

THE DYING HORSE.

Fall back! Fall back! Give him room to die!
Hard is the bed where he needs must lie.

ONE NIGHT OF HORROR.

One night I went to bed with glossy brown hair, and the face of a girl of 18;
next morning I left my room with hair as gray as it is now, though forty-two years have passed away since then.

In one night an awful horror struck me suddenly with the weight of scores of years.
My father was a Mr. Marriot, a ship broker, who lived in Russell square with his family, consisting of my mother and four children, of whom I was the eldest.

One morning, in the December of 1842, while we were sitting at breakfast, my mother said, she had finished reading a letter which had just been delivered, "It's from Judith. She wants Ellen to go and stay a month at the Willows. But I do not like the idea. She never even called on us when she came back to England last summer. Besides, we have known almost nothing of her for years past."

"Oh! I should like immensely to see Aunt Judith," I cried.
"But you have never seen, and don't know anything about her," replied my mother. "It is nearly ten years now since I saw her, and she didn't leave a very pleasant impression on my mind. I had not seen her, of course, since I was a child, but as I have often told you, there was something curious and odd about her that was not to my liking. In fact, she did not seem like a sister of mine."

Aunt Judith was my mother's elder sister by fifteen years. When she was about twenty she married a German baron who was a professor at a university. Why it was nobody knew, but some two years or so after her marriage Aunt Judith became very antipathetic as regarded her relations in England, and but rarely corresponded with them.

Her husband, the baron and professor, died about three years before the time of which I speak. Mourning cards were unknown in those days; still she might have sent a word to inform her sister of her bereavement. To our great astonishment it was only from a friend who attended his funeral that we heard, casually, that he was dead and that she was a widow.

Well, both my father and my mother were unwilling to let me go to the Willows; my mother, because she had, or seemed to me to have, a prejudice against her sister; my father, for no reason that I could make out, except that he echoed my mother. At all events, I overcame their opposition at last, and started, one fine, or rather gloomy, morning, for the clouds were dark and heavy, I remember, as I left London—for The Willows, a mansion in Warwickshire which had been left to my Aunt Judith by my grandfather. Traveling was slower in those days than it is now, and it was not until nearly 6 o'clock in the evening that I drove, in the lumbering coach which conveyed me, up the dreary carriage path which led to the Willows.

Aunt Judith had only returned to live there during the past six months, so I was not surprised to find the place in a very untidy state. Such, at least, was my impression from what I saw through the darkness of the evening.

Things, however, seemed to change for the better when we drew up at the house itself. It was a great, straggling building, which had stood for more than a century, and was cold and forbidding to look at from the outside. But from the windows, and when I could see of the hall, it seemed to be well lit, warm and well appointed within. A female servant came out to meet me as the coach stopped at the door.

"Mlle. Marriot," she inquired, in a German voice, as I descended.
"Yes," I replied.
"Ah! your aunt would like well to see you," she said. "I shall take you to her. She is dressing for dinner." I followed her up stairs, and into a large bedroom. Standing before a glass at the end of the room was a tall woman whom, from the description I had heard of her, I immediately recognized as Aunt Judith.

to-night. Your parents are well, I hope.
"Your parents" and this in allusion to her own sister, whom she had not seen for years! Her greeting—in fact, her manner, everything about her—was perfectly polite, but strangely cold.

"Yes," I replied, "they are quite well, thank you."
"You can come down stairs when you are ready," she continued, as she stood before the glass, giving the last touches to her toilet. "Dinner will be on the table in about twenty minutes. I had better go down—they will be waiting for me," saying which she left the room.

A curious woman, I thought, when she was gone, and, altogether, I did not care much about her—perhaps, also, I was a little sorry that, against the wishes of my parents, I had come to The Willows at all. When I came into the drawing room I found a party of about a dozen people assembled there. There were, besides my aunt and an elderly German lady, who was a relative of her late husband, the clergyman of the parish with his wife and two daughters, the local doctor—a good looking young man of about six or seven and twenty, the square of whose face and eyes, like my own, were staring on a visit to the house. Dinner passed off very pleasantly. We had music and a dance when the gentleman came up stairs. Altogether I enjoyed myself very much, and it was not until about midnight when we rose from the supper table. One thing I did notice almost unconsciously during the evening, and this was a strange, absent, and at the same time staring, expression which sometimes came upon Aunt Judith's face. It was as though she were looking at or for something which was invisible to everybody else.

When supper was over, and those of the guests who were leaving the house had taken their departure, I went with Aunt Judith to her bedroom, "to rest," she said, "whether Sophia had got my room ready yet."
Sophia was waiting for us when we entered the room, and my aunt and she went down stairs to talk in German. What they were saying I could not tell, as I did not understand the language; but somehow, from their manner or the tone of their voices, it seemed to me as if they were discussing something which they did not want me to know about. At last my aunt said to me in English: "My dear, I am sorry the room I had intended for you is not ready yet. It will be ready to-morrow, but for to-night you must sleep in another room."

Her Sophia said something in German, and after a moment's pause Aunt Judith said, as if in answer: "The blue room. Yes, my dear," she continued, speaking to me, "it is an old-fashioned room, but very comfortable. Sophia will show you to it. Good night, dear."

Again the curious look I had noticed before came over her face as I left the room with Sophia, who walked before me with a candle.

We went up a flight of stairs that led to a part of the building which seemed to be but little used. At the top of these stairs there was a long narrow passage, the walls of which were lined with oak panels. When we got to the end of this passage we turned to the right and went a few yards down another and similar passage, until the servant opened a door that led into a spacious bedroom.

Having put the candle on the mantelpiece, and laid my traveling bag, which she carried with her, on the floor, she looked curiously round the room, and then, when she had bidden me good night, went out and shut the door. I felt very nervous as I looked about in the apartment, which seemed to be in an uninhabited part of the large house, and was astonished, I thought, in an antique and rather grotesque manner. The lofty walls, paneled as they were with wood painted blue, contrasted strangely with the heavy silk window curtains, which were of a dark red color, and with some old portraits in oil that hung in massive oak and stone frames. The chairs and tables were all cumbersome and old-fashioned, and, as to the bed, it almost frightened me to think of sleeping in it, so vast and gloomy did it look with its huge canopy and sombre curtains.

It is not easy to go to sleep at once during the first night of one's stay in a strange house, especially if anything has happened to make the mind uneasy and suspicious. For a long time I lay awake wondering at the curious look I had seen on Aunt Judith's face, and shivering, now and again, as I thought how far away I was from the rest of the household. If I were to be taken suddenly ill, or if anything were to happen to me during the night, what could I do? There was a bell rope in the room, but I had forgotten to ask Sophia whether it communicated with a bell, and, if so, whether there were any one to answer my ring. Isolated as I was in this large and gloomy chamber, my mind was agitated with vague fears, and it must have been nearly two hours before I got to sleep.

How long this state lasted I do not know, when suddenly I awoke. In a moment I was wide awake, staring before me into the black darkness and listening intently to the profound about me. Why was I doing this? I asked myself, but could not give any answer. Something must have happened to awake me. What was it? I wondered. I looked and listened. There was only blackness and silence.

For many seconds I lay thus peering and listening, and was just on the point of shutting my eyes again, when, glancing at them through the darkness, I saw two other eyes, and hot on my cheek came the breath of something—man, or beast, or monster! I drew my head some inches back; the eyes, to which mine were riveted, advanced. I felt a form bending over the side of the bed. It stopped. The eyes stopped, the form became motionless. In the pure agony of the moment—actuated by that alone—I rose a little in my bed, and bent my head forward; the form also rose, and the eyes, which were still fascinated to mine, retreated. As they did so, to my unutterable horror I discerned the outline of a human face!

It was within a few inches of my own, and now my eyes, becoming accustomed to the darkness, could see that it was covered with hair. There was a dreadful gibber—such as might come from an ape or a dumb man in pain—and before my fascinated gaze flashed two rows of shining teeth. The creature—monster or maniac—was by my side, ready, waiting to spring upon me. Hot upon my face came its breath, while the awful eyes shone like the eyes of a tiger. It was on the spring—to tear me limb from limb. Just one thing stayed it. Just one thing was keeping off the awful death that threatened me. In all the ecstasy of my terror I comprehended what that one thing was. It was the power of my eyes. I was fighting an eye battle with the monster.

Into its dreadful eyes I gazed, as though I was gazing into the very gates of hell. Like the eyes of a wild beast, they seemed ever restlessly pouring forth a tumultuous torrent of passion, and ever restlessly in search of mine, which they shrank from when they met. Constantly as they did so there was the same hideous, inarticulate gibber of baffled rage.

Two or three hours at least must have passed until the daylight began to steal in through the curtains, which were only partly drawn.

When the light came the sight before me was even more horrible than my imagination had conjured in the dark. Concluding by the side of the large bed, between the window and me, was a man. But such a man! A tall man in a flowing gown, with long, matted, unkempt yellow hair and beard, his face deadly white, but every muscle in his body in a convulsive sympathy with the fire that blazed from his wild and awful eyes.

Minute after minute passed, though I took no heed of them. All my thought, all my strength was concentrated into the one weapon I had—my eyes. Still, I felt at last that I could not prolong the battle much longer. What was I to do? My strength was giving way. The monster or maniac was becoming more and more excited, foaming at the lips and uttering short, sharp cries, while his long, cruel fingers worked convulsively, as though they were impatient to be on their prey.

So long as I could ward him off with my eyes, he dared not approach me nearer; directly, through faintness, I dropped them, he would fall upon me and tear me to pieces. My strength was going. A look of exultation came upon his face. The daylight had lasted for a long time. Oh, God! would no one ever come? I could hold out no longer. His glare of triumph increased. My eyes were getting dim. His face was getting nearer and more exciting.

It seemed as though another spirit came suddenly into my body—I was hardly conscious of what I did—looking into his eyes with a strength that did not seem to be mine, I rose in my bed, bent forward my body, eye to eye, drove the creature back till he was more than a yard from the bed—slipped from the bed—gave one spring—caught the handle of the door, and was in the passage in a moment. There was an awful noise behind me of wind bells and laughter and prancing feet. As I fled, screaming, down the flight after flight of stairs, it grew nearer and nearer. The monster was upon me. A number of people seemed to be about me. I heard shouts and blows—a confused trampling, shouting and scuffling—and then all was dark.

When I awoke I was in bed. I had been very ill for many days, they said. It was a long time before I was allowed to see a looking glass; when I did, I found that my beautiful brown hair was gray. It had changed its color in that one awful night. The maniac was Aunt Judith's only child, who had escaped during the night from the room where he was confined. Aunt Judith, and the baron when he was alive, had secretly kept the poor creature since it had been discovered during its infancy to be insane. The constant sorrow and anxiety which it entailed was, I may add, the cause of most of what was strange about Aunt Judith.—Saturday Review and Republic.

DO NOT EAT TOO MUCH.

PROFESSOR ATWATER'S LECTURE ON A VERY PRACTICAL TOPIC.

The Relation of Food to Health—Ignorance of the Laws of Eating Claims Many Victims—Scientists Are Now Giving Attention to the Subject.

The lecture was by Professor W. O. Atwater, on "Food and Health." It was under the auspices of the scientific societies of Washington and the Smithsonian Institution. The principal point of the lecture was the adaptation of food to the demands of the body, and of the evils of overeating and insufficient nutrition.

The eating of bread and meat is a simple matter, but the way in which the different constituents of the food perform their offices in the maintenance of life are problems as profound as any with which physical science has to deal. The works of nature culminate in man. In his organism his operations are most complex and his needs are most varied. The laws which regulate our physical being are discovered but slowly, and by the most ingenious and profound research. Those which govern the nutrition of our bodies have been shrouded in mystery, which only the investigation of later times has begun to unveil. But the crude theories of the past are being gradually replaced by the more certain knowledge of the present.

But this evil of overeating, be it great or small, is, of course, confined to the classes to whom generous fortune, unchecked by reasonable restraint, allows it. There are countless sufferers from dietary habits into which self-indulgence has not tempted, but relentless fate has forced them. The overfed only pay for pleasure the penalty of pain. The greater misery of the underfed, their hunger, with its inseparable attendants, ignorance, selfishness, crime and degradation, are things of terrible moment.

The lecturer referred to the income and expenditure of the body, as follows: "The body receives food, drink and oxygen, which constitute its income. Part of this material is transformed into flesh, fat, bone and other tissues of the body. The remainder, together with the tissues worn out by use, is transformed into urea, carbonic acid, water, etc. These products are given off through the body and constitute its expenditure."

Illustrated maps were used to show the distribution of different people engaged in different occupations, and he proved that although people in this country work harder and need to have more and better food than those of corresponding classes in Europe, yet that many persons of sedentary habits, who really need but little, consume as much as would be required if they were engaged in severe muscular labor.

A certain amount of food is necessary to keep the machinery moving. A large number of well-to-do people of this country eat much more than is necessary. The excess consists of meats and sweetmeats. We ransack the four quarters of the earth for materials to excite the appetite, and thus increase the amount of food consumed. Most people of this country are engaged in occupations which require comparatively little muscular exercise, and the result is we impose upon our bodies the task of getting rid of a large amount of material in excess of its needs at fearful cost to health and happiness.

The cheapest food is that which supplies the most nutriment for the least money. The most economical food is that which is cheapest and best adapted to the wants of the user. But the maxim that "the best is the cheapest" does not apply to food. The best food, in the sense of that which has the finest appearance and flavor and is sold at the highest price, is not generally the cheapest nor the most economical, nor is it always the most healthful. It is important that people be taught about their food, but the first requisite is the information to give them. The subject is, however, new. In its investigation we stand upon the borders of a continent of which but a small part has yet been explored. In the great European universities investigation is active. In our own country exactly little has been done, and that little is dependent almost entirely upon private munificence for its support.

"What," said the speaker, "is to be done about it? In the first place we ought to find what flaws there are in any, in the conclusions to which the best research of the time seems to force us. Then we must see how those conclusions are to be supplemented. This will require abstruse and costly experimenting. But at the same time the public needs to be educated. People need to understand the fundamental principles. The laws of a large number of states and territories require that physiology be taught in the public schools, but unfortunately the teachers themselves are deficient in training, and many of the text books are sadly defective."

In referring to the importance of painstaking research, the speaker cited the experience with the respiration apparatus. This in its best form has been used in a few European universities and experimental station laboratories, but not in this country. The greatest difficulties attend its management. Professor Hering, of the University of Goettingen, began work of this kind over twenty years ago and has only lately, and after the expenditure of many thousands of dollars, succeeded in getting his respiration apparatus into condition for experiments of the desired accuracy. But the great problem now before the student of animal nutrition is that of the income and expenditure of energy in the animal body. It will require the keenest, most elaborate and most painstaking efforts of the chemist, the physicist, and the biologist, by the effort toward its solution, must be made.

In speaking of researches in this line in the United States it was that we are very far behind European investigators, that, indeed, we have hardly made a beginning. What we most need is a trained man with high, scholarly ideas, enthusiastic devotion, and abundant means at his command. That we shall some time have these there is good ground to hope.—Washington Post.

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