

Tales of the Times.

TRUE STORIES AND FANCIFUL YARNS ILLUSTRATIVE OF MODERN LIFE AND CHARACTER.

HERE has been filed in the courts of this city, says a Lanark Junction, Ill., correspondent of the Philadelphia Times, a suit for divorce on grounds probably the most extraordinary in the annals of the law, those grounds being that a bona fide ghost prevents the lady bringing the suit from living with her husband in any degree of matrimonial quietude and happiness. The plaintiff is Mrs. Theron Baldwin, nee Mrs. Rippledance, of a prominent family, who was married on Dec. 14 last to Philip Baldwin of this place.

Mrs. Baldwin alleges that the ghost of Mr. Baldwin's first wife, Rosemond Baldwin, haunts their domicile, persecutes her in various ways, and altogether makes life unendurable under their joint husband's roof, and forces her to live apart from him. She declares that she was absolutely skeptical on matters supernatural, and before the beginning of her extraordinary experiences would have been regarded with the most matter-of-fact of the ideas of a ghost. Mrs. Baldwin's friends also testify to her practical and even turn of mind, but say that her disposition has been entirely altered since her marriage.

She is a bright, cheery and lively little woman, full of gay and pleasing chatter, but now betrays a nervous, depressed condition of the mind, owing, she declares, wholly to the unsettled life led by the ghost. Her story of this persecution is that on the return from their wedding tour and on her entering a mistress in the house formerly occupied by Mr. Baldwin and his first wife the first sight that met her eyes was a lady dressed in a loose white robe.

She exclaimed at the sight of this stranger seated with an air of being at home in the apartment, and on his seeming to see nothing of the figure pointed it out to her husband, and was quite offended when he declared that her eyes deceived her and that there was no one present in the room besides herself, himself, and the maid-servant who admitted them. She concluded that he was jesting with her, but insisted that there was a woman of the description she gave seated within a few feet of her. She noticed that the servant started and turned pale on listening to this description, and afterward, on being alone with the girl, she questioned her closely as to the cause of this emotion, and after a great deal of reluctance on the maid's part, won from her the avowal that the picture she had drawn was an exact likeness of her predecessor. Though much bewildered at this coincidence, and amazed at having seen this singular apparition at her residence, Mrs. Baldwin finally succeeded in dismissing it from her mind.

Several days passed without the occurrence of anything to startle her, when, one night while alone in her bedroom, her husband being away on business, she was standing before her mirror brushing out her hair. She saw all at once at her elbow this strange figure. Turning from the glass she looked about the room, but it was quite empty, and, thinking that her imagination had deceived her, she turned again to the mirror, when, as distinct as before, she saw the figure staring at her with an angry and displeased countenance.

Brightened now beyond all control of herself she ran screaming to the bedroom door, but to her astonishment found it was as securely locked as she herself had left it on entering the room. She called the cook, who was the only servant in the house, telling her what she had seen, and together they searched the bedroom and the dressing room opening into it, but found no trace of any one. She was so disturbed over this occurrence that she was unable to sleep for the rest of the night.

So much was she upset by the mystery of the thing that she wrote to her sister, Miss Anna Bell Rippledance, to room with her company when Mr. Baldwin's business took him from her. The Rippledance lady, a sprightly miss of 16, was told nothing of what had happened, and to her bright, sunny nature the unhappy lady trusted to drive from her mind the delusion which she was beginning to believe was the cause of her seeing this ghastly figure. But on the day after her arrival Miss Anna Bell destroyed this hope by remarking to her sister that she had seen a lady in white walking down the hall just before her, and asking where she had gone.

Her sister put her off with some trivial explanation, but the next day Miss Rippledance came to see her and Mr. Baldwin, saying that she had just seen a woman dressed in white enter her bedroom, and that, following her into the apartment she had been unable to find any trace of her. She insisted on her sister and Mr. Baldwin accompanying her in a further search. Mr. Baldwin was much put out at what he considered a hysterical creature of his wife's heated imagination. Mrs. Baldwin denied this, and, being upheld in her statement by her sister, the gentleman began also to look uneasy and amazed.

He went at once to Miss Rippledance's room and searched in vain for the intruder. He refused to believe that it was the spirit of his dead wife, though Mrs. Baldwin testified in her plea for divorce that on one occasion she heard her husband speaking to some one whom he addressed as a prayer, to go away and leave him in peace. On entering the room she found her husband alone, and he became angry when she asked him to whom he spoke, denying that he had been talking to any one.

first night of her installation as mistress of the house, and who is the only servant in the household who was retained after the first Mrs. Baldwin's death, resulted to her present mistress having drawn as perfect likeness of her predecessor as could only have come from one familiar with her in life or looking at her as she spoke, which is the more remarkable as Mrs. Baldwin never saw her husband's first wife while still alive.

It is understood that Mr. Baldwin promised his first wife when she was dying that he would never marry again. On being interviewed regarding the suit brought by his wife, he declared that he had nothing to say.

DON FERNANDO.

IN THE large cities of Mexico poverty is very prevalent; beggars are numerous and almshouses are resorted to as a matter of course. The laws are very strict in punishing those who openly, and those beggars resort to artful means to extort aid from charitable people. While the law expressly forbids asking alms, it does not prevent beggars from accepting aid. These professional beggars evade the law by pretending to peddle goods, sell trifles or act as street porters, etc.; but they actually live on alms bestowed by charitable people. These "professional beggars" are generally dressed in rags and tatters, and on their faces carry a woe-begone and hungry expression. Should you bestow alms on one of these gentry, he will call down the blessings of heaven and all the saints on your head; should you not give him alms, he will curse you and consign you to the hottest part of hell. Indeed, their seeming piety is only excelled by their persistency and profanity.

Adjoining the federal building in the City of Mexico was a little portico that jutted out from the main building. A Mexican occupied this place. He was a dignified-looking, middle-aged man, and while his clothes were rather old and seedy-looking, he kept them carefully brushed and always presented a neat, genteel appearance. From daylight till dark, he was to be found at his post. He wore wide-legged, white cotton pants, ornamented with a broad yellow stripe; high-heeled boots, always neatly blacked; a long, black Prince Albert coat, shining from age, buttoned closely over his chest and its lapel adorned with a bouquet of roses; his head was covered with a high stovetop hat of uncertain age and remote fashion; and a pearl gray vest decorated with a large brass watch chain; a gorgeous red sash and a sky-blue necktie completed his wearing apparel and finely set off his well-built figure. In fact, he presented such a well-dressed, genteel appearance that the employees of the federal building bestowed on him the flattering and dignified title of "Don Fernando."

Don Fernando really lived on alms, but he was too shrewd to openly solicit donations from charitable people, as such a course would lead to his arrest and conviction as a vagrant and beggar. To comply with the requirements of the law he had taken out a "merchant's license." In the eyes of the law Don Fernando was a "merchant," though his name did not figure prominently on "leagues, while, as a matter of fact, he was a beggar and depended on charity for his living.

Don Fernando had a small box and a small portable stand. He was a "merchant," so his license said, and his "stock" consisted of a few Spanish weekly papers, a box of cigars that no one could smoke, a dozen boxes of matches innocent of sulphur, and a gross of lead pencils devoid of plumbago. He could talk English pretty fair and looked upon American tourists with great favor, as he frequently secured alms from them. He claimed to keep "American books and papers" for the benefit of American tourists. These "American books and papers" consisted of a few fat volumes and one of date *El Comercio* and a bundle of Ayer's Almanacs, and patented medicine pamphlets that he had gathered up at drug stores.

Don Fernando was always on the lookout for American tourists. Should an American pass within a rod of his "business" stand, Don Fernando would instantly resume a graceful and dignified attitude and call out in English: "Here is American books and newspapers for sale; the finest collection in the city, Colonel, will you please buy a late paper?" This would fetch the tourist every time. He would look over the "selection of American books and newspapers," but, as the papers were usually out of date, he would ask for a later one. Then Don Fernando's face would assume a doleful expression, and in a half-sobbing voice he would assure the tourist "that while he spoke English, he could not read it; that news agents took advantage of him and worked off old papers on him; that he was an honest, but poor man; he had a wife and five children, the youngest of which was an infant only three days old; that he must sell his goods to procure himself and family their evening meal; would not the rich American buy something from him; should he do so, the saints in heaven would bless him."

As Don Fernando never had anything that a person would possibly desire to buy the tourist would generally bestow a few nickels in alms, and continue on his way. Don Fernando would loudly call down the blessings of heaven on his benefactor, wipe away the supposed tears, rearrange his "stock," light a cigarette, sit down, and patiently await another tourist "sucker."

Don Fernando did not seem to make great efforts to make a sale; but to every American who stopped at his "news" stand he would relate his affecting tale of poverty and woe, and lay particular stress on the fact of being the father of an infant three days old. The infant part of his pathetic story was particularly affecting, and it always fetched a dime or a quarter from the charitably disposed auditor. Had Don Fernando been the father of twins, I am sure he would have bankrupted all the tourists.

At dusk Don Fernando would "close up his shop," feeling happy that while he had made but few sales his "stock" was still undiminished, his fair receipts for the day were clear profit. He would put his "stock" in the box, shoulder it and start for his home. Bright and early the next morning he would be back and ready for "business."

Don Fernando's "news" stand was situated near the stamp department division

room of the customs service; and the clerks could clearly see him rise to his feet to undergo the treatment of the stamp department, and we could all repeat it word for word backward, forward, and in the English and Spanish. During a period of four months Don Fernando related his pathetic story to American tourists at least 22 times a day, and he never varied it a word. "Infant of three days old" never got any older. But he never attempted to tell his story to Mexicans. The clerks in the stamp building got pretty well acquainted with Don Fernando, to the detriment of his pocketbooks and morals, and believed he was an honest but unfortunate man; instead, as he proved to be, a cunning hypocrite and consummate rascal.

For several months Don Fernando occupied his place of "business," and seemed to be doing well in the matter of receiving alms; though he never directly asked for charity, and seldom made a sale.

One morning Don Fernando was absent. An hour later, my attention was attracted to an uproar in the streets. I saw three police officers half carrying and dragging an intoxicated Mexican to the jail. The prisoner was vainly resisting the officers and cursing them with choice Spanish and vigorous English oaths. I looked more closely at the prisoner, and recognized in the bruised and battered face, the well-known features of Don Fernando! But the graceful, polite and genteel air was missing. The shiny, well-lashed plug hat was crushed into a shapeless mass, and hung jauntily on his left ear; the long, black Prince Albert coat was split up the back, torn to ribbons, and the general appearance was that of a wretched, half-dressed, and half-dragged man. The sky-blue necktie, and gorgeous red sash were badly disarranged; while capricious in the cotton trousers exposed to public gaze those portions of Don Fernando's anatomy which edicts of fashion and city ordinances require to be concealed.

Don Fernando that night slept in jail, and the next day he had his trial. At the trial it was proved that he was a "vagrant character" and a "professional beggar," that he did not have a wife and five children, and that the "three-day-old infant" only existed in his fertile imagination. For months Don Fernando had been pretending to be an honest "merchant," but in reality he was only a "professional beggar," and had lived on alms gained through false pretenses and lying tales of family misfortunes.

The police magistrate sentenced Don Fernando to six months' imprisonment for "flaunting, begging and exposure of person." His "merchant's license" was revoked, and his stall near the federal building placed "to rent."

I frequently saw the prisoner while he was working out his fine on the streets, but in the staid, old-fashioned and forbidding convict I could hardly recognize the graceful, polite and genteel Don Fernando, late "News Merchant," near the federal building.

The moral of this story is: Don't beg, but if necessary, beg right. It is more honorable if it is more risky. —SUN.

TOLD BY AN ATTORNEY.

SEVERAL members of the bar were sitting around the stove in the court room, the judge amongst them, witnesses, litigants, jurors and spectators having mostly retired. There was a lull in the proceedings, and the lawyers were indulging in reminiscences of the bench and bar.

The judge had recalled the familiar incident related in one of McGuffey's school readers wherein it is told of the famous Chief Justice Marshall that at some country inn in Virginia he had listened in silence to an argument amongst some young law students discussing and ventilating their views on the evidences of Christianity, and after they had exhausted the subject as they supposed, how they turned to the venerable old man whom they took for some old layman in the neighborhood, and in the great chief justice of the United States rose up and fell upon their puerile argument against Christianity like a thousand of bricks and smote the presumptuous young fools hip and thigh.

"That story is somewhat fleshy," added the judge, "for Marshall was not likely to surprise anyone in that way. It always struck me as being on a par with the other story in the reader about the boy who climbed up the wall of the Natural Bridge to carve his name higher than all the others to carve his name with his jack-knife. As the rock is limestone to carve one's name on, and with a jack-knife would be a difficult task."

"Perhaps the story was written by an Englishman," added a lawyer, "and he made the very natural mistake of supposing that the rock was the same as that found in England, which is mostly soft enough to be easily cut by a knife."

"Well," remarked the district attorney, "I never placed much faith in the Marshall story for I suppose it is like many other goodly-gooly stories which are told to point a moral, but the story may have had a grain of truth in it. I know of a similar incident, however, within my own experience."

"How was that?"

"I was living in the town of P—, and had just commenced the practice of law. Of course clients were scarce and I with my diploma from a law school and my license to practice had waited and waited for business which did not show up until, to keep the wolf from the door, I 'accepted' the nomination for police magistrate of the town of P—, and on account of my poverty, I suppose, was elected by a good majority."

"I got fees instead of salary, the marshal and I, and of course it behooved the students made it a practice to be at the railroad depot to see the incoming and outgoing trains. They also had a habit of getting on the trains, riding out of town a short distance and jumping off, walk back to town. This they did at considerable risk to themselves. Although trains did not run so fast at that time as they do now there was some complaint made about it and the town council passed an ordinance against the practice. It was intended for the benefit of the

students, of course, but it increased our jurisdiction, and like most courts," he bowed to the judge, "we were not slow to accept the increase."

"We had enforced this ordinance on several instances, no one questioning its validity. One day the marshal, happening to be near the depot, saw a passenger jump from the train while it was in motion. Here was a fish for his net. The passenger seemed to be a countryman from the neighborhood, as he was dressed in the uniform of the farmers of that region, that is, he wore a broad-brim straw hat, a coarse suit of clothes, and his pants were secured in his boots tops after the manner of the husbandmen. His hair was stiff and long and shaggy as if they had not received his attention for some time.

"Although our ordinance was mainly directed at students, yet the marshal, who was no respecter of persons, especially when they were strangers and would likely pay a small fine rather than go to the expense of employing counsel to defend them, arrested the stranger in the act and immediately brought him before the court."

"Next day we happened to have a forcible entry and detainer suit on trial in my court, involving the possession of a valuable tract of land near town, and there were several lawyers in court, some engaged in the trial and others hearing the proceedings.

"When the marshal came in with his prisoner the latter was offered a seat on a bench in the corner of the room. He announced that he had a prisoner present ready to stand his trial, and I, as judge, had to sidetrack the civil business on hand to attend to the criminal.

"I read the complaint to the prisoner and asked him if he was ready to plead; and if he desired counsel.

"He said he would defend his own case and would plead not guilty.

"This attracted the attention of the lawyers who like to see the man with a fool for a client, and I remember that Colonel H., who was present, engaged in the civil case and was a distinguished lawyer from the city of B., looked at the prisoner with an air of recognition and smiled more than once at the further proceedings against the prisoner as if he were some well-known joke in the matter, known only to him and the prisoner.

However, we proceeded to introduce witnesses and the town having closed its case and everything being soon heard and fully understood by the court, the court was satisfactorily convinced that the prisoner was guilty beyond all question of getting off a moving train within the corporate limits, this time, and from the appearance of the prisoner it was an even guess whether he could pay his fine or would be compelled to sweat it out in duress via the town jail.

The court asked if he had any witnesses and he replied that he had not.

Then after reading to him the ordinance and reviewing the evidence, I requested him to stand up, and he complied very cheerfully, not seeming to appreciate the gravity of the situation nor the danger he was in.

"You have been lawfully tried," I began, in as deep and grave a manner as became the police magistrate of the corporation of P—, "for the offense of violating the provisions of ordinance no. 22 of the town of P—, by jumping from a moving train within the corporate limits of said town on the blank day of blank, eighteen hundred and blank. The court finds you guilty in manner and form as charged in the complaint, and assesses your punishment at a fine of ten dollars and costs. Have you anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon you?"

"Well, yes," he said, "By the way, your honor, have you at hand a copy of the charter of your city?"

"I had a copy of the charter and got it and handed it to him.

"Better plead guilty, general," observed Colonel H. to the defendant. "Who on top here leaves all hope behind?"

But he didn't. He gave us a lecture on the law of municipal corporations such as had not been heard before in that court and such as I venture to say will never be heard there again. His voice was deep and clear, and before he was done we were thoroughly convinced that our council had no power to prohibit anyone from getting off a train head first if he thought fit, and we were equally convinced that our prisoner should be treated as became his situation. I dismissed the case out of hand and bringing forward my box of cigars, offered one to him, which he accepted. Then Colonel H. came forward and began congratulating the prisoner upon his escape and we were soon apprised of the fact that he was the attorney general of the United States.

his case it did, at least, as it afterward turned out, for one day he refused to drink with the ugliest, most dangerous man he had, and a row ensued.

"The tough" whipped out a pistol and would have killed the fellow, but some one caught his arm, and the other man went down on his knees and begged for his life. It was no good, however; the tough was drunk and was determined to kill him, and to prevent an open murder some one suggested that they light it out in the street, and a revolver was put into the hands of the tenderfoot. He didn't know how to handle the gun at all, and while one man showed him what to do, four or five more held the tough. Then they were put at 10 paces, and a more abject, scared specimen I never saw than that tenderfoot. He could hardly stand up, and his pistol sabbled about as if it were swung to a string. The tough even felt more than any one else, for he felt sure of his victim.

"After he had watched the shivering wretch for a moment he pulled up his gun, and at the same time the tenderfoot pulled up his and tried to aim it. Then bang went the tough's gun, and almost simultaneously followed the report of the tenderfoot's. The tough dropped like a shot, and the tenderfoot threw up his right hand and howled with pain and fear. We rushed up and found the tough dead, with a bullet through his heart, and the tenderfoot with his fingers and hand bruised and bleeding, but not seriously injured. The bullet from the tough's pistol had struck the trigger of the tenderfoot's and discharged it with fatal results."

"The strange-looking man had apparently no more to say, and his listeners looked at each other questioningly.

"The drummer coughed suspiciously.

"I ask," he said, "how it happened that the tough's bullet didn't take care of the tenderfoot's finger off before it reached the trigger of his pistol?"

"Simple enough," said the strange-looking man, frankly, "he didn't have his finger on the trigger; he had it on the trigger guard, and he would have been pulling on it yet to make the gun go off if luck hadn't been against the tough."

"The strange-looking man relapsed into his former silence, and nobody had the cheek to try to tell any more stories. —Detroit Free Press.

MARRIAGES OUT OF FASHION.

So By the Way Are Births and Incidents, Daily Deaths, Too.

From the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

In all the three important events in man's career—birth, marriage and death—there has been a remarkable falling off in the last 25 years, confined to no country, but existing throughout the civilized globe. We need not inquire into the causes, for we can see them too clearly around us. The chief cause which lies at the bottom of all the trouble is the decline in marriage. Marriage has gone out of favor with the emancipation of woman and the greater difficulty in making a living, and this decrease largely explains the falling off in the birth rate, but not wholly, for the average number of births to each marriage is now only a seventh of what it was only a few years ago. The only redeeming feature in this picture is the declining death rate, due to better sanitation and a better knowledge of how to care for ourselves; indeed, but for this improvement the population of the world would be at a standstill today, as the birth rate is just what the death rate was a quarter of a century ago. We are still improving our sanitary condition and saving many lives that were hitherto sacrificed, but we must recognize the fact that sooner or later we will reach the highest point which we can hope to achieve. On the other hand, there is no limit in the matter of a decreasing birth rate, and it may continue indefinitely until it reaches the zero point. In France the population is actually declining, and would probably be declining but for the immigration from Italy, Belgium and Germany. In Ireland and Hawaii it has been declining for nearly half a century, and the whole civilized world seems to be drifting in that direction. There is no danger of very much crowding on the planet, as philosophers feared. Civilization will prevent this, and Malthus could not visit us today, would probably be very much surprised to see how naturally his suggestions have been carried out.

Seventeen Her Name Of.

A special dispatch from the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, from Washington, D. C., says: "Where is this person?" asked Secretary Morton, as he pointed to a name on the pay roll. Against the name was set the salary of \$1,800 a year, the highest received by any woman in the department of agriculture.

"She is away on leave," replied the clerk.

"How long has she been away?"

"Six months," replied the clerk.

"Strike the name from the roll," said the secretary.

Something was said about the "influence" behind the \$1,800 movement.

"It makes no difference who she is," said the secretary. "We will have no one drawing \$1,800 a year and not rendering any service."

The name went off. And the old-timers are wondering what will happen when the woman comes back.

"Why," said one startled employe, "the whole world is behind her."

They tell a story of a senator's experience with this woman. He had heard that she had said her husband was the inventor of the gun which killed more Yankees than any other made in the south. It occurred to him to ask for her official head for the remark. The woman learned of the senator's action and she went to him.

"You have not removed from my place," she said, "and I will see that you lose your seat in the senate."

"I believe she would, too," said the senator in telling about the interview.

Another case somewhat similar to this of Secretary Morton occurred recently. A cabinet officer heard of a woman holding a "sit-me-up" in his department and sent for her immediate superior.

"Why isn't she discharged?" he asked.

"We would have a row on our hands," was the answer. "She is a sister-in-law of Congressman Hank."

"Mark her off," ordered the secretary.

"She would go if she was the sister-in-law of Andrew Jackson and Thomas Jefferson put together. The people in this department will earn their money."

A Bona for Ladies.

French Tansy Tablets are for the relief and cure of painful and irregular menses and will remove all obstructions, no matter what the cause. The only safe and sure remedy on the market. Manufactured by A. Augendre, Paris, France, \$2 per box and for sale only by D. M. Noble Drug Company, sole agents, Butte, Mont.

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This great educational advantage our readers may put within their reach for the insignificant sum of 10 cents a day. The terms are so easy that it will be continued definitely. Its many advantages do not permit of detail.

Imported Song Birds.

The success of the efforts of our northern neighbors in Oregon in importing song birds is attested by the following, taken from the *Oregonian*: Speaking of this subject it says: "Reports are coming in from a number of places to Secretary Hager, of the association for the importation of song birds, in regard to the return of the birds from their winter migration.

The song thrushes are back. One pair, which raised broods of young out near the cemetery, are again nesting here. A new brood of young is being raised in the same place and there with his sweet songs. A number of other thrushes have been seen in the city and neighborhood. The black starlings have also returned, and a pair are building a nest near the heart of the city, where they nested last year. The male is frequently heard singing from the top of a church spire. Frank Dekum went around to have a look at them the other day, and was much pleased to see them back. Goldfinches and chaffinches have returned in large numbers. The skylarks do not migrate. Flocks of 15 or 20 of them were seen on the Riverside road while the snow was on the ground, and a number of them were fed by R. Scott of Milwaukee during the cold spell. They are now heard singing on fine days, but they have not had a chance to sing much of late. A number of black thrushes have been seen at Summit, and in Washington and Marion counties. The only report in regard to nightingales last season came from Mr. Hughes, who lives near Silverton. He wrote that a pair of nightingales had been nesting near a spring on his place, and had raised broods there for two or three summers. He will report if they return again this season.

On the whole, the results of the importation of song birds have been very satisfactory."

Remain Even in Peril.

One humorous accident connected with the fire is told by a member of engine 25. He was with a few members of that company attempting to save a screaming young lady who was hanging from the third story of the Ames building. At the risk of their own lives they finally placed a ladder on the burning building, and one man took the young lady from her perilous position and placed her safely on the ground. Instead of running as fast as she could for her life she carefully took hold of her skirts and lifted them so as not to wet them, and slowly picked her way among the debris and on to the opposite sidewalk, where she disappeared. —Boston Evening Record.