

OLD FASHIONED PHILOSOPHY.

Scorn not the homely virtues. We are prone
To search through all the world for something new;
And yet sometimes old-fashioned things are best—
Old-fashioned work, old-fashioned rectitude,
Old-fashioned honor and old-fashioned prayer,
Old-fashioned patience that can bide its time,
Old-fashioned firebrands sacred from the world,
Old-fashioned satisfaction with enough,
Old-fashioned candor and simplicity,
Old-fashioned folks that practice what they preach.

—National Magazine.

A HAUNTED HOUSE

WHEN my husband took over the direction of the Gertrudis and Santa Maria mines near Pinal, Mexico, we brought down from "the States" our various goods and chattels, and began the attempt to make ourselves as comfortable as possible in the huge, Spanish-built house which was the only thing in the way of an abode that could be secured, for love or money, in the very inconvenient new-old town of Pinal.

At first I liked the queer, rambling old house, with its wide, heavily pillared corridors, thick walls, high-bared windows and enormous carved doors. It had been built, according to a half-faced date, in the year 1603, and had been the habitat of more than one famous man in its time. But, even after our modern furnishings were put in, flowers and vines arranged about, and everything possible done to brighten it, the house still had a dreary, ghostly air about it, and one always had the sensation that some one else was about—some one unseen, but felt—and altogether there was an indelible eerie feeling about the place that did not tend to make one very cheerful. However, I consoled myself by remembering that big, old houses generally make one nervous at first; also, the rent was surprisingly low for so large an establishment, with its fifteen rooms, corridors, and corral. And, as one can get used to very nearly anything in this world, by trying hard, I gradually got over the uneasy feeling which I had mostly felt, when entirely alone, and put it down to "nerves."

There was the slight drawback, however, that we could not keep servants. In spite of good wages, light work and short hours, our servants would invariably leave after two to five days' service, refusing, under any circumstances, to stop longer. They gave no reason for this beyond the fact that the situation was not to their liking. So I could only pay them, and, with indignant sorrow, view their departing backs, then fare forth in search of further errands, inwardly consigning Mexican servants to a future which it would be unadvisable to put into bald words.

In the midst of these turnouts, "Society" (with a big B) began, slowly and carefully, to call, and pleasantly hinted in divers ways, that there was something wrong about our house.

The leader of Pinal society, Mrs. Isaacstein, was the last to call. She had at first been somewhat dubious about visiting me. As I have before said, she "led" Pinal society (for her husband was the principal grocer of the place), and therefore she could not, as she sweetly explained to me, be too careful about "babies" she called them.

Waiving, however, discussion of this excellent lady, for indeed she is "another story," her statement during her call that our house was said to be haunted by evil spirits, and that we would never be able to keep a servant in it, was somewhat dispiriting. In vain did I inquire particulars. No, she knew nothing beyond the fact that servants and "tradespeople" gave the place a bad name; that it was certainly troubled by something, and that no one ever lived long in it.

Here was a pretty mess! And, indeed, as if in confirmation of the woman's prediction, the very next day both servants left, after they had been with me four days, and I was on the point of beginning to expect better things of them. I sat down and wept. Then, disgusted with native servants, I hired me forth and wired to the "Border" for a couple of old and well-tried Chinese servants, determined that I would not abandon my house, and live in hotels, to please ghosts, Mexican servants or any one else.

In due course the new servants arrived. One, a sturdy, taciturn Celestial, rejoicing in the name of Ching, was to act as porter, caretaker and general watchdog—the ghost would have to be lively that could get ahead of Ching. Charley, his cousin, was of the same ilk, being besides a splendid cook. But I explained matters duly to the two, and could have warbled for joy over their derisive smiles and grunts when I timidly alluded to "ghosts," and hinted that they might be disturbed by mysterious sights or sounds.

And now did I begin to be acquainted once more with peace, with the coming of Ching and Charley, who feared neither "hog, dog nor devil," and certainly seemed able to deal with anything in the way of terrestrial or supernatural beings.

In fact (for such is the inconsistency of women), I rather began to wish that the ghosts would walk, or otherwise make themselves known; or that anything exciting would happen. For, after the advent of my two Celestials, my meditation was entirely gone; as I did I daily consult with the "border" boys, and whenever the first

man and the other purveyors to our inner needs. In other words, matters waxed decidedly dull and boring, so that I complained bitterly to my other half, who only laughed uproariously, and gave me little sympathy. (You see, he had his work.) And said he: "My good wife, you don't know a fine thing when you see it. Here you are with plenty of leisure and all the chance you want to shine in the 'American Colony of Pinal,' yet you let it slip. Put on your gaudiest gown (if you have one); all the jewelry you can beg, borrow or steal; go and pay your calls, and I'll wager you a Virat hat that you'll have all the diversion you can stand."

Meekly, but without the jewelry, I did as I was told. I called on my ladies, and I opened up a new horizon to myself in the way of topics of conversation. For in Pinal you always discuss your servants, and other people's servants; your own, and other people's position in society; and the fact that "Society in Mexico is not what it is at home." To hear the wives of the grocerman, cheap clerks and machinists discussing "social position" gave me rather a sort of "Alice-in-Wonderland" feeling, but I held my peace.

Not many weeks passed before society and I mutually dropped each other, and I gave my husband no peace until he decided upon and arranged a nice, long ducking trip to the lakes, some forty miles from Pinal. And, oh me, how enjoyable it was. But when we returned, with unburned faces and hands showing traces of powder and hard work, the ladies of the American colony shook dubious heads over me and my probable fate. A woman who actually went hunting with her husband, could ride thirty miles in a day, and was reported to shoot as well as a man, was a paradox to them. For their parts, they wondered why any man wanted to marry such a woman so unfit for society.

To tell the truth, I rather regretted the tan and sunburn myself, when I found upon our return invitations to the usual yearly big ball at the Casino. I hadn't been to a dance of any sort since our last country house visit on Long Island. I had a particularly pretty gown, knew that the frock would be good and slippery, the native Mexican band fair, and that there would be plenty of presentable men to dance with, mostly delegations from the outlying camps. But how in the name of all that was consistent could I appear in an evening gown, topped off by a face, neck and arms that were about the consistency of color of burned leather? My husband unfeelingly suggested whitewash, but I applied lemon juice, and mourned. It really was disappointing, you know.

Three days before the dance, the partner of my joys and sorrows was called away to inspect the installation of some new machinery. He left with reluctance; for, while our big old house seemed absolutely safe, there had nevertheless been some burglaries of late, and he dreaded leaving me alone with the servants for a couple of nights. But I urged him to go, saying that the doors were perfectly robbery-proof, the servants trustworthy, and that I would keep a shotgun handy, so that he need have no fears. In point of fact, for once I preferred his room to his company, having a face-bleaching process in view, the which I knew he would never consent to, did he come to know of it. So he departed, and feeling relieved and sneaky by turns, I set about preparations for the surreptitious whitening of my unlucky countenance. Most school girls will recognize the beautifier which I hastened to apply, as soon as my light dinner had been dispatched that night. With doors carefully locked, and a revolver handy, in case of burglars, I experimented with a piece of camellia skin until it amply covered my face, concealing even the ears. Then I cut very small holes for my eyes, nose and mouth, so that I could barely breathe comfortably. Then, sewing on strings to hold the contrivance in place, I proceeded to smear it liberally with good, strong Mexican leeks—and how they did smell to high heaven!

When ready for bed I carefully applied this odorous mask, and tied it on so that it could not by any possibility come off. As I put out the candles, I caught a glimpse of myself, and came near shrieking at the sight, for I looked more like a first-class ghost than anything else. I had twisted my hair back tight, and, to protect it from the leeks, covered it with an old white bathing cap. The mask entirely hid my face, and I looked like some unearthly, tall, white thing, with a flat nose, and no eyes and mouth. I assure you that I was as ghastly an object as one could well imagine; so hideous, in fact, that I precipitately shut out the view, blew out the lights and hastily sought my couch.

My "beautifier" numbed sleep; I found about my house, wholly unaware of my presence. The next thing I knew I was sitting up in bed, my heart beating wildly, while I listened breathlessly for a repetition of the sudden wild cry that had thrilled through the great, empty house, waking me from deep sleep. Motionless, I waited there in the dark, not daring to light the candles, and wondering at the sang froid with which I had assured my husband that "no burglars could worry me." In a moment, there it was again—a cry for help, not so loud as it had been at first, and half strangled, choking, this time.

Without stopping to put on more clothes, my feet bare, and my husband's loaded .38 Colt in my hand, I noiselessly opened my door, passed through it, and crept down the corridor toward the back entrance of the house, where Ching and Charley had their rooms. As I went, I concluded that burglars had got in and had killed the two Chinamen; next, they would dispose of me, and then rob the house. So furious did the thought make me that I lost all fear, and fairly ached to get at the wretches.

Noiselessly stealing along, close to the wall, my pistol cocked and ready for work, I caught a glimpse of what was happening before I myself was seen. The light of several lanterns set about showed me poor, old Ching, evidently dead, lying almost across the back entrance door, which was wide open; Charley, bound and still moving, had been flung over him, while several men in peon blouses were busily hauling up mysterious boxes and cases through a hole which gaped in the middle of the paved corral. I gaped myself, in my astonishment, for I had never seen the hole before. But that was all I did see just then, for at that very moment one of the men caught sight of me, and glared, aghast, as I advanced upon them. Then he gave a loud yell that fairly terrified me into standing still for a moment, dropped his boxes and took to his heels, yelling that the devil was upon them.

As he fled, the other men stared about and seeing me, also emitted screams of terror, and made wild for the back door, dropping their burdens as they went. I fired twice only, for their terror had somewhat taken me aback, and had the supreme pleasure of seeing two of the miscreants clap their hands to their legs, and fall, with grievous groans. (I had fired purposely at their legs, for I didn't want to kill them—Mexican jails aren't overly comfortable.) Then, allowing the two to groan and pray alternately where they had fallen, I went over to attend to the two poor servants.

Neither of them was dead; Ching was badly cut and unconscious, but Charley wounded my feelings by shutting his eyes tight and trying to wriggle away from my touch. "Go 'way," he moaned; "I'm good Chinaman—no stealer, like Mexican boy—go 'way, devil!"

So they had all taken me for a ghost, or the devil. I could hardly contain my laughter as I enlightened and unbound Charley, and left him to revive his unconscious cousin. Then, having relieved myself of my ghostly attire, I sent out for two gendarmes, to whom I confided the wounded burglars, and told my tale of woe.

Next morning, as soon as it was sufficiently light, we inspected the scene of the night before, and found out that the burglars had not been burglars at all, but the members of a famous counterfeiting band who had simply flooded northern Mexico with bad money, and whom the police had never been able to locate. It seemed that they had made up their minds to a secret entrance under our old house, with a secret entrance covered by stones just inside our back patio wall, and there had stored their contraband goods during many past months. In this way, it had gotten out that the house was haunted, and I myself was pleased to verify my past feeling that some one, unseen, was present.

Well, they all went to prison for several years, and the secret entrance to our house was securely stopped, thus doing away forever with its reputation of being haunted by evil spirits.

As for my providential mask, I threw it away, and went to the ball regardless, with my brown face and hands. And the Pinal social leaders, sitting out, wondered audibly "how any woman could have the heart to dance and enjoy herself, after having actually shot with her own hands two poor, helpless human beings!"—San Francisco Argonaut.

A Matter of Color.
"I wonder why we see so few actors of ripe experience nowadays?"
"I don't know, unless it's because their well-known tendency to be jealous keeps them green."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Russia and the Yellow Pest.
When Chinese workmen apply for jobs to the Russians in Manchuria they are informed that heathens cannot be engaged and that they must first become Christians. This makes them desist invariably.

Secret Concerts.
Yarmouth, England, corporation forbids smoking on Sundays in its new pier pavilion, as the band plays sacred music.

It is better to escape through a hole than not at all.

OLD FAVORITES

Sally in Our Alley.
Of all the girls that are so smart
There's none like pretty Sally.
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage sets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells lace long
To such as please to buy 'em;
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes between
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm dressed all in my best
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamed,
Because I leave him in the lurch,
As soon as text is named;
I leave the church in sermon time
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

The Pessimist.
Nothing to do but work,
Nothing to eat but food,
Nothing to wear but clothes,
To keep one from going nude.

Nothing to breathe but air—
Quick as a flash 'tis gone;
Nowhere to fall but off,
Nowhere to stand but on.

Nothing to comb but hair,
Nowhere to sleep but in bed,
Nothing to weep but tears,
Nothing to bury but dead.

Nothing to sing but songs,
Ah, well, alas! alack!
Nowhere to go but out,
Nowhere to come but back.

Nothing to see but sights,
Nothing to quench but thirst,
Nothing to have but what we've got;
Thus through life we are cursed.

Nothing to strike but a gait,
Everything moves that goes;
Nothing at all but common sense
Can ever withstand these woes.
—Ben King.

RAILROAD TIES OF LEATHER.

Massachusetts Man's Invention, to Take the Place of Wood.

The invention of a leather crosstie, designed to take the place of sleepers made of wood, is attracting a great deal of attention in railroad circles, writes a Springfield (Mass.) correspondent of the New York Mail and Express. T. W. Dunnell of West Warren, Mass., is the inventor. While studying the art of paper making he learned that there was a scarcity of lumber in the country and that the railroads used annually 120,000,000 ties for renewals alone. Tin, steel, iron, glass, stone and of grass and sawdust composition had been made, but there were objections to all of these. So he set to work and finally hit upon a formula which seems to answer the purpose.

In the manufacture of his crosstie, which weighs 125 pounds, the scrap leather from shoe shops is taken into a disintegrator, ground very fine, subjected to a refining process and molded. The tension of the molding machine can be so regulated that the ties hard enough to take a spike or ties through which a spike cannot be driven can be turned out.

The three great essentials in a crosstie are apparently found in this leather for it is guaranteed to hold a spike. The splinter will not splinter it and it will not rot. It is expected to stand service for thirty-five years. Sample ties put down twenty-eight months ago in the West Springfield freight yard of the Boston and Albany road do not show the least wear. Roadmaster Sullivan of the Boston and Albany says the spikes hold as well as when first driven instead of working loose, as in the wooden ties. The ordinary chestnut tie now in use must be replaced every two years.

Mr. Dunnell proposes to turn out 5,000 ties a day for the present. The New York Central is planning to test the invention in its New York yards.

ONE OF AFRICA'S WONDERS.

City of a Hundred Thousand People Skilled in Many Intricate Arts.

The next of Great Britain's wars is quite likely to be in Kano. Few people know where Kano is or what sort of people inhabit it, but all reading men will doubtless be familiar with it ere many years elapse. Not many will accept the description of the Hausas that it is "the center of the world," but Kano, without using the language of extravagance, must be ranked among the wonders of Africa. Its high walls inclose a population of 100,000 people, living in houses which, though built of mud, are not by any means to be despised and which line broad streets and roads which would put many London streets to shame. Most of the houses are shaded by trees, and one traveler has described the appearance of the town as being that of "a big beautiful garden."

The great market, says this traveler, who visited Kano a year or two ago, is one of the wonders of the world.

THE USEFUL GOURD.

Women who live in cities and have to buy their hats, dish towels, sponges and dippers at the store have a surprise awaiting them at the St. Louis Fair. A Tennessee woman, says the Nashville American, will exhibit there a wonderful collection of gourds which show how nature herself provides those useful articles for country folk. Since Indian days in the colonies the gourd has been the traditional backwoods dipper, and in the middle South many a romance has been woven about a gourdful of clear spring water handed to a traveler by a mountain maid. But the gourds at the fair will be more useful than romantic. There will be among them great gourds, which make good receptacles for anything from eggs to silk dresses. The largest of them will hold, it is said, a hundred dozen eggs. Baby rattlers, spinning-tops and darning gourds will be shown just as nature provides them, and others, polished and varnished. There will be long-handled gourds for dippers; gourds shaped and colored like goose eggs, duck eggs and turkey eggs, so that when placed in the nest they deceive the fowls; gourds that have been hung in the poultry yard for the martins to nest in; long, slender gourds that look like snakes, and round ones that exactly resemble oranges will be there to show the plant in its common varieties.

Most interesting to the women, perhaps, will be a botanical hat, based on a shape of woven grasses and trimmed with vegetable lace from the inside of a gourd, colored with dyes. (This same lace gourd will be shown adapted for lumber use, as a dish-cloth, and in still different shape as a bath sponge. Beside it will be the beautiful "Turk's-cap" gourd, which serves as a pin cushion.)

A gourd bonjo of the olden time will show how plantation folk in many regions once grew their music on the vine; and on another gourd, polished and varnished, will be traced the old-time melody of "Sugar in de Gourd." There are few more variously useful plants grown in this country than the gourd, and few more popular in the region from which this exhibit is to be collected. City people who go to the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition with the idea that a gourd is a hard-shell imitation of a crook-necked squash are destined to have their notions on the subject altered.

"THE MOCKING BIRD."

How This Old-Time Popular Song Came to Be Written.

This is how the late Septimus Winner came to compose "Listen to the Mocking Bird." The account is furnished by the composer's son, J. Gibson Winner of Philadelphia.

"It was suggested by listening to a colored man, Dick Milburn, known as 'Whistling Dick.' Mr. Winner said: 'Dick was a unique character. He found infinite delight in wandering about the city whistling in imitation of a mocking bird, at the same time strumming an accompaniment upon the guitar.'"

"My father met him one day, and struck by his remarkable performance as a warbler, said to him, half in jest:

"How would you like to have a song for your mocking bird, Dick?"
The negro gazed at father in abject astonishment, and then, with a laugh that echoed through the block replied:

"Dat would be mighty nice, massa an' I would be much obliged 'f yo' massa, ef yo' done gwine to do so!"
"The compass of Dick's voice was hardly an octave, and in order to fit him properly the melody was made very simple. That same evening my father composed the words and music."

"The words which ran higher were to be spoken by the darkey, not sung except where they came within his range, followed by the whistler's clever imitation of the bird. Dick was a very good-natured fellow, but not endowed with much intellectual capacity. Night after night he came to Mr. Winner's music store to learn the words of the song. Try as he would, father could not teach him the words."

"Eventually, however, Dick mastered one verse. Milburn, nevertheless, had ideas of his own. He had a fine sense of humor, and improvised lines to the music, suggesting ridiculous fancies to attract the laughing crowd. It was not long before his idea of the mocking bird song became popular and added greatly to Dick's local reputation."

"The song was published in ballad form soon after and quickly took hold on the public. It was sung all over the country, and is just as popular to-day as it was forty-seven years ago."

"Father sold it to Lee & Walker, Philadelphia firm, for \$5, and during the twenty-eight years of its copyright never received anything beyond the price at which it was originally sold. The profits from its sale have exceeded \$100,000, perhaps the largest amount ever realized from any musical composition of its class."

Dressing by Lottery.

The girls employed in the potteries of England are good-looking and well dressed. They have taste which is cultivated by the art work of the factories. Many of them are more stylish perhaps, than their position seems to warrant, but this is easily explained. They buy their clothes by a system known as "Maxims." This means that twelve girls subscribe one shilling a week. The money is held by a fore woman, and when there is sufficient cash to buy a hat or dress the girls draw lots, and the winner has the new dress, while the other subscribers have to wait their turn. Then, in all the glory of ribbons and flery, the lucky girl appears on Sunday.

Occasionally a woman can do as she pleases with no one to care, but a maid is never so neglected that some woman is not watching to see what he is up to.

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ROBBED WOLF OF HIS PREY.

Lumber Clerk Was the Kind of the Brute's Chase for a Deer.

While traveling along the Oulmougan Lake in the Canadian pine country the other day, Oscar White, a clerk employed by a lumber firm, saw the method and the end of a murderous deer hunt.

At right angles to the provision road on which he was traveling ran the well beaten way along which the saw logs were drawn to the riverside. Down this by track came a beautiful deer, followed by a single gaunt gray timber wolf.

The deer would bound along for a few score yards at an amazing rate of speed, and then stop to listen and look about, whereas the tireless pursuer kept up the same steady pace in the most confident and businesslike manner.

When about a quarter of a mile from the side of the lake the deer slackened his pace to a trot before coming to a dead stop. The crafty wolf had made a tremendous spurt. The deer seemed neither to see nor hear its pursuer, owing perhaps to a whining of the road and to the fact that the wind was dead against it.

In an instant the wolf seemed to spring some dozen feet or so through the air and fasten upon the deer's flank. A moment's gallant struggle and the deer was dragged down and its butcher was devouring its hind quarters without waiting to destroy its life.

White had reached the intersection of the roads just before this, and rushed his horses to the scene. He was without firearms, but the wolf sneaked off on one side through the snow from the still breathing body as the team approached. With a blow of his axe White put the suffering creature out of its pain. Then he managed to drag the carcass on to his sleigh.

The wolf, which was squatting dog fashion within ten yards of him, lifted up its ugly muzzle and set up a tremendous howl as White did this, but made no attempt to come to close quarters with him. White, enraged at the impudence of the brute, swung his axe around his head and let it fly at the wolf. His aim was true, but the wolf was wary and dodged in time, although the axe handle struck its hind leg with sufficient force to send it away yelping.

After recovering his weapon the man went on his way. The wolf paused long enough to devour the blood covered snow where the deer had fallen and then made after the sleigh, which he followed, jogging along like a coach dog, until the depot buildings were reached. Then he sat down for ten minutes gave vent to his injured feelings in a series of howls.—New York Sun.

Milston Editor in Kansas.

The following notice was recently inserted in a paper which is the pride of the small Kansas town in which it is published: "We are going over our books and if this paper is being received by any person dead since Jan. 1 they will confer a great favor by notifying us at once."

A man with a clown's breath ought to be in the spicy cucumber class.