

## THE FIRST OF THE GHOSTS.

Athenagoras was an Athenian philosopher, who flourished during the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. For a short period he held the Platonic Professorship in the Alexandrian Museum, but being converted from Paganism, he resigned the situation, and became an open and zealous teacher of Christianity. He was one of the first of the men of learning who joined the new religion, and his principal work, addressed to the Emperor, is an apology for the Christians, in which he defends the resurrection of the dead, and the unity of the Deity, the two points chiefly attacked by the Pagans. For the following incident of his life, we are indebted to a Monkish Chronicle, printed in the seventeenth century, but whether it occurred previous to, or after his conversion, we have been unable to ascertain. In all ages and in all sects, the superstition that appears inherent to our nature, has produced apparitions, but we incline to the belief that the one here described, ranks with the first to which the revealed religion gave birth. Since then, what hosts of similar tales have been told!

There was a noble mansion for sale in Athens. It had already been purchased a number of times, but each of the owners, after a few days possession, was glad to get rid of it, even at less than its cost. It was said to be haunted, and the spectre or demon, whichever it was, permitted none of the inmates to rest.

Athenagoras, returning to Athens, (from Alexandria probably,) passed by the house, and perceiving the board that announced it for sale at a very low price, determined to make it his residence. He bought it, and laughed at the owners reason for selling it so cheap.

"Thanks to his ghostship," he said, "I am housed like a Consul, for which he is welcome to pay me a visit, as soon as he finds it convenient to come."

Resolved to sleep there that night, he took immediate possession. Everything about the place was in excellent condition, and but little preparation was needed to make its internal arrangements complete to his wish. His slaves were dismissed early to rest, but Athenagoras himself, according to custom, continued reading and writing until midnight arrived.

Athens had long since sunk to repose, and silence, as in solitude, gathered around him. It was suddenly broken. A sound as of chains dragged through the house, smote on his ear,—Louder it grew, and nearer it came, but Athenagoras continued to write undisturbed by the noise.

At length he looked up, and perceived the spectre before him. It was that of a man, feeble and old, and apparently bending under the weight of his chains. A collar of iron encircled his neck, with a large ring attached, and a chain several feet long. Chains, too, hung from his hands, were joined at his feet. His looks were reproachful and sad, and his features seemed worn by the sharp corrodings of grief. In the eyes of Athenagoras he appeared more an object of pity than dread.

"'Tis one of the martyrs," thought Athenagoras. The spectre lifted his hand as if he desired to be followed.

But Athenagoras was busy, and did not choose to obey the imperious command of a ghost. He therefore replied to the sign by another, requesting the spirit to wait.

The spirit sighed deeply, but made no other attempt to disturb the philosopher while he continued to write.

Having finished, Athenagoras arose, and taking his light, commanded the ghost to proceed where he wished. The latter obeyed him with joy, but his steps were so feeble and tottering, that Athenagoras, impelled by a feeling of pity, offered his aid. He found that the shadow presented no substance, except to the eye.

"What art thou?" he demanded.

But the apparition answered only with a melancholy shake of the head, still moving slowly along, his chains clanking harshly at every step. He stopped in the Court, again raised his hand as to rivet attention, and pointed solemnly down to the spot whereon he then stood. As he did so, the moon em-

erged from a cloud. The spectre looked up with a glance of despair, and instantly sank through the ground.

Still undismayed, Athenagoras plucked up some grass from the spot, that he might be enabled to know it again, and then retired to his couch.

On the following day he gave information of what had occurred, and the magistrates came and examined the spot. On digging, they found there, the bones of a man loaded with chains. The bones were properly buried, and the house was haunted no more.

Of how many modern ghost stories is the foregoing the sum and substance. The Chronicle quotes Pliny the younger, as its authority. But Pliny died, A.D. 113, Aurelius was elected Emperor, A.D. 161. We do not remember, and have not the authority by us, to tell when Athenagoras was born.—N. Y. Mirror.

COL. CROCKET IN A QUANDARY.—"I never but once," said the Colonel, "was in what I call a real genuine quandary. It was during my electioneering for Congress, at which time I strolled about in the woods, so particularly pestered by politics, that I forgot my ride. Any man may forget his ride, you know; but it isn't every man can make amends for his forgetfulness by his faculties, I guess. It chanced that as I was strolling along, considerable deep in Congressionals, the first thing that took my fancy was the snarling of some young bears, which proceeded from a hollow tree; but I soon found that I could not reach the cubs with my hands; so I went, feet foremost, to see if I could draw them up by the toes. I hung on at the top of the hole, straining with all my might to reach them, until at last my hand slipped, and down I went more than 20 feet deep, to the bottom of that black hole, and there I found myself hip deep, in a family of fine young bears!

I soon found that I might as well undertake to climb up the greatest part of a rainbow, as to get back, the hole in the tree being so large, and its sides so smooth and slippery from the rain.

Now this was a real, genuine regular quandary if so be I was to shout, it would have been doubtful whether they would hear me at the settlement, and if they would hear me, the story would ruin my election; for they were of a quality too cunning to vote for a man that ventured into a place that he couldn't get himself out of. Well now, while I was calculating whether it was best to shout for help, or to wait in the hole until after election, I heard a kind of grumbling and growling overhead; and looking, I saw the old bear coming down, stern foremost, upon me. My motto is always go ahead! and as soon as she lowered herself within my reach, I got a tight grip of her tail in my left hand, and with my little buckhorn-hatted penknife in the other, I commenced sparring her forward. I'll be shot if ever a member of Congress rose quicker in the world than I did! She took me out in the shake of a lamb's tail."

SPECULATION IN WHISKERS, OR SHAVING  
IN A BROKER'S OFFICE.

BY SOL SMITH.

There lived in Milledgeville, in 1832, a dandified individual, whom we will call Jenks. This individual had a tolerably favorable opinion of his personal appearance. His fingers were hooped with rings, and his shirt bosom was decked with a magnificent breast-pin; coat, hat, vest and boots were made exactly to fit; he wore kid gloves of a remarkable whiteness; his hair was oiled and dressed in the latest and best style; and, to complete his killing appearance he sported an enormous pair of real whiskers! Of these whiskers, Jenks was as proud as a young cat of her tail, when she first discovers she has one.

I was sitting one day in a broker's office, when Jenks came in to inquire the price of exchange on New York. He was invited to sit down, and a cigar was offered him. Conversation turning on the subject of buying and selling stocks, a remark was made by a gentleman present, that he thought no person should sell out stock in such-and-such a bank at that time, as it must get better in a few days.

"I will sell any thing I've got, if I can make anything on it," marked Jenks

"Oh, no," replied one—"not any thing; you wouldn't sell your Whiskers!"

A loud laugh followed this chance remark. Jenks immediately answered: "I would—but who would want them?" Any person making the purchase would lose money by the operation, I'm thinking."

"Well," I observed, "I would be willing to take the speculation, if the price could be made reasonable."

"Oh, I'll sell 'em cheap," answered Jenks, winking at the gentlemen present.

"What do you call cheap?" I inquired.

"I'll sell 'em for fifty dollars," Jenks answered, puffing forth a cloud of smoke across the counter, and repeating the wish.

"Well, that is cheap; and you'll sell your whiskers for fifty dollars?"

"I will."

"Both of them?"

"Both of them."

"I'll take them! When can I have them?"

"Any time you choose to call for them."

"Very well, they're mine. I think I shall double my money on them, at least."

I took a bill of sale, as follows:—

"Received of Sol. Smith Fifty Dollars in full for my crop of whiskers, to be worn and taken care of by me, and delivered to him when called for."

"J. JENKS."

The sum of fifty dollars was paid, and Jenks left the broker's office in high glee, flourishing Five Central Bank X's, and telling all his acquaintances of the great bargain he had made in the sale of his whiskers.

The broker and his friends laughed at me for being taken in so nicely. "Never mind," said I, "let them laugh who win; I'll make a profit out of these whiskers, depend on it."

For a month after this, whenever I met Jenks, he asked me when I intended to call for my whiskers?"

"I'll let you know when I want them," was always my answer. "Take good care of them, oil them occasionally; I shall call for them one of these days."

A splendid ball was to be given to the members of the Legislature. I ascertained that Jenks was one of the managers—he being a great ladies' man, (on account of his whiskers, I suppose,) and it occurred to me that before the ball took place, I might as well call for my whiskers.

One morning I met Jenks in a barber's shop. He was admiring before a large mirror, and combing up my whiskers at a wonderful rate.

"Ah! there you are, old fellow," said he speaking to my reflection in the glass. "Come for your whiskers, I suppose?"

"Oh, no hurry," I replied, as I sat down for a shave. "Always ready, you know," he answered giving a final tie to his cravat.

"Come to think of it," said I musingly, as the barber began to put the lather on my face. "Perhaps now would be as good a time as another; you may sit down and let the barber try his hand at the whiskers."

"You couldn't wait until to-morrow, could you?" he asked hesitatingly. "There's a ball to-night, you know—"

"To be sure there is, and I think you ought to go with a clean face; at all events I don't see any reason why you should expect to wear my whiskers to that ball; so sit down."

He rather sulkily obeyed, and in a few moments his cheeks were in a perfect foam of lather. The barber flourished his razor, and was about to commence operations, when I suddenly changed my mind!

"Stop, Mr. Barber," I said; "you needn't shave off those whiskers just now." So he quietly put up his razor, while Jenks started up from the chair in something very much resembling a passion.

"This is trifling!" he exclaimed. "You have claimed your whiskers—take them."

"I believe a man has a right to do as he pleases with his own property," I remarked, and left Jenks washing his face.