

THE THEOSOPHIST.

Mr. Keats, the theosophist, was a nice refined young student from the same hospital as Tanson, but so quiet about his powers that if he had not seen Coldboy reading a theosophical book one day they would probably never have been heard of.

The old gentleman was delighted at being in the same house with a theosophist. He had been reading principally of phenomena—of cigarettes which travelled invisibly on psycho-electric currents, of letters from Thibetan adepts found in the centre of pillows whose probity was above suspicion, and of the astral bodies of the adepts themselves, which sometimes appeared to their most favoured disciples; and his heart yearned towards the new-comer.

Mr. Coldboy being perfectly hungry for miracles, Mr. Keats borrowed his box of cigars and dispersed them on the mysterious currents all over the house, and for the next three days the old gentleman ransacked the house from basement to garret in his endeavours to recover them. Despite his utmost efforts he only found five, and the theosophist said that he had put on too strong a current and burnt them up. He said that Mr. Coldboy would find that the five which were left wouldn't burn well, a statement which Mr. Coldboy sorrowfully verified.

Three days later, when all the lodgers were sitting in the front parlour, a perfect shower of paper roses fell in the midst of them. Everybody was greatly impressed except Captain Green, and he swore disgracefully, as he fished an overblown specimen out of his whisky, and smacked the theosophist in the eye with it. He said that if the "Brothers" hadn't got anything better to do than drop dirty rubbish in other people's grog it was time they were taught. He said it was d——d ungentlemanly, to say the least of it, and it all came through not having been properly trained when they were young.

Mr. Coldboy was so horrified at this blasphemy that Keats told him that a "Brother," named Get-Homey-hall-Sing, who lived in Thibet, had conceived a great affection for him. The old gentleman was charmed, and soon found that the information was correct. Epistles from Get-Homey-hall-Sing turned up in the most inconvenient places, but generally in the interior of cushions or pillows.

Mr. Coldboy got so used to receiving epistles in strange places that he thought nothing of them. Once, when he had a friend in to dinner, the stuffing of the fowl he had provided proved to be a long essay from Get-Homey-hall-Sing on the transmigration of souls and incarnation, in which the writer stated most solemnly that the fowl was none other than Mr. Coldboy's late Uncle Bill. The two men looked at each other in consternation, and the friend, who had already eaten some, turned pale and said he'd go home. He said he'd had quite enough of Uncle Bill for one day, and he couldn't stay in the same house as the remains another minute.

A week later an event occurred which caused Mr. Coldboy to abandon theosophy and return to his every-day heathenism.

He had just retired for the night when he felt something hard under his left ear. In a moment he had lighted the gas and opened the pillow and discovered a chunk of wood on which was written the tender greeting, "Good night."

Mr. Coldboy, without any enthusiasm whatever, turned the gas out and returned to bed. Almost directly he crawled out, bored and annoyed, and lighted it again, and with the aid of his penknife disinterred a large clinker from the centre of the mattress, which was described as a sacred brick from the Thibetan monastery.

With the *billet-doux* on one side of his pillow and the brick on the other, the old gentleman fell asleep. He was awakened by a gentle tap, tap, tap at the window, and sitting up in bed, beheld a mysterious form standing on the window-sill.

Trembling with horror, Mr. Coldboy realised that this must be Get-Homey-hall-Sing himself, and hardly knowing what he was

about he snatched up the sacred brick and heaved it at him. There was a crash of broken glass and a shrill cry, and then the voice of Get-Homey-hall-Sing, hoarse with pain, was heard frantically urging somebody above the "Haul up."

As Mr. Coldboy gazed, he slowly ascended, and the now thoroughly aroused old gentleman sprang out of bed and threw up the sash just in time to see Captain Green and Tanson haul him in at Keats' window, and went to bed, and for the next three weeks the house was disturbed by guerilla warfare of a most blood-thirsty nature between the erstwhile theosophists.

ONE OF A GANG!

Miss Grip is a strong-minded old lady, who lives alone, save for a simple-minded maid-of-all-work. One day Jane announced that a man was coming up the front walk with about a gross of toasting forks on his arm.

"Go and tell him we do not want one," said Miss Grip. "He'll be one of a gang, sure enough. Those fellows only come to see if there is any chance of robbing the house. Or stay; I will go with you, and you shall hear how to talk to such scoundrels."

"Well! what do you want?" demanded Miss Grip of the pedlar.

"Please, ma'am, would you like to buy——"

"No! I don't want a toasting fork. But I can tell you all you want to know. My husband is a very powerful man and always at home. I have three grown-up sons, no umbrellas in the lobby, you see. The best silver is in a safe in the dining-room; a large dog sleeps there; the door is doublelocked, and the windows are iron-framed. We have also two dogs and a man-trap in the back-yard; and the wall is spiked."

As the pedlar walked away with an air of injured innocence Miss Grip remarked. "That is the way to talk to those fellows, Jane. They won't bother this house much, you'll see!"

Five minutes later up from the lower regions came Jane in a high state of excitement. "Oh, miss! while we were at a street-door, talking to that toasting-fork man, some-one has come in the back-yard, and stolen all the best silver and I don't know what out of the breakfast parlour!"

That some elements of Detroit society have enthroned themselves upon very lofty pedestals of virtue has been proved by the recent demand for the covering or at least partial draping, of nude figures in the Museum of Art there. The insertion of the legs of the Disc Thrower into a pair of chintz pantaloons, the adornment of the Dying Gladiator with a large metallic fig-leaf, and the furnishing of the Venus of Milo with a chest-protector resembling a huge hand-painted sand-bag, all tend to show what virtue can do when it gets an early start.

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