

A HAUNTED PREACHER.

HE WAS A VICTIM OF AN AWFUL NIGHTMARE.

He could not sleep without waking crying "Fire." Where his habits caught him, and the thought of his late enemy for a time.

The gentleman, I know, was subject to a peculiar form of nightmare, which had never varied since his childhood. He always imagined that the house was on fire, and invariably awoke shrieking "Fire," at the top of his voice. Of course it was the most inconvenient form of this common malady that he could possibly have selected, for, if I remember right, he was a clergyman, and whenever he was exchanging pulp with a brother divine, or taking his annual holiday, he worked himself up to such a state of nervous excitement, for fear he should have a visit from his old enemy, that he scarcely ever failed to bring about the result he so dreaded, and the inmates of whatever house or hotel he chanced to be sojourning at would be aroused in the dead of night by awful cries of "Fire." As the years went by, however, the attacks became less and less frequent, until, as he reached and passed middle age, the clergyman had almost ceased to dread them, and they became a memory of the past.

One summer, after a year of unusually hard work, his devoted congregation decided that a trip to England would be the best possible tonic for their overworked rector; and so to England the rector went, with three months' leave of absence and a well-filled purse. All went well until the middle of the voyage, when one night my friend was aroused by a most unusual commotion in the stateroom; chains were clanking, ropes were scraping over the deck, men were rushing to and fro, stateroom doors were banging as excited passengers rushed on deck to learn what was the matter, and above all the tumult was heard the captain's voice, entreating every one to be calm, and assuring them that there was no danger. Hastily donning a few garments, the clergyman hurried on deck, thinking there must have been a collision, and wondering why he had not been awakened by the shock. Reaching the deck, his worst fears were realized; the pumps were being rigged, and sailors in tarpaulin suits were descending into the hold to find out the extent of the damage. "Have we struck a rock, or been run down?" he asked, excitedly. "It's worse than that, sir," answered the man he addressed. "We're afire! but somehow or other we can't make out where it started from, nor even smell the smoke; it must be down in the hold." "Well, but who discovered it first?" cried the excited parson. "Some one must have seen it, or how did you know there was a fire?" "Well, sir, we were all roused by some one yelling 'Fire!' like mad. Every one that heard took it up, and we all turned out and rigged the pumps first thing, and now there ain't even the smell of fire to be found."

With a sickening certainty, the awful truth dawned upon the unhappy clergyman. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" The terror of his youth had overtaken him at last on mid-ocean, and he had aroused the entire ship's company by his shouts of "Fire!" without awaking himself.

He dared not confess, and leaving captain and crew to continue their search indefinitely, he crept sadly back to his stateroom, and the story goes, never slept a night without a thick handkerchief tied over his mouth during the remainder of the voyage.

And One of Them Was Doubtful.

In a town not far from one of the large business centres dwelt two elders of the Presbyterian church, both Scotch, and both very rigid about all matters of doctrine, thoroughly convinced of their own righteousness, and of everybody else's lack of it. Their Christian names were respectively David and Jonathan, and Jonathan was the elder of the two. A new minister arrived in town to take charge of the Presbyterian flock, and, eager to be the first in well doing, Jonathan called on him to bid him welcome, and also to give him a few points about the congregation. The minister inquired about the general religious condition of the town. "Bad, minister, zera bad!" responded Jonathan solemnly. "Indeed there's nae gude Christians in the town but Davie and myself and I hae grave doubts about Davie."

She is Still True to French.

"Where are you going, this summer, Maud?" "We have taken rooms at Westfield," was the immediate reply. "All our friends are going there, and we expect to have a very pleasant outing. If I am glad for one reason more than another that it is to be Westfield, it is on account of its nearness to the city. I don't intend to miss one of my lessons at the Berlitz school. I used to have a perfect hatred of French. I could not learn it, much less understand it, but now—well, you will have to ask Prof. Ingles how I am progressing. A good many of the girls are taking German also, but my alleged brain finds enough in French at present."

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THE JUDGMENT OF OSIRIS.

By Hunter Duvar.

Whether upon the earth I cannot tell, Or in a higher or a lower sphere, A horror of great darkness there befell, But where, no mortal man can guess or fear.

Or it may have been within some world Where darkness never yet has ceased to reign, Nor the wing brooding o'er the deep been furled, Its loss the laughing sunlight at amain;

Or it may have been in some far region, Or in some vast and boundless space, Or where the disembodied spirits dwell, And that there be such things I cannot tell.

Youth bloometh quick, but dies ere buds expand, Age breathes slow yet cometh to dust again, While all the time death's not unkindly hand Is never tired of gathering in the grain.

And when the loosed spirit 'scapes life's pain, Before some high Court its plea is made, Its cause is judged of and its fate is sealed, O'er great Osiris, Lord of Heaven! He!

O'er that dread judgment place there hung a pall, Opaque, tenebrous, sullen, dire and dense, Egyptian darkness seeming like a wall, Of velvet black through which no eyeball's lens Could look and live, but blackness more intense Than depths of subterranean caverns bear, So untransparent was the motionless air.

A point of light ope'd in the solid dark, A vivid pencil of bright blood-red hue, Which slow and silent from the central spark In vast concentric rings expanding grew, And through the orb a sanguine selflight threw, More awful than e'er sung by poet's lyre, A circular background of red, rayless fire.

In centre of this red and glowing sphere A thin and shifting smoky mist appeared, Whence, denser growing, cast a murky smear Upon the red, and flicked about and neared The central point, till in some manner weird The mist had taken substance and had grown Into the semblance of an ebony throne.

This giant throne was massive-framed and railed With seeming limbs of gnarled withered trees, But which were writhing serpents, sable scaled, That never ceased to interwine and squeeze One on the other. As caryatides! Seven living sphinxes did the throne upbear And with their long eyes looked out from their lair.

Soon other mists came shimmering on the red In soft, thin vapors like the wave of wings, Of wandering sprites that round the centre sped, And drawing near the centre of the rings Grew dense, till the unreal flickerings Formed into corporeal figures, towering tall, And stood embodied, forty-two in all.

The Assessors these. One for each mortal sin, An awesome company with heads of bears, Bulls, lions, rams, and apes with ghastly grin, Cats, crocodiles and vulture-beaks. In pairs They all were ranged beside the throne on stairs, O'er each head swayed a feather, and edged bands Were upright held in all their mummified hands.

Higher than these the Genii of the dead, Headed as man, as jackal, hawk and ape, The four dread Masters who cut the thread And let the spirit forth free from out the shape, And mortal coil that lies with mouth agape! These four were there to witness what might be The fate of the sad souls they had sent free.

And with them dog-faced Anubis, the guide Who from the genii's laboring hands Leads forth the souls and sails upon the tide Until it safely reach the shadowy strands, Freed from the effete body's swathing bands, Where timid for its doings, or elate, It waits to cross the lintel of the gate.

Right of the throne stood Horus, also known As Har the Child, fair-haired and double-crowned, With falcon visage, around which was blown His sunny hair, by sunlight more embrown'd, He was that in his vengeance was renowned On Typhon, and sought out the scattered limbs Of his slain sire—as say Osiris hymns.

First on the left the moon-god Thoth there stood With his face, and held the golden scale Wherein to weigh the evil and the good, And pen of record to record the tale, That measures out the benefits and bale, A crescent moon lit up his curling hair With rays like to an aureole of the air.

The others ranged alike on either hand— Sin the preventer, Nubt of the south, grim Bes Abhorrent pigmy hated in the land, Ra of the sunlight whom the people bless, Ptahpriam Khem, Khons with the single trees, Kheph with the scarabeus, mummy bound, And Atum lord of On the lotus-crowned.

Apophis the water-snake who brings The accusation 'gainst the soul set free, The nine Temara gods, masters of things, Great Ptah, besides the Abstract They who be Of Years, Age, Life and of Eternity, All these and more were ranged in line of state And with an air expectant seemed to wait.

Thus all these lurid forms personified The qualities that judge the living soul, Each one to watch the faults the accused told, Of all the two and forty sins of old, Each sin fall written on a penal scroll— O awful lesson this, that under sun No soul can 'scape the deeds in body done.

Until, inscrutably, an august Shape, That had not entered, grew upon the eye As grows the outline of a giant cape From out the sea mists, so was seen again Amid these fearsome courtiers standing by, A Presence vast, majestic, magian, lone, The Great Osiris seated on his throne.

A countenance so still, so passionless, No word could paint in deepest fancy's dream Nor that brow's majesty could faint express, Nor tell the great long almond eyeball's gleam Piercing, yet pitiful; the men supreme, The beardless olive and grave mouth's full, firm line Conjoined to make a contour all divine.

As type of strength two horns—in shape new moons' Thin arcs are they, "illuminate and lowne," Ripen to crescents of mid-months' white moons, Around the mighty form flowed ample down (Throat-latched by Upper Egypt's gathered crown) A resplendent mantle to the feet— A regal vestiture, vague, wizard, meet.

Not raiment this, not web of wool or die— But as when human vision would devise The outline of the sun at noontide high, Yet sees but dancing prism—so the eye That saw Osiris knew not of his size, He was a naked form, vast, undefined, Or a draped figure present to the mind.

And as this Presence sat upon the throne There laid out of the dark his daily seen, A ghastly company, stern as of stone, Slowly growing slow

No man could number nor say who had been, Their eyes from through the cerebriants showing, And phosphorescent, as in waves on waves These dead specters came from out their graves.

Profoundly silent all. No motion broke New whispers from the ghastly multitude, 'Till a scene such as a ghastly light broke From out of shades in his widest mood, Till sudden, starting as a bell-stroke would, A voice came like a storm-sough from the north And spake the words: "Let the accused stand forth!"

Slow came before the throne and the stern line Of the demagogues and assassins grim, A female form most delicately fair, Of perfect symmetry and grace of limb, Who stood before the Judge, and looked at him With a proud regal port that seemed to be A challenge made to an equality.

Robeless was she as when laid on her bier, The perfect semblance now that she had borne, For Anubis the angel brought her here To show the body she on earth had worn, Had he in life but seen her every form, Wherein her name had been a synonym For all that other women did begin.

Her color was of pallid, perfect gold, Or as if paley-bronze were lightly washed, With faintly rosy ore, and where the mould Of her fine figure carved and brightly flashed, Soft violet shadows hid as all abashed, Her midnight-dark tresses flowed adown To her small feet and clothed her like a gown.

Her countenance had all the beauty rare That marked the noble of Egyptian race, The broad, low brow, the cheek beyond compare, Tinted, but where no wrinkle you could trace, Straight nose, and in the contour of her face Her large, black, slanting eyes with lustre glow'd, And the old blood of Memnon-monarchs showed.

A small, red mouth, with arched lips firm and full That lightly touched in form of archer's bow, Wearing a smile so sweet and beautiful No man could look on her but feel a glow, Had he in life but seen her every form, And there she waited, the one beautiful thing Of all the shapes of that appalling ring.

THE WATER-SNAKE APOPHIS, THE ACCUSER, SPEAKS: "Thou, Cleopatra, born of Pharaoh's line, Weaver of Egypt's double diadem, The mist had taken substance and had grown Into the semblance of an ebony throne. In pregnant myths that grow from Seb's stem, To watch and ward and lead them, and to bow To the immortal Gods—what answerest thou?"

CLEOPATRA. "Lord of the dead and quick! of heaven, O King! The world hath been so very fair to me, My heart was full of joy that made it sing, And my wraps senses thrilled so blissfully, At pleasant sounds to hear and sights to see, The air was blue, sun glorified the skies, The moon was sister and the stars were eyes."

"The fountains in oasis, where they sang, Spoke mystically pleasant words to me, The bird-songs 'mong the tamarisks as they rang Through sighs of reeds and murmur of the tree, The creeping of the Nile through lilled lea, The blue of waters where my galleys lay In the stretched arms of the Canopian bay."

"Were all a part of me—than diadem I loved them, and (although I could not know) Did think beneficence had given us them, Nor deem that joy could work us any woe. It may be true, I know not. Be it so, I did not make myself. Did I create These feelings that they should affect my fate?"

ACCUSER. "Fair Queen of men, power blithely not in sloth, But is a charge of ever watchful care, And when it loiters as the sluggard doth, The governed land oftentimes becometh bare, And faintest subjects need no aid nor dare, But in their discontent like serpents hiss, In envious plotting. What sayest thou to this?"

CLEOPATRA. "What wars were waged? what draft of fighting men? What sands with gore were moistened in my reign? Boats swam, steeds ramped, slaves builded, and the pen Pappi wrote. Corn yellowed on the plain, None said the monarch's case was people's bane, Men lived and toiled at craft or trade and died, Nor 'gainst me up to heaven their ghosts have cried."

ACCUSER. "Accused! the gods claim worship!"

CLEOPATRA. "Through my land The gods had worship. At the feast of state I oft was present, nay and with my hand Did pet the white bull Apis, nor abate The wine libations where the godheads sat, Nor fail to place fresh flowers upon the lids Of the kings' tombs are in the pyramids."

"If that I shuddered at the sight of gore Of fawns and cooling doves and did recoil From blood of living innocent things, the more Did I bring to the alters corn and oil, Fruits, flowers, and products of the soil, Gum and frankincense and the woods of trees My sea-ships brought from many lands and seas."

"The temples' walls I tinted with hieroglyphs And sculptured sacred figures on the pines; Made alters misty with the pungent whiff Of opifera; led the priests and their canes, And placed new sphinxes on the avenue lanes At temple gates, and lengthened out the line Of mystic obelisks and forms divine."

"As woman I revealed the Women Gods, Athor the lady of the dance and glove, Mistress of turquoises,—as say her odes, Isis the mother veiled in mystery, Full-bosomed Mant, for genatrix is she, These I adored by loving all things fair, For adoration is in praise, not prayer."

ACCUSER. "Wanted! once of Two Egypt's crowned queens, In thy luxurious and voluptuous life, Leman of sea-barbarians hast thou been, Thus bringing luxury on the land, and strife."

CLEOPATRA. "How could a Queen Egypt stoop to wife? If that my hot blood surged, I do not know, The blame lay with the gods and not with me."

The crowd of the spectator dead stayed still Nor did they, at demand and countermand, Lay on the soul at her ougth charge of ill, Nor yet did tell good deeds done in the land; Nor advocate did take the cause in hand, But the accused stood, no one by her side, Calm, proud, impetuous, haughty and monarch-eyed.

Then Thoth the writer took his tablet up, Where he had writ the record clear and fair, And Anubis the weigher placed the cup Of good deeds done, in one scale to compare, And in the other held the brazen square 'Gainst which good mitigating acts are weighed, While anxious all looked as the balance played.

The beam's vibration quivered to and fro, A flicker through the golden balance ran, Quickly at first, then slowly growing slow

Till all the scales began to quiver and move, Showing the ill was more than good was done. The Apophite snake stood forth and cried In certain tones: "This woman's cause is tried."

FITTE THE THIRD. May mortal tongue describe the august sounds When a god speaks and the empyrean fills, Lo! in a rushing thunderous dreadful sound, Reverb'rating 'mong the canyon'd hills, Or, lowly, in the prattle of the rills, Or in the sea's murmur when it grieves, Or in the stealthy whisper of the leaves?

The Judge Osiris spoke the direful doom: "Daughter of balanced deeds, nor ill nor great, Gay thing of whim, as frail as blossom bloom, Too good art thou for hell, for heaven too late, Too slight for purging fires, too delicate, Dine transmigration let thy soul escape, And for one cycle in a lamian sea— Shrink!"

With piercing shriek the sentenced soul fell down In writhing on the ebony paven floor, Her self-long hair that clothed her like a gown, Swelled to moltenness, a form no more But likeness of a spotted snake she bore, Her white and carmine tints grew decked with bars And eyes shone out on her and phosphor stars.

Yet with a grace of motion. As she moved The line of beauty to her progress clear, Though prone, in saltant spasms as beloved, Her new form, and a scintillation gave As you have seen an undulating wave Crested with light though body all a-green, So undulated Egypt's hapless queen.

Meantime the antic pageant's bloodied glare Deceased as metal taken from the fire, And in the places where the figures were Swam but faint films; soon eventures expire And the tenebrous ring contracting higher Shrank to one vivid spot; then out the spark And once more fell the horror of the dark.

Long centuries have trailed since these accords And Egypt's fate has veered for good and ill, The Roman, Moslem, French and British hordes Have made her weakness subject to their will, But the sad sentenced Cleopatra still Doth undulate athwart the lilled meads, Or by the Nile's banks blazes 'mong the reeds.

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