

A RETURN.

"Do you not know me Donald?"— Pushing back her gray hair— "Can ye not speak to me, Donald— Me who was once so fair?"

A GHOST OF THE SIERRAS.

BY BRET HARTE.

It was a vast silence of pines, redolent with balsamic breath, and muffled with the dry dust of dead bark and matted mosses.

The person here alluded to, under that military title, was myself. I hardly need explain to any Californian that by no means followed that I was a "Major," or that I was "old," or that I knew anything about "it," or indeed what "it" referred to.

"About ghosts," said the Doctor, after a pause, which nobody broke or was expected to break. "Ghosts! sir. That's what we want to know. What are we doing here in this black old mansoleum of Calaveras county—if it isn't to find out something about 'em, eh?"

"That's that haunted house at Cave City. Can't be more than a mile or two away, anyhow. Used to be just off the trail."

A dead silence. The Doctor (addressing space generally): "Yes, sir; it was a mighty queer story."

Still the same reposeful indifference. We all knew the Doctor's skill as a raconteur; we all knew that a story was coming, and we all knew that any interruption would be fatal. Time and time again in our prospecting experience, had a word of polite encouragement, a rash expression of interest, even a too eager attitude of silent expectancy, brought the Doctor to a sudden change of subject; time and time again had we seen the unwary stranger stand amazed and bewildered before our own indifference and the sudden termination of a promising anecdote, through his own unlucky interference. So we said nothing. "The Judge"—another instance of arbitrary nomenclature—pretended to sleep. Jack began to twist a cigarrito. Thornton bit off the ends of pine needles reflectively.

"Yes, sir," continued the doctor, coolly resting the back of his head on the palms of his hands, "it was rather curious. All except the murder. That's what gets me, for the murder had no new points, no fancy touches, no sentiment, no mystery. Was just one of the old style, 'sub-head' paragraphs. Old-fashioned miner scrubs along on hard tack and beans, and saves up a little money to go home and see relations. Old-fashioned assassin sharpens up knife, old style, loads old flintlock, brass mounted pistol, walks in on old-fashioned miner one dark night, sends him home to his relations away back to several generations, and walks off with the swag. No mystery there; nothing to clear up; subsequent revelations only impertinence. Nothing for any ghost to do—who meant business. More than that, over forty murders, same old kind, committed every year in Calaveras, and no spiritual post obits coming due every anniversary; no assessments made on the peace and quiet of the surviving community. I tell you what boys, I've always been inclined to throw off on the Cave City ghost for that alone. It's a bad precedent, sir. If that kind of thing is going to obtain to the Foot Hills, we'll have the trails full of chaps formerly knocked over by Mexicans and road agents; every little camp and grocery will have stock enough

on hand to go into business, and where's there any security for surviving life and property, eh? What's your opinion, Judge, as a fair-minded legislator?"

Of course there was no response. Yet it was part of the Doctor's system of aggravation to be come discursive at these moments in the hope of interruption, and he continued for some moments to dwell on the terrible possibility of a state of affairs in which a gentleman could no longer settle a dispute with an enemy without being subjected to succeeding spiritual embarrassment. But all this digression fell upon apparently inattentive ears.

"Well, sir, after the murder, the cabin stood for a long time deserted and tenantless. Popular opinion was against it. One day a ragged prospector, savage with hard labor and harder luck, came to the camp, looking for a place to live and a chance to prospect. After the boys had taken his measure, they concluded he'd already tackled so much in the way of difficulties that a ghost more or less wouldn't be of much account. They sent him to the haunted cabin. He had a big yellow dog with him, about as ugly and as savage as himself, and the boys sort of congratulated themselves, from a practical view point, that when they were giving the old ruffian shelter, they were helping in the cause of Christianity against ghost and goblins. They had little faith in the old man, but went their whole on the dog. That's where they were mistaken.

"The house stood almost 300 feet from the nearest cave, and on dark nights, being in a hollow, was as lonely as if it had been on the top of Shasta. If you ever saw the spot when there was just moon enough to bring out the little surrounding clumps of chaparral until they looked like connecting figures, and make the bits of broken quartz glisten like skulls, you begin to understand how big a contract that man and that yellow dog undertook.

"They went into possession that afternoon, and old Hard Times set out to cook his supper. When it was over he sat down by the embers and lit his pipe, the yellow dog lying at his feet. Suddenly 'Rap! rap!' comes from the door. 'Come in,' says the man gruffly. 'Rap!' again. 'Come in and be d—d to you,' says the man, who has no idea of getting up to open the door. But no one responded, and the next moment smash goes the only sound pane in the only window. Seeing this old Hard Times gets up, with the devil in his eye and a revolver in his hand, followed by the yellow dog with every tooth showing, and swings open the door. No one is there! But as the man opened the door that yellow dog, which had been so chipper before, suddenly begins to crouch and step backward, step by step, trembling and shivering, and at last crouches down in the chimney, with-out even so much as looking at his master. The man slams the door shut again, but there comes another smash. This time it comes from inside the cabin, and it isn't until the man looks around and sees everything quiet that he gets up without speaking and makes a dash for the door, and tear around outside the cabin like mad, but finds nothing but silence and darkness. Then he comes back swearing and calls the dog. But that great yellow dog that the boys would have staked all their money on, is crouching under the bunk, and has to be dragged out like a coon from a hollow tree, and lies there, his eyes staring from their sockets; every limb and muscle quivering with fear, and his very hair drawn up in bristling ridges. The man calls him to the door. He drags himself a few steps, sniffs, and refuses to go further. The man calls him again with an oath and threat. Then, what does that yellow dog do? He crawls edgewise toward the door, crouching himself against the bunk till he's flatter than a knife blade; then half way, he stops. Then that d—d yellow dog begins to walk gingerly—lifting each foot in the air, one after the other, still trembling in every limb. Then he stops again. Then he crouches. Then he gives one little shuddering leap—not straight forward, but up—clearing the floor about six inches, as if—

"Over something!"—interrupted the Judge, hastily, lifting himself on his elbow.

The Doctor stopped instantly. "Juan," he said coolly, to one of the Mexican packers, "quit foolin' with that riatra. You'll have that stake out and that mule loose in another minute. Come over this way!"

The Mexican turned a seared, white face to the Doctor, muttering something, and let go the deer-skin hide. We all up-raised our voices with one accord, the Judge most penitently and apologetically, and implored the Doctor to go on. "I'll shoot the first man who interrupts you again," added Thornton, persuasively.

But the doctor, with his hands languidly under his head, had lost his interest. "Well, the dog ran off to the hills, and neither the threats nor cajoleries of his master could ever make him enter the cabin again. The next day the man left the camp. What time is it? Getting on to sundown, ain't it? Keep off my leg, will you? you d—d Greaser, and stop tumbling round there! Lie down!"

But we knew that the doctor had not completely finished his story, and we waited patiently for the conclusion. Meanwhile, the old, gray silence of the woods again asserted itself—but shadows were now beginning to gather in the heavy beams in the roof above, and the dim aisles seemed to be narrowing and closing in around us. Presently the Doctor recommenced lazily, as if no interruption had occurred.

"As I said before, I never put much faith in that story, and shouldn't have told it, but for rather a curious experience of my own. It was in the spring of '63, and I was one of a party of four, coming up from O'Neill's, where we had been snowed up. It was awful weather; the snow had changed to sleet and rain after we crossed the divide, and the water was out everywhere; every ditch was a creek, or a river. We had lost two horses on the Truth Fork, we were dead beat, off the trail and sloshing round, with night coming on, and the level hail like shot in our faces. Things were looking bleak and scary when riding a little ahead of the party, I saw a light twinkling in a hollow beyond. My horse was still fresh, and he called out for the boys to follow me and bear for the light. I struck out for it. In another moment I was before a little cabin that was half buried in the black chaparral. I dismounted and rapped at

the door. There was no response. I then tried to force the door, but it was fastened securely from within. I was all the more surprised when one of the boys, who had overtaken me, told me that he had just seen through a window a man reading by the fire. Indignant at this inhospitability we both made a resolute onset against the door, at the same time raising our angry voices to a yell. Suddenly there was a quick response, the hurried withdrawing of a bolt and the door opened.

"The occupant was a short, thick-set man, with a pale, care-worn face, whose prevailing expression was one of gentle good humor and patient suffering. When we entered, he asked us hastily why we had not 'sung out' before.

"'But we knocked,' I said, impatiently, 'and almost drove your door in.'

"'That's nothing,' he said, patiently 'I'm used to that.'

"I looked at the man's patient, fateful face, and then around the cabin. In an instant, the whole situation flashed before me. 'Are we not near Cave City?' I asked.

"'Yes,' he replied, 'it's just below. You must have passed it in the storm.'

"'I see.' I again looked around the cabin. 'Isn't this what they call the haunted house?'

"'He looked at me curiously. 'It is,' he said simply.

"'You can't imagine my delight! Here was an opportunity to test the whole story—to work down to the bed rock, and see how it would pan out! We were too many and too well armed to fear tricks or dangers from behind—concealed marauders or road agents, whose purpose was to preserve their haunts from intrusion, we were quite able to pay them in kind for any assault. I need not say that the boys were delighted with this prospect when the fact was revealed to them. The only one doubtful or pathetic spirit there was our host, who quietly resumed his seat and his book, with his old expression of patient martyrdom. It would have been easy for me to have drawn him out, but I felt that I did not want to corroborate anybody else's experience; only to record my own. And I thought it better to keep the boys from any predisposing terrors.

"We at our supper, and then sat patiently and expectant, around the fire. An hour slipped away, but no disturbance; another hour past as monotonously. Our host read his book; only the dash of hail against the roof broke the silence. But—

The Doctor stopped. Since the last interruption, I noticed he had changed the easy, slangy style of his story to a more perfect, artistic, and even studied manner. He dropped now suddenly into his old colloquial speech, and quietly said: "If you don't quit stumbling over those riatras, Juan, I'll hoppel you. Come here then; lie down, will you?"

We all turned fiercely on the cause of this second dangerous interruption, but a sight of the poor fellow's pale and frightened face withheld our vindictive tongue. And the Doctor, happily, of his own accord went on:

"'But I had forgotten that it was no easy matter to keep these high-spirited boys, bent on a row, in decent subjection, and after the third hour passed without a supernatural exhibition, I observed, from certain winks and whispers, that they were determined to get up indications of their own. In a few moments violent rappings were heard from all parts of the cabin; large stones (adroitly thrown up the chimney) fell with a heavy thud on the roof. Strange groans and ominous yells seemed to come from the outside (where the interstices between the logs were wide enough). Yet, through all this uproar, our host sat still and patient with no sign of indignation or reproach upon his good humored but haggard features. Before long it became evident that his exhibition was exclusively for his benefit.

"Under the thin disguise of asking him to assist them in discovering the distributors outside the cabin, those inside took advantage of his absence to turn the cabin topsy turvey.

"'You see what the spirits have done, old man,' said the arch leader of this mischief. 'They've upset that there flour barrel while we wasn't looking, and then kicked over the water jug and spilled all the water!'

"The patient man lifted his head and looked at the flour-strewn walls. Then he glanced down at the flour, but drew back with a slight tremor.

"'It ain't water!' he said quietly. "'It's blood!' Look!"

"The nearest man gave a sudden start and sank back white as a sheet.

"'For there, gentlemen, on the floor, just before the door, where the old man had seen the dog hesitate and lift his feet—there! there!—gentleman—upon my honor, slowly widened and broadened a dark red pool of human blood! Stop him! Quick! Stop him, I say!"

There was a blinding flash that lit up the dark woods and a sharp report! When we reached the Doctor's side he was holding the smoking pistol, just discharged, in one hand, while with the other he was pointing to the rapidly disappearing figure of Juan, our Mexican vaquero!

"'Missed him! by G—d!' said the Doctor. 'But did you see him? Did you see his lurid face as he rose up at the name of blood? Did you see his guilty conscience in his face, eh? Why don't you speak? What are you staring at?'

"'Was it the murdered man's ghost, Doctor?' we all panted in one quick breath.

"'Ghost be d—d! No! But in that Mexican vaquero—that cursed Juan Ramirez!—I saw and shot at his murderer!"

A sympathetic but inquisitive young man, who was visiting a county prison, gently asked a girl prisoner the cause of her being in such a place. "Oh," said she, with a contemptuous toss of her head, "I stole a water-mill, and got off safe, but like a fool, went back after the stream that turned it, and was arrested." The sympathetic young man left immediately.

Hash has been abused more than any other legitimate nourishment, and it is well able to stand it. The Duke of Wellington used to call hash "What is left over from the night yesterday." The Baron Rothschild said of hash, "It has no pedigree." Tully, the Roman orator, speaks thus beautifully and comprehensively, "Hash has done more to advance the human race than any other kind of mixed

food." Socrates, the divine philosopher, told of hash, "That it was an end without means."

The Mysterious Portrait.

In a small but handsomely-furnished sitting-room in a London hotel a young lady was sitting in an easy-chair before a blazing fire, one dreary November afternoon. Her hat and cloak lay upon the table beside her, and from the eager, impatient glances she turned toward the door at every sound of a footstep on the staircase outside, it was evident that she expected a visitor.

At last the door opened, and a tall aristocratic-looking young man entered the room.

"Harry, what a long time you have been!" she exclaimed, springing up from her seat. "What news have you brought? What does your father say about our marriage?" hesitating with the shyness of a bride at the last word.

"Read for yourself, Helen," replied her husband, handing her an open letter, and standing opposite her, leaning against the marble mantelpiece, watching intently the expression of her fair young face as she read.

"In marrying as you have done, you have acted in direct, deliberate opposition to my wishes. From this day you are no longer my son, and I wash my hands of you forever!"

"Harry, why did you not tell me of this before?" exclaimed Helen, as she read the hard, cruel words, looking up through her tears into her husband's face.

"My darling, what was there to tell? How could I know that my father would act in this hard-hearted manner? I knew that he wished me to marry the daughter of a nobleman living near Marston Hall, and so unite the two estates; but I had no idea that he would cast me off for disobeying his wishes. And even if I had known it," he added, fondly clasping his young bride to his heart, and kissing away the tears from her eyes, "I should not have acted differently. My Helen is worth fifty estates, as long as she loves me. I shall never regret the loss of Marston Hall and its fair acres. But, my love," he continued, more seriously, "there is an end of your promised shopping expedition into Bond Street. You will have to do without diamonds now that your husband is a penniless outcast, instead of the heir to fifteen thousand a year."

"Hush, Harry! Please don't talk like that," she said, hurt at his bitter tone. "You know it was not of diamonds or dress I was thinking. But what are you going to do, Harry?" she continued, laying her hand upon his arm, and looking up sadly into his pale, set face. "You cannot work for a living." "And why not work for a living?" he exclaimed, in a determined voice. "Because I happen to be the son of a baronet, brought up and educated without any ideas or knowledge of business? But I will work for my living, and show my little wife that I am not unworthy of the trust and confidence she reposed in me when she placed this little hand in mine." he added, stooping to kiss the small white hand that rested confidently upon his arm.

It was while pursuing his favorite study of oil painting among the famous galleries of Rome that Harry Marston wooed and won Helen Tracey, a governess in an English family residing in Italy, and the orphan daughter of an officer in the army. Before he had known her a month, Harry, who had been in love—or fancied himself in love, with at least half a dozen different young ladies in as many months, felt that he had at last met his fate.

Delighted at the idea of being loved for himself alone, he had not told her of his real position; and it was not till after the marriage ceremony was over that Helen discovered she had married the eldest son of a baronet, and the heir to an estate producing fifteen thousand a year.

It was not without some inward misgivings that Harry wrote to his father telling him of his marriage, which were more than realized by the result, as we have seen by the letter from Sir Phillip Marston, which awaited him at his club on returning to England with his bride.

But, full of confidence in his ability to maintain himself and his young wife by his own exertions, and thinking surely that his father would relent and be reconciled to him after a time, Harry troubled himself very little about his lost inheritance; and though their new home—consisting of three small poorly-furnished rooms in a back street—was very different from the grand old mansion to which he had hoped to take his bride, he set to work cheerfully at his favorite art, and tried hard to earn a living by painting pictures and portraits. But he soon found that it was not so easy as he thought.

It was all very well when he was heir to Marston Hall, and studied painting merely from love of art; but picture dealers, who in those days had been all flattery and obsequiousness toward the young heir, now that he really wanted to sell his pictures and sketches, shook their heads, and politely but firmly declined to purchase.

"Alas, sir! she is dead—dead to me these twenty years. I killed her—I broke her heart with my harshness and cruelty!" exclaimed the old man, in an excited, trembling voice.

A strange chill came over Harry, as the idea that his mysterious visitor must be an escaped lunatic crossed his mind, but mastering, with an effort, his emotion, the stranger continued:

"Pardon me, young sir. This is of no interest to you. My daughter is dead, and I want you to paint her portrait from my

description, as I perfectly well remember her twenty years ago."

"I will do my best, sir, but it will be no easy task, and you must be prepared for many disappointments," said Harry, when, having given him a long description of the form and features of his long lost daughter, the old man rose to depart; and for weeks he worked incessantly upon the mysterious portrait of the dead girl, making sketch after sketch, each of which was rejected by the remorse-stricken father, until the work began to exercise a strange kind of fascination over him, and he sketched face after, as if under the influence of a spell.

At last one evening, wearied with a day of fruitless exertion, he was sitting over the fire watching his wife, who sat opposite busy with some needle-work, when an idea suddenly flashed upon him.

Tall, fair, with golden hair and dark-blue eyes. "Why, Helen, it is the very picture of yourself!" he exclaimed, starting from his seat, taking his wife's fair face between his two hands, and gazing into her eyes.

Without losing a moment, he sat down and commenced to sketch Helen's face, and when his strange patron called, the next morning, Harry was busily engaged putting the finishing touches to his portrait that he did not hear him enter the room, and worked on for some moments unconscious of his presence, until, with a cry of "Helen! my daughter!" the old man hurried him aside, and stood entranced before the portrait.

Alter gazing for some minutes in silence, broken only by the half-suppressed sobs of remorse, the old man turned slowly around to Harry, and asked him in eager voice where he had obtained the original of the picture.

"It is the portrait of my wife," replied he.

"Your wife, sir! Who was she? Pardon me for asking the question," he added, "but I have heard lately that my poor Helen left an orphan daughter, and for the last six months I have been vainly trying to find the child of my lost daughter, so that by kindness and devotion to my grandchild I might, in part at least, atone for my harshness toward her mother."

Harry was beginning to tell him the story of his meeting with Helen at Rome and his subsequent marriage with her when the door opened, and his wife entered the room.

Perceiving that her husband was engaged, she was about to retreat, when the old gentleman stopped her, and after looking earnestly in her face for a few moments, exclaimed, "Pardon me, madam can you tell me your mother's maiden name?"

"Helen Treherne," replied Helen, wonderingly.

"I knew it, I knew it!" exclaimed the old man, in an excited voice. "At last I have found the child of my poor lost daughter!"

In a few words Mr. Treherne explained how he had cast off his only child, on account of her marriage with a poor officer and refused even to open her letters when she wrote asking for forgiveness.

"But, thank Heaven," said he, when he had finished his sad story, "I can atone in some measure for my hardness toward my Helen by taking her Helen to my heart, and making her my daughter."

It is needless to add that when Sir Phillip Marston heard that his son had married the daughter of one of the finest and oldest estates in the country, he at once wrote a letter of reconciliation to Harry, and after all, Helen eventually became mistress of Marston Hall, in the picture-gallery of which no painting is more valued and treasured than "The Mysterious Portrait."

A Tenor Calls "Encore."

He was a tenor singer in one of the opera companies that visited Cincinnati this season. He was a good singer, and everything he sang the audience, with that determination to get the full value of their money and a little more, which is a peculiarity of Cincinnati audiences at an opera or concert always insisted upon an encore. And he responded good naturedly, although he thought it a little hard to be compelled to perform double the work set down on the bills every night. One day while promenading Fourth street it occurred to him to do a little encoresing himself and see how it worked. He stepped into a hat store and inquired of the proprietor, who came forward to wait upon him, the price of a silk hat.

"Seven dollars," was the reply. He selected one that fitted him and paid for it, then he shouted: "Encore! encore!"

"What do you mean?" inquired the proprietor, in amazement.

"I mean that I want another hat."

"Certainly," said the proprietor, as he placed a duplicate upon the counter, wondered what the man wanted with two hats.

The tenor picked them both up and started for the door.

"Hold on!" cried the latter. "you didn't pay for that other hat."

"But I paid for the first one, and the other is an encore," replied the tenor. Seeing that the man of hats, caps and furs failed to comprehend, he said:

"I think I saw you at the opera last night?"

"Yes, I was there. But I don't see what that has to do with you paying me for—"

"Wait a bit. You paid to hear the opera given that was on the programme?"

"Yes. Certainly of course I did. I will call the two hats—"

"No matter about calling the two hats. You didn't pay to have that opera gone through with twice, did you?"

"How absurd! Certainly not. 'Spose we say twelve dollars for both—"

"Say nothing until I get through. I am the tenor of that opera troupe. Every song that I sang I was called upon to repeat, and if I am not mistaken you clapped harder than any one else in the theater. And I had to give you double the amount of goods that you had paid for, don't you see?"

The hat-store man did see by that time, and he said to the tenor: "I acknowledge the corn, you can take my hat," but he wouldn't, he only took the one he had paid for, and with a feeling of satisfaction that he had impressed a lesson upon every Cincinnati man who would encore anything, he walked out and with a genial smile pursued the even tenor of his way.

Casper Pick, of Luxemburg, Stevens county, was well pounded by Sheriff Mickleby a few days ago, for slandering the sheriff's wife.

Duels in New Orleans.

A New York Sun correspondent gives an account of some duels that took place in New Orleans about twenty-five years ago. He says: A young gentleman from Mississippi, the son of a wealthy planter, went to New Orleans to spend the gay season. He was quiet, modest and unassuming. His great wealth, fine personal appearance, cultivated mind, and engaging manners had marked him as a superior being among the throng of hard drinking, loud talking, swaggering young men of that period. He was a favorite among the ladies, and by his general deportment excited the envy and the ire of the bravadoes, who, notwithstanding their well-known dissoluteness, were admitted into society. More than one of them had attempted to fasten a quarrel upon him, but had not succeeded.

At length one of the most reckless of the famous duellists determined to grossly insult him. Accordingly one evening while the young Mississippian was sitting at a table in the rotunda of the St. Louis hotel, the professional cut-throat stepped up to the table, and seizing the glass of wine, dashed it in the enemy's face. It was supposed that, according to the code, a peremptory challenge must follow. But the Mississippian knew his man, and had perfect control of himself. He said nothing, did nothing; but quietly retired. He was voted a coward, of course, by the throng. The next day passed and he was not seen. It was supposed he had quit the city. That evening the swaggering duelist who had given him a mortal affront was in the rotunda, the lion of the night. Suddenly the Mississippian appeared.

He strode across the rotunda to where the duelist was standing, and without saying a word seized him by the mustache and goatee, jerked his mouth open and spat down his throat. He was challenged on the spot. He accepted, and being the challenged party, had the choice of weapons. This was why he had bided his time. He selected Mississippi rifles at forty yards. The meeting took place the following day out on the old Metairie course, and at the first fire the professional fell dead, with an ounce ball through his brain.

Such was the state of society in New Orleans at that time, that it was the universal custom at all balls and receptions, even of a select character, given at either the St. Louis or St. Charles hotels, to require every gentleman to be searched for concealed weapons, in the dressing-room, before he was allowed to enter the ball room.

Upon one occasion, at a ball given at the St. Louis hotel, two men, both reputed gentlemen, men of wealth and standing in the community, quarreled about an engagement to dance with a lady. High words passed, and it was supposed a duel must be had on the next day; but one of them, a few moments later, dropped a note, with a \$5 gold piece enclosed by a string to one of the hackmen on the pavement below. The note contained a request to obtain a Thug knife, and fasten it to the string. This was done, and the murderous weapon a few minutes afterward was in the possession of the soon to be murderer. A Thug knife is a short dagger-shaped blade, with a cross handle of hard wood. It is grasped as a corkscrew is when you are about to pull a cork, the blade protruding about six or eight inches from the clenched hand, between the middle fingers.

Concealing this weapon, the scoundrel requested the man with whom he had quarreled to step aside for a moment to an ante-room. The request was complied with, and no sooner had the door closed upon them than the unsuspecting man was struck to the heart with the Thug knife, and instantly killed. The murderer was arrested and allowed to give bail, but was not tried; and I was told that he is yet living in New Orleans, and, strange as it may seem, is a respected member of society. Two cotton bakers quarreled, one day, at the cotton exchange. High words passed, but no challenge followed. A few evenings afterward while they were at a social club, one of them, without a word of warning, drew a revolver. The other threw up his hands, said he was not armed, and begged for his life, which was not granted. He was shot dead. An arrest and trial followed, but the jury rendered a verdict of acquittal.

Divorces in Roumania.

A Bucharest correspondent of the London Times says divorces are extremely common there, and considered as one of the usual attendants of society. The Roumanians say that some men and their wives will always quarrel, and sometimes separate. This happens in all countries; therefore it is better to part quietly and remain good friends, so to speak, than to live in continual wrangling, or separate after a divorce suit and part enemies for life. The following incident of this custom is narrated: "I knew a young man here who informed me that he had been recently divorced from his wife; this he did in a casual conversation, and without any of the embarrassment that would attend such information in an English city. Some time afterwards I had occasion to call at his residence, and was presented by him to his mother, and then, much to my astonishment, to his ex-wife, who had called to visit them with their little daughter. There they had a pleasant chat together. When I reflected on the probable result to hair and eyes which would ensue from a meeting between an Anglo-Saxon mother and her divorced daughter-in-law, I was somewhat staggered in trying to institute a mental comparison between the merits of the two systems."

At one of our leading hotels, after a club dinner, when the cigars were on, a gentleman leaned back and asked one of the waiters to bring him a cuspidore.

"A what, sur?" said the attendant, with a vacant stare.

"A cuspidore," repeated the gentleman, hoarsely, with the annoyance a man always feels at table in attracting his neighbors' attention to his order.

"Is it on the bill, sur?" said the waiter, peering over his interrogator's shoulder.

"No, you fool," replied the now amused diner.

"I thought not," said Patrick, drawing himself up with an air of professional superiority; "cuspidores is out of season, sur!"