

THE WITCHERACT DELUSION

One late autumn evening, during the exciting events of the witchcraft delusion in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, there came running into the primitive Church of Weymouth, Mass., during a special evening service, a boy by the name of Ichabod Cole.

His hat was gone, his breath was spent. He threw his arms aloft in nervous excitement, and his entranced stopped the meeting, as he had evidently something thrilling to tell.

As soon as he could speak, he made a declaration that a terrible creature had appeared to him as he was hurrying along over the wooded Weymouth road by the sea toward his home. He believed the creature was the "Black Man," as the Evil Spirit was at that time called, and he had fled to the Church for refuge.

Were such an incident to happen to-day, the boy's story would be met only with ridicule, but then nearly every one believed in witchcraft, and many persons had been sent to prison and several put to death in the Colony on the charge that they had signed their names to a book brought to them by the "Black Man," and had met in witch circles in the forests, to which it was asserted they travelled through the air.

Corey, of Salem Farms, had been recently put to death in a most cruel manner for refusing to plead in court to an amazing charge of this kind. Several enfeebled old women had suffered death under the charge of witchcraft in Salem and Boston.

The delusion had begun with children, who seemed to have been seized with a sudden mania for acting queer and an unfortunate people of dealing in wicked arts. The mania spread, and became a mental epidemic. It was like the convulsions of the Barkers and the Jerkers, an epidemic nervous disease, which appeared at another time in the Colony. Any one who will read Cotton Mather's "Wonders of the Invisible World" will be amazed at the delusion that filled the whole Colony at the time, and that overcame the judgment even of the magistrates. Such was the state of the public feeling when the incident we have given happened.

There was a break in the meeting, and the boy was questioned by excited voices in regard to the creature who had frightened him. He could only say that it was black or gray, and had eyes like fire. A good old minister, a man much loved for his great heart and simple blameless life, said, "Evil times have fallen upon us also." All saw that he literally believed Ichabod Cole's story, and a sense of helpless horror and apprehension darkened every mind and sank into every heart in that congregation.

Strange as it may seem, it is probable that in that little assembly, holding its simple service by candle-light, there was only one person who did not believe that the boy, Ichabod Cole, had not seen the famous Black Man, the Evil Ghost of troubled times.

That one person was Aunt Heart Delight. A queer name, you will say. Yes, now, but it was not queer at that time. Prudence, Piety, Charity were common names then, as were Experience, Love, Hope and Grace. Aunt Heart Delight was so called by her father on account of her cheerful disposition when a little child.

Aunt Heart Delight Holden had grown up to womanhood a tall, stately woman, with a broad, high forehead, and a heart given to benevolence. She was very devout but was without superstition, and she clearly saw that the so-called witchcraft in the Colony was a mental delusion.

The meeting closed. Aunt Heart Delight went to the boy at once, laid her hand upon his shoulder, and bent upon him his serene face and quieting eye.

"O Ichabod, Ichabod," she said, "you, too, have lost your head. You have seen nothing but what is perfectly natural and can be accounted for. But you did not lose your head, did you, boy?"

"My head! What would I have done had I lost my head?"

"You have seen a wildcat, or an owl in a hawk's nest, or some such thing, and the stories that are abroad have excited your head that you think you have seen something else. I would be willing to face it with a good dog and gun. But I do not blame you for running, as you were unarm'd."

and had lanterns of perforated tin in their hands, and the women foot-stoves. The men wore pointed hats and thick capes, and the women broad bonnets and plain cloaks. The lanterns were not lighted, for the bright moon, like a night sun, made the woods almost as clear as in daylight.

They came to a clearing, and here Aunt Heart Delight and Ichabod, parting from the rest of the usually afflicted company, took the direct road to "New Spain."

"I am afraid," said Aunt Heart Delight, "that there may be some wild animals about in the woods, and that that is what you saw."

"I am not afraid of no animal," said Ichabod, "I am afraid of something worse than that." He looked up to Aunt Heart Delight, furtively—"Aint' you?"

"N. A person with a clear conscience has nothing to fear from any other world than this."

Ichabod was silenced, but his imagination was glowing and growing. The falling of a chestnut made him start. A rabbit that ran across the road filled him with renewed terror. They came next to the old farmhouse, and the bars with the stacks of corn husks. Here their ways parted.

"Good-night, Ichabod," said Aunt Heart Delight.

The two stood in the open road under the full moon.

"Aunt Heart Delight," said Ichabod, "may I ask you a question?" His voice was grave, like that of a judge, very grave and measured.

"Yes, Ichabod. What?"

"Aunt Heart Delight, oh, this is an awful night, the moon and stars and everything all so scary! Aunt Heart Delight, may I ask you a question?" he repeated.

"Yes, yes, do not keep me here freezing to death. What is it, Ichabod?"

"Aunt Heart Delight," said the boy at length, timidly, "did you ever have a bean?"

"Oh Ichabod!"

"May I see you home, and won't you give me lodging in the barn?"

"Oh, I see—you are afraid to go home alone. Well, I pity you, and I'll go home with you."

"I'll be your bean," said Ichabod, with spirit, in an awful burden rolling off his heart.

Aunt Heart Delight went home with him, and left him at the door with a "Good-night, Ichabod. When I want a bean I will send for you."

"Thank ye, Aunt Heart Delight, and I'll always stick by you and protect you whatever may happen."

Aunt Heart Delight smiled, and then Ichabod shut the door, and she turned homeward alone.

Her way lay through some woodland oaks, the strong, knotted arms of which had long buffeted the winds of the sea. They arched the way between two hills, and through the hollow flowed a running brook, now partly ice-bound, a lone wall came to the place, which was pleasant in summer but very lonely in winter, she heard a stone rattle on the wall. A heavy, dark object appeared on the wall, and mounted the great trunk of one of the oaks. She was alarmed as she had reason to be, but hurried by, and came safely to her home.

These events greatly excited the community. But the public mind became gradually more quiet. There was a high-minded, clear-sighted man in Boston, named Robert Calef, who was an intimate friend of Aunt Heart Delight, and had met her often during the prevalence of the witchcraft delusion. He was honest and fearless, and his iron words became a terror to those who had been engaged in persecuting infirm people on the superstitious charge of "Signing the book of the Black Man." He is celebrated in a noble poem by Whittier, entitled "Calef in Boston."

"In the solemn days of old,
Two men met in Boston town,
One a tradesman, frank and bold,
One a preacher of renown.

"Spoke the simple tradesman then,
"God be judge 'twixt thee and I,
All thou knowest of truth hath been,
Unto men like thee, a lie.

"Of your spectral puppet play
I have traced the cunning wiles;
Come what will, I needs must say,
God is true and ye are liars."

"In the ancient burying ground,
Side by side the twins now lie—
One with humble, grassy mound,
One with marble, pale and high."

In the terrible clouds of the witchcraft delusion this man had walked with undimmed vision. He was the first to publish a book in London, which caused those who had been engaged, in the recent persecutions to ponder upon what they had done, and in some cases to try to excuse their conduct. The book was publicly burned on the Green of Harvard College.

Hearing that Weymouth was in danger from the excitement of a delusion, this man went to visit Aunt Heart Delight in her lovely Weymouth home.

"When will this calamity end?" he asked of her one day.

"When some one shall accuse one of the magistrates of witchcraft," said Aunt Heart Delight, "they will all see the matter clearly enough then."

AS YOU LIKE IT.

THE UNIVERSAL GRIPPE.
Why is all the house so dismal?
Papa's got the grippie.
Why this look that's so abysmal?
Papa's got the grippie.
Why this coughing and this sneezing?
Why this blowing and this whizzing?
Why that sneeze and manner freezing?
Papa's got the grippie.

Why this turmoil and confusion?
Mamma's got the grippie.
She knows well it's no illusion;
Mamma's got the grippie.
Back, and head, and eyes are aching;
Brain feels heavy knees are shaking;
Don't the children get a raking?
Mamma's got the grippie.

Why this howling and this yelling?
Baby's got the grippie.
Whew! of all his woes he's telling,
Baby's got the grippie.
What's a quirming and a kicking,
Just as if a pin was sticking
In his tender flesh and pricking.
Baby's got the grippie.

Oh, for some relief effective
From this unrelieved grippie!
Oh, for some new fierce invective
To describe the grippie!
When you've taken six or seven
Quinine pills and need eleven
More it makes you sigh for heaven
Where there is no grippie.

Every deer that is shot in Scotland coats
the shooter an average of \$250.
A miser grows rich by seeming poor; an
extravagant man grows poor by seeming
rich.—Shenstone.

If you merely think you have the "grip,"
you haven't got it. If you know you have it
there is a possibility that you have something
similar to it.

Be good natured, my boy. Be loving and
gentle with the world, and you'll be amazed
to see how dearly and tenderly the worried,
tired, vexed, harassed old world loves you.
—Burdette.

Bismarck has a superstitious concern of
1890. It was long ago published of him
that he confidently believed he would live
till this year, but his intimates say that he
does not expect to go much, if any, be-
yond it.

The delegation of Sioux Indians now in
Washington called upon Senators Allison
and Wilson, at the Capitol. As
they filed out of the room they said to the
dignified Senators, "Well, good-bye,
boys."

An Englishman has bought the contents
of the royal castle of Nuremberg, contain-
ing the most complete collection of instru-
ments of torture extant, costing \$30,000 in
all. There is a library of 3,000 volumes,
giving the history of crime and torture for
many centuries.

In Berlin the street car fare costs from two
and a half to seven and a half cents, accord-
ing to the distance you ride. No one can
be carried after the seats are full. The cars
stop to take on or let off passengers only at
certain points, which are three minutes
apart. This city leads the world in street
car mileage.

In Cleveland, O., a Judge adopted a novel
means of deciding a suit over the ownership
of a carrier pigeon. He asked disinterested
parties to take the bird outside the city and
release it. The pigeon flew to the loft of
the plaintiff, and the Judge decided that
that was sufficient proof that the bird be-
longed to the former.

Whittier having been invited to contribute
to the Jewish Messenger a symposium on
"What it is to be a Jew," writes (in that
journal):—"I don't know what it is to be a
Jew, but I know what it is to be a Christian,
who has no quarrel with others about their
 creed, and can love, respect and honor a Jew
who honestly believes in the faith of his
fathers, and who obeys the two great com-
mandments, "Love to God and Love to
Man."

A very little girl in the infant class at one
of the Sunday Schools came home last Sun-
day and told her mother that the teacher
had taught them a new song. On express-
ing a wish to hear it, the mother was much
astonished at the following sentence, which
was all the child could remember:—"I'm a
little girl, and I'm a half of cheese."
The words, which had been misunderstood
by the child, were these:—"I'm a little
girl, and I'm a half of heaven."

The new lighthouse at Houtholm is the
most powerful in the world. The beam is of
2,000,000 candle power, and shows clearly at
Buckham, a distance of 35 miles. It is pro-
duced by arc lamps fed by De Meritens's
dynamo, driven by steam engines. To pre-
vent the extinction of the light through an
accident of the machinery, the latter is dupli-
cated; one set coming into play should the
other fail. The light is further supplement-
ed in thick weather by two powerful sirens,
or fog trumpets, working with compressed
air.

The Late Empress of Brazil.

In singing out the death of any distin-
guished person for special reference, it is not
to be presumed that the loss to his or her
friends is more keenly felt than the bereave-
ment which takes place in more obscure and
humble homes. It is the conspicuous posi-
tion that they have occupied which naturally
attracts the public attention when the hour
of their summons comes. One of the most
recent deaths of persons in high places is
that of the late ex-Empress of Brazil, which
took place on the 29th ult. in the city of
Oporto. There are many circumstances
connected with her death calculated to add
bitterness to the royal husband's bereave-
ment. And first there was the fact that the
most tender affection, was among crowned
heads, existed between husband and wife
who for forty-six years shared their mutual
sorrows and joys. There was the cir-
cumstance that the husband was not present
to render those last loving ministrations and
to hear the last sad farewell. He had gone
out for a promenade when during his absence
alarms symptoms showed themselves and
before his return his devoted wife had
breathed her last. Again there was the
thought that her last home should have been
so clouded by her grief for Brazil. Her last
words were words of regret for her native
land. Said she: "I regret that my chil-
dren and grandchildren are not around me,
that I might bless them for the last time.
Alas! Brazil, that beautiful country. I
cannot return there." The scene that
took place when the bereaved Emperor
arrived at the chamber of death was
supremely pathetic and tear-compelling.
The able announces that when Dom Pedro
arrived at the bedside of his dead wife he
kissed and kissed her forehead. He appear-
ed to be unable to move and didn't speak
for twenty minutes. Then he said: "I have
experienced the most bitter trial that God
could inflict upon me. Her faithful and
affectionate companionship has sustained
me for forty-six years. God's will be done."
Then, noticing his wife's eyes were still
open, he lost control of himself and exclaim-
ed: "Is it possible that these dear, kind
eyes will never again brighten when they
see me?" Having closed the eyelids he
reverently kissed them. Many hearts will
condole with the royal mourner, and will
feel the more keenly for him, seeing that
his own country has required with such
base ingratitude the services of the ruler
whose whole life was spent in promoting
their prosperity and well-being.

England and Portugal.
There is a lull in the Anglo-Portuguese
imbroglio. The three or four weeks that
have elapsed since the report of Major
Serpa Pinto picking a quarrel with Makololo,
an African potentate, and shooting several
hundreds of his followers to pieces with a
Gatling gun, have been utilized in making
explanations and correcting misrepresenta-
tions. From the first the Lisbon newspapers
expressed their astonishment at the dis-
cretion of the Zambiar adviser concerning the
doings of Serpa Pinto in Makolololand. They
all declared that there was no chance of a
quarrel with England, if Lord Salisbury
would deal justly with the subject. Whether
this be so or not, it is now evident that
the respective governments understand each
other and there is no great danger of any-
thing serious growing out of the affair.

Though Lord Salisbury has kept his own
counsel and has given the people very little
information of what he proposed to do the
knowledge which comes from the other
side would seem to indicate that affairs are
approaching an amicable settlement. At the
opening of the Portuguese Cortes last week,
the king in referring to the African Colonies
of Portugal said: "The patriotic aspirations of
Great Britain to extend her vast possessions
in Africa have been met at several points by
the fixed design of Portugal to maintain her
authority over those regions that the Por-
tuguese were the first to discover and open to
Christianity and commerce, and where
Portuguese authorities have exercised juris-
diction and influence sufficient to indicate
incontestable possession. This commission
has provoked a difference of view, and has
led to a diplomatic correspondence which is
also dealing with the difference of opinion
regarding the conflict between the natives of
the Siled country and the Portuguese
scientific expedition. Supported by the
two Chambers, my Government will endeavor
to convince the British Government of our
right to the territory north and south of
the Zambesi river, hoping to obtain an
equitable adjustment of all legitimate
interests which may, as I desire, promptly
restore a perfect accord between two
nations that have been united by bonds of
friendship and tradition for centuries."
And thus another rebuke is given to those
who in such grave circumstances, counsel a
speedy vindication of the national honor,
and at whatever cost. Here as in many
another connection, haste is not hurry.
Many will rejoice in the prospect of a peace-
able termination of a squabble which at one
time threatened to develop into serious com-
plications.

A Princely Gift.
There is enough of eccentricity in the
world to prevent the order of events from
assuming a stereotyped and monotonous
form. The rule in these days is for those
who have any considerable bequest to leave
to society, to so devote their wealth that
their name shall in some way become iden-
tified with it. Hospitals, poor houses,
churches, etc., can all be pointed to as
illustrations of this tendency. And there
is nothing in the circumstances to condemn,
provided the harmless and natural desire to
be remembered, and not a feeling of vanity
actuates the giver. It is well, however,
that the gift itself is not affected by either
giving or withholding the name. It does
not depreciate from the princely bequests of
an unknown philanthropist who has given
£100,000 to found a hospital for convales-
cents in London. His beneficiaries will
only have to add to their prayers "whoever
he may be" when they invoke Heaven's
blessing upon the man who did not forget
them in their necessity. May the race of
such men never die out. We will put up
with the eccentricity requesting their names
to be withheld.

A Liverpool man has invented an auto-
matic savings bank. When a penny or two
half-pennies are pressed into the automatic
bank the depositor pulls out a drawer and
finds a printed ticket bearing a number
in duplicate. He writes his name and ad-
dress on the ticket, which he then presses into
a cavity in the machine made to receive it,
Escaping the other half as his deposit
slip.