

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

I have never taken much stock in ghost stories. I have always considered them to be creatures of the imagination, and have been inclined to turn up my nose at them. I have considered myself above such things.

Perhaps the experience I am about to relate, came as a punishment for the views I had taken in this matter. Or possibly it was entirely by chance that I became the victim.

Whatever the cause may have been, the experience which I passed through has brought about a complete and radical change in my opinions on the subject. I no longer assume that calmly superior air, when it is mentioned. I was so overcome at the time that I have never been able to give a clear account of my experience, and this statement will, therefore be found to be rather disconnected.

It was on the fifth day of January, 1893. I had retired about 10 o'clock, and soon fell into a calm and peaceful slumber. I do not know how long I slept, but it must have been several hours after, that I awoke from no apparent cause. It was a clear night, and as there was a full moon, it was almost as light as day. But it was that soft, yellow light which throws out the shadows with such startling distinctness, and gives such a ghastly effect to every object. My senses seemed to be preternaturally keen, and I felt a presentiment of impending evil.

My room is at the head of the stairs, which lead from the kitchen, at the north end of the house. As I lay there I thought I heard a window rattling in the kitchen, but I thought it was caused by the wind, which was blowing quite strongly from the north at the time. Suddenly, however, I felt a draught of cold air blow up from below, and I heard a door slam in a distant part of the house: so I

knew a window must be open in the kitchen. Visions of burglars floated through my head, and to say that I was frightened is putting it mildly. Soon I heard something coming up the stairs. "Clank, clank, clank," it came, nearer and nearer, and finally stopped before my door. Then all was still for a minute, although it seemed to my excited senses at least an hour. Finally, when my nerves seemed about ready to give way under the strain, I heard a slight rustle, and a most frightful object stepped into the room.

I am unable to describe it fully; partly because I was too frightened to take much notice, and partly because words would fail to do justice to the horrible appearance of the thing.

However, I saw enough to assure myself that it was a ghost. It wore the traditional white garments, but, unlike all the ghosts I had ever read about, it did not move silently. It is true I could hear no sound of footsteps, but there was the same noise I had heard before, whenever it moved. It appeared to be a creaking of the joints. It was entirely without flesh, and the skin was stretched tightly over the bones. Its eyes were sunken deeply in their sockets, and glowed in a particularly ghastly manner. Indeed, the whole figure seemed to emit a peculiar bluish light. There was no particular or well-defined source of light, but the whole room seemed to be pervaded with it.

This strange figure hesitated a moment, and then slowly approached me. As for me, I was sitting up in bed, and my "each particular hair" was doing the little porcupine act so thrillingly described by Shakespeare. The apparition stopped by the side of my bed and spoke. Such a voice! It is impossible to describe it, but it gives me the horrors every time I think of it. Neither do I