

noise as if something was being dragged stealthily on the floor of the corridor, and a few moments later the notes of an unknown air distinctly broke the stillness of the night. When I reached for my watch and found that it was not quite three o'clock, I could not believe that any member of the family would be up playing a musical instrument at that time; but the music was very peculiar, low and weirdlike, unlike any I had ever before heard. I confess I was somewhat startled when I remembered the story I had heard at Marmont's on the previous evening. I was on the point of putting on my dressing-gown and going out into the corridor, when the music ceased and the noise began again, as if something was moving slowly through the hall, I unlocked the door as quickly as I could, but nothing was visible as I looked into the hall, which appeared perfectly dark, for the moon had at that instant gone down behind the hills. Shutting the door I got again into bed, with the determination of having a full explanation in the morning from some of the family.

I met only M'dlle de Guercheville and her uncle at breakfast, as her father did not feel very well and sent his excuses for his non-appearance. I mentioned the circumstances which had occurred during the night, and as I did so I noticed that one looked at the other in surprise. After a pause of a few moments, Dr. de Guercheville observed:

"I cannot at all explain the matter—it is certainly very curious; for the servants have, on two previous occasions, heard the very same noises. None of us, however, have paid any attention to their statements—indeed I don't think my brother has yet been told of them."

"I hope you don't think," said M'dlle de Guercheville, addressing me, "that we put you purposely in that room—it is the most comfortable in the house, and nobody ever believed there was anything in the stories which Marguerite and another servant have been telling. I thought when I was told of them yesterday, that the silly girls had made them up to frighten the house-keeper who is very superstitious, and no favourite with some of the servants."

"After what you have told me," continued the Doctor, "I must believe that the servants did hear something. I suppose the Seigneur will rather plume himself on the fact that this old house is haunted. I believe it is only your old families that are properly entitled to ghosts in their houses—they are luxuries beyond the reach of commonplace people."

"I remember hearing a similar story about a year ago," said M'dlle, "when poor Raoul left us. Uncle—"

Here she stopped suddenly and blushed slightly, as if she had been betrayed into the mention of a name forbidden at the Château. The Doctor, evidently observing her confusion, changed the topic, and took me into the garden to show me some rare autumnal flowers which he was himself cultivating.

VII.

I did not see the Seigneur, the rest of the day, as he was obliged to drive away at noon to a distant part of the estate where some expensive improvements were going on. Nor had his daughter any opportunity to speak to him, for some of her female friends arrived in the course of the morning. I was left at my own desire in the library, where I found some papers from which I wished to make some extracts. In the evening, after dinner, we were all assembled in the large drawing-room, and then M. de Guercheville learned, for the first time, the story of the mysterious noises in the east corridor. When I came to mention the music, he looked exceedingly perplexed and then gave a quick exclamation of surprise, as if he had remembered some circumstance long forgotten.

"What instrument do you suppose it was?" he enquired.

"That I cannot tell," I replied; "the music was very low indeed, quite muffled and indistinct, as if it proceeded from a distance."

"Your story," said Mr. de Guercheville, "recalls to my mind something I had forgotten. If you will wait a few minutes, we may unravel the mystery."

"Thereupon he went out and returned shortly, asking us to follow him. The house-keeper and a servant preceded us with lights to the corridor, where my bed-room was situated, and finally entered a large chamber in the old tower. The room was filled with furniture which had been injured—in fact it was a lumber-room. The house-keeper laid the lights on an old cabinet which stood against the wall; it was evidently the worse for wear, most of the bronze ornaments with which it was covered being broken; and the only part that appeared perfect was one of the Louis Quatorze legs.

The Seigneur pressed a spring concealed under a bunch of grapes, and a large compartment flew open, and showed us a knight on horseback, fully equipped for the battle or tournament. Suddenly the sound of music was heard, and the knight rode forward on a mimic stage, and then stood motionless with spear at rest. Two airs were played—the first stirring and the last plaintive—and then the knight turned and vanished behind. The mechanism was perfect, and the music effectually drowned the slight creaking of the secret springs.

"This old cabinet," said M. de Guercheville, "was brought from France by my grandfather, and was the work of a clever Parisian artisan. If you will look closely at it, you will see that it was intended to represent a tourna-

ment, but it got broken and the other knight is missing though, as you see, the machinery still works perfectly. I had entirely forgotten the toy, until you alluded to the music, which, of course, proceeds from a little box concealed in the interior. Years ago the cabinet was consigned to the lumber room until it could be sent up to Quebec for repairs, but it was forgotten, and has ever since remained there among other odds and ends."

"You must get it repaired, papa," said M'dlle de Guercheville; "it is a pity to have so pretty a toy hidden away."

"Yes; I must try and think of it; but if my memory serves me aright, there used to be a secret drawer somewhere in the cabinet which is full of strange contrivances."

After fumbling about for a minute, he found a knob which he pressed. As a long deep drawer flew up, M. de Guercheville laughingly said:

"Perhaps we shall find an old will, or other document revealing some family secret. M. le Curé will you take the responsibility of first looking in?"

The Curé thus laughingly addressed, put his hand in and brought out, sure enough, a small package which he handed to the Seigneur, who appeared startled at the realisation of his prediction. When he had looked at the package, he dropped it with the exclamation, "Mon Dieu," and then added, "It is the missing money."

The Abbé picked up the parcel, and running over several bank notes, said:

"Yes, there are exactly £250 here."

"Poor Raoul!" I heard Estelle (who was at my side) whisper involuntarily. It was quite evident to me that the discovery of the notes had something to do with the banishment of Raoul from his former home. The necessary explanations were afforded me, late in the evening, by the Abbé, who came to my room.

"A year ago," said the Abbé, "M. de Guercheville received a sum of (£250) for the purpose of paying some workmen who were constructing a new mill on the estate. Raoul was, at the time, on a visit to the Château, and on the night previous to his departure for Quebec, he was in the study and saw M. de Guercheville place the money in the escritoire and lay the key carelessly on the mantel-piece, whilst he was giving the young man orders concerning some articles he wished sent from the city. Now the study, as you know, communicates by folding doors, which are generally open, with the bed-room in which the Seigneur sleeps; and on the night in question he saw Raoul distinctly in the moonlight pass from the escritoire to the door leading into the hall. He thought nothing of the circumstance at the time, but you can imagine his astonishment the next morning when he went to the escritoire and found the money gone—the key also was lying on the table, and not on the mantel piece. Questions were put cautiously to the house-keeper, but she declared positively that neither she nor any of the servants had entered the room that morning—in fact, they never did so, until M. de Guercheville had come to breakfast. The suspicion then took firm hold of the Seigneur's mind that Raoul had, in a rash moment, taken the money. When the Seigneur learned, for the first time, that Raoul had been somewhat extravagant and got into debt at Quebec, his suspicion of the young man's guilt was very much strengthened. Raoul, indignant at the charge against him, refused to come near the Château whilst under so shameful an accusation. He did not deny that he had gone into the study late at night, when all the household had retired, but declared that he had done so simply to get a pocket-book which he had left on the escritoire, when M. de Guercheville had concluded giving him some instructions with reference to some business he wished done at Quebec. When he persisted in denying all knowledge of the transaction, M. de Guercheville became deeply incensed and declared that he was sure of his guilt. It is just to say of him, however, that when his first outburst of anger was over, he was as ready as any to prevent the matter getting beyond the family, the Curé and myself, for he was unwilling to injure the young man's prospects in life. The Curé never for an instant believed that Raoul was guilty—M'dlle de Guercheville held the same opinion—as to the Doctor, he was never referred to in the matter in my hearing. To-night, as you have seen, the young man's innocence has been revealed in a very extraordinary manner; it is very curious that the missing money should have been found in the old cabinet.

"Who could have put it there?" I asked.

M. de Guercheville declares that he had not seen the cabinet for a number of years—indeed, he had forgotten its existence until you mentioned the strange fact of the music.

The Abbé made some allusions to the subject, and then announced his intention of leaving for the city at an early hour the next morning.

"I need not tell you," he said, "that M. de Guercheville wishes to repair, as soon as possible, the wrong he has unintentionally done to Raoul. It was my intention to have returned the day after to-morrow under any circumstances, and I may as well leave in the morning, especially as it will afford me great pleasure to be the messenger of good tidings to the young man. You must remain here until the end of the week, for I see you are about to volunteer to accompany me; but that certainly I will not permit."

VIII.

Raoul's return—for I pass over the unimportant incidents of the two days after the Abbé's departure—was hailed with much delight by all. It was not difficult to see from M. de Guercheville's manner that he was anxious to make amends for the past. The Doctor seemed satisfied with the denouement—at least he did not give any signs that he was sorry or glad that Raoul was restored to favour. Undoubtedly the one who showed her delight most unequivocally was Estelle. It was easy to see that the sisterly affection she had hitherto felt for the young man was likely to grow into a deeper feeling.

But there was a mystery still connected with the missing notes. How did they become concealed in the cabinet? Was the mysterious noise that I heard in the corridor at all connected with the music and the concealment of the notes? I have no doubt of it whatever.

The night after Raoul's return I retired to my room at a somewhat earlier hour, as I had a severe head-ache. It was a very stormy night; the wind perfectly shrieked around the house and shook the elms till they almost bent; the rain came down in torrents at intervals. But I soon fell asleep notwithstanding the roaring of the wind and the constant tapping of the branches of the elms against the window panes. My sleep was considerably disturbed by dreams in which music played a principal part. I thought that I was in a spacious concert room, which was brilliantly lighted and filled by a gay concourse, and that a singer, resembling Estelle, came forward to sing. Just as I imagined that I heard her voice filling the air with its harmony, I woke suddenly to hear the trees still moaning as the wind swept through them. Then in the lull of the storm I again distinctly heard the music of the cabinet. I jumped up hastily and threw on my dressing gown, but before I could get to the door and unlock it, I was startled by the sound of a rustling in the hall—exactly the same noise I had heard on the previous occasion. I threw the door open and called "Who's there?" but the only answer was the shriek of the tempest. As I looked up and down the corridor, I saw nothing but darkness—the only familiar sound I heard was the tick of the old French clock in the lower hall. Perplexed at the mystery I returned to bed; but it was long before I could compose myself to sleep.

When M. de Guercheville heard that I had been again disturbed by the mysterious noises, he was as much puzzled as I was, and immediately ordered the cabinet to be packed away in an out-house until it could be sent to Quebec for repairs. This decisive action on the part of the Seigneur apparently annoyed the mysterious visitor, for during the remaining nights I was at the Château I heard nothing unusual. Nor, as I have been told, were the noises again heard on the re-appearance of the cabinet in the library—the mystery ceased with the removal of that article from the lumber-room.

Of course the servants believed to the end of their lives that there was something supernatural in the circumstances. The Doctor, however, contended for a solution of the mystery, which will be probably satisfactory to matter-of-fact people in this prosaic age. He said that he had noticed, for some time past, that his brother showed an unusual languor and dullness about the eyes, as if he had not his necessary amount of sleep. M. de Guercheville himself confessed that he awoke frequently in the morning just as weary as when he had retired. This fact corroborates the theory of his brother—that the Seigneur had become a somnambulist and was himself the author of the noises which had so perplexed us all. He probably fell asleep after he had seen Raoul pass out of the study on the night previously mentioned, and dreamed that the money was not safe, or had been taken out by the young man. Now a somnambulist has been somewhere described as "a dreamer who acts his dreams"; and we may therefore surmise that M. de Guercheville got up in his sleep, took the money out of the escritoire, and carried it to the cabinet. The fact that he had not seen the cabinet for years does not weaken the force of the theory; for it is one of the phenomena of dreams that ideas and facts, long forgotten, suddenly appear in these visions of the night.

A few weeks after the events I have narrated, as briefly as possible, M. de Guercheville and his daughter went to Europe, whilst Raoul continued his legal studies at Quebec. The Seigneur certainly never walked again in his sleep—his somnambulism, according to the Doctor, was owing to his nervous system being deranged, and disappeared with a change of air and scene. Of course my readers can adopt or reject the Doctor's theory as they may think proper; my duty ends when I have laid the facts before them.

Four years after I left Quebec, Raoul was married to Estelle; and when I saw him last he was one of the Judges of the Superior Court, where he still continues, whilst Madame adorns the society of the Ancient Capital. The Abbé, I am sorry to say, died a year ago. His remains are laid beneath the shadow of an old gray church in the suburbs of Quebec.

A LADY of the West End, with rather remarkable ideas for a republican country, remarked the other day at a little dinner that she should like to see this country a monarchy, and that she wished the people might have titles, as in foreign lands. "Yes," gravely replied the youth to whom she spoke, and who happened to be a Michigander, "I should like to be duke of Pontiac, and see my mother duchess of Kalamazoo."

ROUND THE DOMINION.

B Battery is to be augmented by one hundred additional men.

ON Saturday morning, the 20th ult., the temperature at Winnipeg was 30° below zero; Battleford 43° below.

THE Mounted Police intend erecting a monument to the memory of the murdered Constable Grayburn.

AN excellent specimen of mica, taken from a mine about 30 miles beyond the terminus of the Kingston and Pembroke Railroad, was shown in Kingston lately.

It seems to be a settled fact that the steamer "Northern Light" will run this winter as last between Georgetown, P. E. I., and Pictou, N. S. Should the ice seriously interfere with navigation, the "Northern Light" will try the route between the Capes.

A PLAN is in contemplation for the construction of a harbor of refuge, at what it is estimated would be a comparatively small expenditure, in the Lower St. Lawrence.

It is said that the Minister of Militia has given instructions for the establishment of a manufactory for the making of cartridges in Quebec, and that an officer of B Battery of Artillery is to be sent to Woolwich, Eng., to thoroughly acquaint himself with the details of their manufacture. The proposed factory in Quebec will be under the supervision of B Battery.

PERSONAL.

EARL GROSVENOR, son of the Duke of Westminster, was a guest at Rideau Hall last week.

ROBERT MARSHALL, M.P.P. for the city of St. John, has been sworn in a member of the New Brunswick Government without office.

HER Royal Highness the Princess Louise sails for Canada in the "Farmatian" on January 22nd. This disposes of all stories to the contrary.

A LETTER has been received by Mayor Ray from the Governor-General, in which he enclosed a Christmas gift of \$500 to be distributed among the poor of St. John who still suffer from the effects of the great fire.

MR. BENTLEY, the Brazilian Consul-General, hitherto residing at San Francisco, has been transferred by the Emperor to Canada, and he will reside at Montreal. This step has been taken in view of the expected closer relations between the two countries.

J. H. SPENCER, B.A., Ph.D., has been elected by the Governors of King's College to the Professorship of Chemistry and Natural History. Dr. Spencer highly distinguished himself at McGill College, and after graduating there prosecuted special studies in Germany.

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

"No! Algernon, dear. I say that the boy shall not be brought up on the bottle. Look at its grand-pa's nose!"

No woman should ever give a plump "no" to an offer of marriage. Hold on to even a poor one and use it for bait.

THE girl who gets married on the 29th of February and thinks she's smart, won't feel as proud of the job when she comes to want to celebrate tin and crystal and silver weddings.

BULKINS, in referring to the time his wife complimented him, says the coal fire needed replenishing, and she pointed toward the fire place with a commanding air and said, "Peter, the grate."

MAMMA to Isabel (four years of age) who is rather unmercifully teasing the kitten: "Isabel, my child, you must not do so. I don't like to see it." Isabel: "Well, don't look, mamma."

LITTLE boy of four was sleeping with his brother, when his mother said: "Why, Tommy, you are lying right in the middle of the bed; what will poor Harry do?" "Well, ma," he replied, "Harry's got both sides."

THE gentlemen at a dinner-table were discussing the familiar line, "An honest man's the noblest work of God," when a little son of the host spoke up and said: "It's not true. My mother's better'n any man that was ever made."

THE clergyman in a certain town having, as the custom is, published the banns of matrimony between two persons, he was followed by the clerk's reading the hymn beginning with the words, "Deluded souls that dream of heaven!"

"My wife," remarked a prominent manufacturer, "never attends auctions. She went once, and seeing a friend at the opposite side of the room, nudged politely, whereupon the auctioneer knocked down a patent cradle, and asked her where she wished it delivered."

THERE is nothing so charming as the innocence of children. "Mamma," said a five-year-old the other day, "I wish you wouldn't leave me to take care of baby again. He was so bad I had to eat all the sponge cake and two jars of raspberry jam to amuse him."

"My dear," said a sentimental maiden to her lover, "of what do these autumnal tints, this glowing baldrick of the skies, this blazing garbure of the dying year, remind you?" "Pancakes," he promptly answered. And then she realized for the first time that two hearts did not beat as one.

THERE is still some pleasure in the airy castles and dreamy scenes of a hopeless love—some beauty in the gossamer fabric woven by love in the loom of fancy, whose web is the golden wire of un wisdom and whose web is the silver threads stolen from the sunlit realm of imagination and hope.

THE Rochester Democrat of last Monday says: "There was a go-as-you-please walking-match at the conclusion of the services at one of the churches last night. It was a young lady who went as she pleased, and the youth waltzed off towards home alone, with a large sized mitten in his pocket. From present indications there will be no match."

A PICTURE is now being exhibited at Munich which is ascribed to Michael Angelo, and some connoisseurs are of opinion that this ascription may possibly be correct. It represents a "Pieta" of the same character as the master's statue, only that two angels flank the Madonna. A letter of Victoria Colonna's, mentioning such a picture from Michael Angelo's hand, further seems to confirm its authenticity. The picture comes from Ragusa, and was in the possession of one family for several centuries. According to them, it was painted for a bishop, a friend of Michael Angelo's. So excellent an authority as Steinle, of Frankfurt, has pronounced in favour of its authenticity.