

Our Story Teller.

The Haunted Valley.

From the Overland Monthly.

A half mile north from Jo. Dunfer's, on the road from Hutton's to the Mexican Hill, the highway dips into a sunken hollow which opens out on either side in a self-confidential manner, as if it had secret to impart at some convenient season. I never used to ride through without looking first to see if the road had been to the promised return.

It was just this way while I looked at him, so regarding me rather unsteadily, and with evident complexity of vision—"he was all right; but when I looked away, so"—taking a long swing at the decanter—"he was all wrong. Then I'd gaze at him reproachful-like, and he'd reform."

Probably Mr. Dunfer honestly intended the regard he turned upon me as a merely reproachful one, but it was singularly well calculated to arouse the gravest apprehension in the breast of any unarméd person so reproached, and I had lost all interest in his interminable narrative. I rose to go. Before I had fairly risen he had again turned to the counter and, with a barely audible "So," and emptied the bottle at a gulp.

Heaven! what a yell! It was like "Hiss" in his last, strong agony. Jo staggered back after emitting it, as a cannon recoils from its own thunder, and then dropped into his chair, as if he had been stricken down like a beef-horn by a side-swaying train, with a stony stare that made my flesh creep on my bones. Looking in the same direction, I saw, with a quick chill of the scalp, that the knot hole in the wall had indeed become a human eye—a full, black eye, that glared into my own with an entire lack of expression more awful than the most devilish glitter.

I involuntarily covered my face with my hands, to shut out the horrible illusion; if such it was, and the little white man, coming into the room at a moment, broke the spell, and I walked out of the room with a sort of dazed fear that *delirium tremens* was upon me. My horse was hitched at the watering-trough, and, untying him, I mounted, and gave him his head, too much troubled in mind to note whether he took me.

I did not know what to think of all this, and, like everyone who does not know what to think, I thought a great deal, and, naturally, of very little purpose. The only reflection that seemed at all satisfactory, and which singularly enough, was prominent in my mind, was one that was not at all connected with Jo. Dunfer and his pointless narrative; and this was, that on the morrow I should be some miles away, with a strong probability of never returning.

A sudden coolness brought me out of my abstraction, and looking up, I found myself entering the deep shadows of the ravine. The day was stifling, but his transition from the silent, visible heat of the parched fields to the cool gloom heavy with the pungency of cedars, and vocal with the melody of the birds that had been driven to their leafy asylum, was exquisitely refreshing. I looked for my mystery, as usual, but not finding the means of my local mystery, I dismounted, led my sweating animal into the undergrowth, tied him securely to a tree, and sat down to meditate. I began bravely, by analyzing my pet superstition about the haunted valley. Having resolved it into its constituent elements, I arranged them in convenient troops and squadrons, and collecting all the forces of my logic, bore down upon them from impregnable positions with the thunder of irresistible conclusions, and a great noise of chariots and general intellectual shouting. Then, when my big mental guns had overturned all opposition, and were growing almost inaudibly away on the horizon of pure speculation, the routed enemy struggled upon the rocks, and captured me, bag and baggage. An indestructible dread came upon me, and I rose to shake it off, and began threading the narrow dell by an old, grass-grown cow-path that seemed to flow along the bottom, as a kind of substitute for the brook that nature had neglected to provide.

The trees among which the path straggled were very ordinary, well behaved plants, a trifle perverted as to bole, and eccentric as to their general aspect. A few loose boulders, which had detached themselves from the side of the precipitous slope, had dammed up the pathway here and there, but their stony repose had nothing in it of the stillness of death. There was a kind of death-chamber in the valley, it is true, and a mysterious whisper above; the wind was just fingering the tops of the trees—that was all.

It is strange that all the time I did not think of connecting Mr. Dunfer's drunken narrative with what I now sought; and it was only when I came upon a clear space and tumbled over the level of some small trees that the revelation came to me. This was the site of the abandoned "ahanty," and the fact was the more forcibly impressed upon me by quickly noting that some of the rotten stumps were stacked all around, in a most unwork-like manner, while others were cut, and the butt ends of the corresponding trunks were bent to that blunt wedge form which is given by the axe of the master. The opening was no more than ten yards in diameter, and upon one side was a little knoll—a natural hillock some ten feet across, bare of shrubbery, but covered with green grass. Upon this standing rigidly a foot or two above the grass was a headstone! I have put a note of admission here, not to indicate any surprise of my own, but that of the reader. For myself I felt none. I regarded the lonely tombstone with something of the same feeling that Columbus must have had when he saw the hills of St. Salvador.

The grave—a rather short one—was in somewhat better repair than seemed right, considering its age and surroundings; and I actually widened my eyes at a clump of unmistakable garden violets showing evidence of comparatively recent watering. The stone was a rude enough affair, and had clearly done duty as a door-step. In its front corner, carved, or rather dug, an inscription, the exaggerated eccentricity of which I cannot hope to reproduce without aid from the engraver. It reads thus:—

ALF WEE—CHINAMAN. Aged unknown. Wirtk last for Whisky Jo aim to keep in memory green and liquor a worm to Sialata natter take on ayres like Witea. Dammun! She was a good gal.

While delivering this treacherous threat at avarax and sense, Mr. Dunfer fixedly regarded a knot-hole in the thin board partition, as if that were one of the eyes whose size and color had incognitely his servant for active usefulness. "Now, you youngsters won't believe anything 'g'in the infernal devil," he suddenly flamed out with an appearance of rage which somehow failed to impress me, "but I tell ye that Chinaman was the perversest scoundrel you ever dreamed of!"

It was about to explain that perverse scoundrel was not a staple article in my nightly visions, when Jo, re-exultantly dashed in another blinding tumbler of whisky, and resumed, standing:

"That miser'ble, pig-tail Morgellaner 'twat to peg'in' away at the caplin's all round the stems, girdleways. I pitted out his error as patiently as I could, and showed him how to cut 'em on twosides, so to make 'em fall right; but no account I turn my back onto him like this," and he turned it upon me, amplifying the illustration by taking in some more liquor—"than he was at it ag'in. It was just this way while I looked at him, so" regarding me rather unsteadily, and with evident complexity of vision—"he was all right; but when I looked away, so"—taking a long swing at the decanter—"he was all wrong. Then I'd gaze at him reproachful-like, and he'd reform."

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It would be difficult to adequately convey my amazement at this astonishing description of the deceased, the insolent frankness of confession, the grotesque and ambiguous anathema, and last, but not least, the ludicrous translation of gender and sentiment, marked this as the production of one who must have been at least as much demented as bereaved. I felt that any further discovery would be a pitiful anticlimax, and, with an unconscious regard for a dramatic effect, I turned squarely around and walked away.

"Go-up there, old Fuddy-duddy!" This unique adjuration came from the lips of a queer little man, perched atop a high ragged post of firewood, behind a brace of fat oxen, who were hauling it easily along, with a stimulation of herculean effort that had evidently not imposed upon the driver. As that gentleman happened at the moment to be smiting his animals at random with a long pole, it was not quite clear whether his beasts were named Fuddy & Duddy, and were both subjects of the imperative verb "to go-up." Anyhow, the command produced no visible effect upon any of us, and the queer little man removed his eyes from my face long enough to spear Fuddy and Duddy alternately with his wand, remarking quietly, but with some feeling, "Dern your skin?" as if they enjoyed that imprecation in common. So far my quest for a ride had elicited no further attention than I have indicated, and finding myself falling slowly astern, I placed one foot upon the inner circumference of a hind wheel, and was slowly elevated by an aspiring spoke to a level with the hub, whence I boarded the conveyance, sans ceremony, and scrambled forward, to nestle myself besides the driver—who took no notice of me until he had administered another indiscriminate castigation to his cattle, accompanied with the advice "to buckle down, you derned Inceivable!" Then, while this dual incapacity, by courtesy, supposed to be revelling in the happiness of being expected to obey authority, the master (or rather the former master, who I could not suppress a whimsical feeling that the entire establishment was his lawful prize) strained his big, black eyes upon me with an expression strangely and somewhat unpleasantly familiar, laid down his rod—which neither blossomed nor turned into a serpent, as I half expected, folded up his arms, and gravely demanded "W'at did you do to W'aky?"

My natural reply would have been that I drank it, but there was something about the query that suggested a hidden significance, and something about the man that did not encourage a shallow jest. And, as, having no other answer ready, I merely held my tongue, but felt as if I were resting under an imputation of guilt, and that my silence was being construed into a confession. Just then a cold shadow fell upon my cheek, and caused me to look up. We were descending into my ravine; I cannot describe the sensation that came upon me, but it did not seem at times, and itself four years ago, and now I felt like one to whom a friend had made some sorrow confession of crime long past, and who has basely deserted him in consequence. The old memories of Jo. Dunfer; his fragmentary revelation, and the unsatisfying explanatory note by the head stone, came back with singular distinctness. I wondered what had become of Jo, and I turned sharply round and asked my prisoner. He was intently watching his cattle, and, without drawing his eyes, replied:—

"Go-up, old Terrapin! Helles along-side Ah Wee, up the canon. Like to see if they always come back to the spot. I've been expectin' you. Helles!" At the enunciation of the aspirate, Fuddy-duddy, the incapable terrapin, came to a dead halt, and, before the echo of the vowel had died away up the ravine, had folded up all his eight legs and lain down in the dusty road regardless of the effect upon his dermied skin. The queer little man slid off his seat to the ground, and, without uttering a word, began designing to look back to see if I was following. But I was.

It was about the same season of the year, and at near the same hour of the day of my last visit. The jays clattered loudly, and the trees whispered darkly, as before, and I somehow traced in the too fanciful analogy to the open breast of Mr. Jo. Dunfer's mouth, and the mysterious reticence of his manner, and to the mingled insolence and tenderness of his sole literary production—the *Epitaph*. All things in the valley seemed unchanged, excepting the cow-path, which was almost wholly upgrown with rank weeds. When we came out into the "clearing," however, we changed enough. Among the stumps and trunks of the fallen cedars, those that had been hacked, "China fashion" were no longer distinguishable from those that were cut "Molien way." It was as if the Old World barbarism and the New World civilization had reconciled their differences by the arbitration of an impartial deity—as one day they must. The knoll was there, but the crumpled had overrun and all but obliterated its enetic grasses; and the patriotic garden-violet had capitulated to his plebeian brother—or, perhaps, had merely reverted to his original type. Another grave—a long and rostral mound had been made beside the former one, which seemed to spring from the comparison, and in the shadow of a new head-stone the old one lay prone upon the ground, with its marvellous inscription wholly illegible by reason of the dead leaves drifted over it. In point of literary merit the new epitaph was altogether inferior to the old, and was even repulsive in its taste and savage peculiarity. It read:—

(Concluded on 8th page.)

The Cincinnati Commercial has discovered the following national anomalies: The French have the best poll-drawers and the most bald-headed men of any people in the world. The Americans have the best dentists and the most bald of any people in the world. The English have the best corn doctors and the most corn of any people in the world. The Germans have the best lager and the fewest drunkards of any people in the world.

In Chinocha, East Prussia, a village of 479 inhabitants, 79 cases of cholera occurred, 45 terminating fatally.

Money to Lend.

MONEY TO LEND

At Greatly reduced Rates of Interest

HORACE HORTON Appraiser for the Canada Permanent Building & Savings Society of Toronto.

INSURANCE CARD

The Subscriber is agent for the following-class Insurance Companies: PHOENIX London, England. HARTFORD of Hartford, Conn. BRITISH AMERICA, of Toronto. Fire & Marine business done at the lowest possible rates.

HORACE HORTON Office Market Square, Goderich, Sept 20th, 1878.

TO LEND ON THE SECURITY OF REAL ESTATE IN THE COUNTY OF HURON at 6 per cent by DOYLE & SQUIER.

\$30,000 TO LEND ON THE SECURITY OF REAL ESTATE IN THE COUNTY OF HURON at 6 per cent by DOYLE & SQUIER.

MONEY TO LEND ON EASY TERMS INCORPORATED THE A. D. 1864 HURON & ERIE SAVINGS & LOAN SOCIETY.

CAPITAL \$70,000. THIS SOCIETY ADVANCES MONEY ON SECURITY OF Real Estate, and on Terms very favorable to borrowers.

SOLICITORS' COSTS ARE CHARGED. The Society pays the Solicitor's charges. Any sum of money, from \$50 upwards, if lent for any number of years, may be repaid at any time, with or without interest, at the option of the borrower.

THE CHURN can be seen at the Store of J. P. Ferguson, Hamilton Street, Goderich, County of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

ALEX. WALLACE WATCHMAKER AND JEWELLER WEST STREET, GODERICH.

REMOVAL. ALEX. WALLACE WATCHMAKER AND JEWELLER WEST STREET, GODERICH.

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MONEY TO LEND AT LOWEST RATES. J. B. GORDON, BARRISTER AND ATTORNEY AT LAW AND SOLICITOR IN CHIEF.

MONEY. Private funds to be lent on Mortgage of Farm Lands at 6 per cent per annum, payable half yearly. Patents taken out if required. No delay and charges reasonable.

MONEY TO LEND ON Real Estate. A FFAIRBANKS Trust and Loan Company of Upper Canada.

CHEESE, CHEESE. Shephard Strachan, Grocers, Goderich.

New Butcher Shop Opposite Henry Martin's Hotel, Hamilton St.

MORGAN CRADLES.

GRAPE VINE CRADLES.

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Barley Forks, Straw Forks

Hay Forks, Fish Forks.

Rakes, Spades, Shovels, Coal Oil, Black Oil, Machine Oils, Pitch, Tar, Rosin, Oakum, Ropes, Blocks, &c.

NEW HARDWARE STORE,

(Opposite Market House.)

C. H. Parsons & Co.

Goderich, July 25th, 1871.

PHOTOGRAPHS

\$1.00 Per Dozen.

HALF DOZEN on BACK NEGATIVES 51 cents, postage free. One dozen from back negative 87 cents, postage free, to any address.

Particular Attention paid to Copying old Ambrotypes. For either large or small photographs. The subscriber in returning thanks for the liberal patronage heretofore extended to him, would just say that he has made such improvement in his gallery as will merit commendation of the same.

A Great Reduction on Large Photographs. E. L. JOHNSON, Goderich, Aug. 15, 1878.

The Huron Favorite.

NEW LABOR-SAVING CHURN.

INVENTED AND PATENTED BY ALEX. TICHBORNE, Goderich, Ont.

ALEX. TICHBORNE

A NEW CHURN

has much pleasure in offering to the Farmers of Huron County a new and improved churn, which he has secured a Patent for the Dominion of Canada.

THE HURON FAVORITE

and really acknowledge that for SAVING OF TIME AND LABOR, STRENGTH AND DURABILITY OF CONSTRUCTION, SIMPLICITY OF OPERATION, SPEED AND EFFICIENCY OF WORKING, AND LOW PRICES.

REMOVAL.

ALEX. WALLACE WATCHMAKER AND JEWELLER WEST STREET, GODERICH.

Watches Clocks and Jewelry

which will give satisfaction to the purchaser, and as all work has been done by myself, customer may be assured of the highest quality.

ALEX. WALLACE.

Goderich, Aug. 15th 1878.

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New Butcher Shop

Opposite Henry Martin's Hotel, Hamilton St.

THE Subscriber has pleasure in intimating that he has secured a Patent for the Dominion of Canada for a new and improved churn, which he has secured a Patent for the Dominion of Canada.

TIME IS MONEY.

If you want to do two days work in one day, get good the.

PATENT GROOVED IRON HARROWS

the best and cheapest ever offered in Canada. Only \$10 cash, worth \$25.00. Inspection invited at D. K. STEPHAN'S Blacksmith Shop, Goderich, March 30th, 1871.

New Butcher Shop

Opposite Henry Martin's Hotel, Hamilton St.

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PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION

OF THE Agricultural and Arts Association OF ONTARIO.

TO BE HELD AT KINGSTON.

On the 25th to 29th September, 1871

Persons intending to exhibit will please take notice that the Entries of articles in the respective classes must be made with the Secretary, at the Office of the Association, generally, on or before Saturday, August 19th, 1871, at 10 o'clock, and on or before Saturday, August 26th, 1871, at 10 o'clock, and on or before Saturday, August 26th, 1871, at 10 o'clock, and on or before Saturday, August 26th, 1871, at 10 o'clock.

Extensive NEW PREMISES

G. N. DAVIS HAS THIS DAY REMOVED TO HIS COMMODIOUS NEW BRICK BUILDING

(NEARLY OPPOSITE F. JORDAN'S DRUG STORE) Convenient to the Market.

His stock of stoves &c. IS LARGE AND COMPLETE

He will save money by inspecting his stock before purchasing elsewhere. ALL KINDS OF JOB WORK WILL BE DONE THE SAME AS USUAL.

Stoves! Stoves!

THE Catholic months since, to obtain for the nation in the State, a score an an both politics by the Rede with courts they were representation half of the Sandies—W. med.—"Wh Catholics de was sick, an consequence putation will new-found explain his him—that cur he the ill-felling in. We can't ings of A Catholics o opinions of days since Roman C suitable in ters of " sentiment hard on N some sort he can aff asks him the Lead Irish Can.

Wm. Churchill

HAVING ATTENDED THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF Sessions at the ONT. VETERINARY COLLEGE

possessing the qualification, and obtained a diploma, he now feels able to attend to the Diseases and accidents of all Domestic Animals, and is prepared to attend to the Diseases and accidents of all Domestic Animals, and is prepared to attend to the Diseases and accidents of all Domestic Animals.

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