

The Times' Daily Short Story.

A GHOST ABOARD

Copyright, 1904, by T. C. McClure. We were bound from Liverpool to a South American port in the new clipper ship Danube, and one night, when seven or eight days out, we lost the breeze and lay idly on a glassy sea.

A sailor named Charles Jones was on watch as lookout at 10 o'clock. He was a sober, dignified man and the best seaman of the crew. As second mate of the ship I had charge of that watch at the time, while the captain and chief mate were lounging about on the fore and main decks.

Of a sudden Jones yelled out and came running aft in a state of great excitement. He was in such a perturbed state that it was five minutes before he could relate his story. He was pacing to and fro, he said, keeping a bright lookout and not thinking of anything in particular when he suddenly found something walking beside him. He heard no step or sound, but a "something" stood shoulder to shoulder with him. It wasn't a man nor was it yet a shadow. The sailor felt its breath on his cheek and turned to seize it, but the "something" laughed at him and glided away.

I was greatly provoked with the man and charged him with having slept on his post, though I knew that I did him injustice in this. It was a cloudy night, with the moon breaking through now and then, and I contended that his "something" was but a shadow and ordered him back to his post. Nothing further happened that night, and the next morning the captain called the old man aft and gave him to understand that if he felt or saw any more ghosts it would be bad for him. The crew would talk the matter over and, of course, side with Jones, but that anything further would be seen of the "something" no man believed.

When ten days had gone by and nothing more had turned up we began to look upon the ghost as a good joke, and the two men who saw it were the butt of ridicule. At 1 o'clock of a certain morning, however, the breeze being small and the night without a moon, though fairly light, the chief mate stood looking to windward over the port quarter at what he believed was a sail. His watch were all wide awake, and he could hear the footsteps of the man on lookout as he paced.

The officer had been standing still for perhaps five minutes when he felt a hand laid on his arm and icy breath on his cheek, and as he wheeled about there was the sound of low laughter. To his surprise and consternation no one was visible. His impression as he turned was that I had softly approached to test his nerves. For a few seconds he was as sure that he had a human being to deal with as that he lived, but when he found nothing before him and yet heard the mocking laughter his flesh began to creep.

Going back to the binnacle, he asked the man at the wheel if he had seen or heard anything queer. The man replied that he had seen something like a shadow beside the mate, and he had also heard a laugh that made his flesh creep. The mate pookpooked and bulldozed to make light of the affair, as it was polite to do; but, though the man was reduced to silence, it was evident that he was fully satisfied that a spook was aboard.

Next morning the mate related his experience to the cabin, and as he was a man whose word could not be questioned no one thought of ridiculing him. On the contrary, we began fishing for some natural and plausible reason to account for the thing. Various theories were raised, dismissed and abandoned for others for the next week, and we found ourselves no better off than when we began.

Two weeks had gone by before we got another scare. This time it came to the captain himself, as he hoped it would. At 10 o'clock at night he sat reading in his cabin when a chill passed over him, and he felt two ice cold hands on his neck. It was at that moment a strong man had put his thumbs together on the back of his neck and clutched with his fingers. The captain started up and shook himself clear of the clutch and whirled to strike at whoever was behind him.

No person was there, but as if in answer to the captain's oath of astonishment there was the same low, sarcastic laughter as had been heard by the others. His stateroom door was open and had been for two hours, and the laughter died away in that direction, and the door gently closed of itself.

The captain came on deck and called me and whispered that a man had passed into his stateroom. Together we descended and made a search, and, of course, nothing was found. No man could have been more upset. His experience had been even more trying than the others, and all his arguments had been torn to shreds. Something had gripped him, though no marks were left to prove it. Some one or something had laughed, though the captain was all alone in his cabin and was sure that the sound could not have come from his own lips.

We saw nothing more of the ghost business and reached port safely with all well, but the yarn got into the papers and was circulated among the taverns, and when ready to sail again we found ourselves without a crew. By paying double wages we secured one after a long delay, and the craft was seventeen days out when the ghost appeared again and laid its cold hands on one of the men.

The entire crew before the mast seized the boats and abandoned the ship, and, though her officers stuck by her and eventually got her into a port, she had received such a bad name that she never made another voyage. She could not be sold at any price, but had to be broken up. M. QUAD.

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TWO MYSTERY CASES.

Clew in That of Woman Found Dead in Riverside Park.

New York, Dec. 29.—Two mysterious deaths, either or both of which may have resulted from murderous assault, are being investigated by the police today. Both the victims were women, young and well dressed, and each died from a broken neck.

One is the woman who body was found lying on a bench in Riverside Park Monday. The other woman was found lying dead in the basement of a tenement house in Delancey street last night.

Following an all-night inquiry the woman found in the Delancey street basement was identified today as Mrs. Cecelia Butler the widow of a railroad employee who died two weeks ago. Her relatives believe her death was accidental.

In the Riverside Park case however, the continuance of investigating strengthens the belief that the woman was murdered. The police today were trying to find a man wearing the uniform of a street car or elevated railway employee who was seen half-dragging a woman toward Riverside Park late Sunday night.

MAINE'S NEW LAW ENFORCED.

Man Indicted for Killing a Man Mistaken for a Deer.

Skowhegan, Me., Dec. 29.—The grand jury of the supreme court arose today and reported indictments against Maurice W. Cayford of Cornville, who was arrested for killing Fred Butler of Skowhegan by mistaking him for a deer. There were two counts, one for alleged manslaughter and one for carelessness in killing a man while hunting. If a conviction in the latter count is made by the court it will be the first under the recently enacted statute.

J. HAMPTON MOORE APPOINTED.

New Chief of the Bureau of Manufactures in the Commerce Department.

Washington, Dec. 29.—President Roosevelt has appointed J. Hampton Moore of Philadelphia chief of the bureau of manufactures of the department of commerce and labor.

Mr. Moore is president of the National League of Republican clubs and was formerly city treasurer of Philadelphia. He has accepted the appointment and will enter upon the discharge of his duties about the first of the year.

HOPES HE WILL DIE.

Sheriff Peck's Demise Before Execution of Mrs. Rogers Desired by Woman.

White River Junction, Dec. 28.—Sheriff Peck received from Boston on Monday an anonymous letter in a feminine hand, in which the writer expressed a hope that he would drop dead before the time set for Mrs. Rogers' execution, and that after death he might go to the lower regions.

KINGS AND QUEENS.

It has been shown that out of a list of 2,550 sovereigns 200 have been overthrown, 134 assassinated, 123 taken prisoners of war, 108 executed, 100 slain in battle, 64 forced to abdicate, 28 died by their own hands, 25 were tortured to death, while 23 became mad or imbecile. This gives a total of 905 whose reigns have ended miserably.

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GREEK PLAY OUTDOORS

Will be Given by Students at Berkeley, Cal.

ANCIENT MUSIC PRESERVED

The "Ajax" of Sophocles Is Being Rehearsed by Students in Greek Department of California University.

The fine eucalyptus and cypress trees which look down into the beautiful Greek theater at Berkeley, Cal., are to see something new under the American sun—a Greek tragedy given in the open air, just as it might have been given thousands of years ago among the hills of Greece, says the New York Herald.

The opening of the theater a year ago was celebrated by the production of "The Birds," under the direction of the classical department. It is now of an undertaking to give a tragedy and to assist the students in this effort. President Wheeler of the University of California and the department of Greek invited Miss Mabel Hay Barrows of New York to come to California and take the direction of the "Ajax" of Sophocles. She is in Berkeley, and the work is well under way.

The story of Ajax makes its appeal today as much as it did when it was played before the old Athenians, 400 years before Christ. It is as follows:

The arms of Achilles had been awarded, after his death, to Odysseus, though Ajax was generally considered second to Achilles among heroes of that day. Ajax was angry with thwarted ambition and vowed vengeance on the men who had voted against his claims. In the dead of night he went out to kill these foes, or at least the chief of them, Agamemnon, Menelaos and Odysseus. Athena, who loved him none too well, turned his blind fury against the cattle which had been brought in as booty. When morning dawned and reason returned he was overwhelmed with remorse and determined to end his own life.

He bids farewell to wife and child and friends, his warriors and sailors from Salamis, and seeking a secret spot on the seashore, buries his sword hilt in the sand, falls on the point and dies. His heartbroken wife finds the body, but before it can be removed Agamemnon and Menelaos arrive in anger, declaring that the body of the would be murderer must be left a prey for birds of carrion. Teucer, half brother of Ajax, demands decent burial for the dead chieftain and, through his persuasions, backed up by the unexpected approval of Odysseus, permission is granted to Teucer and his friends to deal with the body according to usage. The play ends with the funeral procession, the little child leaning his hand upon his father's Bier, warriors and sailors following, with Teucessa, the stricken wife, a picture of sorrow and desolation.

The chorus, made up of fifteen men, so distinctly a feature of a Greek tragedy, plays an important part. The music for this chorus was written specially for the play. The composer, Willys Peck Kent, of New York, made a study of all the scraps of Greek music that have survived to the present time, including the famous hymn to Apollo which was unearthed at Delphi ten or a dozen years ago. The voices are accompanied by a quartet of clarinets.

The simplicity of this drama, with its unity of thought and action, is its main charm. It is rich in beautiful lines and interesting in grouping. It is a masterpiece that moves the heart of those who see it acted, even though they may not understand a word of Greek.

The training of the students is left for their academic instructors. They are required to read and reread a good English version till they are familiar with the story of the play, the action it demands and the emotions that are excited. After some competition for parts they are assigned in accordance with the material that offers, certain requirements having to be considered. Ajax must be the largest and tallest of all; Odysseus shorter; Agamemnon tall and handsome; the messenger fleet; the attendants strong enough to shoulder Ajax after the death scene; Teucessa pretty and slight; her attendants pathetic and graceful. These physical requirements have been fairly met among the students and graduates at Berkeley. Miss Barrows herself takes the part of Teucessa.

Then comes the learning of the lines, no small task when 150 or more lines must become so thoroughly familiar that they trip from the tongue with ease and fluency, sounding like poetry. Added to this difficulty is the fact that the modern Greek pronunciation is used in this production. The accepted pronunciation of the university is the old Erasmian, but on account of its superior musical quality, especially for singing, Miss Barrows prefers the living pronunciation.

It was the joy of giving a play in an outdoor setting that induced Miss Barrows to cross the continent in the heat of summer and spend two months drilling the students in their lines, dances and singing. Every day and all day long she may be found in the beautiful theater training the actors by ones and twos or in larger groups, in spite of the hundreds of wayfarers, Templars, Odd Fellows and ordinary tourists who wander up the hill to see this new California wonder nestled among the trees, which are even indebted to the Greek for the very names they bear—eucalyptus and cypress.

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HALL & RUOKEL, NEW YORK

HUGE PILE OF BLAZING HATS.

Idaho Republicans Burn Headgear as Result of Election Promise.

It is doubtful if any city in the United States can boast of as peculiar an election celebration as the Republicans recently held at Moscow, Idaho, says the Chicago Inter Ocean. For over an hour a huge fire, fed by hats, burned within one block of the center of the city, while a gang of bareheaded men, shouting with might and main, danced about to the great delight of the spectators.

On election day Moscow Republicans, feeling sure of victory, were loudly proclaiming on Main street what they would do to the Democrats in the nation. "We'll carry everything in the United States except Missouri, and if Missouri joins the Union we'll burn our hats," they shouted, and with a general round of handshaking the bargain was sealed.

True to their word, the Republicans began gathering hats until the collection numbered several hundred. Just as darkness came the hats, packed in half a dozen barrels, were unloaded near the center of the city, and the fire was soon blazing fiercely. This was great fun for a few minutes, but it soon became too tame a celebration for Moscow.

Suddenly with a great rush everybody else's hat, and about a minute later there were fifty bareheaded men watching the flames devour their headgear. But Republican hats did not make a big enough blaze, and a general raid resulted in a good collection of Democratic "hats." The crowd scattered save those who had nothing to lose and a few of the bolder spirits. At frequent intervals a Democrat would be located, and then a hot foot race and another hat was dropped into the barrel.

Moscow citizens are used to practical jokes, and all was taken good naturedly.

Future of the Automobile.

After a time perhaps the automobile will cease to be a fad as it is now, says the Columbia State. Millionaires and those who think themselves millionaires will no longer use the machines for amusement purposes alone. The horseless carriage will be put to practical, sensible uses and will fill a now vacant place in our domestic economy.

Chinese Cues.

The custom of Chinese wearing pig-tails is not so very ancient. It dates from 1627, when the Manchus, who then commenced their conquest of the Celestial empire, enforced this fashion of doing the hair as a sign of degradation.

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USE FOR AMERICAN RATS.

Rodents Killed to Furnish Ear and Nose Flaps for Japanese Troops.

A use has been found for American rats outside of forming an ingredient for chop suey, says a dispatch from Seattle, Wash. They are being used by the Japanese to keep their ears and noses warm while they are fighting Russians. Only his hide is pressed into service, and a large number of these hides come from Seattle.

According to the Japanese authorities, patriotic rat catchers of Seattle have a method of obtaining the hides of the rodents peculiarly their own. They first catch the rats in a trap, then tap them on the head with a monkey wrench, skin them and hang the hides over a radiator to dry. After this the hides are shipped to the orient, where they are made into ear flaps for the Japanese soldiers.

Nearly every Japanese in Seattle has developed into a rat catcher. Probably the cause of the decrease in the rat population would not have been discovered for a long time but for Harry Key, a porter in a saloon, upon whom devolved the duty of freeing the place from rats. A few months ago Harry was not anxious to catch rats, but of late it has become a mania with him. He would rather catch rats than eat.

It was thought that the rats caught were being disposed of as was any other refuse. But one of the employees happened to find Harry busy making wild lunge at imprisoned rats with a monkey wrench. The Japanese was so intent on his work that he did not know anybody was watching him. When all the rodents in the cage had been killed the Japanese started to skin the biggest one. When the operation was completed the hide was carefully hung over the radiator to dry. Then the employee began to question him.

Every Japanese who has any loyalty, Harry said, has developed into a rat catcher. The rodents are being killed by hundreds. So fixed has become the habit in the minds of the Japanese that if they see a rat on the street they start for it for all they are worth, and several of the little brown men, in their zeal to get one more ear flap for a soldier, have almost dived into a sewer after one of the elusive rodents.

FIVE COWS DROWNED.

Animals Wandered Onto Ice at West Ferrisburg and Broke Through.

Verdun, Dec. 28.—Five cows owned by William Kimball of West Ferrisburg broke through the ice on Lake Champlain Tuesday and were drowned.

AGREE WITH ADDICKS MEN.

Regular Delaware Republicans Compromise on Legislative Offices.

Dover, Del., Dec. 29.—In the organization of the Delaware legislature today the Union, or Addicks, faction and the Regular Republicans reached an agreement on the temporary officers of the two branches.

In the House, Representative Boggs, Union Republican, was elected temporary speaker, and Representative Armstrong, Regular Republican, temporary clerk. After the senators-elect had been sworn in, the Senate elected Senator Sparks, Regular Republican, temporary secretary. Lieut.-Governor Cannon presided over the Senate.

Both branches endeavored to effect permanent organization, but failed. A recess was then taken until later in the day.

DROPPED DEAD.

Mrs. Ann Eagan of Montpelier, Mother of T. W. Eagan.

Montpelier, Dec. 30.—Mrs. Ann Eagan, aged 75 years, widow of the late Thomas Eagan, dropped dead yesterday at the home of a neighbor. Mrs. Eagan was engaged in washing for awhile, after which she sat down to rest. Then she went over to the residence of a neighbor on Northfield street. Here she remained for a few minutes. Starting for home again she took three steps and fell dead.

The deceased was born in Ireland and came to this country 27 years ago. Two sons survive her, J. J. and T. W. Eagan, the latter being the well-known stone dealer. He went to Albany yesterday and did not hear of the death of his mother until he arrived in Vt. city.

GOV. BELL MAY ATTEND.

State's Executive Planning to Go to Roosevelt's Inauguration.

It is expected that Gov. Charles J. Bell and his staff will attend the inauguration of President Roosevelt in Washington, March 4. The details of the arrangement for Vermont's participation in the inaugural exercises and parade are now in the hands of Adjt.-Gen. W. H. Gilmore, of Fairlee. All organizations, societies, and other companies of Vermonters that may desire to participate in the parade should communicate with General Gilmore.

H. H. ROGERS III.

New York Dec. 29.—H. H. Rogers, who was at his office yesterday for the first time in a week, is not in the best of health, according to several of his personal friends. Last week he was kept at his home three days by order of his physician, and yesterday he did not stay downtown long. His friends have advised him to take a rest from business for the time being, but it is understood that he is not willing to do so.