

THE GHOST OF RUSSIAN HILL.

[CONCLUDED.]

This was all. Terrified nearly to death, the poor woman lost her senses and fell. As she expressed it afterward, a cold, dull, awful blank seemed to stretch itself like a black curtain between her sight and the world. The children found her lying there insensible, and help was called in. In vain her friends strove to impress upon her that this strange scene she seemed to have witnessed was nothing but a dream or a nightmare; she replied by asking whether the appearance of the Spanish girl to her and her children before had been a dream. The night was succeeded by a dangerous fever, and she lay for many days in a delirium. Mr. Evans caused the floor to be taken up in the scarlet room. Underneath it lay just such a box as Mrs. Addis had described; the lady within it unrecognizable from the action of stacked lime. Then the poor people in the Spanish apartment were questioned, and they related what they knew. The house on Russian Hill had been the abode of a young girl belonging to their people; she thought herself the wife of an American merchant, whom she loved with intense devotion; and she used to watch for his coming with anxious fondness. His real wife, meantime, called from her eastern home and came to join him; and he, fearing discovery, poisoned the poor girl, as 'twas thought; though none could prove it, and nothing positive was known beyond her disappearance on that night, the 19th of October, two years before. The American merchant abandoned the house and furniture just as it stood, giving an agent charge to let it for an almost nominal sum. After remaining empty for some time Mr. Evans took it for Mrs. Addis, its low rent being the inducement, and he knowing nothing of the story. After the discovery Mrs. Addis was removed, and lay long ill at the house of a kind Spanish woman who received her. Strange to say, her children also became ill; as if (people said) the curse on the house were working itself out. A better home was provided for her—the one in which she has been introduced to the reader—and she removed to it. She was only then recovering from the long illness and was very weak. Mr. Evans substantiated this story in every particular that he could, as did others. The suspected man had gone with his wife to Australia; and no one had held the Spanish girl in sufficient interest to follow him there and charge him with his crime. He lives in immunity from it, so far as is known, to this day. I make no remarks upon the story myself. I give it as it was given to me. That it was singularly singular, none can deny. And if the reader should be curious on the subject of Mrs. Addis herself, I may mention that she prospered well, and regained her own position in life. But she never alluded to the house on Russian Hill with the least abatement of horror. Nothing in this world will ever shake her belief in the ghost that haunted it.—Overland Monthly.

"AN EDITOR IN HEAVEN."

Apocryphal to an article going the rounds under the above heading, an exchange presents the following legend: Once upon a time after a demise of one of the corps editorial, he presented himself at the gate of the Golden city, and requested admission. The door-keeper asked him what had been his occupation while on terra firma? He replied he had been an editor. "Well," said the watchman, "we have a crowd of your kind here now; and they all come in as 'dead heads.' If you pay your passage you can come in; if not, you must place yourself under the control of a personage you ruled tyrannically down below"—meaning the devil. Not having the wherewith to go in, our brother of the quill and scissors posted off, and presented himself at the entrance of Goliath's dark domain. A very dark-complexioned gentleman stood sentry, and asked in a gruff voice, "Who comes?" "An humble disciple of Faust," was the calm reply. "Then hold on, you can't be admitted," exclaimed the gentleman in black, evincing considerable agitation, and scarcely knowing upon whom to vent his wrath. "Why not?" demanded the type, who began to get somewhat huffy, and looked around for a "sheep's foot" with which to force an entrance. "Well, sir," replied the sentry, "we let one of your profession in here many years ago, and he kept up a continual row with his former delinquent subscribers, and as we have more of that class of persons here than any other, we have passed a law prohibiting the admission of any editors, only those who have advanced our interest in their papers on earth, and even those we keep in a separate room by themselves. You have published many things operating against us, and always blamed the devil with everything that went wrong, so you can't come in. We enforce this rule without respect to persons, for our own peace and safety. Now travel." Casting a droll leer on the outside sentinel, our typographical friend started on again, determined to get above. This time he took with him an old file of his paper, and presenting it to the guardian of the oriental city, requested that it might be carefully examined, and they could see whether he was entitled to a free ticket. In due course of time the conductor came along and took him in, telling him that he had been a mild sort of fellow, and that his improvement, and that resolutions had been passed to admit all members of the art preservative, who had abused the devil while below. He added that as they had been punished enough by being with the 'devil,' all their future punishment is commuted. He further stated that his own delinquent newspaper subscriber could be found in Heaven.

To break one's self of bad habits, understand clearly the reasons, and all the reasons, why the habit is injurious. Study the subject until there is no longer doubt in your mind. Avoid the places, the persons and the things that led to the temptation. Keep busy; idleness is the strength of bad habits. Do not give up the struggle when you have broken your resolution once, twice, ten times, or a thousand times. That only shows how much need to strive. When you have broken your resolution, just think the matter over and endeavor to understand why it was that you may be open your guard upon a recurrence of the same circumstances. Do not think it a trifling easy thing you have undertaken. It is folly to expect to break off bad habits in a day, which have been gathering strength in you for years.

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