

LIFE IS ESSENTIAL.

I questioned my soul as I stood by the dead. My soul, in its anguish, made answer and said: "No power can destroy and no fiat create. For death is transition and life is a state. Each atom of form and each atom of force exists as a part of their infinite source. And whether in motion, or whether at rest, Must live by a law that is never transgressed."

THEY SAW THE GHOST

Nearly every city, town or village in our country that is old enough to have a history has its haunted house and its story of ghostly visitants and eerie, uncanny sounds and sights connected with some particular locality.

To this rule Florence, Ala., many of whose older residences and families date back to the days of Andrew Jackson, forms no exception. Around several of the ivy clad mansions of the old town hang mysteries which make them objects of interest to the educated whites and of terror to the ignorant and superstitious negroes.

Humanity in every age has been eager to listen to the marvelous and to swallow the incredible upon very slight guarantee. However, it is upon no such slender testimony that our story rests.

Early in the history of the town among the first attracted to the locality by the picturesque beauty of its location above the swift flowing Tennessee was a North Carolinian named Richard Hunter.

Wealth in those days was counted in the south by the acreage of plantations and by the number of slaves, male and female. Of the former Richard Hunter possessed enough for a barony and of the latter a small regiment.

Around the great square brick house with its massive pillars and wider, reading porches, could be seen bright and happy black faces by the score. The cotton fields resounded to the hoeing songs of well conditioned and swartny fieldhands, while in the "quarters" not far off packanimines and dogs barked.

Richard Hunter had but one child, the sole heiress of his acres and his wealth, and she had just bubbled under the warm glances of a southern sun into womanhood, fresh and blooming as a wild rose.

Alice Hunter was in that period of life where the present is so bright that its glow reaches out and dominates the future. Wealth, doing parents, gratification of every wish were hers; but above all she had won the love of the man of her choice and was happiest in the knowledge that Philip Marston's dearest hope and highest aspiration centered in herself.

Phil Marston, as he was known to every one, or "Boss Phil," as the negroes called him, was young, handsome, free handed, free hearted, gallant and all that went to make him an ideal lover.

In spite of strong rivalry he had won his ladylove, and the day was set for their marriage. Alice was only 17, and so the wedding day was postponed until the following year.

Suddenly in 1836 the Cherokee broke out. Philip Marston raised a company of riflemen from among the hearty yeomanry of the section and joined the command of his friend and neighbor, General Coffee.

Throughout the sharp and decisive campaign that followed Marston bore a conspicuous part for gallantry until the final battle on the banks of the Coosa.

Wounded in upon a peninsula, bonneted, all but a narrow neck of land, by swollen waters of the rivers, the chiefs and bravest warriors of the Cherokees made their last and desperate stand. Leading his riflemen to a charge, Philip Marston fell, mortally wounded.

Bad news travels quickly. It was on a night of furious wind and rain that a hunting shirted rifleman brought the tidings of Philip Marston's death to the Hunter mansion.

Suddenly the great bronze knocker on the door pealed out its summons, and Alice, thinking that none but a lover would brave the tempest and darkness, flew to greet him.

In silence and with bowed head the hardy pioneer pointed to the riderless steed which he led and extended to her a scrap of paper on which her dying lover had traced a few words of farewell.

Pale, calm, tearless, the ghost of her self, she watched the rude but loving mourner bend him to a chamber in the house and lay him as if asleep upon a couch.

Day by day she faded like a lily that is denied moisture, and within a few short weeks her spirit fled to join his in another world.

Since then the Hunter house has had many owners and many occupants, but every year upon the anniversary of that stormy night in 1837 the stroke of a horse's hoofs are heard without, the old knocker clangs, footsteps sound upon the stairs, and the occupants of the south room—the same in which Philip Marston's body lay—receive a ghostly visitant.

Ten years ago the house was owned and occupied by a family named Thundersen, among the members of which was a nephew named William Black, a young and rising member of the bar.

Early in the summer of 1842 the Thundersens went on their annual pilgrimage to one of the Virginia watering places, leaving young Black the sole inmate, as, according to southern custom, the servants lived in a separate building.

Several days had gone by without incident until the night of June 25. Black had started to go to bed, but was suddenly seized with an unaccountable loneliness and distrust of his solitary condition, and upon reflection recollected that this was the anniversary.

Taking his hat and cane, he went in search of a fellow barrister of his own age and with whom he was intimate, one John T. Jones, who held forth upon the courthouse square and kept bachelor's hall over his office.

It was about 11:30 o'clock, and as beautifully calm and clear a moonlight night as heart could wish when they entered the house, and after locking the hall door went to Black's room, the south chamber. Young men make short work of toilets,

so they were quickly in bed, and neither being sleepy Black started to tell Jones the story of the haunted room.

He had just finished when the old cracked bell in the courthouse tower struck midnight, and as the last reverberations died away a horse's hoof strokes could be distinctly heard upon the gravel walk without.

Suddenly and without warning the windows commenced to rattle in their casements, and a noise resounded from the roof as if torrents of rain were descending upon its weather beaten shingles.

Then came the clang of the old knocker upon the hall door. The noises ceased as quickly as they had begun, and all was silence.

Then "tap"—"tap"—"tap"—"tap"—came the unmistakable sound of footsteps upon the stairs, slowly and wearily mounting. They ceased for a second or two upon the landing outside, the door swung noiselessly open, and a figure, clearly seen in the moonlight, entered and crossed the room.

Both men lying on the bed saw it plainly and afterward described it as that of a young and beautiful girl, tall and slender, with golden curls framed round a face of marble pallor, wide open blue eyes and clothed from head to foot in fleecy white, with a single white rosebud nestling above the ear.

Advancing slowly to one of the windows the figure stood a moment with clasped hands, looking wistfully out into the night and with the full glow of the moonlight upon its upturned features. Then it turned, approached the side of the bed where Jones lay, stooped and placed a hand cold as earth itself upon his forehead.

Up to that moment he and Black had been too frightened to move or speak, but when that icy hand was laid upon him the spell was broken. Human nature could endure no longer, and with a yell both of them tumbled out of the other side of the bed from where the figure stood and bounded down the stairs.

They did not go back to the Hunter house that night. In fact, it was some days before they could summon nerve enough to go in daylight and get their clothes.

Since then the night of June 25 in each year finds that room untenanted.—T. R. Gordon in Atlanta Constitution.

Only Rich Men Can Be British Officers. Notwithstanding the attempts which the commander in chief has made from time to time to make the army as a profession less expensive, it is still quite as costly as heretofore; consequently only the sons of the wealthy are able to adopt a military career.

To begin with, there are the crammer's fees for preparing the youth for the necessary examination. Then parents are required to spend hundreds of pounds in order to support him at Sandhurst or Woolwich, and subsequently to supplement his small pay as a junior officer of about £80 to £100 per annum, for it is an indisputable fact that a subaltern cannot live in the average line regiment on a smaller private allowance than £80 to £100 a year.

Then again, apart from all this expense, there is the cost of the young officer's outfit, which, for the ordinary British line regiment, runs from £120 to £200, and if cash is not paid some 15 or 20 per cent more must be added to this amount. It is generally acknowledged that officers' sons make the best officers, but if they and the sons of clergymen and other professional men of moderate means are to be enabled to adopt a military career an inquiry will have to be instituted into regimental expenses and a considerable reduction made, or the army will continue to be exclusively officered by the sons of the rich, a practice which is universally admitted to be inadvisable.—London Court Journal.

What a Maverick Is. Some years ago a man named Maverick located near Austin, Tex., and went into the stock business. He had considerable money and established a large ranch, mostly of cattle. He was what might be termed a progressive man, but his ideas of progress were not suitable to his surroundings.

For instance, he concluded that branding cattle was useless—in fact, barbarous—and he determined that the red-hot iron should never again be pressed against the side of an animal belonging to him. He kept his word, but he didn't keep his cattle.

This was a regular picnic for the cowboys of that locality, who of all things could never be accused of being at all scrupulous on questions of honor, especially when there was a steer involved in the case. Well, the cowboys picked up Maverick's cattle wherever they could find them, and it was not long before every hoof of them was gone and he was reduced to almost poverty. Ever since that every unbranded head of cattle over 6 months of age has been called a maverick and is regarded by the cowboy as the property of him who first finds it and sticks his brand on it.—Louisville Commercial.

Family Names and Migration. Southern family names are scattered across the country below Mason and Dixon's line from east to west in what geologists would perhaps call a drift. As the west began to be settled by people from the colonial seacoast fringe, emigration tended to go in straight lines, so that the names of the Virginia seacoast appear in Kentucky, those of North Carolina in Tennessee, those of South Carolina along with Oglethorpe's cockneys in Georgia. Later the drift swept westward into Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas. In the progress names have been curiously transformed. Flemish names have lost the "van" or "de." Huguenot names, whether Flemish or pure French, have been awkwardly Anglicized, and even English names have suffered violent change.—New York Sun.

From the German. Rich Aunt—Why do you bring me this grass, Tommy? Tommy—Because I want you to bite it. "Why do you want me to bite it?" "Because I heard pa say that when you bite the grass we will get \$40,000."—Texas Siftings.

An Ingenious Lawyer.

The ingenuity of lawyers in making business for themselves is in course of illustration in a reference case now in progress down town. An estate is involved in the litigation. An unsuccessful contest of a will left some of the litigants dissatisfied. This furnished the lawyer his chance. He found that about 125 persons might be entitled to a dip into the estate if the will could be broken. He addressed a note to each of them, proposing to attack the will and tendering his services on a contingent arrangement. In this note he informed them that proceedings would be begun and that he would make defendants of all who did not join his movement. With the apparent necessity forced upon them of accepting his services without charge or hiring various lawyers to protect their interests, they flocked to him.

When proceedings were started, he issued circulars of information to his clients and kept them posted on every move. This involved some trouble and expense, in which the clients were asked to assist. In this way, while receiving nothing that could be called a fee from any one, the small contributions of his 125 clients are said to have helped the lawyer's bank account an average of \$300 per month. As he is very industrious and does his work earnestly his clients are glad to help him out, and while he seems to be basing his chances of reward solely on the success of his suit he is making quite a comfortable income.—New York Times.

Sea Monsters of Old.

The kraken was one of the sea monsters of old, and if all the stories told about its wondrous size and doings are true it overshadowed the serpent as much as the latter does the common garter snake. Dandelons declares that this marine giant caused tidal waves by swallowing a goodly part of the waters of the ocean and then belching them out again. He also makes mention of the fact that its gigantic horny beak was often mistaken for mountain peaks suddenly shoved into sight by the internal convulsions of the earth. Bishop Pontoppidan, a truthful (?) and saintly member of the Copenhagen royal academy, is much more conservative in his estimates of its size, giving it as his opinion that they were seldom found more than "the half of an Italian mile in length and not larger in diameter than the cathedral at The Hague."

He also says that its body was frequently mistaken by sailors for an island, "so that people landed upon it and were engulfed in a maelstrom of water when the creature sank to its hidden ocean bed." Other authorities testify that its beak from the eyes to the point "was longer than the mainmast of a man-of-war." We'll take sea serpents in ours.—St. Louis Republic.

Russian Drivers.

Mme. de Ujfalvy-Bourdon, describing her travels in western Siberia, says that for a part of the way she and her husband drove from town to town with horses hired from the Cossacks. They were fine horses and traveled with frightful rapidity. Generally they were unaccustomed to being driven together. Only the middle one—the most docile—was harnessed before the time for starting. The others were not brought out until the driver was on his seat. When the manager of the station pronounced the word "gato" (ready), the carriage bounded forward. The horses tore madly on for 15 or 20 minutes, and it was hard to tell whether they or the driver had the mastery.

On the plain it was a magnificent drive. When the horses were well started, the driver let the reins hang loose, and they kept up a fine pace. The driver had them well in hand, and there was no danger; he calmed and guided them with wonderful skill. Honor to the Russian coachmen.—Manchester Times.

Difficulties of Smokers. The Turks are now a nation of smokers, but early in the seventeenth century the priests and rulers denounced smoking as criminal, and Amurath IV ordered its punishment by death in the cruelest forms. One playful punishment consisted in thrusting the pipes of smokers through their noses.

In Russia, at the same period, the noses of smokers were cut off. The powers ecclesiastical were strongly opposed to the new habit, and Popes Urban VIII and Innocent X thundered in turn against the terrible vice of smoking. The papal thunders, however, proved powerless against the charms of St. Nicotine, although there was much reason in those decrees which were directed against the custom of smoking and snuffing in church. Pope Urban excommunicated all who should be guilty of so unbecoming a practice. And later Innocent X solemnly excommunicated all who should take snuff or tobacco in St. Peter's church at Rome.—All the Year Round.

The Pillar of Safety.

Before the erection of the new university buildings in Jena the professors generally held their lectures in various public halls scattered all over the town. In the body of one of these halls, where the professor of theology used to hold forth, there stood a large pillar. At the close of the session the students applied to the professor for their certificates of attendance, when the latter remarked to one of the young men:

"But, my dear sir, I never saw you at any of my lectures!"

"Oh, Herr Professor, I always sat behind the pillar."

"Stranger!" was the reply. "You are the fourth who professes to have sat regularly behind the pillar."—Tagliche Rundschau.

Father and Son.

Little Bobby—I can't find my hat and coat. Father (rushing about)—I can't find mine either. I don't see what your mother does with things. She's gone out, and there's nothing for us to do but hunt till we find 'em or else stay in. Little Bobby (after long thought)—Let's look on the hall rack.—Good News.

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