

WAS IT A GHOST?

THE STRANGE STORY OF MRS. GLENDENNING'S HUSBAND.

You remember Hawthorne's story of "Wakefield," a man who, from mere oddity and whim, after parting from his wife to go on a short journey, vanished into the wilderness of London and never returned to her, although he lived so near that he watched curiously her comings and her goings year after year, seeing her change from a happy matron into a melancholy widow, and so go on into cheerless age. Other things have happened quite as strange, perhaps stranger. Let me tell you the true story of Mrs. Glendenning's husband.

Agnes Holt met Hugh Glendenning before she left school: they fell in love, were engaged, and by the time she was 18 she married him. He was a young fellow of 26, and his most striking qualities seem to be good looks and impetuosity of temperament. In person he was of average height; his figure good; his face remarkably handsome; his hair and eyes dark; his complexion pale. Agnes was a quiet, graceful creature, with blue, bashful eyes and the most charming smile in the world. In speech she was curiously reserved, and rarely expressed herself freely. One of the discomforts of the season of her engagement was that Hugh constantly pressed her for an ample confession of love which she would never make in words by more than a quiet assent when he demanded if she loved him. She hoped and expected that after marriage he would be less persistent and more ready to take things for granted, while he, on his side, looked forward to wedlock with the belief that once a wife Agnes would no longer torture him with her evasions and denials, but tell him with the same freedom and eloquence which he used himself the whole story of her passion for him. The two probably loved each other equally, but their temperaments were too powerfully contrasted to make mutual understanding possible. Agnes was slow, puritanical and, however faithful and strong in feeling, utterly destitute of spontaneity; while Hugh was quick, ardent and given to the most powerful expression of whatever feeling or mood came uppermost.

They had been married a month when business arrangements compelled Hugh to go to England, and he insisted on taking his wife. She yielded, but her inclinations were against the journey: she disliked to leave her family, and was, besides, in great fear of the sea. She was melancholy and nervous in parting from her friends, and for the first three days on the ocean spent the entire time in tears. Hugh could not understand her horror of the water, and felt, besides, that she was using him ill in feeling the least reluctance at severing her connection with her old home. He tortured her with questions. Did she love him? Did she trust him? If she loved him, if she trusted him, how could she help being glad to accompany him anywhere on the whole earth? These demands, incessantly repeated, insistently urged and pressed, wore upon the young wife: she knew they were actuated by a love which jealously demanded everything from her, but they developed a sort of coldness and perverseness in her mind.

On one occasion, when Hugh asked if she really loved him, she replied listlessly, "How can you expect me to love you when you wear me out like this? I shall soon begin to hate you if you go on in this way."

These careless words produced the most profound impression upon Hugh's mind, and were the beginning of calamity. He brooded over them, incessantly repeating them to himself. Agnes, who was a mere child at heart, and of a nature not wide enough fully to absorb the idea of another's, realized nothing of the suffering she had inflicted. Besides, Hugh's conduct began to estrange her. It became his wont to sit looking at her, his large black eyes growing gradually cavernous in their depth and unearthly in their brilliancy. At times he would exclaim, "You do not love me; you will soon hate me." At night he never seemed to sleep, and banging the lantern so that the rays fell on her face, blinding and dizzying her, he would sit on the edge of the berth, staring into her face and muttering, "She hates me!"

They voyage was a short one, in ten days they were in London, where they met friends, and for the three months which followed both Hugh and Agnes had a comparatively happy and cheerful time. Agnes upbraided her husband for his absurdities, and he himself seemed to see his conduct in the light of day instead of the lurid glare of an insane, jealous dread. Still, married life was a palpable disappointment to Agnes, who began to feel that if she must bend her every faculty to the task of pleasing a man whose brain seemed in a whirl of false and distorted ideas concerning her and his love for her and her feeling for him, she should soon lose all respect for and belief in her husband.

Toward the latter part of the time they spent in London, her cousin, George Dana, a young man of 22, whom she had known and loved like a brother from her infancy, happened to join their party. His coming was the signal for more outbreaks of jealousy on Hugh Glendenning's part. His mind seemed all astray; he was indifferent to the fact that he placed his wife in a cruel and humiliating position; he persisted in the chimera that an easy habit of intimacy with her cousin George was the expression of a love which far surpassed the affec-

tion for himself. Again and again he taunted and insulted her, until she implored her cousin to leave London. George Dana, however, little guessing Agnes' actual position with a man who was half insane, could not be induced to go. He was not through with his sight-seeing; he was interested in the races; in short, he liked being in London at this time of the year better than being anywhere else in Europe, and he insisted on remaining, and even felt a sort of boyish satisfaction in anguishing Glendenning's jealousy to the utmost by constant offers of attention to the young wife. By the 1st of July Hugh's business was concluded, and he took Agnes to France and Switzerland for a month, but the two were no longer on terms of intimacy. Hugh was still jealous, and regarded his wife's steady coldness as a sign of the most chilling indifference. Agnes, on her side, felt that to maintain a semblance of buoyant happiness when she felt so dejected at the way she had been outraged was to lessen her dignity as a woman. The two sailed from Havre for New York, on the 14th of August, 186—. On the seventh day out, when they were half way across the ocean, Hugh Glendenning was suddenly missed. There was no trace of him on board the steamer, and it was readily concluded that the rash and unhappy young man had thrown himself overboard.

It was naturally the cruellest possible trial for Agnes when she was forced to believe that her husband had committed suicide. She knew, too, that he had been disheartened by her coldness; again and again she repulsed him when he tried to have an explanation with her. Naturally, now that he was gone, all the generosity of her first love returned; she forgot his faults and remembered only her own; she accused herself of cruelty and heartlessness, and sorrowed like the most despairing widow.

The trouble which now overwhelmed Agnes and her family was one of those cruel enigmatical troubles which take all freshness out of life. Agnes, when restored to consciousness, declared that while she was crossing the fields her husband had suddenly started out from behind a tree, caught her by the arm, held her tightly clutched, and said to her in a horrible tone, "Do not dare to marry that man!" and that she remembered no more until she opened her eyes and saw her mother bending over her. A frightful bruise on the tender flesh of her arm corroborated her story. The family too had all seen a man who, if not Hugh Glendenning, was his absolute likeness. George Dana was the only one who combatted the truth of these ideas; he declared it to be wholly impossible that Glendenning should be alive; he himself had questioned the captain and officers on board the steamer after the suicide five years before. Everything pointed conclusively to the belief that the unhappy man had been drowned. The steamer had been searched over and over; on the fatal day of the disappearance they had not even sighted a vessel or a boat; thus there could have been no rescue from the sea. He was dead, George declared, with irresistible decision. When confronted with the fact that they had all seen Hugh or his ghost, he declared it to be a chance resemblance—that Agnes was dispirited and nervous, and when the man touched her, her disordered imagination supplied the words she believed him to have spoken.

George, however, being broken-hearted at the failure of his engagement, was not to be trusted as a counsellor in such a crisis. The marriage was given up. Advertisements were put in the principal papers for a year, imploring Hugh Glendenning, if alive, to communicate with his wife and family; but not a word was heard from him. Agnes naturally suffered the cruellest form of suffering—suspense, and dread, and helpless and hopeless misery. Her past was imbrued, present she had none, and the future was full of doubts and terrors.

Gradually, as two years, then three years, passed, everyone save herself ceased to believe in the reality of the apparition which startled them all on the 20th day of August. And at times even Agnes herself doubted the evidence of her senses. How could it be possible that Hugh was still alive when in all these past eight years he had only once disclosed himself to the sight of any of his friends? When he might come and claim her before all the world, what possible object could he have for lurking in shadow, only eering to overwhelm her when she made an effort at renewed ties?

George Dana naturally was not slow to help her in these questions and doubts; he tried, too, to inspire her with courage—that, instead of cowering helpless before vague and nameless shadows in the darkness, she should resolutely go on and meet and grasp and defy them. By this time, too, she was legally freed from her husband, even if he were alive, according to the laws of her state; more than eight years had passed since his apparent death. Agnes was at last persuaded to end the long suspense. She suffered not only for herself, but for George, whose life she was spoiling, and finally consented to marry him privately from her sister's house in New York. Their plans were not discussed beyond the family circle; it was decided that the two should quietly walk out to the city church, and there and then be married by a strange clergyman. Thus everything unpleasant would be avoided, and before consequences were faced they would be actually met and conquered.

This plan seemed destined to bring the happiest results. The morning of the wedding-day dawned. Agnes quietly ate her breakfast, then went to her room and put on her bonnet to go out and be married. As she stood at the win-

dow drawing on her gloves a man stepped suddenly on the pavement, looked up and gave a warning gesture, then ascended the doorstep. A moment later her sister entered the room, and found her sitting down by the fire, huddled as if to warm herself.

"Why, Agnes," said she, "I expected to find you all ready to start. Here is a little package which some one has just brought for you. Unless it was a secret about the wedding, I should suppose this was a present."

"There will be no wedding," said Agnes, in a hopeless tone; "I have just seen Hugh again. It was he who brought that. Let me see it."

She opened the little parcel listlessly. It contained a ring, a man's wedding ring—the very one she had given Hugh nine years before.

Agnes has never seen her husband since. Whether he is alive she does not know; whether he died that 20th of August at sea she does not know; whether the chain of contradictory circumstances we have narrated were actual and based upon the correct hypothesis, that he himself appeared twice before her in the flesh, she does not know. George Dana, urged by her entreaties and her prayers, finally renounced all hope of overcoming her reluctance to even think of him again after her double warning, and married. Agnes is a hopelessly-saddened, changed and melancholy woman.

It seemed natural, under the circumstances, that Agnes should not only mourn, but mourn with peculiar hopelessness, for her young husband, who had been taken from her only a few months after their wedding-day. She sorrowed a year, two years, three years; but by that time her family all began to make an effort to persuade her that it was wrong thus to continue oppressing not only herself but them with this long-past affliction. She was faithful and tenacious of impressions, but at the end of four years she had resumed her ordinary dress and begun once more to mingle freely in the society at her mother's house. She was more attractive than in her girlhood, and her story, too, was well known and created a touching interest in her youth and beauty. She had several admirers, but not until George Dana returned did she allow any one to come near her as a lover. George had, perhaps, always been fond of her; he was, at any rate, now ardently in love with her. Remembering, as Agnes did, poor Glendenning's jealousy of the young man in London, it was with some mental disquietude and outward struggle that she allowed herself to yield to the feeling that she could love again, and love her cousin George. However, his courtship was so far successful that she had promised to marry him when she had passed the fifth anniversary of her husband's death. This date, which was to divide her old allegiance from her new, was the 20th of August, 186—. The day passed quietly in a pleasant country-house. George Dana was to come in the evening, and Agnes rose when she heard the train whistling at the bend and said she would walk across the field to meet her lover. Every one smiled and no one offered to accompany her. The family, consisting of the father and mother of Agnes, her three sisters and four of her married sisters' children, all sat on the piazza waiting for Agnes and George to return to tea.

Suddenly, Mary Holt exclaimed, "If Hugh Glendenning were alive, I should say that was he!" and she pointed to a man who passed the house at a distance of some two rods, and who now at her exclamation lifted his hat and bowed.

The sight of the man created the most powerful sensation in the group, and Mr. Holt sprang to his feet and went down to the gate; but he had vanished. The likeness to Hugh Glendenning had been startling; not only his face, but his attitude and gesture and his gait seemed to have declared that it was Hugh Glendenning himself. In another moment George Dana came running up, calling for help. He had, he said, while crossing the fields to meet Agnes, seen her in conversation with a man who looked like Hugh Glendenning, and who strode away on his approach, and when he himself reached her she had swooned away and was lying on the ground.

BURLESQUE.

A LUCKY BARBER.—He is a wag, facetious, droll and funny. His entrance upon a funeral scene always turns that depressing episode into a hilarious and joyous occasion. He realizes this and lives up to the character. His home is Springfield, but he visits Hartford at stated periods on important business. At these times the report reaches around that the "Springfield Delegation" is in town, and immediately the air is surcharged with good humour and mirth. On one of his recent visits he dropped into one of our barber-shops and a chair.

Barber.—Shave, sir?

Springfield Delegation.—Shave, heavens!

(Long pause, during which the barber goes on with his work.)

S. D.—Remarkable weather for spring!

(No answer.)

S. D.—Isn't the weather very uncertain in Hartford during the changeable months?

B.—Ah! Does it hurt?

S. D.—Oh, no! Are the crop prospects prospectively encouraging hereabouts?

B.—(Still silently and solemnly at work.)

S. D.—Am told they raise lots of tobacco in the Connecticut Valley. Is it true that the farmers who are holding it back refuse to send it forward?

B.—(Still taciturn, makes no reply and continues his work.)

S. D.—It seems to me this attempt to hold an extra session of Congress is an effort of the Democracy to trample on the necks of the downtrodden people of our glorious land, not to mention the independent Greenback voter.

B.—(Utterly oblivious and serious as an owl.)

S. D.—Don you think an enlightened public like ours, a free and untrammelled public, should give a moment's thought to those frivolous problems of an unscientific character, which now disturb and disrupt the whole of Eastern Europe and Asia Minor?

B.—(Still wearing an unconcerned and mournful expression and continuing his avocation.)

S. D.—In your opinion, that is in your unbiased and uninspired opinion, is the recent progress toward a higher development in art culture commensurate with the advancement of the ancient Romans during the period B. C., when their attention was chiefly devoted to interior decoration?

B.—(Stolid and expressionless as to face and mute as to voice.)

S. D.—(Settles back in his chair with a long-drawn sigh, and subsides in disgust and chagrin.)

The Other Barber.—(after a moment of profound silence.) See here, stranger, that fellow you've been talking to is deaf as a bologna sausage.

S. D.—I've got to catch that Express for Springfield.

And the barber is out fifteen cents.

A COAL mine near Wattenscheid, in Germany, is now lighted by electricity, at, it is said, a cost of about 24d. for each light per hour. Another coal mine in the same district is repeating the experiment.

In France the number of Catholics is given as 39,390,000, and of Protestants as 600,000, while in Great Britain and Ireland there are 5,600,000 Catholics against 26,000,000 Protestants.

According to statistics it transpires that upwards of £1,250,000 was raised in London last year for charitable objects, and on a calculation it will be seen that this is more than £1 for every man, woman and child in the capital.

SOME experiments with the electric light recently made in the reading-room of the British Museum have satisfied the trustees of its applicability for the purposes of the room as far as the amount and distribution of light near concerned.

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

Solutions to Problems sent in by Correspondents will be duly acknowledged.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. W. S., Montreal.—Many thanks for several valuable communications.

Student, Montreal.—Correct solution received of Problem No. 229.

J. H., Montreal.—Correct solution received of Problems for Young Players, Nos. 216 and 217.

E. H., Montreal.—Correct solutions received of Problems for Young Players, No. 217.

HERR ANDERSEN.

The following sketch of the career of the great chess player, Herr Andersen, has been most kindly forwarded to us by Mr. Bird, of London, Eng., for publication in the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

It is almost needless to say that Mr. Bird speaks from intimate knowledge, when testifying to the skill and personal character of Herr Andersen, and on this account we are sure his sketch will be acceptable to our readers.

Herr Andersen, the celebrated chess-player and Professor of Mathematics at the University of Breslau, died in that city on the 14th ult.

The news will be received with much regret by all classes of the chess community, for of all the distinguished exponents of the pleasing and scientific recreation of chess, not one ever gained the admiration and esteem of lovers of chess to a greater extent than Andersen. Last summer, in Paris, at the close of the grand International Chess Tournament, a banquet was held to commemorate the 60th anniversary of his birthday.

His victories over the chess-board in important and memorable international and other gatherings have been very remarkable. At London, during the Exhibition of 1851, he was winner of the first prize in the International Chess Tournament, defeating Staunton, the British champion, Kienitzky, of Paris, Lowenthal and Szen, of Hungary, Jansen, of Russia, and ten other eminent European players. In 1852, at the Tournament of the British Chess Association, held at Bristol, he again secured first prize, and also at Baden, in the year 1870. At Vienna, in 1873, and in Paris last year, he was also a prize winner. On the latter occasion, securing two victories over the American champion, Mackenzie, in a manner worthy of his 1852 fame. His demure manner of play, beauty of style and power of combination, have commanded universal admiration; he was also a most chivalrous player, never, when opportunity offered, evading a contest. Throughout his long chess career, he was only defeated by one opponent—Paul Morphy, the American prodigy.

M. GREY'S WIT.

The new President of the French Republic indulges in epigrammatic sayings. He is a very good chess player, and being asked recently to write something, however trifling, in an album, wrote as follows: "Life is like a game of chess; each one holds his rank according to his quality; but, when the game is over, kings, queens, knights, and all the rest are thrown into one common box.—*Agr. Argus*."

CHESS IN IRELAND.

As we last month announced, Herr Zukertort, on the 18th ult., played twelve simultaneous blindfold games at the Dublin Chess Club, his opponents being Lord Randolph Churchill, the Hon. H. C. Plunkett, Sir John Blunden, Major Craggs, Capt. Wallace, Capt. Melhado, and Messrs. Cairns, Pim, Lewis, Goodbody, Woodet, and Sutcliffe. The Lord Lieutenant and the Duchess of Marlborough were among the spectators, and also the Commander of the Forces. Play commenced at 3 p.m.