

THE GHOST'S SUMMONS.

"Wanted, sir—a patient." It was in the early days of my professional career, when patients were scarce and fees scarce, and though I was in the act of sitting down to my chair, and had promised myself a glass of steaming punch after, in honor of the Christmas season, I hurriedly interrupted my surgery. I entered briskly into my study, and I caught sight of the figure standing against the corner, then started back with a strange feeling of horror, which for the life of me I could not comprehend. Never shall I forget the ghastliness of that face—the white horror stamped upon every feature—the agony which seemed to sink the eyes beneath the contracted brows; it was awful to me to behold, accustomed as I was to scenes of terror.

my opportunity, I slipped a powder, which I had managed to put into my pocket before that stood beside him. The more I saw the more I felt convinced that it was the nervous system of my patient which required my attention; and it was with sincere satisfaction that I saw him drink the wine and then stretch himself on the luxurious bed. "Ha!" thought I, as the clock struck twelve, and, instead of a groan, the deep breathing of the sleeper sounded through the room, "you won't receive any summons to-night, and I may make myself comfortable."

"I come on a strange and painful errand," I began, and then I started, for I happened to glance fully into her eyes, and from them to the small white hand grasping the chair. The wedding ring was on that hand! "I conclude you are Mr. Read who requested permission to tell me some absurd ghost story, and whom my late husband mentions here." And she spoke as she stretched out her left hand toward something—but what I know not, for my eyes were fixed on that hand. "Horror! What and delicate it might be, but it was shaped like a claw, and the third finger was missing!" One sentence was enough after that. "Madam, all I can tell you is that the ghost that summoned your husband was marked by a singular deformity. The third finger of the left hand was missing," I said, sternly, and the next instant I had left that beautiful, sinful presence.

That will never be disputed. The next morning, I received a check for a thousand pounds; and the next day I heard of the widow was that she herself had seen that awful apparition, and had left the mansion immediately. The first pile at the entrance of False Bay Lake, Mira Bay, Cape Breton, was driven on the twenty-ninth of last month, and the work of turning the lake into an artificial harbor for the name of the "Port of Harwich," is being proceeded with. A systematic arrangement of one hundred borings has been carried out with a patent boring apparatus, to determine the nature of the bottom, the depth, and lake. From the knowledge thus gained, it is found that it will be quite practicable, ultimately, to make an entrance of one hundred and fifty feet wide, by from twenty-seven to thirty feet deep, although a much smaller one will be sufficient for all requirements of the place at present and for some time to come.

The Inspection of Steam Boilers. From a recent report of the Harwich (Conn.) Steam Boilers, there is among steam-users a great reluctance to keep boilers in good repair. If a leak is discovered which does not particularly interfere with the work in progress, it is neglected and allowed to go on increasing until perhaps a large amount of labor is locally involved. A crack is discovered by an inspector. He reports it to the owner of the boiler and recommends that although it is not actually dangerous, he should have it repaired, and that the best inspection he finds that nothing has been done, and that the crack has increased in length, and is rapidly approaching a dangerous point. It becomes necessary to say to the owner that the boiler is unsafe, and the repairs required, or take the responsibility of running the boiler on your own shoulders. The chances are that such an owner will become violent and declare inspection an unmitigated nuisance. In the majority of cases manufacturers are anxious to know the exact condition of their boilers, and will not run them a day if thought to be in an unsafe condition. Our whole experience goes to show that generally the steam-user is in full sympathy with the company's efforts to prevent any carelessness in the use or management of boilers.

There are defects in boilers which can only be discovered by careful inspection. Hydraulic tests are recommended, and the inspector reveals defects like the following: corrosion of plates; growing along the edge of the inner lap of the sheet; crack or fracture running from rivet to rivet; accumulation of sediment or hard lime-scales over the fire surface; and the plates are over-heated and their strength greatly reduced; braces and stays, broken or corroded so badly as to have little strength left. Then there are the questions of fuel, blow-out, safety-valve capacity, steam gauge, quality of feed water, etc., which have a direct and important bearing upon the safety and economy of boilers.

One of the most obvious effects of the hard times, is the reduction that has taken place in the rate of wages. If any one desires to know why it is that so many Comptrols are returning from the States, he will find the information desired in a column of statistics recently published in the New York Tribune. When men in so many occupations are forced to accept a large reduction in their rate of pay, it is easy to understand how they are induced to leave their present employment, and are unable to find any employment at all. The Tribune gives a comparative statement of the average weekly wages in 1870 and 1876 of fifty-eight different classes of workmen. From various causes some classes have felt the decline more than others, the difference in the rate of pay as shown by the comparison, ranging from ten to twenty per cent. in various occupations. The first among the trades which have suffered are the building trades. Carpenters who received from \$21 to \$27 per week in 1870, now receive from \$18 to \$21. Bricklayers formerly receiving \$21 to \$20 now get \$18 to \$24. Stone Cutters and Masons have met with a similar reduction. The wages of people whose occupations require no particular skill, such as dry goods clerks, have undergone a greater reduction. Clerks whose wages formerly averaged \$24 to \$18 now average \$10 to \$15, while there are said to be hundreds of well dressed young men who work fourteen hours a day and receive only \$8 per week. The misfortune of this class of people is that no matter how much their wages may be reduced they are still expected to present a well dressed appearance. Waiters who received from \$25 to \$30 per month in 1870 now work for from \$25 to \$30. Even in some occupations demanding a considerable degree of skill, the employees have been compelled to accept a reduction. Male compositors now average \$15 to \$20 who formerly averaged \$20 to \$24. Of the fifty-eight classes of workmen enumerated by the Tribune only one maintains the same rate of wages which he enjoyed in 1870. The wages of women have fallen to a much greater extent, and in some cases, are wretchedly low. Many women by hand and constant work do not earn more than \$2 per week, and the majority not more than \$4. We have no space to enter into particulars, but the condition of these women, required to work hard for a meagre pittance, and many of them not able to obtain employment even then, is certainly very wretched.

The only consolation is that the hard times had the effect of reducing other things than wages. The most noticeable and some of the other expenses of living are so reduced that the deficiency in wages does not feel that it otherwise would be. D. L. MOODY'S Best FROGSKIN AND DISHWASHERS. SHEFFIELD HOUSE IMPORTATIONS. RICHARD THOMPSON.

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