty and much tugging that he got it into his power, which as soon as he had done, the spectre 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 it came down. And one night about this time, lights were seen in the house. One of them came into Mr. Mompesson's chamber, which seemed blue and glimmering, and caused great stiffness in the eyes of those what saw it. After the lights 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 opened they heard a noise as if a half a dozen had entered together, after which some were heard to walk

about the room, and one rustled as if it had been in silk, the like Mr. Mompesson himself once heard.

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 stopped. Then the gentleman knocked to see if it would answer him as it was wont, but it did not. For farther trial he bid it for confirmation, if it were the drummer, to give five knocks and no more that night, which it did, and left the house quiet all the night after. This was done in the presence of Sir Thomas Chamberlain of Oxfordshire, and divers others.

On Saturday morning, an hour before daybreak, January 10, a drum was heard beat upon the out sides of Mr. Mompesson's chamber, from whence it went to the other end of the house, where some gentlemen and strangers were sleeping. It played at their door and outside, four or five several tunes, and so went off into the air.

The next night, a smith from the village was staying with John, Mr. Mompesson's man. Together they heard a noise in the room, as one had been shoeing of a horse, and something came, as if it were a pair of pincers, snipping at the smith's nose most part of the night.

One morning Mr. Mompesson, rising early to go on a journey, heard a great noise below, where the children lay sleeping, and running down with a pistol in his hand, he heard a voice crying, "A witch, a witch!" as they had also heard it once before. Upon his entrance all was quiet.

Having one night played some little tricks at Mr. Mompesson's bed's feet, it went into another bed, where one of his daughters slept. There it passed from side to side, lifting her up as it passed under. At that time there were three kinds of noises in the bed, they endeavored to thrust at it with a sword, but it still shifted and carefully avoided the thrust, still getting under the child when they offered at it. The night after, it came panting like a dog out of breath, upon which, one took a bedstaff to knock, which was caught out of her hand, and thrown away, and company coming up, the room was presently filled with a bloomy noisome smell, and was very hot, though

without fire, in a very sharp and severe winter. It continued in the bed panting and scratching 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.

After this, the gentlewoman's bible was found in the ashes, the paper sides being downwards. Mr. Mompesson took it up, and observed that it lay open at the third chapter of St. Mark, where there is mention of the unclean spirits falling down before our saviour, and of his giving power to the twelve to cast out devils, and of the scribes' opinion, that he cast them out through Beelzebub.

The next night they strewed ashes over the chamber to see what impressions it would leave. In the morning they found in one place, the resemblance of a great claw, in another, of a lesser, some letters which they could make nothing of, besides many circles and scratches in the ashes.

About this time I went to the house, on purpose to inquire the truth of those passages, of which there was so loud a report. It had ceased from its drumming and ruder noises before I came there, but most of the more remarkable circumstances before related, were confirmed to me there by several of the neighbors together, who had been present at them. At this time it used to haunt the children, and that as soon as they were put to bed. They went to sleep the night I was there, about eight o'clock, when a maid servant coming down from them, told us it was come. The neighbors that were there, and two ministers who had seen and heard divers times went away, but Mr. Mompesson and I, and a gentleman that came with me went up. I heard a strange 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 they 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 the noise seemed to

come from, 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 that it would imitate noises, and made trial by scratching several times upon the sheet, as five and seven and ten, which it followed and still stopped at my number. I searched under and behind the bed, turned up the clothes to the bed cords, grasped the bolster, sounded the wall behind, and made all the search that possibly I could to find if there were any trick, contrivance, or common cause of it. The like did my friend, but we could discover nothing. So that I was then verily persuaded, and am so still, that the noise was made by some demon or spirit.

After it had scratched about for a half an hour or more, it went into the midst of the bed under the children, there seemed to pant like a dog out of breath very loudly. I put my hand upon 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. I looked under and everywhere about, to see if there were any dog or cat, or any such creatures in the room, and so we all did, and found nothing. The motion it had caused by this panting was so strong, that it shook the room and the window very sensibly. It continued thus more than half an hour, while my friend and I stayed in the room, and as long after as we were told. During the panting I chanced to see as it had been something (which I thought was a rat or mouse) moving in a linen bag, hung up against another bed that was in the room. I stepped and caught it by the upper end with one hand, with which I held it, 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. . . .

. . . If it be possible to know how a man is affected, when in fear and when unconcerned, I certainly know for mine own part, that during the whole time of my being in the room, and in the house, I was under no more frightment than I am while I write this relation. And if I

know that I am now awake, and that I see the objects that are before me, I know that I heard and saw the particulars that I have told. There is, I am sensible, no great matter for story in them, but there is so much as convinceth me, that there was something extraordinary, and what we usually call preternatural in the business. There were other passages at my being at Tedworth, which I published not before, because they are not such plain and unexceptionable proofs. I shall now briefly mention them. My friend and I slept in the chamber, where the first 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 great 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 a 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 slept in that vicinity, or had business thereabout, and that his servants were not up until he called them, which was after it was day. This they confirmed, and protested that the noise was not made by them. Mr. Mompesson had told us before that it would be gone in the middle of the night, and come again many times early in the morning, about four o'clock, and this I suppose was about that time.

Another passage was this, my servant coming up to me in the morning, told me, that one of my horses (that on which I rode) was all in a sweat, and looked as if he had been rid all night. My friend and I went down and saw him so. I enquired how he had been used, and was assured that he had been well fed, and ordered as he used to be, and my servant was one that was wont to be very careful about my horses. The horse I had had a good time, and never knew but that he was very sound. But after I had rid him a mile or two, very gently over a plain down from Mr. Mompesson's house, he fell lame, and having made a hard shift to bring me home, died in two or three days, no one being able to imagine what he ailed. This I confess might be an acci-

dent, or some unusual distemper, but all things being put together, it seems very probable that it was something else.

But I go on 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, (being in the day) seeing some wood move that was in the chimney of a room, where he was, all by himself, 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 a candle in the room, but carried them away lighted up the chimney, or throw them under the bed. It so scared this child by leaping upon it that for some hours it could not be recovered out of the fright. So that they were forced again to remove the children out of the house. The next night, after which something about midnight 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.

Another night, strangers being present, it purred in the children's bed like a cat, at which time also, the bedclothes and children were lifted up from the bed, and six men could not keep them down. Hereupon they removed the children, intending to have ripped up the bed, but they were no sooner placed in another, but the second bed was more troubled than the first. It continued thus for hours, and so beat the children's legs against the bedposts, that they were forced to arise and sit up all night. After this it would empty chamber pots into their beds, and strew them with ashes, so that they were never so carefully watched. It put a long pike iron into

Mr. Mompesson's bed, and into his mother's a naked knife upright. It would fill porringers with ashes, and throw everything about, and keep a noise all day.

About the beginning of April, 1663, a gentleman that 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 fattened there, that it was difficult for several men to get it out with a lever. After this, there were some other remarkable things, but my account goes no farther. Only Mr. Mompesson writ me word, 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 an arbor.

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, asked what news in Wiltshire. The visitor said he knew of none: "No," said the drummer, "Do not you hear of the drumming at a gentleman's house at Tedworth?"

"That I do enough." said the other.

"I," quoth the drummer, "I have plagued him, (or to that purpose) and he shall never be quiet till he hath made me satisfaction for taking away my drum."

Upon hearing of this, the fellow was tried for a witch at Sarum, and all the main circumstances I have 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 divers years together.

The fellow was condemned to transportation, and accordingly was sent away. But I know not how ('tis said by raising storms, and affrighting the seamen) he made a shift to come back again, and 'tis observable, that during all the time of his restraint and absence, the house was quiet, but as soon as ever he came back 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 counted a wizard. Upon this occasion I shall here

add a passage, which I had not from Mr. Mompesson, but yet relates to the main purpose.

The gentleman who was with me at the house, Mr. Hill, being in company with one Compton of Somersetshire, who practised physick, and pretended to strange matters, related to him this strange story of Mr. Mompesson's disturbance. The physician told him, he was sure it was nothing but a rendesvous of witches, and that for a hundred pounds he would undertake to rid the house of all disturbance. In pursuit of this discourse, he talked of many high things, and having drawn my friend into another room, apart from the rest of the company, said, he would make him sensible he could do something more than ordinary, and asked him who he desired to see. Mr. Hill had no great confidence in this talk, but yet being earnestly pressed to name someone, he said he desired to see no one so much as his wife, who was then many miles distant from them at her home. Upon this Compton took a looking-glass that was in the room, and setting it down again, bid my friend look in it, which he did, and there, as he most solemnly and seriously professeth, he saw the exact image of his wife, in that habit which she then wore, and working at her needle in such a part of the room (there represented also) in which and about which time she really was, and he found upon enquiry when he came home. The gentleman himself averred this to me, and he is a very sober, intelligent, and credible person. Compton had no knowledge of him before, and was an utter stranger to the person of his wife.

Thus I have written the sum of Mr. Mompesson's disturbance, which I had partly from his own mouth, related before divers others, 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 writ also to Dr. Creed, then doctor of the chair in Oxford."

Glanvill concludes his narrative by reaffirming the credibility of Mompesson's word and finally he attacks that brand of opinionated dogmatism which refuses to accept the existence of anything inexplicable. For anyone to say that these phenomena never occurred, says the

Rev. Dr. Glanvill, is like the Spaniard who once said that there was no sun in England, for though he spent a full six weeks there, he never once saw it.

Today we have no more idea of what the Demon of Tedworth actually was than those who were actually forced to suffer through its assaults. Was the vagabond drummer really a wizard, or was he merely bragging for effect because he knew what was happening to the man who had deprived him of his drum? At best we can nod sagely and call it a poltergeist. But as to its true nature, we will probably never know.

The Grave Robber Who Had a Heart

IN ABOUT 1620 there lived in Beaujolais, France, a nobleman who was very happily married. His wife became severely ill. She was suddenly beset with burning fever followed by convulsions and fits of fainting. After a few days of intense suffering she died. The countess lay in state for three days, after which she was placed in a coffin and taken to the family tomb below the altar in the church of Beaujeu. She was dressed in costly silks and her head was crowned by a beautiful tiara of flowers, while on one of her fingers was a jeweled ring of great value.

The undertaker was a poor man with a large family to support, and driven by gnawing poverty, he decided to remove the ring from the corpse. Late at night when the church was deserted he crept stealthily to the altar with a single flickering candle to light his way. He opened the vault, pried the lid from the coffin and tried to slip the ring from the countess's finger. Her hand was so stiff, however, he was unable to get it free. He was nervous and anxious to get the unpleasant theft over with so he decided to cut the finger off. He took out his dagger and pressed it against the "corpse's" hand. Without any warning the countess sat up, opened her eyes, and uttered a piercing shriek.

The man was so frightened that he dropped his knife and candle, stumbled back in the darkness, then fled as if the devil himself were after him. Fortunately, he was intrinsically a decent man. He went straight to the count and told him exactly what had happened, adding emphatically that the countess was very much alive.

Without wasting a second both men returned to the church. When they arrived and looked in the vault they

found that the coffin was empty. They began searching frantically, and finally discovered her in another part of the church.

After regaining consciousness the countess wondered why she had been left all alone in this cold, dark place. Groggily she got up and began groping about in the unfamiliar surrounding. When she became aware that she was wearing a crown of flowers she realized what had happened and fainted at the thought of having been entombed alive. She was still unconscious when they found her, but after she was taken home she revived in a little while. The count was so overjoyed at this turn of events that he refused to punish the undertaker. As for the countess, she recovered completely and never fell into another cataleptic state again.

The Charmed Life of Francois de Civille

FRANCOIS de CIVILLE, a captain of the French army, who originally came from Normandy, was wounded in a battle near Rouen. He was left for dead and afterwards was stripped naked and thrown into a ditch with a pile of corpses. A layer of earth was thrown over the bodies, and from 11:00 AM until 6:00 PM Civille remained buried. His servant, who had been searching for his master, finally found him, and thinking that he might not be quite dead, carried him to his lodgings. There Civille remained for five days without being able to move a muscle, or speak a word, yet now he burned with fever just as he had suffered from severe cold while lying naked in the ditch.

On the sixth day the town was captured by the enemy. When some of the occupying troops entered Civille's quarters they took him for a corpse and threw him out the window. His fall was broken by a huge pile of manure. There on the dunghean he was left as dead for seventy-two hours, but finally he was discovered by a relative, who, thinking that he saw some signs of life, took him home. As a result Civille recovered completely.

Incredible as it may seem, this was not Civille's first narrow escape. His mother died while her husband was absent, and she was buried despite the fact that she was in her ninth month of pregnancy. Fortunately the husband returned on the following day. Infuriated, he ordered the grave opened, for he wanted the unborn child to be delivered in order for it to be baptised. A caesarian section was hastily performed and the child was found to be alive and healthy. Had it not been for the fast and decisive action of his father, Civille might have been born in the coffin of his dead mother.

Horror in the Monastery

IT WAS ABOUT 8 P.M. on a cold winter night. An old woman was still praying in the church of St. Nizier de Mariegny that was attached to the monastery of the Récollets, and in which were situated the catacombs used by the monks of the order. Suddenly the woman, who was quite alone, heard a voice which seemed to be coming from the ground below. Although it was distant, it was a clear cry for help. At first she was terrified. But gathering her courage, she proceeded to the spot from which the noise seemed to originate. In a matter of moments she stood in a place where she could distinctly hear a voice crying out at periodic intervals,

"Help me! Oh God, have mercy on me!"

Alarmed by this the woman fled and went at once to the door of the monastery and demanded to see the prior right away. When he arrived she told him what she had heard, but he was obviously quite skeptical, and sent her away, saying that the whole thing had been a result of her over active imagination.

A month later a monk of the order died, and when they removed the heavy stone covering the entrance to the catacombs, a horrible sight met the eyes of the burial party. A corpse, clothed in the habit of the brotherhood, was sitting upon the steps. Its hands and arms showed deep wounds, which the man had inflicted on himself, and other signs proved to the vain efforts which he had made to move the stone that imprisoned him. It was the corpse of a young monk who had "died" shortly before those agonized cries had been heard by the woman.

The Cremation of a Vampire

EARLY in the 18th Century a well known French botanist named Joseph Titton de Tournefort travelled extensively through Greece and the Near East. His *Relations d'un Voyage de Levant* was a fascinating account of the journey. One of Tournefort's most blood curdling narratives was his description of the burning of a suspected vampire by the superstitious peasants of a village in the Greek Islands. The following is an exact translation of what he saw:

"The man whose story we are going to relate was a peasant of Myconos, in disposition naturally churlish and very quarrelsome, and this is a detail worth noting, for it often occurs in similar instances. This man then, was murdered in some lonely country place, and nobody knew how, or by whom. Two days after he had been buried in a small chapel in the town it began to be whispered abroad that he had been seen at nights walking about with great hasty strides, that he went into houses, and tumbled about all the furniture, that he extinguished candles and lamps, that he suddenly fast gripped hold of people from behind and wrought a thousand other mischiefs and knaveries.

"At first people merely laughed at the tale, but, when the graver and more respectable citizens began to complain of these assaults the affair became truly serious. The Greek priests candidly acknowledged the fact of these disturbances, and perhaps, they had their own reasons for so doing. A number of masses were duly said, but in spite of it all, the monster continued to carry out his trade and scarcely showed himself at all inclined to mend his ways no matter what they did. The leading citizens of the district, and a number of priests and

monks met together to discuss the business several times, and in accordance with some ancient ritual of which I do not know the purport, they decided that they must wait for eight or nine days after the burial.

"On the next day, that is the tenth, a solemn mass was sung in the chapel where the body lay in order to expel the demon who, as they believed, had taken possession of it. The body was exhumed after the mass, and presently everything was ready to tear out the heart according to custom. The town butcher, an old and clumsy fisted fellow, began by ripping open the belly instead of the breast: he groped a good while among the entrails without finding what he sought, and then at last somebody informed that he must dissever the diaphragm. So the heart was finally extracted amid the wonder and applause of all who were present. But the carrion by now stank so foully that they were obliged to burn a large quantity of frankincense, when the hot fume commingled with the bad gases that were escaping from this putrid corpse but served to augment and extend the foetor which seemed to mount to the brains of those who were intent upon the loathesome spectacle. Their heated imaginations reeled, and the rank horror of the thing inflamed their minds with the wildest fantasies. Some even commenced to cry aloud that a thick cloud of smoke was being spewed out by the dead body, and in sober sooth, amid the frenzy we did not dare to assert that this was merely the thick fume pouring from the censers.

"Throughout the whole chapel, then, and in the square which lies before it, one heard nothing but the cries of *Vrycolakas*, for this is the name that is given to those persons who return in this evil manner. The bawling and the noise spread through all the neighboring streets and this name was shouted so loudly that it seemed to cleave to the very walls of the chapel itself. Many of the bystanders asserted that the blood of this poor wretch was a rich vermeil red in hue; whilst the butcher swore that the body was still as warm as in life. Thereupon all mightily blamed the dead man for not really being dead, or rather for allowing his body to be reanimated by the devil, for this is the true idea that they have of a *Vrycolakas*.

"As I have said, this name reechoed from every side in a most extraordinary manner. Large numbers of people went up and down through the crowd asserting that they could clearly see that the body was still supple and pliant with unstiffened limbs when they brought it from the fields to the church to bury it, and that obviously he was a most malignant *vrycolakas*. One could hear nothing but that word being repeated over and over again.

"I am very certain that if we had not ourselves been actually present these folk would have maintained that there was no stench of corruption, to such an extent were the poor people terrified and amazed and obsessed with the idea that dead men are able to return. As for ourselves, we had carefully taken up a position near the body in order that we might exactly observe what took place, and we were retching and well nigh overcome by the stench of the rotting corpse. When we were asked what we thought about the dead man, we replied that we certainly believed he was indeed dead, but as we wished to soothe or at least not to inflame their diseased imaginations, we tried to convince them that there is nothing at all extraordinary in what had taken place, that it was hardly surprising the butcher should have felt a degree of warmth, as he fumbled with his hands amid the decomposing viscera; that it was quite usual for noxious gases to escape from a dead body just as they issue from an old dungheap when it is stirred or moved; as for the bright red blood which still stained the butcher's hands and arms, 'twas but foul smelling clots of filth and gore!

"But in spite of all our arguments and all our reasoning a little later on they burned the dead man's heart on the seashore, and yet in spite of this cremation he was even more aggressive, and caused more dire vexation and confusion than before. It was commonly reported that every night he beat folk sorely; he broke down doors and even the roofs of houses; he clattered at and burst in windows; he tore clothing to rags, he emptied all the jugs and bottles. 'Twas the most thirsty devil! I believe that he did not spare anyone except the consul at whose house we lodged. Albeit I have never seen anything more pitiful and more sad than the state of this island.

All the people were scared out of their wits, and the wisest and best among them were just as terrorized as the rest. It was an epidemical disorder of the brain, as dangerous as a mania or sheer lunacy. Whole families left their houses and from the furthest suburbs of the town brought little tent beds and pallets into the public square, in order to pass the night in the open. Each moment somebody was complaining of some fresh vexation or assault; when night fell nothing was to be heard but cries and groans; the better sort of people withdrew into the country. . . ."

Tournefort goes on to describe how matters went from bad to worse. Any number of remedies were attempted to rid the community of this troublesome vampire, masses were sung, solemn processions paraded the streets day and night, priests fasted, they even sprinkled holy water about and washed the doors on all the houses of the city with it. At last they went as far as to pour a quantity of the precious liquid into the mouth of the corpse itself. Finally, says Tournefort,

"For our part, we kept impressing upon the magistrates of the town that in such circumstances it was their duty as pious Christian folk to appoint a special watch all night in order to see what took place in the streets; and owing to this precaution at last they caught a number of beggars and other vagabonds who most certainly had been responsible for a good deal of the disorder and bother. This is not to say that they had originated it, or that they were even mainly to blame for the turmoil and disturbances. Yet they had some small part in the panic, and apparently these ruffians were released from prison a great deal too soon, for two days afterwards in order to make up for the harsh fare which had been their lot whilst they were in gaol, they once more began to empty the jars of wine of those who were foolish enough to leave their houses empty and unguarded all night long without any sort of protection. Nevertheless the inhabitants placed their faith in prayers and religious observances.

"One day as they were chanting certain litanies, after they had pierced with a large number of naked swords the grave of the dead body, which they used to exhume three or four times a day merely to satisfy any idle

curiosity, an Albanian who happened to be visiting Myconos just then took upon himself to say in a tone of the most absolute authority that in a case like this it was to last degree ridiculous to make use of the swords of Christians. 'Can you not see, poor blind buzzards that you are, the handles of these swords, being made like a cross, prevents the devil from issuing out of the body? Why do you not rather employ Ottoman scimitars?' The advice of this learned man had no effect at all; the *vrycolakas* was incorrigible, and all the inhabitants were thrown into the utmost consternation. They were at their wits end to know what saint to invoke, when suddenly, just as if some cue had been give, they began to proclaim aloud throughout the whole town that the situation was intolerable; that the only way left was to burn the *vrycolakas* whole and entire; and that after that was done let the devil possess the body if he could; that it wss better to adopt these extremest measures than to have the island entirely deserted. For, indeed, already some important families had begun to pack their goods and chattels with the intention of definitely withdrawing to Syra or Tenos. The magistrates therefore gave orders that the *vrycolakas* should be conveyed to the point of the island of St. George, where they had prepared a great pyre with pitch and tar, lest that the wood, bone dry as it was, should not burn fast enough of itself. What remained of the carcass was then thrown into the flames and utterly consumed in a very few minutes. This took place on January 1, 1701. We saw the blaze as we were sailing back from Demon, and it might justly be called a festive bonfire, and after this there were no more complaints about the *vrycolakas*. The people laughingly said to each other that the devil had been finally caught this time, and they even composed a number of street songs and popular ballads mocking him and turning him into ridicule."

The Strange Case of Victorine d'Olmond

IN HIS BOOK *Des Inhumations Précipitées,* Dr. Léonce Lénormand tells the following remarkable story which occurred during the early part of the 18th century in Toulouse.

A certain M. d'Olmond, president of the parliament of Toulouse, had a beautiful 15-year-old-daughter named Victorine. She happened to fall in love with an army officer, a chevalier named de Sezanne, and in due time became engaged to him. But before the marriage was able to take place, the chevalier's regiment was called away and a full two years elapsed without any word from him. At last a report was heard that he and his entire command had been killed in battle. Victorine's grief was great, but after waiting vainly for another full year in hopes that her beloved might still turn up, she finally gave in to parental entreaties and agreed to marry a M. d'Saint Alban.

Although she felt no great love for her husband, she had a daughter upon whom she lavished the full measure of her affection. Three years afterwards, however, she died after a short illness. Her husband being a wealthy man saw to it that she received a lavish funeral, after which she was entombed in a splendid vault.

Five years later, M. d'Saint Alban, while visiting his wife's tomb, discovered another visitor there, a strange lady whose resemblance to his deceased wife was almost frightening. Upon seeing him there a peculiar look came over her face and she hurried away as if in great alarm. Determining to learn who she was and why she had been visiting the tomb, he followed her and made a few discreet inquiries. He discovered that her name was Madame Sezanne, and that she had recently arrived in Toulouse with her husband. Saint Alban immediately be-

came suspicious. He ordered that his wife's vault be opened, and he found the coffin to be empty. Applying directly to the parliament he demanded an investigation. Evidence was uncovered that five years before, on the very day after Victorine's funeral, the chevalier de Sezanne had been seen leaving Toulouse in the company of a heavily veiled lady.

The case was brought to court and the Sezannes denied ever having heard of M. d'Saint Alban. Sezanne produced documentary evidence that his wife was the daughter of an Italian peasant. Madame Sezanne backed up everything her husband said and further denied knowing the d'Olmond family. They, too, were called to testify and confront the Sezannes. After a considerable amount of discoursing by the lawyers, just as she was about to receive a judgement in her favor, M. d'Saint Alban left the courtroom. Soon afterwards he returned with his daughter, and presented her to Madame Sezanne. At the sight of the child, Victorine broke down, overcome by her maternal affection. Her masquerade was ended, she had to admit her true identity.

To the shocked amazement of all present the truth was now revealed. The chevalier de Sezanne had been captured during the recent war and remained a prisoner for several years. When he finally gained his freedom he returned to Toulouse with the full intention of claiming his bride. It happened that he arrived on the very day after her funeral. Wishing desperately to see her face for a last time, he went to her tomb, opened it, and embraced the body with tears in his eyes. To his amazement she began to revive. Without wasting any time he carried her off to his lodgings, and as soon as she felt strong enough, several hours later, fled with her to Italy. There he arranged for her to be adopted by a peasant he knew, after which the couple were married.

Thinking that they were safe after the passage of five years they visited France, but unfortunately they were found out.

Although the court ruled in favor of Victorine's first husband, M. d'Saint Alban, the unusual circumstances of the case were such that she was given permission to retire to a convent for the rest of her life.

Vampires in Austria

A FASCINATING ACCOUNT OF vampirism was pubished in the *Harliean Miscellany* in 1745, under the title of *The Travels of Three English Gentlemen.* The pertinent section of the narrative relates to their experiences in Eastern Europe.

"We must not omit observing here, that our landlord seemed to pay some regard to what the Baron Zalvasor has related of the vampyres, said to infest some parts of this country. These vampyres are supposed to be the bodies of deceased persons, animated by evil spirits, which come out of the grave, in the night-time, and suck the blood of any of the living, and thereby destroy them.

"Such a notion will, probably be looked upon as fabulous and exploded by many people in England; however, it is not only countenanced by Baron Zalvasor, and many Carnioleze noblemen (Carniola is a district in Austria), gentlemen, etc., as we were informed, but likewise actually embraced by some writers of good authority. M. Jo. Henry Zopfius, director of the gymnasium of Essen, a person of great erudition, has published a dissertation on them, which is extremely learned, and curious, from whence we shall beg leave to transcribe the following paragraph:

" 'The Vampyres, which come out of the graves in the night-time, rush upon people sleeping in their beds, suck out all their blood, and destroy them. They attack men, women, and children, sparing neither age nor sex. The people attacked by them complain of suffocation, and a great interception of the spirits; after which, they soon expire. Some of them, being asked at the point of death, what is the matter with them, say they suffer in the manner just related from people lately dead, or rather the

spectres of those people; upon which their bodies, from the description given of them, by the sick person, being dug out of the graves, appear in all parts, as nostrils, cheeks, breast, mouth, etc., turgid and full of blood. Their countenances are fresh and ruddy; and their nails, as well as hair, is very much grown. And, though they have been much longer dead than many other bodies, which are perfectly putrified, not the least mark of corruption is visible upon them. Those who are destroyed by them, after their deaths, become vampyres; so that to prevent so spreading an evil, it is found requisite to drive a stake through the dead body, from whence, on this occasion, the blood flows, as if the person was alive. Sometimes the body is dug out of the grave, and burnt to ashes; upon which, all disturbances cease. The Hungarians call these spectres *Pamgri* and the Serbians, Vampyres; but the etymon or reason of these names is not known.' "

The Necrophile Who Did a Good Deed

THE FOLLOWING IS a translation from the French book, *Les Signs de la Mort* by Bouchut. It is undoubtedly one of the most incredible accounts of apparent death ever recorded, and its amazing ending far stranger than most fiction.

A young Frenchman was once forced to enter a clerical order because of his father's ambitions. Before taking his final vows, however, he went on a short trip, and happened to stay one night at an inn, where he found the proprietor and his wife in deep grief. Their only daughter, a very beautiful girl, had died that very day. The funeral was to take place on the following day, and the young seminarian was asked to watch the corpse during the night and to perform the usual prayers.

He did so, and having heard so much of the girl's beauty, and being alone with the body, his curiosity got the better of him. He lifted the veil from her face and gazed intently at her features. What he saw surpassed even the height of his imagination, and he was so smitten by the charms of the beautiful dead girl, the fire of passion arose in him, and forgetting his duty and the solemnity of the occasion, he took certain liberties with the corpse such as are permitted usually only among living married people.

Shame and remorse then overcame him, and he left the inn hurriedly the next morning.

On the following day the funeral was to take place, but as the corpse was being taken to the cemetery, movements and thumps were perceived by the pallbearers. They stopped the procession, opened the coffin, and took the girl out; restoratives were applied and she re-

covered. Naturally the parents' joy was boundless, but it was shattered a few months later when they learned that their daughter was pregnant. Worse yet, she was absolutely unable to give any explanation as to how her condition had come about. In due time she gave birth to a healthy baby boy, and as a result became the object of cruel gossip throughout her village. Her discomfort was so great that she finally decided to hide her shame in a convent.

While all of this was taking place, the father of the young seminarian died and left him a considerable sum of money. The son, having become free to act according to his own dictates, did not take his final vows. He returned to his home with the full intention of making a new life for himself. On his way he happened to pass through the village where he had spent that single fateful night. There he heard about the result of his previous visit, and ascertained exactly what the truth happened to be. He went to the girl, confessed what he had done, and told her that he loved her. They were married and subsequently had a long, happy life together.

Born in the Grave

In 1893 a young pregnant woman died in a small Austrian town, and after the customary three day waiting period, was buried in the local churchyard. Several days after the funeral rumors began spreading that she had been poisoned by her husband, consequently the grave was opened by order of the authorities. It was discovered that she had died *after* her interment, and the appearance of her body indicated that she had struggled horribly before death occurred. The most dreadful thing, however, was that she had given birth to a child in her coffin. The doctor who had signed the death certificate was arrested and given a prison sentence as a result of his negligence.

The Woman Who Climbed Out of Her Grave

IN SALZBURG, Austria, in the early 1860's a Mrs. Zeller, wife of one of the town's leading merchants, underwent an experience similar to that of the French countess mentioned earlier. To all outward appearances, Mrs. Zeller died and was buried after the customary waiting period. The funeral took place with great ceremony, and the body was interred in extremely rich attire. Among other things, there was a very expensive ring on one of Mrs. Zeller's fingers, an ornament she had prized so highly that her husband thought it fitting she wear it to the grave.

The night after the funeral, one of the undertaker's servants, having noticed the ring, decided to rob the body. Taking up the necessary tools, he sneaked into the cemetery well after midnight and began digging up the newly made grave. When he finally struck the coffin he removed the lid at once. To his horror the "corpse" began to stir. In fact, "it" sat up stiffly and looked him in the eye. The would-be grave robber scrambled from the hole and fled in abject terror.

Mrs. Zeller, instead of lying down again, climbed with no little difficulty to the surface of the earth, walked all the way home in her shroud, and rang the doorbell of her own house. It is easy to imagine the reaction of her family when they saw her.

As a result of this amazing resurrection, a large gilded cross was attached to the outside of the Zeller house to commemorate the incident. The address was #1 *Dreifaltigkeitsplatz*, and may even be seen there today.

The Luminous Woman

THE FOLLOWING tale, like so many true stories related by Victorians, omits certain pertinent details in keeping with the rigidly observed custom of "protecting the innocent." The only thing we know about this incident is that the story was told to a writer named Robert Dale Owen by an unnamed clergyman who was chaplain to the British legation in the country where the event occurred. It would be safe to assume that the man who originally told the story to the chaplain was a British diplomat. Here is the narration in as close a form to the original as possible.

In the year 185– I was staying with my wife and children, at a favorite watering place. In order to attend to some affairs of my own, I determined to leave my family there for three or four days. Accordingly, one day in August, I took the railway and arrived in the evening, an unexpected guest, at——Hall, the residence of a gentleman whose acquaintance I had recently made, and with whom my sister was then staying.

I arrived late; soon afterwards went to bed, and before long fell asleep. Awaking after three or four hours, I was not surprised to find I could sleep no more; for I never rest well in a strange bed. After trying, therefore, in vain again to induce sleep, I began to arrange my plans for the day.

I had been engaged some little time in this way, when I became suddenly sensible that there was a light in the room. Turning round, I distinctly perceived a female figure; and what attracted my especial attention was, that the *light by which I saw it emanated from itself.* I watched the figure tentatively. The features were not

perceptible. After moving a little distance, it disappeared as suddenly as it had appeared.

My first thoughts were that there was some trick. I immediately got out of bed, struck a light, and found my bedroom door still locked. I then carefully examined the walls, to ascertain if there were any other concealed means of entrance or exit; but none could I find. I drew the curtains and opened the shutters; but all outside was silent and dark, there being no moonlight.

After examining the room well in every part, I betook myself to bed and thought calmly over the whole matter. The final impression on my mind was that I had seen something supernatural, and, if supernatural, that it was in some way connected with my wife. What was the appearance? What did it mean? Would it have appeared to me if I had been asleep instead of awake? These were questions easy to ask and very difficult to answer.

Even if my room door had been unlocked, or if there had been a concealed entrance to the room, a practical joke was out of the question. For, in the first place, I was not on such intimate terms with my host as to warrant such a liberty; and, secondly, even if he had been inclined to sanction so questionable a proceeding, he was too unwell at the time to permit me for a moment to entertain such a supposition.

In doubt and uncertainty I passed the rest of the night; and in the morning, descending early, I immediately told my sister what had occurred, describing to her accurately everything connected with the appearance I had witnessed. She seemed much struck with what I told her, and re-

"It is very odd; for you have heard, I dare say, that a lady was, some years ago, murdered in this house; but it was not in the room you slept in."

I answered that I had never heard anything of the kind, and was beginning to make further inquiries about the murder, when I was interrupted by the entrance of our host and hostess, and afterwards by breakfast.

After breakfast I left without having had any opportunity of renewing the conversation. But the whole affair had made upon me an impression which I sought in vain to shake off. The female figure was ever before my mind's eye, and I became fidgety and anxious about

my wife. "Could it in any way be connected with her?" was my constantly recurring thought. So much did this weigh on my mind that, instead of attending to the business for the express of transacting which I had left my family, I returned to them by the first train; and it was only when I saw my wife and children in good health, and set everything safe and well in my household, that I felt satisfied that whatever the nature of the appearance might have been, it was not connected with evil to them.

On the Wednesday following I received a letter from my sister, in which she informed me that, since I left, she had ascertained that the murder *was* committed in the room in which I had slept. She added that she purposed visiting us the next day, and that she would like me to write an account of what I had seen, together with a plan of the room, and that on that plan she wished me to mark the place of the appearance and of the disappearance of the figure.

This I immediately did; and the next day, when my sister arrived, she asked me if I had complied with her request. I replied, pointing to the drawing room table, "There is the account and the plan." As she rose to examine it, I prevented her, saying, "Do not look at it until you have told me all you have to say, because you might unintentionally color your story by what you may read there."

Thereupon she informed me that she had had the carpet taken up in the room I had occupied, and that the marks of the blood from the murdered person were there, plainly visible on a particular part of the floor. At my request she also drew a plan of the room, and marked upon it the spots which still bore traces of blood.

The two plans—my sister's and mine—were then compared, and we verified the most remarkable fact, that *the places she had marked as the beginning and ending of the traces of blood, coincided exactly with the spots marked on my plan as those on which the female figure had appeared and disappeared.*

"I am unable to add anything to this plain statement of facts," says our narrator. "I cannot account in any way for what I saw. I am convinced that no human being entered my chamber that night; yet I know that, being

wide awake and in good health, I did distinctly see a female figure in my room. But if, as I must believe, it was a supernatural appearance, then I am unable to suggest any reason why it should have appeared to me. I cannot tell whether, if I had not been in the room, or had been asleep at the time, that figure would equally have been there. As it was, it seemed connected with no warning nor presage. No misfortune of any kind happened then, or since, to me or mine. It is true that the host, at whose house I was staying, when this incident occurred, and also one of his children, died a few months afterwards; but I cannot pretend to make out any connection between either of those deaths and the appearance I witnessed. . . . But what I distinctly saw, that, and that only, I describe."

Unfortunately, due to the obscurity in which this whole account is shrouded there is no way of knowing whether this apparition was seen before or since. Perhaps it is just as well.

The Banshee

Whose Feelings Were Hurt

THERE ARE FEW Irishmen who doubt the existence of Banshees. It makes no difference whether a native of Erin is Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or Heathen, he knows that there are such things. Beyond the boundaries of the Emerald Isle there is considerable confusion as to exactly what a Banshee is. One of the best accounts of the species in general, and of one in particular, comes from the pen of a nineteenth century Irish author, William Carleton, who said,

"There are very few, however remotely acquainted with Irish life or Irish history, but must have heard or read of the Irish banshee; still, as there are different stories and different opinions afloat respecting this strange being, I think a little explanation concerning her appearance, functions, and habits will not be unacceptable to my readers. The banshee, then, is said to be an immaterial and immortal being, attached, time out of mind, to various respectable and ancient families in Ireland, and is said always to appear to announce, by cries and lamentations, the death of any member of that family to which she belongs. She always comes at night, a short time previous to the death of the fated one, and takes her stand outside, convenient to the house, and there utters the most plaintive cries and lamentations, generally in some unknown language, and in a tone of voice resembling a human female. She continues her visits night after night, unless vexed or annoyed, until the mourned object dies, and sometimes she is said to continue about the house for several nights after. Sometimes she is said to appear in the shape of a most beautiful young damsel, and dressed in the most elegant and fantastic garments; but her general appearance is in the likeness of a very

old woman, of small stature, and bending and decrepit form, enveloped in a winding sheet for grave dress, and her long, white hoary hair waving over her shoulders and descending to her feet. At other times she is dressed in the costume of the middle ages—the different articles of her clothing being of the richest material and of a sable hue. She is very shy, and easily irritated, and, when once annoyed or vexed, she flies away, and never returns during the same generation. When the death of the person whom she mourns is contingent, or to occur by unforseen accident, she is particularly agitated and troubled in her appearance, and unusually loud and mournful in her lamentations."

Apparently, Carleton tells us, not all Irish families can claim the honor of having a banshee. In order to possess one, the family must be old, reputable, and of indisputable Irish lineage. Furthermore, the loyalty of the banshee is unaffected by financial circumstances. The impoverished peasant is as likely to have a family banshee as the richest earl in the country.

The following story, is said by Carleton to have actually occurred, and involved a branch of his own family.

The relative in question, identified only as John, was a farmer living in the vicinity of Mountrath. He had been born a Catholic, became a convert to Protestantism, and eventually developed into an Atheist. He was a reserved and gloomy man whose meager personal needs were taken care of by an ancient housekeeper named Moya. Because of his unpopular beliefs, he had few close friends, and his neighbors for the most part kept their distance, but they respected him and left him to his own devices.

A well educated man, John devoted his leisure time principally to his hobby of gun collecting and shooting, but when he needed a change of pace he read voraciously. He was thoroughly familiar with all phases of Irish folklore, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to scoff at the wild and blood-curdling stories that Moya told him.

One morning in November, 1818, Moya came to him in a terrible state of nerves.

"Och," she said, "I am very afraid that there's trouble and misfortune hanging over us."

"And what makes ye think so?" John asked, with a half smile.

"Och," she replied, "I'm heart scalded to have to tell you, and I know you'll laugh at me; but say what you will, there's something bad over us, for the banshee was about the house all night, she has me all frightened out of my wits with her shoutin' and bawlin'."

John was well aware of the old belief in the family banshee, and scoffer though he was, he became pale as marble at the ominous announcement.

"Where did you see her?" he demanded, adding, "and what did she look like?"

"I saw her at the little window over my bed; a kind of reddish light shone around the house; I looked up, there I saw her old, pale face, and glassy eyes looking in as she rocked herself to and fro, and clapping her little, withered hands, and crying as if her heart would break."

Having composed himself, John told the old woman that the apparition had been nothing but a bad dream, and told her to make his breakfast. He had to make a jaunt into town that day and he wanted to get home before dark.

Instead of paying attention to him, Moya stood there trembling, and with tears streaming down her ancient cheeks said,

"Fer heaven's sake, John, don't go today; stay till some other day, and God bless you, for if you go today, I'd give my oath there will something cross you that's bad."

He paid absolutely no attention and insisted again that she get him his breakfast. She obeyed, weeping profusely the whole time.

Even as he bundled himself up against the brisk November winds she tried her best to dissuade him from leaving the house.

"Don't go today!" she groaned, "I know more of these things than you do, and I see plainly that if you leave you'll never come through this door again with your life."

Understandably shaken at the intensity of Moya's emotion, he stalked out of the house and headed for the stable. He had no intention of letting the superstitious drivel of

an old *collough* make him change his plans, after all, he was a man of the world.

John finished his business in town early enough to be sure, but he met an old friend he had not seen in years, and the two of them stopped off in a pub for a few drinks. One glass led to another and it was quite dark when he finally mounted his horse and headed for home. Unfortunately, he never reached his destination. Two highwaymen had been watching him from a dark corner of the pub and upon learning that John had a long and lonely ride before him they made hasty plans. Overtaking him on the road they shot him in the head and stole every valuable item in his possession.

When he failed to return that night Moya grew frantic. It was dark and windy. But when she heard a commotion outside, and found John's horse standing at the stable door riderless, and smeared with clotted blood, she raised the alarm. A party of men volunteered to go out and search for their missing neighbor, and in very short order found him lying in a ditch with two slugs in his head, and his body immersed in blood.

The body was taken home, a wake was held, and within a few days was interred in the family plot in the local churchyard. In Carleton's own words, "Having no legitimate children, the nearest heir to his property was a brother, a cabinetmaker, who resided in London. A letter was accordingly dispatched to the brother announcing the sad catastrophe, and calling on him to come and take possession of the property; and two men were appointed to guard the place until he should arrive."

The two guardians had been the dead man's closest friends in life. Jack O'Malley was a huge, genial Roman Catholic, who feared no living creature, but he was so cautious in his attitude towards the dead, that he was known on occasion to go ten miles out of his way to avoid a haunt. His companion, Harry Taylor, was tall, haughty, and reserved. Furthermore, he was a staunch Protestant, and utterly scornful of ghosts, goblins, leprechauns and like beings. In essence the two men were diametrically opposed to each other in doctrine, and though they argued all the time they were fast friends and perpetual companions.

It was the sixth or seventh night of their lonely vigil. A cheerful turf fire blazed on the hearth, and old Moya slept soundly in the chimney corner on a straw pallet. The two old friends sat at a small oak table with a decanter of whisky, a jug of water, a blunderbuss, and a brace of brass pistols. As they talked fondly of good times past, Jack mentioned the banshee and said that he hoped she would not come to disturb their watch.

"Devil take the banshee!" exclaimed Harry, "You're just too superstitious for your own good. I'd like to see the face of anything dead or alive that would dare appear here!" Seizing the blunderbuss and glancing sternly at his friend he added, "By God, I'd empty this into the very soul of anyone who dared intrude here tonight!"

Jack looked pale and replied, "Better for you to shoot your own mother than to fire at the banshee."

"Bah!" said Harry contemptuously, "I'd no more think of puncturing the old hag's skin than I would of tossing off this tumbler of whisky." And with that he drained his glass.

Their pleasant banter continued on into the wee hours of the night until both men became drowsy and started to doze. They blew out the candle and rested their heads on the table in hopes of catching a few winks of sleep. Soon there was no sound but the ticking of the clock in the next room and the regular, hoarse breathing of Moya in the chimney corner.

Neither knew how long they had been sleeping, when the old woman woke up with a wild and baleful shriek.

"Oh, the banshee!" she screamed, "The banshee! Lord have mercy on us, she's back again and I've never heard her so wild before in all my days."

Jack O'Malley turned pale for he believed her implicitly. Harry, on the other hand, assumed that some intruder was skulking about outside. Each man for his own reasons, listened intently, but heard nothing. Nevertheless they went out and looked carefully about the yard, but found nothing. They returned to the kitchen and decided to polish off the bottle of whisky before going back to sleep.

A few moments later there was an unearthly howl that even Harry agreed was enough to waken the dead.

"The banshee again!" Moya groaned.

Jack O'Malley's knees turned to jelly. Harry Taylor jumped up and seized the blunderbuss.

"No, no, Harry, don't go out," said Jack, "there's nothing for us to fear in here."

Keeping a firm grip on the weapon Harry sat down again. Meanwhile Moya dropped to her knees and began praying and wailing vehemently. There was something outside, no doubt about it. Only Harry had doubts as to what it actually was.

Carleton himself describes the sound saying, "The sad cry was again heard, louder and fiercer than before. It now seemed to proceed from the window and again it appeared as if issuing from the door. At times it would seem as if coming from afar, whilst again it would appear as if coming down the chimney, or springing from the ground beneath their feet. Sometimes the cry resembled the low, plaintive wail of a female in distress; and in a moment, it was raised to a prolonged yell, loud and furious, and as if coming from a thousand throats; now the sound resembled a low, melancholy chant, and then was quickly changed to a loud, broken, demoniac laugh. It continued thus, with little intermission, for about a quarter of an hour, when it died away, and was succeeded by a heavy, creaking sound as if of some large wagon, amidst which the loud tramp of horses' footsteps might be distinguished, accompanied with a strong, rushing wind."

The sound went around the house several times, then finally it diminished and disappeared completely. O'Malley and Moya were aghast, and Taylor, despite his skepticism was visibly shaken.

"It's the death coach," said Moya, "I often heard it and seen it before."

"You've actually seen it?" asked Harry, "Tell us what it's like."

"Why," answered the old woman, "it's like any other coach, but twice as big and hung over with black cloth and a black coffin on the top of it, and drawn by headless black horses."

"Heaven help us," murmured Jack, crossing himself.

"Strange," said Harry, shaking his head.

"But I don't understand it," said Moya, "It always comes before someone dies, and I don't know what brought it now. . . . unless it came with the banshee."

Harry grinned sardonically, "Maybe it's coming for you," he said.

"No, no!" she exclaimed, "I'm not of that family at all."

For a moment it seemed as though the silence would remain for the rest of the night, but suddenly the dreadful shrieking and awful clatter assailed their ears again.

"Open the door!" ordered Harry, "and put out Hector."

Hector was a large, ferocious mastiff who belonged to Jack. But when his master opened the door the dog refused to cross the threshold. His hackles rose and he trembled like a leaf, howling mournfully all the while.

"You must go out you cowardly beast!" shouted Harry, picking him up and heaving him into the blackness. With a final hideous howl the dog fell to the ground and was still. His belly was ripped open as if by razor sharp claws.

"That does it," said Harry, grabbing the blunderbuss, "Follow me, Jack, and don't forget your pistols. I'll have a crack at this infernal demon or die trying."

"I'll follow you to the death," answered Jack, "but I wouldn't fire at the banshee for all the leprechauns' gold."

But he went right after his friend, determined to see the matter through regardless of what happened.

Catching sight of his ghastly quarry Harry pulled the trigger and blasted away with a thunderous explosion that shattered the night. Carleton tells us that after that,

"An extraordinary scream was now heard ten times louder and more terrific than they heard before. Their hair stood erect on their heads, and huge, round drops of sweat ran down their faces in quick succession. A glare of reddish blue light shone round the stacks; the rumbling of the death coach was again heard coming; it drove up to the house drawn by six headless, sable horses, and the figure of a withered old hag, encircled with blue flame, was seen running nimbly across the hayyard. She entered the ominous carriage, and drove it away with a horrible sound. It swept through the tall

bushes which surrounded the house; and as it disappeared, the old hag cast a thrilling scowl at the two men, and waved her fleshless arms at them vengefully. It was soon lost to sight; but the unearthly creaking of the wheels, the tramping of the horses, and the appalling cries of the banshee, continued to assail their ears for a considerable time after all had vanished."

Considerably shaken by their experience the two men returned to the house and reloaded their weapons. It was a useless precaution, however, for they were not disturbed again. John's heir arrived from London in a few days and thus O'Malley and Taylor were relieved of their guardianship.

Moya died not long after this, for the harrowing experience of that terrifying night sapped what little strength she had left. "The insulted banshee," says Carleton, "has never since returned; and although several members of that family have since closed their mortal career, still the warning cry was never given; and it is supposed that the injured spirit will never visit her ancient haunts, until every one of the existing generation shall have 'slept with their fathers.' "

The Horror
That Was the Black Death

VISUALIZE, if you will, what life would be like if suddenly a devastating epidemic broke out which defied all efforts to stamp it out. Imagine, if you can, what might happen if, as this pestilence spread unchecked, it became common knowledge that the daily death rate rose into the millions. Imagine cities like New York, London, Rome, and Moscow losing half or more of their inhabitants. Law, order, and public morality would disappear. All vestiges of civilization would crumble, and the human race would degenerate into mobs of terrified, vicious, snarling beasts.

This is all imaginary, of course, the populations of Pittsburgh and Chicago are not about to be wiped out by some sinister, unknown microbe. The example was given merely for the sake of perspective. The idea of such a destructive outbreak, however, is far from imaginary. It actually happened, not once, but on a number of occasions during those horrible eruptions of plague from ancient until comparatively recent times.

The worst of the plagues, however, was the Black Death which devastated Asia and Europe in the 14th century. Originating in China, it spread like a noxious miasma through India, Persia, and Russia—from there to Europe. It arrived in Sicily in October 1347, when twelve galleys of infected victims landed in Messina. The pestilence spread so rapidly that soon all of Sicily was sick or dying. Fleeing refugees carried it to the mainland, and it spread across Italy like a terrible tidal wave. In Florence alone the first onslaught wiped out nearly half of the populace. One of the city's better known residents, Giovanni Boccaccio said,

"Such was the pitiful misery of poor people and divers

others who were in better condition, it was most lamentable to behold. The greater number of them under hope of healing, were compelled by poverty, kept still within their houses weak and faint, thousands falling sick daily, and having no help or being comforted in any way with food or medicine, all of them died, few or none escaping. Great score there were that died in the streets by day or night, and many more besides, although they died in their houses."

Corpses piled high in the streets, the pestilential stink became unbearable, and everyday life as it had once been, changed radically. The bustling activity of commerce and social life ground to a creaky, ominous halt. In northern Italy said one historian,

"Savage wolves roamed about in packs at night and howled around the walls of the towns. In the villages they did not slake their thirst for human blood by lurking in secret places, as was otherwise their wont, but boldly entered the open houses and tore the little ones from their mothers' sides; indeed they did not only attack children, but even armed men and overcame them."

To many it seemed as though the end of the world were at hand. Indeed, the Black Death itself appeared to be nothing more than the final stage of what had been long expected by those who could read the signs and portents of impending doom. Between the years 1298 and 1314 seven comets were seen—and had not the great physicians Hippocrates and Avicenna taught that "Comets, Auroras, and particularly Eclipses of the sun and moon, were the cause and precursors of future pestilences?" Had not the great philosopher Aristotle looked upon the conjunction of Mars and Jupiter as menacing to mankind, said the astrologers? It was with baleful pride they pointed to the fact that at 1:00 PM on March 20, 1345 (a scant three years before the outbreak of the Black Death) Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, were in conjunction under the 14th degree of Aquarius. Saturn, they explained, "collects the evil vapors in the depths of the earth, the other draws them up into the heights of the air, particularly when the moon is subject to eclipse in the sign of Aquarius, Libra, or Scorpio."

Another phenomenon interpreted as having a direct

bearing on the plague was the appearance on December 20, 1348 of a pillar of fire above the pope's palace at Avignon. Other events which undoubtedly had a more concrete effect on the epidemic of plague were the earthquakes and swarming locusts. Tremors at Venice were so severe that the bells of St. Mark rang by themselves as entire churches and towers crumbled into piles of debris. Even more serious, however, were the locusts which appeared in such frightening multitudes that they obscured the sun. Not only did they destroy crops, they died by the millions, their loathesome forms piling higher and higher, adding to the filth, terror and despair.

No country, no city, no town was free of the dreaded spectre of the Black Death. Often corpses accumulated more rapidly that they could be placed into graves. At one point the mortality rate was so high at Avignon that Pope Clement was forced to consecrate the entire Rhone river so that the bodies might be buried beneath its waters.

Finally, as a result of the widespread pestilence the very fiber of medieval society began to crumble and decay. With the rich and the powerful fleeing to isolated retreats cities and towns were transformed into veritable hells-on-earth. Left to their own devices the poor degenerated into wild-eyed packs of verminous beasts. Devil worship arose from the ashes of disillusionment. If God would not listen and alleviate the general suffering, then perhaps the Devil might. Wholesale murder, robbery, even cannibalism became familiar. Cynical athiests renounced their faith bitterly, crying out,

"Oh Thou thoroughly wicked God, if I could but lay hands on Thee! Truly I would tear Thee to pieces. I deny Thee, deny Thy faith and Thy power. I will go to the Orient, turn Moslem, and live according to the law of Mohammed. He is a fool who puts his confidence in Thee!"

In light of this growing dissolution of law and morality, countless numbers of wretched unfortunates were victimized all over Europe. Hospitals became slaughterhouses. Grave-diggers and corpse carriers, forcibly recruited from the ranks of murderers, thieves, and galley slaves terrorized whole communities. Constituting the very

dregs of humanity, they had nothing to lose. To them the Black Death was a reprieve. Looting the houses of the dead, they frequently hastened the departure of dying persons in order to ransack their homes. Girls and women of all ages were brutally ravaged, then thrown naked and groaning on the pestilential corpse carts that rumbled ominously through the filthy streets.

The corpse collectors and gravediggers were forced to wear bells on their feet to warn the living of their approach. Many criminals, in order to capitalize on the terror and confusion, fastened bells to their own feet and went into the houses of healthy persons, threatening them with death and infection if they refused to pay outrageous blackmail.

In some districts gangs of demented maniacs roamed about with the express purpose of spreading the plague. They would gather up material which they believed to be poisonous and go about smearing it on walls, doorposts, windows, church pews, any place in which they thought they might wreak havoc. Consequently a general feeling of mistrust infected the minds of the people. It was as dangerous as the plague itself. As one chronicler put it, "No longer did one neighbor trust another—husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, all suspected one another."

Suspected "plague-makers" were tortured and executed without mercy. None of them, however, were subjected to such vicious persecutions as were the Jews. Although the ecclesiastical and secular authorities were perfectly aware of the fact that the Jews had not been responsible for the Black Death, they encouraged the massacres for material and political reasons. The elimination of the Jews was highly profitable to all parties concerned. First of all it was relatively easy to convince the rabble that the Jews were responsible for the plague by poisoning wells and springs. Not only were the energies of the mobs safely dissipated on the Jews instead of the ruling classes, there was a great deal of valuable property to be confiscated and divided up after Jewish ashes had cooled. Thus, on July 24, 1349 all the Jews were burned at Frankfort, many committing suicide to avoid their executioners. In Nuremburg, where they were to be officially

outlawed six hundred years later, the entire Jewish community was slaughtered. In the town of Eger, the place of the massacre "Murder Alley," still bears witness to the fate of its hapless Jews. In other German towns such as Gotha, Eisenach, Dennerstaedt, Kreuzburg, Arnstadt, Ilmen, Nebra, Wiehe, Herbsleben, Thomasbruecken, Frankenhausen, and Weissensee, every last Jew was slain. About the only countries in which the Jews were able to survive were England, Lithuania, and Poland.

The great irony of these massacres was that most Jewish physicians, trained in the superior medical tradition of the Arabs, recognized that well water was dangerous to the health during plagues. Not only did they warn their own people to avoid dangerous drinking water, they gave their Christian neighbors the same advice. Their efforts, of course, were regarded as positive proof of guilt.

In all, the Black Death of the 14th century annihilated one-quarter or more of the population, an estimate regarded by many experts to be extremely conservative. Whatever the case, such statistics tend as a rule to be misleading. Germany, for example, is believed to have lost approximately a million and a quarter of its inhabitants in 1348 alone. Yet in certain sections of the country the proportions were much higher than this. In Pomerania and Holstein, for example, two-thirds of the entire populace died. In Schleswig four-fifths perished. The monastic communities were especially hard hit, the Franciscans alone lost 124,434 souls.

France lost over half of her entire population (some estimates run to three-quarters of the nation). Many districts such as Burgundy and Viviers lost as many as 90% of the people. In some towns as few as two hundred survived where there had once been twenty-thousand.

Italy fared no better, for it is believed that at least half of the population perished. Venice lost 75 percent of her inhabitants and was repopulated largely by foreign immigrants who were given citizenship after a two-year residence. Genoa lost 80 percent, Bologna and Padua almost 70 percent, Piacenza 50 percent, and Pisa 70 percent. The towns of Padua and Belluno were all but wiped out, and they too had to be resettled by strangers. The Prince of Carrarra went to extreme measures and of-

fered amnesty to criminals who would agree to settle there. Verona was repopulated in a similar fashion after having lost 75 percent of her population. Florence, which had originally had a population of about 130,000, fared worst of all. For according to Boccaccio over 100,000 died.

England was decimated, barely one out of ten survived. 25,000 of the clergy alone died. Other available figures tell us an even more terrible story. In Smolensk, Russia, in 1386 only five persons were left, and the entire populations of Iceland and Cyprus are said to have been wiped out. It is all so nightmarish and remote that it seems almost difficult to believe today. How prophetic were the words of Petrarch who said in dying Florence, "Oh happy posterity, who will not experience such abysmal woe, and will look upon our testimony as a fable."

Voluntarily Buried Alive

THE FOLLOWING two amazing accounts both come from the pens of physicians. The first is translated from the report of a German, Dr. J. M. Honigberger, who lived in India for many years. The second was written by Dr. James Braid, the man who gave hypnotism its name, and who elevated it from the realm of hocus pocus to science.

"An Indian Rajah heard of a Fakir whose name was Haridas and who was said to permit himself to be buried for several months at a time, after which he revived again. He sent for the fakir, who expressed himself willing to submit to the experiment, for the purpose of proving that a man's true life was not dependent upon the activity of that life in a physical body; but that a man's personality constituted only the house in which the spiritual individuality lived, from which the real man may go out or enter again at will. The fakir was informed that all possible means would be taken to prevent any attempted deception on his part; to this he agreed, requesting only that his body should be taken care of in a manner as to protect it against destruction, so that the soul would find it intact on taking possession of it again at the appointed time. He then made certain preparations consisting of filling his ears, nostrils, etc., with wax so as to prevent the entrance of air, and entered into a state of death-like trance, in which no heartbeat and not even the presence of a spark of life could be discovered. Before the Rajah and his court the apparent corpse was then sewed into a linen bag, and this was sealed with the Rajah's own seal, after which the bag with the corpse was placed into a box for which the Rajah himself provided a lock and kept the key after it was locked. This box was then buried in the garden of one of the ministers of the

king; barley was sown in the ground above, the whole enclosed by a wall, and in addition to that, military guards were posted there by day and night.

"On the fortieth day after the burial the box was exhumed in the presence of the Rajah, his ministers, General Ventura, and some Englishmen, among whom there was a physician. They found the fakir lying therein stark and stiff like a corpse, in the same condition as when he was buried. Warmth was then applied to his head, the wax removed, air blown into his mouth; after which the body revived, nothing the worse for having undergone this experiment. One of the ministers present declared that he knew of the same fakir's having once been buried for four months. He said that at the time of the burial the fakir had his beard shaved off, and when the exhumation took place, four months afterwards, his chin was still as smooth as at the time of the burial, which goes to show that all vitality had been withdrawn from the body by the departing soul."

Dr. Braid, who did not regard the performance of the fakir as an occult phenomenon, but rather the result of auto-hypnosis, wrote the following:

"Runjeat Singh, the king of Lahore, put two companies of his bodyguards near the place where the fakir was buried, and four sentinals that were relieved every two hours were continually watching the grave. Twice during the time of the experiment the king arrived unexpectedly and ordered the grave to be opened, when each time the apparent corpse was found in the same corpse-like condition. Finally, at the stipulated time, the grave was again opened; lock and seal were found in order; the king, Sir Claude Wade, and the diplomatic agents went themselves down into the hole and found the body of the fakir in the bag, which had begun to rot. His appearance was that of a corpse, and the attending physician could find no trace of life in the body. Water and artificial respiration were then resorted to; warm applications were made to his head. His mouth was so firmly closed that the jaws had to be wrenched open by means of a knife inserted between the teeth. In half an hour's time the fakir revived, and asked the Rajah whether he did now believe."

The Hospitals That Were Hellholes

UNTIL A LITTLE over a century and a half ago (and in some instances, until much later) most hospitals were chambers of horror, and to be sent to one was a virtual sentence of death. Worst of all, however, were the "madhouses" or "lunatic asylums." Echoing night and day with the clanking of chains and the frenzied shrieks of violent patients, the mental institutions were anything but asylums. More like something out of Dante's *Inferno,* they were real life hells—nightmares come to life. Naked or in decaying rags, the half-starved inmates languished in dark, narrow dungeons. With neither light nor heat to give them comfort they wallowed in their own excrement with only lice, rats, and other vermin for company.

Shackled as they were to the walls of foul pest-holes without fresh air, water, or even clean straw, these wretched outcasts were not even accorded the consideration given wild animals in zoos. Even more dreadful than their surroundings was the treatment they received at the hands of their keepers, overseers who were often mentally retarded sadists, or brutal ex-convicts. Armed with clubs, whips, and chains, these bullies taunted, abused, and beat their charges on impulse.

Instead of being given baths, patients were occasionally cleaned like pigs in a pen; first doused with buckets of filthy water, they were then scrubbed down with coarse mops and brooms. The injustice of such savage treatment drove many of them to the limits of endurance. Alternating between despair and rage, they shrieked, howled, and clanked their chains. Others who were more cunning practiced patience and feigned lethargy and indifference to such treatment. Watching and waiting until their tormentors were incautious enough to lower their guard, the clever ones would attack, using their chains as weapons, striking with sudden, serpent-like agility. Occasion-

ally patients succeeded in killing or disabling one of their hated keepers, but such triumphs did nothing to alleviate the overall suffering. Malnutrition, scurvy, and dysentery raged unchecked, frequently claiming victims who had not succumbed to rat-bites, gangrene, or exposure.

There were other shocking conditions—bloody survivals of the middle ages. In these "asylums" could be found instruments of torture used to "treat" the mentally ill—the rack, unchanged since the Inquisition, once used to extract confessions of guilt, now was being used for a primitive kind of shock therapy. There was the drum, a huge, hollow shell about twelve feet in diameter, containing a door large enough to accomodate a man of above average height. Inside the drum was a chair in which the "maniac" could be strapped. The whole device was mounted on a huge axle from which extended a large crank. When the crank was turned, the drum revolved faster, faster, and faster, to drain excess blood from the brain. When it was finally stopped from turning its miserable occupant was ready to collapse from nausea, vertigo, and terror. There were many other devices to supplement the drum, equally terrible, equally cruel.

The following is an actual report dated 1785, describing "the tower of the insane" in the French city of Caen, extracted from a pamphlet entitled *The Condition of the Insane in Normandy before 1789.*

"The cells are cut in the embrazure of the tower wall. Their width at the entrance is six or seven feet and three feet at the other end, toward the opening which overlooks the town ditch. The cell is not more than six or seven feet deep, vaulted above and below, made of stone. Going down twenty-five or thirty feet, one comes into still more horrifying caves where the vaults receive light and air only through three or four extremely narrow openings, so that in broad day, one can see nothing without a light. There is such humidity that, several times a year, inundation takes place and water has to be removed by pumping. An unfortunate woman was brought to the tower for ten days, awaiting her admission to the convent. She was forgotten there for two months, and

languished, her legs in water amidst the most disgusting reptiles."

In addition to such dreadful physical conditions there were still other inexcusable indignities inflicted on the helpless mental hospital inmates. Sadistic sexual perversions were openly permitted, and male attendants raped female patients without fear of punishment. Gifts sent in by friends or relatives were usually stolen before reaching their rightful recipient. Food of the most inferior quality was consigned to the insane asylums, including spoiled meat which often caused fatal food poisoning. Patients often sustained minor, but painful injuries inflicted by student barbers, who used them as practice subjects for everything from shaving to leeching. Outrage was heaped upon outrage as attendants who ministered to the physically ill with kindness, treated "madness" with blows, torture, and chains.

Such treatment, of course, was not due solely to cruelty and sadism. It was a byproduct of ignorance and superstition, a residue of ancient beliefs and practices. The medieval tortures used in the exorcism of demons and the beatings employed for the treatment of insanity were closely related. Primitive and brutal as such methods must seem in retrospect, during the 18th century they appeared to be a rational and effective approach to the management of mental illness. Following traditions established a century earlier, the psychiatrist of the 1700's first sought to gain ascendency over his patients, since ascendency led to control and control seemed to be the initial step towards cure.

Just as the successful twentieth century psychiatrist was once thought to need a Viennese accent and a beard, his eighteenth century counterpart required thunder in the voice, lightning in the eyes, and a majestic bearing. He employed harsh methods because fear was believed to reduce "nervous excitement," and "nervous excitement" was thought to be one of the primary causes of mental illness. Fear helped to drain the blood vessels of the brain, a process that was facilitated by bloodletting, vomiting, blistering, and purging. Patients thoroughly drained of bodily fluids, energy, and the will to resist, were considered to be well on their way to recovery.

Since fear was the major therapeutic tool used to control "nervous excitement" in mental hospitals, the harsh and cruel treatment accorded the patients was considered to be absolutely necessary. Chains, straitjackets, and solitary confinement in dark, secluded cells, far removed from familiar persons and objects were believed to have a soothing effect. In an era when maniacal ravings were still thought of in the tradition of demoniac possession rather than as distortions of normal behavior, the authoritative approach might assist in the exorcism of insanity.

Fortunately the concept of therapy through terror came to an end in the 18th century. The philosophers of the Enlightenment brought about such sweeping, revolutionary changes, that the impact was felt on all levels. If man was born free, but morally enslaved to a cruel, outmoded system, then all men had to be freed. This included the wretched lunatic, also born free, but physically weighted down with chains of iron in a dank and fetid dungeon. Thus, as empirical science spread during the 18th century, physicians, influenced by the Enlightenment, embraced a radically different approach to mental illness. Whereas insanity had once been looked upon as a kind of divine punishment which was visited upon the unrighteous, it was now regarded as an earthly affliction. One no longer had to bear suffering in order to achieve righteousness.

If the vicissitudes of an individual's life caused him to become sick, then he deserved sympathetic support and understanding rather than barbaric treatment to help him overcome his difficulties. The concept of "moral treatment" was born and a new hope for the mentally ill dawned on the horizon.


Prouideas amicis
Intende thesauro
Heliogravure . DURAND.

The Holy Prepuce and the Miracles

ALTHOUGH the rite of circumcision is generally associated primarily with the Jews and the Moslems, most authorities agree that neither went to such extreme lengths as did certain Christians from time to time over the ages. This is ironic as it is strange since the early Christians abolished circumcision. This renunciation of an old Jewish custom notwithstanding, the early church continued to include the Feast of Circumcision in its traditions, which gave rise to some very curious happenings.

Having done away with the actual ceremony it would seem inconsistent that the church would continue to take its celebration into consideration at any time. The strange events which occurred in connection with the Feast of Circumcision, may perhaps seem a trifle peculiar on the surface, but when we consider the frantic quest for holy relics of any kind that swept Europe in the middle ages, a glimmering of understanding appears.

As far as anyone can determine the abbey of Coulombs in the diocese of Chartres in France, came to possess a relic known as the holy prepuce some time during the thirteenth or fourteenth century. The means by which the good monks acquired this holy relic was never specifically stated, nor was it revealed exactly from whose body it had come. It was generally acknowledged, however, to have reached the abbey via a miraculous route. It was a relic held by all in great reverence, for it had the power of rendering all sterile women fruitful, a virtue which gave the abbey an abundance of renown in the neighborhood. Not only did the merest touch of the relic cure sterility, it virtually assured any woman who took advantage of its properties an easy delivery.

In time the reputation of this singular relic spread far beyond the borders of France. Under the circumstances

it is understandable that the day was bound to come when the relic would be the center of an international incident.

It so happened that when Henry V sat on the throne of England, he also ruled a great part of France. He was extremely eager to give his subjects a royal heir, and having heard of the great efficacy of the holy prepuce of Coulombs, he duly dispatched a trusted lieutenant to the gates of the abbey one morning with instructions to borrow it forthwith. There was no question of refusing the royal demand, and the poor monks were thrown into a state of deep consternation. Not only was King Henry too powerful to be turned down, his queen, Catherine of Aragon was a countrywoman of theirs. Thus it was only with the greatest of reluctance that they delivered it into the hands of the royal envoy, hoping devoutly that it would eventually return to its rightful place.

The king of England was too cautious a man to take any chances where heavenly property was concerned, and after the queen had touched the relic it was sent back to France. Unfortunately, however, it did not find its way immediately to Coulombs. The ruling powers, recognizing the great power of the miraculous relic, erected a special sanctuary for it, and it took the monks of Coulombs fully twenty-five years to regain possession of the prize which had been entrusted by heaven originally into their care.

Of course, during its absence there was a great increase of sterility in the vicinity, causing local physicians and midwives frequently to work overtime. Fortunately though, when the relic was untimately recovered it had lost none of its miraculous properties and as far as anyone knows, it is serving the diocese of Chartres to this day.

The abbey of Coulombs, however, was not the only European religious establishment to have in its possession a holy prepuce. A number of others claimed to have a similar relic. They included the Cathedral of Puy, in Velay, the Collegio Church of Antwerp, the Abbey of Our Saviour of Charroux, and the church of St. John Lateran in Rome.

The authorities at St. John Lateran, as far as we know, never revealed exactly how they came to possess

their holy prepuce either, but they were always emphatic on one point. It was *the* only authentic one in existence. Although it was guarded zealously through the centuries, from time to time it was stolen during the periodic sackings of Rome by Goths, Vandals, and even Christians. During one such incursion into the holy sanctuary of the church in the year 1527, a number of relics were stolen, including the holy prepuce. Of course, the miserable, heathenous wretches who committed these acts of depredation were usually doomed to some horrible fate in short order.

In the case of this particular theft however, the casket containing the relics was buried outside the city and never recovered again by the thief. Thirty years later it was discovered by a priest on the property of a wealthy lady. Not knowing that the box he had found contained a number of sacred relics, the honest father took it at once to the owner of the land on which he had found it. Upon being opened, it was found to contain part of the anatomy of St. Valentine, the lower jaw of St. Martha, with one tooth still in its socket, and a small packet inscribed with the name of the Saviour. Noticing a most fragrant aroma that was permeating the atmosphere the lady picked up the little packet, assuming it to contain some aromatic balm. The moment she touched it her hand stiffened and swelled perceptibly. A further investigation proved that she was holding none other than the miraculous holy prepuce stolen from the church of St. John Lateran.

It was duly returned to its proper resting place and that might have been the end of its curious history, had it not been for the worldly curiosity of a canon of the church in the year 1559. In order to make a careful examination of the relic, he made the grave error of breaking off a tiny piece. At once a dreadful storm erupted. There were booming crashes of thunder, blinding flashes of jagged lightning, and then there descended an ominous darkness which spread over the countryside. The terrified man fell to the floor of the sanctuary, convinced that his final hour had come. Fortunately, however, he, the church, and the relic survived, and once again the sun shone down on the eternal city.

The Ghost Who Lost His Case

ON SEPTEMBER 28, 1749, a British soldier, Sergeant Arthur Davis, mysteriously disappeared late in the day while traversing a lonely moor in the Scottish Highlands. No one was particularly surprised. Although Davis was not personally disliked, he wore the hated uniform of the English, and the Highlanders still smarted at their defeat in the recent civil war. There were still little bands of dissatisfied clansmen who had taken to the hills and who were not above waylaying an occasional *Sassenach* who happened to stray in the heather.

When the sergeant did not return home that night his wife immediately feared the worst. The next day a search party was organized and dispatched with orders to scour the countryside. They sought their missing comrade for a full week but the lonely highlands kept their secrets, and not a trace of Davis could be found. The search had to be abandoned. A rumor began circulating that perhaps the sergeant had deserted, but his wife promptly put an end to it, pointing out that everyone in the neighborhood had known her husband's habit of carrying fair sums of money about. She insisted that he had been waylaid, murdered, and surreptitiously buried in some desolate, hidden spot.

At length the theory advanced by Mrs. Davis was generally accepted and the matter was dropped as just another unsolved crime. About a year later, an amazing event occurred. A highland shepherd named Alexander MacPherson sent an urgent message to a friend named Donald Farquarson requesting that he come immediately. While sleeping in his cottage, said MacPherson, an apparition came to him and ordered him to get up and follow it outdoors. Mistaking the visitor at first for Farquarson, MacPherson did as he was told, but when he got

outside he realized at once that he had been mistaken. Instead of being a living person, the stranger proved to be a ghost, identifying himself—or itself—as the spectre of Sergeant Davis. Furthermore, said MacPherson, it requested him to go out and bury its mortal remains. Inquiring as to where they might be found. the ghost described the deserted place known as the Hill of Christie. When the dour shepherd refused to do the ghost's bidding, it told him to get in touch with Farquarson and ask him to do the job.

The next day MacPherson went to the place which had been specified, and found the bones of a human body that was almost completely decomposed. He still, however, did not bury the remains. Shortly after that he received another visit from the ghost. It upbraided him for not having buried the bones. This time MacPherson had a question to ask the ghost. Who, he wanted to know, had the murderers been? It mentioned two men, Duncan Terig, and Alexander Bain MacDonald, a pair of highlanders who were relatively well known in the district as men of less than savory character. Apparently satisfied with all the information, MacPherson called on Farquarson again and the two men then buried the body.

Such incredible events could not remain secret for long, and knowledge of the affair spread so thoroughly through the highlands that in time it reached the ears of the authorities. Thus, after having been arrested and held for a full year, Terig and MacDonald were brought to trial on June 10, 1754, for the murder of Sergeant Davis. It was just three months short of five years since he had disappeared.

Naturally, the chief witness for the prosecution was Alexander MacPherson. He testified how the ghost had come to him, demanded burial, and revealed the names of the men who had committed the murder. Donald Farquarson corroborated MacPherson's testimony. One Isobel MacHardie, who lived near MacPherson, testified that she too had seen the ghost, (stark naked, by the way) on the first night that it had appeared to the shepherd.

The prisoners, of course, denied their guilt and provided alibis placing them miles from the Hill of Christie on

the day of the sergeant's disappearance. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of strong circumstantial evidence against the two men that was highly damning. The prosecution's case was completely shattered by the defense counsel, however, when in cross examining MacPherson he asked,

"What language did the ghost speak in?"

MacPherson, who incidentally did not speak a word of English, replied,

"As good Gaelic as I ever heard in Lochaber."

"Pretty well for the ghost of an English sergeant," interrupted the defense counsel.

Sir Walter Scott, who commented on the case afterwards said, "The inference was rather smart and plausible than sound, for, the apparition of the ghost being admitted, we know too little of the other world to judge whether all languages may not be alike familiar to those who belong to it. It imposed, however, on the jury, who found the accused parties Not Guilty, although their counsel and solicitor and most of the court were satisfied of their having committed the murder."

If indeed it was the ghost of Sergeant Davis that started the creaky wheels of justice turning in this case, it was a terribly inept phantom. For had it not interfered the prisoners in all probability would have ended their careers on the gallows. It was Sir Walter Scott's opinion that there was no supernatural element to the matter at all. MacPherson, he believed, knew all too well who had committed the murder, and perhaps had even been an accomplice. Not wanting to violate the highland code of silence, and be remembered by posterity as a "detested informer," yet wanting to clear his conscience, it would have been a simple matter for MacPherson to reveal part of the truth in the manner he did. There were practical aspects to be considered as well. To have informed on Terig and MacDonald might have proved fatal. It was a relatively sound gamble to assume that if the ghost did not appear in court and testify on its own behalf, anything it said outside the courtroom would have to be regarded as hearsay evidence. Since the ghost—if it ever existed—never appeared in the vicinity again, we can only assume that it waited patiently in the nether world for the arrival of Terig and MacDonald to appeal to a much higher court at some later unspecified date.

The Mystery of the Barren Grave

JUST OUTSIDE the little Welsh town of Chirbury was a prosperous farm called Oakdale. The owner, a dissolute drunkard named Morris, allowed the property to deteriorate as he piled up debt after debt. By the time he died Oakdale was in serious trouble. The widow, Mrs. Morris, had no money and was in no position to raise any on the run down farm. Besides she had a teenaged daughter to bring up.

About this time Mrs. Morris's sister came to Oakdale and brought with her a young man named John Newton. He was a friend of a friend from Staffordshire, said the sister, and was willing to work in return for food and lodging. Although she could learn nothing else about Newton, Mrs. Morris regarded his arrival as a blessing in disguise. She desperately needed someone to manage the farm and she was in no position to be choosy.

As matters developed Newton proved to be just what had been needed. As a result of his tireless work, and managerial skill he soon transformed a physical and financial mess into a profitable farming operation. Mrs. Morris and her daughter, Jane, became very fond of the young man, despite the fact that he said nothing about himself before his arrival at Oakdale. To outsiders he was referred to as a "melancholy and grief-haunted man." There was something that could be seen in his eyes when he attended church in nearby Montgomeryshire that made people stay away from him. Yet, for the most part, said the Rev. R. Mostyn Price, who wrote about the matter years later, "in the pursuit of his occupations at Oakdale, he appeared contented and happy, his manner and behavior towards the widow and her daughter were, at all times marked with respect and even cheerfulness.

He seemed to consider it a part of his duty to alleviate by every means in his power, their cares and troubles, and to lighten their domestic solitude. Occasionally, when the day was closed upon his toils, he would read to them."

It was only natural that Newton and Jane Morris, living in such close proximity should fall in love. The girl's mother approved wholeheartedly. She could not think of anyone else she would rather have for a son-in-law, despite the fact that she knew absolutely nothing about his former life. Newton deeply appreciated this attitude, for as the Rev. Price said, ". . . he shrank sensitively from any allusion to the past, and felt grateful to them both when, with instinctive delicacy they seemed content that his early history should remain unknown to them."

Unfortunately Newton had made enemies, although he did not know it. Two neighboring farmers, Thomas Pearce and Robert Parker resented the fact that Newton had won the affections of Jane Morris. Realizing that they had both been eliminated from the race, they decided to revenge themselves by getting rid of their rival. Once he was out of the way, they reasoned, they could settle the matter between themselves in an amicable fashion.

Soon, in the words of the Rev. Price, "An opportunity of accomplishing their purpose at length occurred. Newton had been attending a fair in the neighborhood and was detained on business until a late hour. It was six o'clock on a November evening, when he left Welsh Pool to walk home. Parker, who had been stealthily watching his proceedings, followed, with Pearce at a little distance. In a short time Newton was brought back to town by the two men, taken before a magistrate, charged with highway robbery, and committed."

Since the crime of highway robbery in those days was a capital offense, and the two men were considered to be respectable citizens, Newton stood absolutely no chance. Furthermore he employed no legal counsel and asked the witnesses no questions, even though he was permitted by law to do so. Instead, he stoutly maintained his innocence throughout the trial. His word was not good enough for the jury, however, the testimony of Pearce and Parker was enough to procure a conviction.

After listening to the sentence of death being pronounced, Newton faced the judge and exclaimed,

"My lord, I protest most solemnly before that God in whose presence I must shortly appear, I am entirely guiltless of the crime for which I am about to suffer. I do not say that I am an innocent man. I have committed a crime, but it is known only to my creator and myself. I have endeavored to atone for it by all the means in my power, and I humbly believe I have been forgiven. I protest once more, I am entirely innocent of this charge. It is my devout and earnest desire that the stain of this crime may not rest upon my name. . . . I have, therefore, in humble devotion offered a prayer to heaven, and believe it has been heard and accepted. I venture to assert that if I am innocent of the crime for which I suffer, *the grass for one generation at least, will not cover my grave.*"

Early the next day a crowd gathered about the gallows as the bell began tolling for the execution. A number of people glanced apprehensively towards the sky, for ominous storm clouds began to gather, then, in the words of Rev. Price, "No sooner had he placed his foot upon the scaffold but fearful darkness spread around: and the moment the fatal bolt was drawn, lightnings flashed with terrific vividness, the thunders rolled in awful majesty, until the town hill seemed shaken to its base: the rain poured down in torrents; the multitude dispersed, horror stricken and appalled, some crying out, 'The end of all things is come!' "

This was in the year 1821. Newton's body was duly cut down and buried in a remote corner of the Montgomeryshire churchyard, where it became known in time as "the robber's grave." Although grass was planted above the little plot it would not live. Soon there was a dark brown patch of bare earth above it conforming approximately to the size and shape of the coffin below.

In 1852 the Rev. Mr. Price wrote his account of the affair, noting that "thirty years passed away and the grass has not covered his grave." Shortly after the minister's narrative was published someone tried replacing the turf over Newton's grave. For a while grass grew everywhere but over the head of the coffin. There it looked withered

"as if blasted by the lightning's stroke." About a month later the rest of the grass died. Some years later the parish clerk made a written statement, saying, "Attempts have been made by different persons to cause grass to grow on the grave by putting fresh soil and sowing seeds, etc., but hitherto without success. The grave is always returned in a short time after each experiment, to the state in which it now is."

As for the other principals in the case, Mrs. Morris and her daughter Jane were so grief stricken that they sold Oakdale, moved away and were never heard from in the district again. Parker, soon after the execution became a drunkard and was killed shortly afterwards in a blasting accident. Pearce simply "wasted away and died."

An epilogue to the story was written in 1941 by British authoress Christina Hole in a book entitled *Haunted England*. "Today," she said of Newton's grave, "it can be seen in the form of a distinct cross of sterile ground with the grass growing strongly around it."

Certainly a powerful testament to a dying man's curse.

The Amazing Mr. Home

THERE ARE numerous accounts in the annals of unexplained mysteries which deal with men and women who possess strange powers. Certainly one of the most incredible individuals who ever fell into this category was a Scot named Daniel Douglas Home. He was born in Edinburgh in 1833 and died at the age of 56 in France in 1886. Although Home is all but forgotten today, during his brief lifetime, he managed to dumbfound all who witnessed his amazing accomplishments.

Home's talents lay primarily in three areas. He was able to handle fire without being burned, he was capable of levitation, and he could cause heavy objects to move without coming into physical contact with them.

Unlike professional charlatans Home did not perform on the stage. Furthermore he never exhibited his psychic powers for profit. He was certainly not reluctant to demonstrate his abilities when asked, but he always did so in the privacy of friends' homes or under laboratory conditions. It is ironic that Home was able to count among his friends such illustrious persons as the Empress Eugenie, Napoleon III, and William Makepeace Thackeray. Yet, the authenticity of Home's feats was totally rejected by the rigid dogmatism of the scientific world. There were of course, exceptions. Any discussion concerning Daniel Douglas Home invariably led to controversy. Elizabeth Barrett Browning once said, "Everybody is quarreling with everybody on the subject."

When Bartolomeo Bosco, the most celebrated stage magician of the time was asked to express an opinion on Home, the answer was firm and emphatic. The element of fakery was totally absent in Home insisted Bosco. Whatever the amazing Scot's powers were, asserted the magi-

cian, they were beyond any ordinary explanations.

Since all of the persons who witnessed Home in action were highly articulate, there are a number of accounts documenting his startling accomplishments. In 1867, Lord Adare, an English journalist, described how he and several others watched Home stir a fireplace full of glowing embers with his bare hands, after which he knelt down, put his face among the coals, and rubbed it with them as if he were bathing in a basin of water. An immediate examination revealed that Home's face was not even singed. Home further amazed the company by picking up an ember and holding it in his hand for about five minutes. Although he displayed no discomfort, it was so hot that none of the others could even come near it.

Dozens of witnesses saw him perform seemingly fantastic feats of levitation. He would often remain suspended in the air while the others passed hands or sticks all around him to make certain that there was no physical means of suspension. Once he took a piece of chalk in hand, rose straight up, and made an identifiable mark on the ceiling after which he slowly descended to the floor again. One of Home's most spectacular demonstrations of levitation was written up by three of the witnesses. Rising from the floor, he floated out of a window that was seventy feet above ground, then drifted back into the room through another window.

Home himself was unable to explain his "wild talents," saying, "I have not, and never had, the slightest power over these manifestations, either to bring them on, or to send them away, or to increase or to lessen them. What may be the peculiar laws under which they have become developed in my person, I know no more than others."

In 1870 after considerable pressure for a scientific investigation of Home, the job was undertaken by the brilliant young physicist William Crookes (inventor of the X-ray tube and later knighted for his scientific achievements). In the course of his study Crooks designed and had built a good deal of special apparatus. When he concluded his investigation he published a report in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* on July 1, 1871. He asserted that under perfectly controlled conditions Home had defied gravity and floated in the air. The scientist

further testified that Home was able to handle hot coals without injuring himself. Lastly he reported seeing heavy objects adjacent to Home being moved by forces which were both invisible and unknown.

Unfortunately Crookes' colleagues of the Royal Society refused to attend a single one of his experiments, scoffing, and calling him a fool. But Crookes was a true scientist, and he knew what he had seen. Writing on the subject two decades later he said, ". . . I find nothing to retract or to alter. I have discovered no flaw in the experiments then made, or in the reasoning I based on them."

Unfortunately, despite the fact that Crookes was able to verify the authenticity of Home's incredible gifts he was unable to explain what they were. It is doubtful if anyone will ever be able to do so.

The Bloody Prophecy

SHORTLY BEFORE the outbreak of World War I, an English businessman named James Matthews was travelling through India for his employer, a London exporting firm. By his own admission he was not a man given to speculations about occult or supernatural matters. He regarded such things as foolishness and not worth the time of a busy man. Yet, the longer Matthews spent time travelling about India the more he came to realize that there were more things in the world than those which appeared on the surface.

Matthews described in detail the incident which made "a believer" of him. Unfortunately, as was typical of men in his circumstances, he did not precisely identify the place or the names of the individuals involved, saying "as I do not wish nor intend that the facts which I am about to relate should cause unpleasantness in any way, or to anybody, I shall give no names, and the initials I use are not those of the parties or places concerned."

Since the following actually took place, there will be no attempt to embellish the facts here by inventing fictitious names. Instead we will stick to the initials supplied in the original narrative by the proper Mr. Matthews.

During a ten day stay in the town of M., Matthews made the acquaintance of a man he referred to as Mr. G. They had adjoining rooms in the same hotel. As far as the Englishman could determine, G. was there for the unpleasant business of obtaining a divorce.

Matthews shared prejudices that were so widespread among his countrymen of the day, and regarded the natives of India as less than civilized. Therefore, he was quite shocked one evening to see his friend G. entering the hotel with "an old ragged, barefooted, white-bearded

fakir." He was even more shocked when G. invited him to join them for a conversation. Bluntly informing Matthews that he was in serious trouble, G. introduced the old fakir, whose name was Abdullah, before telling his story.

"I've never done anything to gain his friendship other than giving him a few rupees now and then to buy oil for his holy shrine, but the fact is that we are old friends. You may not believe what I have to tell you, Mr. Matthews, but I can assure you, the longer one lives in India the more one believes."

G. went on to explain that his chief opponent in court was a high official who had no business interfering in the case. Not only was he meddling, he was taking very active steps to stack the cards against G. This was all quite interesting to Matthews, but he did not quite understand what it all had to do with the fakir.

"I'll explain that," said G., "When I left court this afternoon I met my old friend Abdullah. We hadn't seen each other for six years. Yet he came up to me and spoke to me because he knew all about my case."

"Oh, well," said Matthews, "These natives have very good memories, and lots of ways of finding out everything that's going on. If that's all you want me to believe, I'll believe it."

"He told me something else," said G.

"What else?" asked Matthews.

Rather than answer directly, G. turned to Abdullah and said, "Oh, *Fakirjee,* please tell my friend exactly what you said to me earlier."

The fakir hesitated. "He is your friend?"

"I am his friend," replied Matthews with a slight air of irritation. With this the fakir addressed both men and said, "Oh G. sahib, and friend, there is much evil and injustice in the world. But there is a far higher court than the court in which your case is now being tried, and a much greater judge than those who preside at the bench in our city. For all of these judges will one day stand before this higher court to be judged themselves. They shall be given their warnings, however. Oh G., sahib, your enemy whose cunning and unjust actions are bringing you such pain now, will be called to account within five

moons. Hear my words, G. sahib and friend, he will pay for his most grievous wrongs five moons from this very day. . . ." He lowered his voice and continued. "There is more. He will be summoned suddenly in the state of that very crime with which he has falsely accused you, G. sahib, mark my words well! The lowest of the low will sweep up his blood and brains with their unclean brooms. The untouchables will gather the shreds of his skull like vultures. Within five moons, sahib, this enemy of yours will be buried headless, he will be in such a state that even his own mother would not recognize him. And now, with your kind permission gentlemen, I am weary and I shall take my leave of you."

When the fakir had left, Matthews, at G.'s insistence wrote down all the details of Abdullah's prophecy on a sheet of paper, exact names and dates were carefully recorded. The two men then sealed the information in an envelope with sealing wax and an eight anna piece, then after inscribing the date on the outside they both affixed their signatures.

"By the way," asked Matthews, "What is this crime that your opponent has accused you of?"

"Drunkenness." replied G. softly.

"Well then," said Matthews, "If this enemy of yours does indeed die drunk within the appointed time then I must confess I shall begin to believe myself."

"I can assure you," said G., "You can believe Abdullah."

"Why?" asked Matthews.

"Because," said G., "He is endowed with a wisdom that transcends our pitiful western knowledge. It is well and good for materialists like you to sneer at men like the old fakir, but let me tell you, it is the very materialism of the English which keeps them from ruling India successfully. You English are playing on India like a piledriver on harpstrings. You can't understand why there is no harmony. Your piledriver is good enough in its own way, but what about the delicate strings of the harp?"

Matthews decided that this was a good time for him to leave. For though his friend G. was a European, and certainly cordial enough, he was critical of the British, and Matthews had no desire to enter into any political argu-

ments. He subsequently left the town of M. and never met G. again.

He kept the sealed envelope, however, and some months later, on his return to M. he learned that G. had not only lost his case in court, he had been forced by the authorities to pay the correspondent's legal expenses. In addition he had been ordered to pay alimony of £500 a year. To add insult to injury, all of this was done with the full public knowledge that the wife and the correspondent were living together. Matthews commented wryly by saying, "It struck me that the ways of the law, as administered in India, are rather peculiar and incomprehensible."

His next visit to M. happened to be exactly two days before the full "five moons" of Abdullah's prophecy. He bought a newspaper at the railway station and while reading in a cab on his way to the hotel, suddenly came upon an item that sent chills down his spine. He read "that a certain very high court official had fallen off a balcony in going to bed: that his head, face and skull had been completely smashed into jelly; and that the sweepers had swept his brains, blood, and scattered bits of skull out into the verandah of the club in which he had been living." From what Matthews learned afterwards, the dead man had attended a very raucous party at the club that night. There had been a great deal of drinking—champagne, brandy, liqueurs. Not only had he gotten thoroughly drunk, he had been the last man to leave.

When he arrived at his hotel Matthews remembered the sealed envelope. He had it in his inside pocket. When he got up to his room he sat down, reread the news story, and then tore the envelope open. There they were, all the details in his own handwriting, written five months before the date on the newspaper which lay in his lap. It was on that day that James Matthews began to believe.

The Haunted Mirror

IT WAS late afternoon on February 20, 1936. In a small ward in the War Memorial Hospital at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan a man named Jeffery Derosier was slowly dying. On a plain enameled table next to the bed lay a cheap, unmounted mirror—it was nothing more than a piece of silvered glass.

Feebly Derosier asked the nurse to hand him the mirror and she did so. There were three other patients in the ward who witnessed the entire proceeding. After staring briefly into the mirror, Derosier suddenly threw it back on the table and cried out in terror,

"My God, I'm dying!"

A chilly silence descended on the room. What point was there in anyone speaking? Then unexpectedly and in a disjointed manner Derosier said, "You won't be able to pick up that mirror."

A few minutes later he was dead.

Some time afterwards one of the other patients in the ward, Harvey Davenport, tried to pick up the mirror. He couldn't move it. Next a nurse tried. Once again it was impossible to move the mirror. The next person to try and fail was Dr. F. J. Moloney, Derosier's physician. Following Dr. Moloney was a procession of nurses, patients, and doctors. Some tried to move it with their bare hands, others tried using tools, all failed in their attempts to get it to move. For the next twenty-four hours the mirror remained absolutely immobile.

The story of this weird event spread like a ripple on still water. Since there were a number of witnesses available, one of the local papers carried the story in great detail. The Associated Press got wind of the affair, checked it out, and promptly released it to the world.

The novelty soon wore off. No one could explain the mystery, the hospital authorities were becoming increasingly upset for a number of reasons. Not only were they getting entirely too much unpleasant publicity, the idea of a haunted mirror was having adverse effects upon some of the patients.

One nurse tried to pry it loose with an icepick but failed completely. A surgical nurse named Adeline Knoop decided that she wanted to take a crack at moving the mirror. It had become a challenge that many likened to the sword of King Arthur. Instead of utilizing any tools Miss Knoop decided to rely on her long fingernails. Suddenly, as if it had been propelled by some strange force, the mirror went flying up into the air, after which it fell to the floor without even sustaining a crack. An examination of the back revealed absolutely nothing. There was no substance which could possibly have made it stick to the table. Similarly, the table was thoroughly clean. When it was put back on the table the mirror "behaved" in a perfectly ordinary fashion. It could be moved without difficulty.

If there was any relationship between the dying man's words and the mirror's temporary refusal to budge no one ever knew. Shortly after the incident the mirror was accidentally broken and the pieces thrown away by Grace Fleming, a nurse, who reflected the official sentiment when she emphatically declared, "Good riddance!"

The Phantom Horseman of Mons

EVERY WAR has its incredible accounts of phantom armies, ghostly swordsmen, and other supernatural phenomena. One of the best documented instances of a phantom army, however, dates back to the bloody days of World War I. This particular apparition (or army of apparitions) was seen near Mons in France, during the savage fighting of August, 1914. Before that month had ended, the relentless German advances shattered all Allied hopes for a short war and an easy victory. August, in particular, saw especially fierce and bitter combat. Many strange tales were told afterwards concerning that harsh and unhappy month. But none are as strange as the accounts of what was seen by thousands of troops on the nights of August 27th and 28th of 1914.

One description was given by a Lt. Col. F. E. Seldon, who wrote to the *London Evening News* on Sept. 14, 1915. Expressing himself in a calm, almost detached fashion, Seldon said that on the night of the 27th (Aug. 1914) he, along with two other officers had been riding at the head of a long column. It was still fairly light and visibility was quite good. As they moved forward Seldon and his two companions saw two long columns of horsemen riding parallel to their own line of march. The strange troops were a ghostly white and moved without making a sound. Nevertheless, before it grew too dark one of the officers took a small scouting party out to investigate the mysterious pale cavalry, but they could find nothing. Finally it became so dark that the ghostly phenomenon could be seen no more. Seldon closed his letter to the *Evening News* by saying, "I myself am absolutely convinced that I saw those horsemen; and I feel sure that they did not exist only in my imagination. I do

not attempt to explain the mystery—I only state the facts."

A far more dramatic account came from the description of a Lance Corporal Headly-Johns of the Lancashire Fusiliers. The following is what he told a London reporter, Harold Begbie, while on leave in England.

"I was in my battalion in the retreat from Mons on or about August 28 . . . the weather was very hot and clear, and between eight and nine o'clock in the evening I was standing with a party of nine other men on duty. . . . Captain Leaton suddenly came up to us in a state of great anxiety and asked us if we had seen anything startling (he used the word 'astonishing'). . . .

". . . Afterwards Captain Leaton came back, and taking me and some others a few yards away, showed us the sky. I could see quite plainly in the mid air a strange light which seemed to be quite distinctly outlined and was not a reflection of the moon, nor were any clouds in the neighborhood.

"The light became brighter and I could see quite distinctly three shapes, one in the center had what looked like spread wings. The other two were not so large but quite plainly distinct from the center one. They appeared to have a long loose hanging garment of gold tint, and they were above the German lines and facing us.

"We stood watching them for about three-quarters of an hour. All the men with me saw them, and other men came up from other groups who also told us they'd seen the same thing. I am not a believer in such things, but I have not the slightest doubt but that we really did see what I now tell you. . . . I have a record of fifteen years good service, and I should be very sorry to make a fool of myself by telling a story merely to please anyone."

Similarly on the night of August 28, 1914 Phyllis Campbell, a nurse, was told by a wounded man she was taking care of, a similar story. He described a "yellowish mist" that rose above the German lines. Then he told of a "funny cloud of light" and a "tall man with yellow hair and golden armour on a white horse, holding his sword up." Nurse Campbell heard virtually the same story and variations of it from a number of other soldiers that night. She recalled that many men continued talking about

the strange phenomenon long afterwards. Apparently, however, the British were not the only ones who saw the ghostly figures. About a month later she received a letter from a friend who happened to be nursing in a German hospital—in Potsdam to be exact. The letter said in part,

"There has been much comment here because a certain regiment which had been ordered to take a small section of the front failed to carry out commands. It was impossible, the officers declared!

"When they went forward they were powerless; their horses turned sharply around and fled. Nothing could stop them. 'We saw at the same moment strange shapes in the sky and lower down a huge man on a white horse . . . it was like going full speed ahead and being suddenly pulled up in front of a precipice.' That is the way they talk. Is there something to it, Phyllis?"

Whatever it was, it turned the tide of battle, for the German advance turned at that moment into a retreat.

THE END

Epilogue

Presumably, if you have just finished reading this compilation of horrors from earlier times, you might be a likely candidate for a mild case of the shakes. . . . Especially if you are alone, it is dark and cold outside, and there are inexplicable creaking sounds behind the walls. Why not? After all, you have been subjected to a sometimes gory, occasionally brutal, and often creepy narrative. Moreover, you have been presented with pictorial illustrations designed to help prod the imagination into conjuring up horrific images where none existed previously.

Take heart, dear reader (as they used to say in bygone days), the worst is over. There is no more need to shudder. You are safe from vampires. They have probably formed a union and would refuse to suck your blood unless it met carefully prescribed standards of purity unattainable in this century. As far as being in danger from such demonic fiends as ghouls or cannibals, perish the thought. No self-respecting anthropophagite would dare to take a bite out of *you,* not if he was in his right mind. You would probably poison him! If your flesh isn't partially pickled already from the vast conglomeration of additives, medications, preservatives, and artificial flavors you consume every year, it probably tastes like the waste product of a chemical plant. Besides, can you imagine what effects tobacco, air and water pollution must have on the flavor of human flesh these days?—ugh!

As far as ghosts, and other assorted supernatural spirits are concerned, you have little to fear. At the rate the Great Society is destroying old landmarks, houses, mansions, and other assorted architectural relics, there won't be any places left for ghosts to haunt.

Then we have the incubi and succubi. . . . Maybe once upon a time it was considered bad taste to indulge in wild, nocturnal sexual hanky-panky with a physically attractive spirit of the opposite sex. But not today! Think of the advantages. They are too numerous to list, but imagine the practicality for—say a spaceman, having his own private succuba. She would be weightless, no drain on the oxygen or food supply, and a tremendous boost for morale. Not even a loving wife could be jealous of her.

So you see, most of the monsters aren't really so monstrous when you come right down to it. And the nightmares—well, who doesn't have them nowadays? What is a mere plague of the Black Death compared to the perpetual threat of nuclear warfare? In the days of the Black Death life was very simple. If you caught it, you died and that was that. If you survived, you thanked God and kept on living. Today, the Deity is pretty much beset with troubles of His own, and mankind hasn't quite made up its mind whether it is going to explode itself out of existence with bombs, hypertensions, or overpopulation.

Who knows, perhaps the real reason so many of us enjoy reading about horrors dredged up from the past is that we are trying to convince ourselves that maybe the "good old days" were really the "bad old days"?

All of our present day horrors notwithstanding—income tax, television commercials, and creeping uglification (to mention only a few) things could be worse. At least we can all still indulge ourselves in certain ways. We can still set forth on that most intimate of affairs, the one that each of us embarks upon each time we pick up a book and read it. You are indulging in it now, as you read, just as I did when I wrote these lines. Let's hope that none of us is ever deprived of the privilege of such affairs, and that the worst of our nightmares be forever populated by paper monsters.

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