

THE TRAGEDY OF A TALISMAN.

A scene in the White House the Night of the Recent Elections.

It was night in the white house, says the New York Sun. The only sound was the scarcely audible click-tick that faintly smote the ear with monotonous regularity. This came not from the corner clock, for that had stopped at 2:30, nor was it the note of a dead watch nestled somewhere in the walls of the venerable mansion. The ticking proceeded from a telegraph instrument, which had been struggling for hours to tell the full story of disaster.

Night in the white house, but what a night! Hours earlier the faithful "Lige" had stolen off to bed, confessing that his tortured brain could no longer stand the click-tick of the demon magnet. One by one the members of the little group had departed, each on tiptoe and without a word of farewell, and each closing the door softly behind him, as friends do when they pass mutely out of the presence of one grievously afflicted. Wagonmaker only had turned his face and smiled. It was a smile intended to express all the offices of Christian consolation, but it was not noticed or appreciated. Silence now everywhere except the tick-click-tick of the abandoned instrument. Even the voice of baby McKee was hushed in the awful stillness of a quarter to 3 in the morning.

Night in the white house and one man awake and alone. He sat in a great easy-chair, his elbows on his arms and his head bowed down and tightly clasped between his clawing fingers. His figure was rather imposing as he sat in the chair, but when he got up and began to pace the room with restless tread, it might be observed that his legs were uncommonly short for his size.

And now something happened which was evidently the consummation of a purpose long deliberated in that midnight agony.

The man went straight to the great cabinet of carved oak between the windows of the room. With a usual display of workmanship he unlocked its central compartment and took therefrom an amorphous and rather bulky parcel in tissue paper, tied with a pink string. He nervously broke the strings and tore off layer after layer of the enveloping substance. Then a faint musty odor stole into the room, as when one opens a long-closed chest in some back garret, and the man held in his hands a shabby black hat of cylindrical shape and of the fashion of half a century ago.

He glared fiercely for a moment at this inanimate and unresisting object, then placed it on the floor and, stepping back a few feet, shook his clinched fist at the old hat.

"D—n you!" were his exact words. It was a Presbyterian oath, and the receding angel, in noting the circumstance, dropped a tear upon the page and blotting Benjamin Harrison's first damn forever from the record.

The telegraph instrument ticked once or twice and all was still again. The hat crouched helplessly at the feet of its owner. Its very helplessness was a mute appeal, but the fury of the man grew as he contemplated the grotesque, old-fashioned object.

"Tick-click-tick, tick, tick"—he started and looked around him as if the devil himself had just whispered in his ear the suggestion of a terrible deed.

Then, with his features distorted almost beyond recognition by an uncontrollable passion, his limbs quivering with the impulse of a deadly purpose, Benjamin Harrison, twenty-third president of the United States, suddenly shot up into the air with an agility surprising in so short-legged a person, and descended heels-down, square on the top of the doomed relic and discarded talisman.

And as the shape and soul went together out of the once venerated form, as it was crushed down into an unrecognizable wad of pasteboard, hide, and hair, an agonizing cry was heard through the corridors of the white house. Was it the soul of the murdered talisman, or was it only baby McKee awakened by dream or colic?

AMERICAN DOCTORS ABROAD.

Drs. Ricord and Evans—The Former the Most Decorated Man in Europe.

Dr. Philippe Ricord, whose death in Paris was announced Oct. 22, was the most decorated man in Europe, says the New York Tribune, having more than 200 crosses, medals, insignias and other tokens of gratitude and admiration bestowed on him by European potentates, and was buried amidst an almost national display of military and civic honors. He often said, in a jocular way: "The eighteenth century, just before expiring, had one more mistake to perform: it was to push me into the world. I was born the 10th of December, 1800, at eleven and three-quarters at night." The event occurred at Baltimore, where his parents resided. They were French and had taken refuge there from the French West Indies desolated at that time by the revolt of San Domingo and Guadaloupe. Dr. Ricord established himself at Paris soon after having obtained his diploma and he attained there the highest distinction in his profession and great popularity among the poor and the rich, not only in France but in all Europe. He was the first of those American doctors who have won wealth and fame in the old world, as, for instance, Dr. Sims, the obstetric practitioner; Dr. Crozier, the eye specialist; and still proprietor and director of the American Register of Paris and London. Dr. Ricord was the favorite specialist at the Tuilleries in Louis Philippe's time and Dr. Evans was a favorite at the court of Napoleon III. It was Dr. Evans who courageously drove fallen Empress Eugenie to the sea coast after the revolution of September 4, 1870, and after she had spent the night under the roof of his princely mansion in Malekoff avenue. Both were loved by the French people. Dr. Ricord was driving through the streets of Paris during one of the three days of fighting in February, 1848, and he was surprised that nobody attempted to bother him. This was explained by the returning home he read on the back of his carriage this inscription, written in chalk, "National property," the same inscription which was placed on public monuments even of a monarchical origin, to preserve them from any injury on the part of any people infuriated against anything connected with the overthrow of monarchy. During the war of 1870-71 and the commune the person of Dr. Evans was respected like that of his predecessor and countryman, Ricord, for he had given 100,000 francs to establish an American ambulance corps, placed under the management of Dr. Edward Crane, editor of the American Register. Dr. Ricord, who had been educated in America, had the quick and sharp wit of a Yankee and of a French erudite, but he never used it so as to hurt the feelings of any one. He was loved by all who approached him, and it was in the presence of an immense concourse of people, Americans and Europeans, that his funeral services were held.

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From Epoch.

"I don't see why you are always borrowing money," said the living skeleton to the dwarf. "It is a physical necessity," replied the dwarf. "How so?" "I'm always short."

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