

ST. JOHN'S EVE

Come, draw the chairs around the hearth, my lad, What! it's but 10 o'clock, and all is bright? If I had kept that strength that once I had, They had been ranged there with the morning's light. Just once a year, just once, poor souls! They're let To cross the old home threshold, and to sit Beside the fire, and here we don't forget; I say, they're ready ere the lamps are lit!

A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

There was a large party at the Chateau de Kerdall, near Nantes. The Marquis de Kerdall and his young wife had just returned from a tour of the world on their yacht, during which they had paid flying visits to Africa, America and Oceania, and they had celebrated their home coming by gathering together all their friends and relatives at their beautiful country house. Among the guests was old Dr. Cornabue, an illustrious member of the Academy of Metaphysical Sciences, so original, so absent-minded, so venerable in his blonde peruke and his costume of the fashion of 1850. Then there was Mme. De Lartignes, an old school friend of the Marquise, a brilliant and coquettish Parisienne. And there was Miss Hawthorne, an English maiden lady with youthful propensities. And there were many others, all of whom found plenty of amusement to their heart's content at Kerdall.

she knew not. She was awakened by a rattling at her window, which she had left half opened on account of the heat. What was her terror when, in the feeble starlight, she saw a form climbing noiselessly through the window. She tried to scream, but her throat was parched with fright and she could not utter a sound. The man had entered the chamber. Then the poor woman hastily buried her head beneath the bed clothing. Half dead with fear, she could hear her nocturnal visitor going and coming across the carpet with muffled steps. It seemed as though he must have removed his shoes in order to tread softly. Bathed with cold perspiration and her teeth chattering, she awaited the mortal blow from the invader. But it did not come. After about a quarter of an hour she timidly peered out. She could see and hear nothing. Slightly reassured, she recovered the use of her voice and started a series of shrieks, so sharp, piercing and terrible that in an instant the entire chateau was turned into her chamber with lights in their hands. M. and Mme. De Kerdall at the head. "What is it? What's the matter?" they cried. She recounted her horrible vision. They would not believe her; she had been dreaming. Who could have climbed into this chamber, so high above the ground, without a ladder? "Did you see him plainly?" asked the Marquis, with a touch of suspicion in his voice. "As plainly as I see you, and it even seemed—" She hesitated. "What?" "It seemed as though I could recognize Dr. Cornabue in his blonde wig and redingote." Every body laughed. What! Dr. Cornabue! A man of age and character scaling windows at midnight! It was evident now that Mme. Lartignes had been dreaming. They tried to dissipate her fear, and she was just about to persuade herself that she had been the victim of an hallucination when she happened to cast her eyes upon the bureau, where she had left her jewels. They were gone! It had truly been a robber! The laughing suddenly ceased, and they looked at one another in consternation. All at once another cry was heard, a piercing shriek coming through the stillness of the night. It appeared to emanate from Miss Hawthorne's chamber. There was a rush for her apartment, and the English lady was found standing in the middle of the room, with frightened eyes. "There! there!" she cried, pointing to the window. "A man! He has escaped, but I recognized him." "Who was it?" "Dr. Cornabue!" The doctor again! This time nobody laughed. Cornabue was looked for among the persons who had been attracted by the excitement, but he was not there. He was the only occupant of the chateau who was missing. "Come, let us go to the doctor's room," said the Marquis, knitting his brows. "He will doubtless solve the mystery for us." All followed Kerdall—the men half dressed, the women in their white night robes, all carrying candles—a weird procession. Upon the entrance of the crowd the doctor hurriedly wrapped himself in the bedclothes, his wrinkled countenance alone being visible over the top, and this convulsed by anger into a comical grimace. The candle-light was reflected from his bald pate, which shone like ivory. "Is this some ill-timed joke?" he stammered. "What is going on? Is the chateau on fire? I heard a terrible outcry, and was about to inquire into it." "You must come and join us, doctor," said Kerdall. "And how shall I do it?" cried the doctor, furiously. "Some rascal has run off with my clothing, and in exchange he has left me this," and he savagely hurled a white object into the middle of the room. "My corsets!" murmured Miss Hawthorne, modestly lowering her eyes. "And this?" continued the doctor, wildly brandishing another article. "My hat!" cried Mme. de Lartignes, howling the doctor, whose shivering head, with one final grimace, ducked beneath the bed clothing, like the clown going through a trap door in the marionette theater. They knew not what to think. The mystery was growing more complicated. It certainly looked as though a robber had entered the chateau—perhaps a whole band of burglars and assassins. Mme. De Lartignes imagined a troop of brigands armed to the teeth. "Let us hope they have no guns," said the Marquis, to raise the hopes of his guests. There was no echo to the pleasantry. Suddenly a strange sound was heard coming from the ground floor. It was certainly the piano in the reception salon, but it was surely being played by goblin fingers, and so furiously that it seemed as though the keys must be broken.

en barricaded themselves in the saloa and anxiously awaited the result of the chase. It was about an hour later, in the uncertain light which precedes the rising of the sun, that a servant discovered the mysterious stranger ensconced among the branches of a large oak. At his call the Marquis and his guests hastened to the spot. "Come down!" commanded M. De Kerdall, but the bandit only settled himself deeper among the foliage and made no response. "Come down, or I will shoot!" "And, as there was no reply, he lifted his gun and already had his finger upon the trigger when the domestic hurriedly pulled his arm, and said: "Do not fire, monsieur. It is Dr. Cornabue!" "And, sure enough, the blonde wig and long redingote could now be seen among the leaves. But at this moment the first ray of sunlight gleamed in from the east and the oak was illuminated. The Marquis suddenly broke into a fit of explosive laughter, and, as his guests gazed up into the tree, they could not keep from following his example. "The ape!" "Everything was explained. The animal had escaped from his cage the previous evening and had managed to effect an entrance into the chateau. Animated by his instinct of imitation, he had first attired himself in the doctor's effects and then wandered over the house at his own free will. Some little trouble, and at daybreak the party enjoyed a hearty laugh at the adventures of the night. But Dr. Cornabue did not appear at the table. He left the chateau at an early hour, furious and without taking leave. Since this episode he has never set foot at Kerdall, and he has never lost a feeling of deep antipathy to Mme. De Lartignes and Miss Hawthorne. "How could they have mixed me up with a monkey?" he wants to know.—Argoimont.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

THE PREACHER DRAWS A LESSON FROM MUSIC.

He Takes "The Chant of the Stars" for the Subject of a Sermon of Great Beauty and Power—A Perfect Final Harmony. Our Washington Pulpit. The musical resources of all nations seem drawn upon by Dr. Talmage in his sermon of last Sunday to illustrate a most practical truth. His subject was "The Chant of the Stars," and the text Job xxxviii, 9, "Who laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together?" We have all seen the ceremony at the laying of the corner stone of church, asylum or Masonic temple. Into the hollow of the stone were placed scrolls of history and important documents, to be suggestive if, 100 or 200 years after, the building should be destroyed by fire or torn down. We remember the silver trowel or iron hammer that smote the square piece of granite into sanctity. We remember some venerable man who presided wielding the trowel or hammer. We remember also the music as the choir stood on the scattered stones and timber of the building about to be constructed. The leaves of the notebooks fluttered in the wind and were turned over with a great rattling, and we remember how the bass, baritone, tenor, contralto and soprano voices commingled. They had for many days been rehearsing the special program that it might be worthy of the corner stone laying. Laying the Corner Stone. In my text the poet of Ua calls us to a grander ceremony—the laying of a foundation of this great temple of a world. The corner stone was a block of light and the trowel was of emerald crystal. All about and on the embankments of clouds stood the angelic choristers wringing their librettos of overtures, and other worlds clapped shining cymbals while the ceremony went on, and God, the Architect, by stroke of light after stroke of light, dedicated this great cathedral of a world, with mountains for pillars, and sky for frescoed ceiling, and flowering fields for a floor, and sunrise and midnight aurora for upholstery. "Who laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together?" The fact is that the whole universe was a complete cadence, an unbroken dithyramb, a musical portfolio. The great sheet of immensity had been spread out, and written on it were the stars, the smaller of them minims, the larger of them sustained notes. The notes marked the staccato passages, the whole heavens a grand staff with all sounds, intonations, modulations, the space between the worlds a musical interval, trembling of stellar light a quaver, the thunder a bass clef, the wind among trees a treble clef. That is the way God made all things a perfect harmony. But one day a harp string snapped in the great orchestra. One day a voice sounded out of tune. One day a discord, harsh and terrific, grated upon the glorious anthem. It was sin that made the dissonance, and that harsh discord has been sounding through the centuries. All the work of Christians and philanthropists and reformers of all ages is to stop that discord and get all things back into the perfect harmony which was heard at the laying of the corner stone, when the morning stars sang together. Before I get through, if I am divinely helped, I will make it plain that sin is discord and righteousness harmony. That in general things are out of tune is as plain as to a musician's ear is the unhappy clash of clarinet and bassoon in an orchestral rendering. Out of Tune. The world's health out of tune; weak lungs and the atmosphere in collision, disordered eye and noontday light in quarrel, rheumatic limb and damp weather in struggle, neuralgias and pneumonias and consumptions and epilepsies in flocks sweep upon neighborhoods and cities. Where you find one person with cold throat and keen eyesight and alert ear and easy respiration and regular pulsation and supple limb and prime digestion and steady nerves, you find a hundred who have to be very careful because this or that or the other physical function is disordered. The human intellect out of tune; the judgment wrongly severed, or the memory leaky, or the will weak, or the temper unflamable, the well balanced mind exceptional. Domestic life out of tune; only here and there a conjugal outbreak of incompatibility of temper through the divorce courts, or a filial outbreak about a father's will through the Surrogate's Court, or a case of wife beating or husband poisoning through the criminal courts, but thousands of families with June outside and January within. Society out of tune; labor and capital their hands on each other's throat; spirit of caste keeping those down in the social scale who are struggling to get up and putting those who are up in anxiety lest they have to come down. No wonder the old pianoforte of society is all out of tune, when hypocrisy and lying and subterfuge and double dealing and sympathy and philanthropy and revenge have for 6,000 years been banging away at the keys and stamping the pedals. On all sides there is a shipwreck of harmonies. Nations in discord without realizing it. So wrong is the feeling of nation for nation that symbols chosen are fierce and destructive. In this country, where our skies are full of robins and doves and morning larks, we have our national symbol, the fierce and filthy eagle, as erud a bird as can be found in all the ornithological catalogues. In Great Britain, where they have lambs and fallow deer, their symbol is the merciless lion. In Russia, where from between her frozen north and blooming south all kindly beasts dwell, they chose the growling bear. And in the world's heraldry a favorite figure is the dragon, the fabled winged serpent, ferocious and dreadful. And so fond is the world of contention that we climb out through the heavens and baptize one of the other planets with the spirit of battle and call it Mars, after the god of war. And we give to the eighth sign of the zodiac the name of the scorpion, a creature which is chiefly celebrated for its deadly sting. But, after all, these symbols are expressive of the way—ation feels toward nation. Discord wide as the continent and bridging the seas. I suppose you have noticed how warm in love dry goods stores are with other dry goods stores, and how highly grocery men think of the sugars of the grocer men on the same street. And in what an eulogistic way allopathic and homoeopathic doctors speak of each other, and how ministers will sometimes put ministers on that beautiful cooking instrument which the English call a spit—and turned by a crank before a hot fire, and then if the minister being roasted cries out against it the men who are turning him say: "Hush, my brother! We are turning this spit for the glory of God and the good of your soul, and you must be quiet while we chase the service with: "Hush be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love." The earth is diaphanous and circumferenced with discord, and the music that was rendered at the laying of the world's corner stone, when the morning stars sang together, is not heard now. And though here and there, from this and that part of society, and from this and that part of the earth, there comes up a thrilling solo of love, or a warble of worship, or a sweet duet of patience, they are drowned out by a discord that shakes the earth. The Ear of Bach. But if in this world things in general are out of tune to our frail ear, how much more so to beings angelic and divine! It takes a skilled artist to fully appreciate disagreement of sound. Many have an capacity to detect a defect of unskillful execution, and, though there were in one but as many offenses against harmony as could crowd in between the lower F of the bass and the higher G of the soprano, it would give them no discomfort, while on the forehead of the educated artist beads of perspiration would stand out as a result of the harrowing dissonance. While an amateur was performing on a piano and had just struck the wrong chord, John Sebastian Bach, the immortal composer, entered the room, and the amateur rose in embarrassment, and Bach rushed past the host, who stepped forward to greet him, and, before the keyboard had stopped vibrating, put his ardent hand upon the keys and changed the painful harmony into glorious cadence. Then Bach turned and gave salutation to the host. But the worst of all discord is moral discord. If society and the world are so discordant to imperfect man, what must they be to a perfect God? People try to define what sin is. It seems to me that sin is getting out of harmony with God, a disagreement with his holiness, with his purity, with his love, with his commands, our will clashing with his will, the finite-dusting about the infinite, the frail against the puissant, the created against the creator. If a thousand musicians, with flute and cornet-piston and trumpet and violoncello, the lute and the trombone and all the wind and stringed instruments that ever gathered in a Dusseldorf jubilee, should resolve that they would play out of tune and put discord to the rack and make the place wild with shrieking and grating and rasping sounds, they could not make such a pandemonium as that which reigns in a sinful soul when God listens to the play of its thoughts, passions and emotion—discord, life-long discord, maddening discord. The world pays more for discord than it does for consonance. High prices have been paid for music. One man gave \$225 to hear the Swedish songstress in New York, and another \$625 to hear her in Boston, and another \$650 to hear her in Providence. Fabulous prices have been paid for sweet sounds, but far more has been paid for discord. The Crimean war cost \$1,700,000,000, and the American civil war \$5,500,000,000, and the war debts of professional Christian nations are about \$15,000,000,000. The world pays for this red ticket, which admits it to the saturnalia of broken bones and deadly agonies and destroyed cities and plowed graves and crushed hearts, any amount of money satan asks. Discord! Discord! Will Be Put in Tune. But I have to tell you that the song that the morning stars sang together at the laying of the world's corner stone is to resound again. Mozart's greatest overture was composed one night when he was several times overpowered with sleep, and artists say they can tell the places in the music where he was falling asleep and the places where he awakened. So the overture of the morning stars spoken of in my text has been asleep, but it will awake and be more grandly rendered by the evening stars of the world's existence than by the morning stars, and the vesper will be sweeter than the matins. The work of all good men and women and of all good churches and all reform associations help to bring the race back to the original harmony. The rebellious heart to be attuned, social life to be attuned, commercial ethics to be attuned, internationality to be attuned, hemispheres to be attuned. In olden times the choristers had a tuning fork with two prongs, and they would strike it on the back of pew or music rack and put it to the ear and then start the tune, and all the other voices would join. In modern orchestra the leader has a complete instrument tightly attuned, and he sounds that, and all the other performers tune the keys of their instruments to make them correspond and draw the bow over the string and listen and sound if over again until all the keys are screwed to concert pitch and the discords melt into one great symphony, and the curtain falls, and the bats tap and audiences are raptured with Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri," or Rossini's "Stabat Mater," or Bach's "Magnificat" in D. Now, our world can never be attuned by an imperfect instrument. Even a Cremona would not do. Heaven has ordained the only instrument, and it is made out of the wood of the cross, and the voices that accompany it are imported voices, cantatrices of the first Christmas night, when heaven serenaded the earth with "Gloria to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." Let us start too far off and get lost in generalities, we had better begin with ourselves, get our own hearts and lives in harmony with the eternal Christ. Oh, for his Almighty Spirit to attune us, to chord our will with his will, to modulate our life with his life, and bring us into unison with all that is pure and self-sacrificing and heavenly! The strings of our nature are all broken and twisted, and the bow is so slack it cannot evoke anything mellifluous. The instrument made for heaven to play on has been roughly twanged and struck by influences worldly and demonic. O master hand of Christ, restore this split and fractured and despoiled and unstrung nature until first it shall wait out for our sin and then thrill with divine pardon! The whole world must also be attuned by the same power. I was in the Fair-

banks weighing scale manufactory of Vermont. Six hundred hands, and they have never had a strike. Complete harmony between labor and capital, the operatives of scores of years in their beautiful homes near by the mansions of the manufacturers, whose insolence and Christian behavior made the great enterprise will be brought over labor and capital will be brought into unison. You may have heard what is called the "Anvil Chorus," composed by Verdi, a tune played by hammers, great and small, now with mighty stroke, and now with heavy stroke, beating a great iron anvil. That is what the world has got to come to—anvil chorus, yardstick chorus, shuttle chorus, trowel chorus, crowbar chorus, pickax chorus, gold mine chorus, rail track chorus, locomotive chorus. It can be done, and it will be done. So all social life will be attuned by the gospel harp. There will be as many classes in society as now, but the classes will not be regulated by birth or wealth or accident, but by the scale of virtue and benevolence, and people will be assigned to their places as good, or very good, or most excellent, and sixteen ounces in every pound, and apples at the bottom of the barrel will be as sound as those on the top, and silk goods will not be cotton, and sellers will not have to charge honest people more than the right price because others will not pay, and goods will come to you corresponding with the sample by which you purchased them, and coffee will not be chicoria, and sugar will not be sanded, and milk will not be chalked, and adulteration of food will be a state prison offense—aye, all things shall be attuned! Elections in England and the United States will no more be a grand carnival of defamation and scurrility, but the elevation of righteous men in a righteous way. Now, if sin is discord, and righteousness is harmony, let us get out of the one and enter the other. After our dreadful civil war was over, in the summer of 1862, a great national peace jubilee was held in Boston, and as an elder of my church had been honored by the selection of some of his music to be rendered on that occasion I accompanied him to the jubilee. Forty thousand people sat and stood in the great coliseum erected for that purpose. Thousands of wind and stringed instruments. Twelve thousand trained voices. The masterpieces of all ages rendered, hour after hour and day after day—Haydn's "Judas Maccabaeus," Spohr's "Last Judgment," Beethoven's "Mount of Olives," Haydn's "Creation," Mendelssohn's "Elijah," Meyerbeer's "Coronation March," rolling on and up in surges that followed against the heavens. The mighty cadences within were accompanied on the outside by the ringing of the bells of the city and cannon on the commons, discharged by electricity, in exact time with music, thundering their awful bars of a harmony that astounded all nations. Sometimes I bowed my head and wept, sometimes I stood up in the enchantment, and sometimes the effect was so overpowering I felt I could not endure it, especially when all the voices were in full chorus, and all the batons were in full swing, and all the cannons in full throb, and a hundred anvil under mighty hammers were in full clang, and all the towers of the city rolled in their majestic sweetness, and the whole building quaked with the boom of thirty cannon. Parypa Rosa, with a voice that will never again be equaled on earth until the archangelic voice proclaims that time shall be no longer, rose above all other sounds in her rendering of our national air, "The Star Spangled Banner." It was too much for a mortal, quite enough for an immortal, to hear, and while some fainted one womanly spirit, released under its power, sped away to be with God. O Lord, our God, quickly usher in the whole world's peace jubilee, and all islands of the sea join the five continents, and all the voices and all the musical instruments of all nations combine, and all the organs that ever sounded requiem of sorrow sound only a grand march of joy, and all the bells that toll for burial ring for resurrection, and all the cannon that ever hurled death across the nations sound forth eternal victory, and over all the realm of earth and mastery of heaven there will be heard one voice sweeter and mightier than any human or angelic voice, a voice once full of tears, but now full of triumph, the voice of Christ, saying, "I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Then, at the laying of the top stone of the world's history, the same voices shall be heard as when, at the laying of the world's corner stone, "the morning stars sang together."

Very Polite. The Saxons are a very polite people, so over-polite that they not infrequently bring down ridicule upon themselves. It used to be told in Dresden that a stranger in the city was one day crossing the great bridge that spans the Elbe, and asked a native to be directed to a certain church which he wished to find. "Really, my dear sir," said the Dresdener, bowing low, "I grieve greatly to say it, but I cannot tell you." The stranger passed on, a little surprised at this valuable answer to a simple question. He had proceeded but a few rods, when he heard hurried footsteps behind him, and, turning, saw the same man running to catch up with him. In a moment his pursuer was by his side, his breath nearly gone, but enough left to say: "My dear sir, you asked me how you could find the church, and it pained me to have to say that I did not know. Just now I met my brother and asked him, but I grieve to say that he did not know, either."

Hirsch's Hoodoo.

Paron Hirsch, shortly before his death, sold his very beautiful estate at St. Jean, because it was too damp to be healthy. He purchased another through an agent and started to erect a magnificent chateau upon it. After he had expended about £35,000 on the new property, which he intended to endow as a children's hospital after his death, he was informed that it was even damper than St. Jean. He went in person to see, and finding the report true, and that the property was of no use whatever for his benevolent purpose, added to the thought that he had been swindled, caused him to fly into a violent rage, which was the direct cause of his death.

Thrifty Old Age.

Besides doing the butter making, cooking, washing, and housework for his family, an 80-year-old woman of Whitneyville, Me., walks a mile or two daily to pick blueberries, for which she gets about eight cents a quart.

Give a boy a piece of work to do, and he spends half of the time in inventing some contrivance to make his work easier.

You will run across a man officer whose boarding house sulks him, than one who is suited with his house.