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1886

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March, 1886.

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H.L.,
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King St. West, Toron

THE MASKED BALL.

In one of the broadest streets of the city of Mexico stood, many years ago, a fine, large old house. Over the portal was the coat-of-arms, of the noble family of Verano. Through the delicate iron scroll-work of the gates might be seen a large "patio," or court-yard, with a fountain playing in the middle, and beautiful flowers growing all around. For many years but few visitors were allowed to enter, for the master of the house was old and feeble, and saw hardly any one but the priest and the doctor.

There was one bright thing in that dreary home, and that was the old count's granddaughter. She was 16 years old, and as pretty and sweet a little fairy as ever was seen in the city of Mexico. She was the life of the house, and there was not a creature in it, from the solemn old major-domo to the groom in the stable but would willingly have died for the little Countess Teresita de Verano. She was small, slight and agile, with tiny hands and feet. Her head was beautifully set upon her shoulders, and her great black eyes made a curious contrast to the masses of rich brown hair coiled round and round the small head. Her mother had been a beauty, and had died when she was born. Her father lived with the old count in the dreary old palace. But nothing could sadden Teresita's spirits. Her laugh was like a peal of bells, and she had sweet coaxing ways. Her father was a man of refinement and taste, and adored his little daughter all the more that she resembled in many ways the mother whom he had loved so dearly.

At last the old Count de Verano died, and his son lived quietly with his daughter in the dreary old palace. The term of mourning having expired, the whole city was excited by this news that the Count de Verano was going to give a masked ball, to introduce Teresita into society.

Many years had passed since his old friends had crossed the threshold, and great was the curiosity of those who were fortunate enough to be invited. The house was said to be haunted, and all were anxious to see what the old palace looked like inside. The evening came and the old palace was brilliant with a thousand lights. The rooms were hung with choice old tapestries, and the silver and gold chandeliers sparkled with lights and reflected a thousand brilliant colors. The walls were hung with old armor, and the broad marble staircases were thronged with people dressed in dominoes and masks. At midnight they were all to unmask. The guests were more or less startled, therefore, at meeting a man dressed entirely in armor, with visor down, who wore neither domino nor mask. He seemed to know no one, and was always alone. The clanking of his armor and sword could be heard a long way off, and as he came near people stepped aside, so chilly did the air become as he strode past.

It had been arranged between the count and his daughter that they themselves should not wear dominoes and masks. Teresita looked very lovely in her white gauze draperies, and had no lack of partners for the dances. Her simplicity and gayety charmed all hearts, and her father's heart swelled when he heard his darling praised.

The only thing that marred the general enjoyment was the entrance, from time to time, of the man in armor. He walked straight through the rooms, and the conversation and merriment died away as he passed. People wondered in whispers who the strange knight might be. Some suggested that the house was haunted, and that perhaps this was the ghost. In short, all sorts of suggestions were made. Teresita was at first too full of pleasure to be disturbed by the knight, but she could not help noticing the disturbed looks of the people as the knight passed through the rooms, and the dead silence which fell upon them all.

"Mi padre," she said, "who is the stranger caballero, dressed in armor, who walks about alone?"

"What caballero!" asked Don Jayme turning pale. "I have seen no one in armor."

"Where are your eyes, papa?" cried Teresita, "we have all seen him, and you could hear his sword and armor clatter a mile away. Why, there he comes now! Don't you see him? Can's you hear him?

Don Jayme turned white to the lips. He saw and heard nothing himself; but he knew that the appearance of the ghost of the house portended disaster.

At last the time came to unmask. It was like a transformation scene; every one bloomed out in gay costume, and lent additional brilliance to the already beautiful rooms. The servants handed round wine and cake, chocolate and ices; and the air was filled with the hum of voices. But after the first taste first one guest and then another sat down his glass with a look of disgust. The wine looked like a rich, heavy burgundy, but it tasted like blood. At that moment the knight in armor entered the room. The voices were hushed, and all gazed at the figure which strode hurriedly across the floor. But Teresita quietly left her seat, and approaching the figure, said:

"Sir knight, will you not join us now at supper?"

There was no answer, and the guests shuddered and covered their eyes. When they looked again the knight was gone and Teresita lay on the floor in a dead faint. She soon recovered her senses, however, made light of the matter, and was among the gayest of the company for the rest of the evening.

"So much for trying to be polite to strangers," she said, laughingly. "Perhaps he is mad, poor thing."

Don Jayme could neither see nor hear the knight in armor; but he had heard enough of the ghost in his boyhood to remember that those whose attention the ghost wished to attract were the very persons who were both blind and deaf to him. As soon as he could leave his guests unnoticed he made his way to the room of Juan, the old major-domo of the house. He had been in the family since Don Jayme was a baby, and to him the ghost was an old acquaintance.

For the first time in his life poor Juan appeared frightened. His lips were white and trembling, and his eyes were starting out of their sockets. When his master entered the room he held up both hands and said in a frightened whisper:

"Why, what is the ghost walking for? You have doubtless seen him?"

"No, Juan, I can neither see nor hear him; but the senorita has done so and all the guests."

Old Juan fell back in his chair with a groan.

"You must hear him, Senor Count! He is coming along the passage now. Can't you hear his armor clashing and his sword clanking over the stones? He is now in the door-way! Can't you see him?" Juan saw that he was making a great effort and groaned again.

"No," said Don Jayme, after a few minutes' pause; "I can hear and see nothing."

"Oh, Dios!" cried poor Juan. "Come into the hall and see if all the armor is there."

They went together. Almost at the end of the hall one complete suit of armor was missing. They looked at each other. Don Jayme's face was as white as Juan's, and he whispered:

"What does it mean?"

"It means misfortune," replied Juan. "There! He is coming toward us again. Surely you see him now, senor!"

"No," replied Don Jayme. "I see nothing."

"He is making noise enough to wake the dead," muttered Juan to himself.

Meanwhile the guests were beginning to feel uncomfortable. The small hours had begun, and who could tell how many more ghosts might be seen that night? They moved about uneasily, and made inquiries for the host. Teresita did her best to amuse them, and begged them to stay for a few more dances. Her efforts were unavailing, however, and she sent a servant to find her father.

Don Jayme, the moment that he had seen the last of his guests, returned to Juan, with whom he remained in consultation.

Teresita sat alone in the drawing room, where she had that evening had so much enjoyment. She wondered where her father was, and he had turned so pale and had not answered when she pointed out to him the knight coming into the room. She saw herself reflected in a long pier glass, and rose and stood admiring herself for some time. She looked almost as fresh as when the evening began. At last she began humming a gay air, while her feet kept time to the music. She danced to her own reflection in the glass till she was tired and then sank on a sofa. She wondered why no one had come to put out the lights and shut up the house. She listened, but could hear no sound of any one stirring excepting the tramp and clatter of the knight in armor as he made his rounds.

The servants were too frightened to move from the kitchen; and Don Jayme and Juan were talking altogether in the major-domo's room. Juan confessed to feeling alarm. He said he had been told by his late master that the ghost had walked when Don Jayme's grandfather was away fighting in the wars. The ghost appeared for two days and three nights in that very same suit of mail. At the end of three days news came that Don Anares had been slain in battle, and the ghost had disappeared as suddenly as he had come.

Just then Teresita, who had been hunting all over the house for her father, opened the door, and, seeing him, she immediately began talking about the ball and the guests, and finally about the man in armor.

"I think he must be tired by this time," she said, "for he has been working for whole hours. But I do not hear him now, and although I have been all over the house to find you, I have neither seen nor heard him."

All this excitement had tired Don Jayme very much.

"Let us have a glass of wine," he said, "and refresh ourselves before we go to bed," and he led the way to the dining-room. Juan poured his master a glass of wine and then retired.

Teresita joined her father in the dining-room almost directly after Juan had left him. He was sitting in his usual chair at the head of the table, holding his half empty glass in his hand, which was resting on the table. Behind his chair, erect and immovable, stood the knight in armor.

"Why, papa, there is our friend, the knight," she said, "standing directly before you. If you turn your head you cannot help seeing him."

But her father taking no notice of her remark, she touched him, and a shriek resounded through the house which brought the servants hurrying to the room. Don Jayme was dead.

For weeks Teresita's life hung by a thread. When she recovered her gay spirits were gone and her hair was perfectly white. It is said that one of the sweetest of the nuns in her days when the Church of the Sta Maria la Blanca had a convent attached to it, was Teresita de Verano. The old house is empty, and is supposed to be haunted still by the knight in armor.

—* * * A disease of so delicate a nature as stricture of the uretha should only be entrusted to those of large experience and skill. By our improved methods we have been enabled to speedily and permanently cure hundreds of the worst cases. Pamphlet, reference and terms, 10 cents in stamps. World's Dispensary Medical Association, 663 Main street, Buffalo, N.Y.

New York city will soon be two hundred years old, and as an evidence of the city's marvellous growth it is said that the board of aldermen now steal in a single year more than the entire town was worth two centuries ago.

—Corns cause intolerable pain. Holloway's Corn Cure removes the trouble. Try it and see what an amount of pain is saved.

Customer—I'd like some of that wall-paper that you are advertising is filled with arsenic. Wall-paper dealer—How many rolls? Customer—Well, how many does it take to get away with a mother-in-law.

Hoarseness and Bronchitis.

—Among the many remedies used for the cure of coughs and colds, none more speedily gains the confidence of the sufferer than "Hallamore's Expectorant." For hoarseness and bronchitis its rapid effect is surprising. In private sale during 25 years it has gained for itself an enviable reputation and produced wonderful results. In 25 cent bottles at all drug stores. edx

Another case of boycotting is reported. None of the boys in Monkey Row will play with Johnny Grimes, because Johnny fuddles like everything at the noble game of marbles. Verily, the boy is the father of the man.

—H. A. McLaughlin, Norland, writes: "I am sold out of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery and Dyspeptic Cure. It sells well, and I find in every instance it has proven satisfactory. I have reason to believe it the best preparation of the kind in the market." It cures dyspepsia, biliousness and torpidity of the liver, constipation, and all diseases arising from impure blood, female complaints, etc.

Foot-racing is said to be a popular amusement among California young ladies. Popular! Well, we should imagine so? Any amusement in which a young lady can cover a lap is bound to be popular.

Public Notice.

—All testimonials in favor of Hallamore's Expectorant are from well known residents of Toronto. Mr. A. J. Willcock, 189 Spadina avenue, says: "I have used Hallamore's Expectorant for coughs and colds for thirteen years, and would not be without it. It never fails to cure me." edx

The story comes from Texas that a young lady of Sonora caught between her teeth a bullet fired from a pistol. This indicates that a woman may sometimes avoid danger by shutting her teeth.

—A. D. Noyes, Newark, Michigan, writes: "I have enquired at the drug stores for Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil, but have failed to find it. We brought a bottle with us from Quebec, but it is nearly all gone and we do not want to be without it, as my wife is troubled with a pain in the shoulder, and nothing else gives relief. Can you send us some?"

A man in New York has seriously made a collection of bottle corks. This is a light employment, but it is better than making a collection of the contents of bottles, as so many men do.

Worth Remembering.

—In a long letter from John H. Hall of Baddick, Cape Breton, N.S., he says: "I believe were it not for Burdock Blood Bitters I should be in my grave. It cured me of kidney and liver complaint and general debility, which had nearly proved fatal." 246

It is said to be easier to get a divorce in Maine than it is to get a drink of whisky. Yes, and the people seem to want the divorce just about as often as they do the whisky.

—The superiority of Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator is shown by its good effects on the children. Purchase a bottle and give it a trial.

A New York lady advertises for a pair of opera glasses which she lost in a Fifth avenue church. This reminds us that the season for spring bonnets is now open.

—It may be only a trifling cold, but neglect it and it will fasten its fangs in your lungs, and you will soon be carried to an untimely grave. In this country we have sudden changes and must expect to have coughs and colds. We cannot avoid them, but we can effect a cure by using Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, the medicine that has never been known to fail in curing coughs, colds, bronchitis and all affections of the throat, lungs and chest.

"A Nashville youth, eighteen years old captured and married a rich maiden forty-six years old." That surely can't be called a boycott.

It Acts Like a Charm.

—Ex-Ald. George Evans, 449 Queen street west, testifies to the efficacy of "Hallamore's Expectorant" as follows: "It is undoubtedly far superior to all other advertised remedies for coughs and colds, especially in the case of children, with whom it acts like a charm." edx

There is said to be a sort of sympathy between extremes. To illustrate, many a homely man's head has been turned by a pretty girl's foot.

—Free and easy expectoration immediately relieves and cures the throat and lungs from viscid phlegm, and a medicine that promotes this is the best medicine to use for coughs, colds, inflammation of the lungs and all affections of the throat and chest. This is precisely what Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup is a specific for, and wherever used it has given unbounded satisfaction. Children like it because it is pleasant, adults like it because it relieves and cures the disease.

"Whoop it up."

—Probably one of the most difficult complaints to doctor is whooping cough. When treated by ordinary means the poor victim is left to whoop it up as best he can. Hagyard's Pectoral Balsam gives relief in this as well as in all throat, bronchial and lung troubles. 246

The eternal fitness of things is illustrated by the fact that a Mr. Grogg holds a prominent position in a Columbus, O., brewery.

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JUST LOOK AT THE WINDOW
OF
A. MACDONALD
THE YONGE STREET CLOTHIER,
And if you do not see what you want step in and ask for it. He has the finest stock in the city.
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Late of Queen street east, has removed to 2 RICHMOND EAST, corner of Yonge, where will be found a full line of English and Canadian Tweeds, Suitings, Overcoatings, etc

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Satisfaction Guarantsed
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ARE OFFERING SPECIAL INDUCEMENTS IN
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