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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS
OF THE
LITTLE TEW GHOST,
REVIEWED IN CONNECTION WITH
THE LANCASHIRE BOGIE,
AND THE
TABLE-TALKING AND SPIRIT-RAPPING
OF THE PRESENT DAY.

BY
EDGAR HEWLETT,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, WIGAN, LANCASHIRE.

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P R E F A C E.

IN laying the following narrative before the public, I beg to assure them that it is no overdrawn picture; but a true statement of only a portion of the facts connected with this singular case;—if all the particulars were recorded, they would fill a volume;—should any person doubt my veracity, I beg to say that there are many witnesses still living in Little Tew and its neighbourhood, who are fully acquainted with all the particulars, and who would readily confirm what I have written, though “some are fallen asleep.”

Christian friends have advised me to publish the account, and I sincerely hope it will be the means of doing some good. The perusal of these facts will forcibly remind the reader of that awful delusion of Satan, the Table-Talking and Spirit-Rapping of the present day.

Reader, I solemnly warn you to avoid such things as you would a pestilence. Do you say, what harm is there in it? My reply is, much, very much in a temporal point of view; but who can tell how much when viewed in connexion with the being, the well-being of an immortal soul? The lengths to which it is carried are awful in the extreme, especially in America; and the fatal consequences attending the same are

dreadful to contemplate, and should operate as a solemn warning to us not to tempt God, or give heed to seducing spirits; but that we should resist the devil, that he may flee from us. It is to be feared that many who profess and call themselves Christians, know nothing of the devices of Satan, and are therefore led captive by him at his will.

I had in my hand a few days since a list of the names of about twenty persons who had indulged in this sin, and I am sorry to add that the whole number are now either in madhouses or in premature graves. Perhaps these persons once said, "what harm is there in it?" And now where are they? Reader, are you a Christian? If so, have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity. "Should not a people seek unto their God?" "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God," &c. &c.

Fearlessly oppose all that is contrary to godliness in word and practice. Seek his glory in all you say or do, put your whole trust in him, and you shall never be ashamed.



PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE LITTLE TEW GHOST, REVIEWED IN CONNECTION WITH
THE LANCASHIRE BOGIE, AND THE TABLE-TALKING
AND SPIRIT-RAPPING OF THE PRESENT DAY.

DURING the years 1838-39 I was frequently called upon, in the providence of God, to visit the village of Little Tew, in Oxfordshire, for the purpose of preaching the gospel, and thus became acquainted with several families of respectability, and many amongst them were persons who feared the Lord.

Mrs. K., a very respectable farmer's widow, and her daughter, a middle-aged lady, were of the number, and near to them was a modest, quiet, and unassuming young woman about twenty years of age, named Hannah, to whom they were attached on account of the probity of her conduct, and kind disposition. This young woman stated that an old woman one day presented herself at the door, and wanted to tell her fortune. She reproved the woman, saying that she was an impostor, and could not look into futurity, and had better go about her business. At this the old woman, greatly enraged, said she *would* tell her fortune, that she would be married to a young man in three months, and gave some description of his person.

Hannah accused her of telling lies, and shut the door in her face. Shortly afterwards she discovered, or imagined that she saw, something very ugly resembling an *eft*, or *asker*, as they are commonly called in Lancashire, hanging upon her gown, which so greatly alarmed her as to occasion a violent fit; her troubles had now commenced, she became subject to fits which so much affected her health as to unfit her for service; she therefore left her situation, and went to reside with her relatives: here her health soon improved, and within three months, as previously intimated by the old woman, she was married to a respectable young man with whom she had before kept company. I do not remember

what interval elapsed between the time of her marriage, and the strange sounds being heard in her dwelling. She had an infant child when I first saw her, and at that time was evidently suffering much both in mind and body, from some invisible agency. Unearthly sounds were heard to proceed from various parts of the house, which greatly terrified her, and threw her into violent fits, in which she frequently lay for many hours, and was at length with much difficulty restored to consciousness.

The sounds heard in the house varied much ; being sometimes like a scratching noise, at other times as a moaning sound, and frequently as a shrill whistle.

For some weeks they went on in this manner, tormenting the poor woman day and night. Others would hear the sounds, but were not affected by them in the same manner as Hannah.

At length this evil one appeared to grow more bold, and not content with sounds, it began to display its power upon inanimate things. The medicine sent by the medical man for Hannah's use, was usually placed on the dresser shelves, but was several times thrown to the floor in the middle of the room by an invisible hand, when no person was near to it ; or, when about to be taken, the cup into which it was poured had been dashed out of her hand and broken to pieces on the floor.

In consequence of this proceeding, Miss K., the lady before referred to, kindly undertook to keep the medicine in her own house, and Hannah went there, at stated times, to take it from her hands. When she was seated by the fire, it would frequently pull her gown with a downward tug, and at other times untie her apron, and throw it to the further part of the house in an instant. Among other mischievous freaks, it would take off her wedding-ring, and hide it in some part of the house, or secrete the key of her door in a place where no one would think of looking for it, or break the windows of the cottage, thump the bed-room floor,

or lift up the lid of the kneading trough, and let it fall down with violence.

These things frequently occurring, caused great commotion in the village and neighbouring towns, and formed the chief topic of conversation. But when a voice was heard, some of the people were filled with terror and dismay, while others doubted, and many declared they would not believe there was anything supernatural; yet how to account for what was heard and seen they could not tell. Amongst the latter number was a strong hearty widow woman who kept a public house in the village, who said she was determined to be satisfied about the matter, but for her own part she believed it to be some trick of Hannah's. Accordingly she went to the cottage, and on being told that the windows had been broken by this unknown one, she expressed a wish to examine the bed-room windows, and went up stairs alone for the purpose of doing so; but how great was her surprise when she was lifted from the floor towards the ceiling, and again replaced upon her feet, without sustaining any injury to her person. So great was her terror of mind, that she instantly returned home, and was confined to her bed for several days, owing to the shock her nervous system had sustained. She went no more to the cottage, so that I presume she was fully satisfied.

It had now become quite a familiar spirit in the house, such as we read of in the eighth chapter of Isaiah, and nineteenth verse, and it not only peeped and muttered, but at times spoke audibly, using very vulgar language, and sometimes swearing dreadfully. Those who knew the poor woman, sympathized much with her, and were anxious to get rid of so unwelcome a guest as speedily as possible; they therefore determined on holding a prayer meeting in the cottage, in hopes it might thus be driven away from the place; but to their surprise, no sooner were they assembled together at the time appointed, than it was evident there was an uninvited and unwelcome visitor amongst

them reminding us of that remarkable passage in Job ii. 1.

When either of the brethren engaged in prayer, an unearthly voice ironically shouted aloud Amen. One of the persons present ventured to interrogate it, asking who it was, and why it came there, and also entreated it to leave; but all the answer obtained was a chuckling fiendish laugh. On another occasion a person was more successful in obtaining an answer; various questions were put, and a rambling answer was given, that he was the spirit of a departed person; at the same time giving his name, and stating some circumstances in his history, nearly all of which on inquiry proved to be false; thus proving him to be a lying, mischievous, and malicious spirit. Hundreds of persons visited the cottage from all parts of the neighbourhood, the Oxford newspapers had several letters in them, headed "The Little Tew Ghost;" and one letter in particular stated that the Rector and Fellows of Exeter College, Oxford (to whom Little Tew belongs), were about to use means for the speedy removal of the troublesome one; but it treated all these letters as so many idle threats, and continued to maintain its hold both upon the house and the woman. The prayer meetings were continued at the cottage, and a strange shrill voice, louder than the rest, was frequently heard joining in the songs of Zion.

On one occasion the same voice said, "Sing such a hymn," and at the same time gave out the number of the hymn, and again the voice was heard above the others; the hymn was not familiar to me, but I perfectly remember it was a precious one, full of Christ and salvation by Him.

My readers will perhaps wonder that they should so readily comply with so strange a request, but some allowance will be made when it is remembered that they were simple-minded country people, and that familiarity had taken the place of fear and dread; it was a "familiar spirit" in the fullest acceptation of the word. Mr. R. R., a particular friend of mine, a man

who fears God above many, went to one of the meetings, held at the cottage, and was in the act of looking out a hymn, when he felt a pressure on his knee, and immediately a shrill voice imitating the crowing of a cock was heard, as coming from his knee. He then made some remark respecting it, and a slight pressure came on his shoulder, and at the same time a loud voice shouted in his ear—"you're a fool"—"you're a fool"—which seemed to be a favourite expression, if we may judge from its frequent use.

It continued to treat the poor woman in a merciless manner, often throwing her into a fit, in which her teeth were set together for eight or ten hours. Some days passed quietly, and then it would again commenced hostilities by throwing a saucepan, hatchet, or stool at her head. Many blows has she received in this manner, and several times escaped unhurt.

On one occasion it suddenly dashed the child from her lap to the fire on the hearth, but it was providentially preserved from injury.

One day she was regretting to a friend that it had taken her wedding ring from her finger, and she feared it was lost; a voice immediately declared that it was in the handkerchief on the table, and on unfolding the handkerchief it was found. Mr. S. G. being present, said, "Give it to me, Hannah, and I'll keep it for you, and take care he does not get it again; and he then placed it on a ring attached to his watch chain; but was repeatedly called a fool for so doing. Owing to her continued illness, and fearing to be left alone, she was obliged to have some one in the house with her to attend to her domestic affairs, her husband being from home all the day; her mother therefore came to stay a short time, and while she was there the key of the house door was lost, for which they looked all over the house in vain. One of them observed, "*Depend on it that thing* has got it hid somewhere;" a shrill voice then replied, "It's in the pail of water, it's in the pail of water!" A pail of water was standing near at hand,

and the old woman put her hand into it to feel for the key, and not finding it, exclaimed, "Drat that lying thing; it is not here;" whereupon the same shrill voice quickly rejoined, "It's in the pail of water;" again the old woman put her hand into the pail on the other side, and there indeed was the key standing on its end: a stifled laugh was heard when the key was found.

The old woman returned to her own home, and a sister of Hannah's, who had been out to service, being unwell and advised to go into the country for a change of air, came to stay a little while with her. One day while they were together in the court yard outside the cottage, paring potatoes—a loud noise was heard inside, and in going in the floor was wet, and the fragments of a quart bottle were strewn in all directions about the house.

The young woman, it appears, had been recommended to take a small quantity of porter daily, and thinking she might not be able to get it good in the country, had brought a bottle full with her, and left it in her box up stairs; but a thief who could bid defiance to the most vigilant detective, opened the box, took out the bottle and dashed it with violence on the floor below.

One evening as two men were returning from their work in a state of drunkenness, they entered the cottage, vociferating, "Have not you a ghost here?" They then began to swear, and beating the chairs and legs of the table with sticks, challenged it to appear, at the same time using the foulest and most disgusting language. They were quickly expelled from the place, but the language they used, and the lesson they had taught, was not forgotten; frequently afterwards the same disgusting words were heard in that cottage, uttered it may be by one not more sinful than the drunkard, who blasts his prospects, beggars his family, ruins his body, sins against God, damns his own soul, and probably by his pernicious example leads others to that place where hope never comes.

Reader; are you a drunkard? If so, listen, I

beseech you, to what the most high God saith concerning such characters in His holy word, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, "Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Being so continually harrassed, the poor man and his wife could get but little rest, nor did they like to be left alone in the house; for in the dead of the night this intruder would perch himself near the bed, and sometimes on the pillow, and crow or chirp in a frightful manner; and on more than one occasion has lifted them from the bed, and laid them down again without altering their position, and apparently with as much care as a tender nurse would use towards a sleeping babe. Hearing of these things, a kind neighbour of theirs, named T., offered to sleep in the same apartment with them, and a young man called Tom, volunteered to sleep with him. His courage was soon put to the test, for on the first or second night he also was favoured with a lift from the bed, but from some unexplained cause the nurse was not so gentle in laying him down again, which occasioned some fear and trembling, but a screeching voice exclaimed, "Cheer up, cheer up, cheer up."

Another night, when all was silent, and nothing was heard save the ticking of the clock, a rushing sound came through the room, and something fell heavily upon the bed, between the two men. T., who was awake, sprang up in the bed, grasped hold of it, and exclaimed, "I've got him, Tom, I've got him;" trembling as he spoke, for it was cold and slippery to his hand, and loose and rattling; imagine then his astonishment when he found that he was firmly grasping a pound of rushlights. Yes, the same invisible hand that took the bottle out of the box, and broke it into a thousand pieces, now seized upon the rushlights which

had been deposited also in a box, and sent them with electric velocity to the bed of the two faithful sentinels. The poor villagers supposed all this was done by the power of witchcraft, but the prevailing opinion amongst respectable farmers in the neighbourhood was, that the woman was a ventriloquist, and could imitate any voice, and cause it to be heard in any place; and to satisfy themselves and the public generally, they engaged a very clever ventriloquist (at a cost it is said of £10), to come and prove the deception.

I was afterwards credibly informed that he quite failed in producing such unearthly sounds as were heard in the cottage, although a clever man, and eminent in his profession.

The medical gentleman (whose name I do not remember) was next applied to for his opinion; he shook his head mysteriously, and said he thought the woman must have something to do with it; this was soon repeated to her, at which she felt much hurt, and said that she would tell him her mind whenever he called again to see her. Seeing him ride into the village soon after, I accompanied a friend (Mr. K. by name) to the cottage, to meet the doctor, as he was usually called, when the following dialogue took place:—

Hannah.—"I understand, Sir, that you have been making very free with my name; and asserted that you thought me guilty of deception. I consider it unjust and ungentlemanly of you so speak of me; have you any reason for speaking so? If so, please to state it."

Doctor.—"I certainly did speak of you in the manner you state, for the circumstances were so extraordinary and unaccountable, that I thought you must have something to do with it; I admit that I did wrong; I ought certainly to have investigated the matter before passing such an opinion."

Hannah.—"Well, Sir, before you leave I should like you to examine my person and premises, and you will then perhaps be better satisfied."

Mr. K.—"Yes, here is the house open to your in-

spection at all times, and here is my purse also; if money is wanting, do not spare it; if there is any deception, I wish to have it detected; but do not let us condemn an innocent person."

We then all three searched the house and premises together; the doctor also examined Hannah, to see if there was any peculiar formation in her throat, and we were each fully satisfied of the innocence of the poor woman.

A respectable man, a draper by trade, called one day at the cottage. Having asked several questions, he took up a stool, and said, "Is this the stool it has thrown at persons?" and making some other remark, put it down again. On leaving the cottage, it was thrown against his leg by an invisible hand with much violence; and he observed, "I shall never forget it." At one time they could not remain in their cottage in consequence of the annoyance, and a neighbour kindly admitted them into their house, and while they were there a person asked permission to inspect the inside of the cottage; T. took the key, and let him in; he walked up stairs, and while looking about the room, two violent thumps were given to the floor between his legs, as though it had been done with a sledge hammer; the blows were so violent, that it caused the whitewash to scale and fall from the underneath part of the boards on the floor below.

Mrs. K., a kind Christian lady, visited Hannah, when confined to her bed by illness, and she also had her garments pulled by the invisible one; and then it appeared to raise the bed quilt as though some living thing had been creeping underneath. Her son, a youth about twelve years of age, being present, said, "There it goes; shall I stick it with my knife?" Soon after this, I preached again at Little Tew on the Lord's day, in a chapel that Hannah attended when her health permitted, and whither her tormentor has sometimes followed, and given evident signs of his being present by pulling her clothes and snatching away her hymn

book. On this day she was absent, but all remained quiet at the cottage.

As usual I stayed at the residence of my kind and hospitable friend, Mr. K., and on the following morning (Monday) a little girl came from the cottage for milk, and other little comforts the benevolent Mrs. K. used so kindly to bestow upon the afflicted and needy. In reply to questions put, the girl said, "Hannah is very ill this morning, for *that thing* has just thrown a saucepan at her, and has been swearing dreadfully."

I finished my breakfast as quickly as possible, and walked down to the village, where I had the account confirmed by Mrs. and Miss K., who said that there had been sad work going on at the cottage that morning.

Miss K. further informed me that two respectable men had asked permission to go in, having walked from Banbury, a distance of twelve miles, to satisfy themselves as to the truth of the reports in circulation.

On my entering the cottage I found them in conversation with Hannah; she was seated, and they were standing in the middle of the room; she appeared to be low and dejected, and said "that thing" had used her very ill, and tried to kill her that morning by throwing a saucepan at her, and she feared that at some time he would succeed.

I sat down and endeavoured to direct her to the strong for strength; at the same time assuring her if she put her trust in the Lord, no power of darkness could possibly, ultimately, prevail against her, however sorely she might be tried; the three persons listened attentively, but made no observation. Presently a faint murmuring sound was heard. "That is it again," said poor Hannah, as she sat trembling upon the stool. A death-like stillness prevailed for a few moments, and then the sound was heard again, as though it proceeded from the breast of the chimney over the fire place. Again all was silent, and we were each buried in our own reflections; for my own part, I felt that the wished-for period had arrived, when I

should see or hear for myself, and, if possible, make a decided stand against the powers of darkness; and I hoped as an instrument in the Lord's hand to exorcise the evil one. The indescribable sound was again heard. "There it is again," said one of the men, addressing me, "Did you not hear it, Sir?" I said, "Yes, it sounds strangely." Instantly a loud sepulchral voice (which in depth of tone resembled the deepest notes of an organ) shouted, "You're a fool, you're a fool."

The unearthly voice was exactly in front of me, as though I had stood face to face with the adversary. I could have placed my finger on the very spot from whence the voice issued, it was so awfully distinct; I felt as though I was in the immediate presence of Satan. I stood fearlessly in the Lord's strength, and realizing in my heart those blessed portions of God's word: "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence," &c., &c. "The name of the Lord is as a strong tower," &c. "Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you."

With my eyes rivetted to the spot from whence the voice came, I exclaimed aloud, with boldness, "Who are you? I defy you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the name of Jesus I bid you depart and trouble this woman no more." All was again still, and we waited some minutes in breathless suspense; till one of the young men said, "I think that you have spoken properly to it, Sir." Hannah then said, "I do think that he is driven away." I then read a suitable portion of Scripture out of one of the Gospels, showing the power of Christ and his disciples over evil spirits. Having made a few remarks upon the same, we each fell upon our knees before God, and I implored his blessing, and especially besought Him to look in mercy upon the poor woman in His presence, turn her captivity, and deliver her from the power of every spiritual enemy. I then left the cottage, promising to return again in the evening, as it had been previously arranged that there should be a

prayer meeting held that night. According to promise, I returned again in the evening; a lady from Oxford was present, and several neighbours and Christian brethren, and Hannah appeared to be much more comfortable; we conversed together, read the Scriptures, sung hymns, and prayed, till nearly midnight, without the least annoyance; some thought it had quite left, others feared it would return. Hannah said, "I do not want any one to stay with us to-night; I have no fear of its returning." We again sung praise to the Lord for his goodness, and returned to our respective habitations.

As I was about to leave the village, I visited Hannah again on the following morning, and was agreeably surprised to find her busily employed at the washing-tub. Her countenance was cheerful, and she appeared to be an altered person, both in mind and body; she had slept well during the night, and said she believed she should not be troubled any more by the evil spirit. I saw her only once after this, and then she appeared to be in her usual health, and free from the Satanic influence which had so greatly afflicted her, but I have since been informed that she was slightly affected at the time I last saw her. However, the reader will be pleased to learn that she was delivered from her enemy, and that those annoyances she had been so long subject to, entirely ceased. In the providence of God I was removed into a distant county, and Hannah's husband having employment at another place, they left Little Tew, so that I am unable to furnish my readers with any more particulars of this case, or of the eventful history of Hannah H.

I am disposed to believe that those Christian friends who visited her and held a parley with the evil spirit, should have boldly withstood it at the first, and much suffering might have been prevented. At the same time I am fully convinced that they acted with the kindest feelings and purest motives. Should a similar case arise (and I think it highly probable, seeing that

such things are much sought after and encouraged, such as table-talking and table-rapping, and other strong delusions of the enemy), the true Christian will find heavenly directions what to do in Ephesians the fourth, that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Having now detailed the leading particulars of this remarkable case in a simple and truthful manner, I fully expect that many objectors will appear, and I shall not be surprised or offended if many persons say, "I cannot believe it; I think Mr. H. must have been deceived." To such persons I can only say, that those who know me best, do not consider me credulous or superstitious; and it was not until irresistible evidence was afforded and testimony of persons given, whose characters could not be impeached, that I came to the conclusion that, beyond a doubt, there was an evil spirit in the cottage at Little Tew.

The subjoined singular account of the Lancashire Bogie, tends also to confirm my opinion. Why should it be thought incredible? are not angels (invisible) ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? and is it unscriptural to conclude that invisible *evil* spirits tempt men to the commission of sin, and cause much of the evil that exists in the world? The Old Testament Scriptures abound with proofs of the existence of evil spirits in the world, and also of their influence upon mankind, and even after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ witchcraft and sorcery prevailed to some extent, read Acts viii. 16—19; and although it fell before the preaching of the gospel, and the mighty name and power of Christ, we have no warrant, that I am aware of, for supposing that it was entirely eradicated from the world.

As yet we appear to know very little of the world of spirits; painful and individual experience teaches us that our great enemy, Satan, is not dead, neither does he sleep; but that indeed he is the "prince of

the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;" and it is not for us to determine what the Lord may permit him to do, even to one of his own redeemed ones, as in the instance of that tried saint of God, the man of Uz.

I would here observe that, although the young woman, of whom I have been writing, was strictly moral, attended the preached gospel, and willingly joined in religious services, I have no proof that she was a regenerate person. It is possible to go far in a profession of religion, and deceive many, and yet love sin, and be under the guidance of the wicked one; a stranger to God, and without hope in the world.

I am fully aware that there is much in this statement that is ludicrous in the extreme, and such as would appear to be altogether incompatible with an entirely spiritual existence; but as I have never yet been able to reconcile these things to my own mind, of course I do not undertake to reconcile them to the minds of others. But of this I am persuaded, that if we believe no more than our natural reason can comprehend, our faith is not such as is described by the apostle Paul in Heb. xi. 1, and consequently is nothing worth.

Reader, before I take my leave of you, allow me affectionately to ask you a few important questions.

Do you hate sin and strive against it?

What think ye of Christ?

Do you know Christ, and love him as your Saviour and friend?

Do you renounce all your own works, and trust in him alone for salvation?

Do you love his gospel, his people, his ordinances, his free-grace salvation, and glory in the thought of being saved by him, as a poor guilty sinner, through his blood and righteousness only?

Is he all your hope, all your confidence, all your salvation and all your desire?

If you can answer these questions in the affirmative,

you need not fear an evil spirit nor any of the powers of darkness. Not a weapon that is formed against you shall prosper. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." You have abundant cause to sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." He has loved you with an everlasting love, you are redeemed by the blood of his dear Son, quickened by his Spirit, and on your way to glory.

"The soul that on Jesus hath lean'd for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, tho' all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake."

"Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"Beware, lest that come upon you, which is spoken in the Prophets."

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish."

THE LANCASHIRE BOGIE.

Not far from the little snug, smoky, village of Blakely, or Blackley, there lies one of the most romantic of dells, rejoicing on a state of singular seclusion, and in the oddest of Lancashire names, to wit, the "Boggart-Hole."

Rich in every requisite for picturesque beauty, and poetical association, it is impossible for me (who am neither a painter nor poet) to describe this dell as it should be described; and I will therefore only beg of thee, gentle reader, who, peradventure, mayst not have lingered in this classical neighbourhood, to fancy a deep, deep dell; its steep sides fringed down with hazel and beech, and fern, and thick undergrowth, and clothed at the bottom with the richest and greenest

award in the world. You descend, clinging to the trees, and scrambling as best you may—and now you stand on haunted ground! Tread softly, for this is the Boggart's Clough, and see in yonder dark corner, and beneath the projecting mossy stone, where that dusky, sullen, cave yawns before us, like a bit of Salvator's best, there lurks that strange elf, the sly and mischievous Boggart. Bounce! I see him coming; oh, no, it was only a hare bounding from her form; there it goes—there! I will tell you of some of the pranks of this very Boggart, and how he teased and tormented a good farmer's family in a house hard by. But, first, suppose we leave the Boggart's demesne, and pay a visit to the theatre of his strange doings.

You see that old farm-house about two fields distant, shaded by the sycamore tree; that was the spot which the Boggart or Bogie selected for his freaks; there held his revels, perplexing honest George Cheetham (for that was the farmer's name), scaring his maids, worrying his men, and frightening the poor children out of their seven senses; so that, at last, not even a mouse durst show himself in doors at the farm, as he valued his whiskers, five minutes after the clock had struck twelve.

It had long been remarked, that whenever a merry tale was told on a winter's evening, a small shrill voice was heard above all the rest, like a baby's penny trumpet, joining in with the laughter.

"Weel laughed, Boggart, thour't a fine little tyke, I'se warrant, if one could but just catch a glent on thee," said Robert, the youngest of the farmer's sons, early one evening, a little before Christmas; for familiarity had made them somewhat bold with their invisible guest. Now, though more pleasant stories were told on that night beside the hearth than had been told there for the three preceding months, though the fire flickered brightly, though all the faces around it were full of mirth and happiness; and though everything it might seem, which could make even a Boggart enjoy

himself, yet the small shrill laugh was heard no more that night, after little Bob's remark.

Robert, who was a short stout fellow for his age, slept in the same bed with his elder brother John, who was reckoned an uncommonly fine tall lad for his years. No sooner had they got fairly to sleep, than they were roused by the shrill voice in their room, shouting out, "Little tyke, indeed! little tyke thyself. Ho, ho, ho! I'll have my laugh now—Ho, ho, ho!"

The room was completely dark, and all in and about the house was so still, that the sound scared them dreadfully. The concluding screech made the place echo again; but this strange laughter was not necessary to prevent little Robert from further sleep, as he found himself one moment seized by the feet and pulled to the bottom of the bed, and the next moment dragged up again on his pillow. This was no sooner done, than by the same invisible power, he was pulled down again, and then his head would be dragged back, and placed as high as his brother's.

"Short and long won't match—short and long won't match—Ho, ho, ho!" shouted the well-known voice of the Boggart, between each adjustment of little Robert with his tall brother, and thus were they both wearied for more than a hundred times; yet, so great was their terror, that neither Robert nor his brother, "Long John," as he ever afterwards was called, dared to move one inch. And you may well suppose how delighted they both were, when the first grey light of the morning appeared.

"We'st now ha' some rest, happen," said John, turning on his side in expectation of a good nap, and covering himself up with the bedclothes, which the pulling of Robert so often backwards and forwards, had tumbled about sadly.

"Rest,"—said the same voice that had plagued them through the night—"Rest!—what is rest? Boggart knows no rest."

"Plague tak' thee for a Boggart," said the farmer

next morning, on hearing the strange story from his children. "Plague tak' thee! can thee not let the poor things be quiet? But, I'll be up to thee my gentleman; so take th' chamber, an' be hang'd to thee, if thou wilt. Jack and little Robert shall sleep o'er the cart-house, and Boggart may rest or wriggle as he likes when he is by himsel'."

The move was accordingly made, and the bed of the brothers transferred to their new sleeping-room over the cart-house, where they remained for some time undisturbed.

But his Boggartship having now fairly become the possessor of a room at the farm, it would appear, considered himself in the light of a privileged inmate, and not, as hitherto, an occasional visitor, who merely joined in the general expression of meriment.

Familiarity, they say, breeds contempt; and now the children's bread and butter would be snatched away, or their porringers of bread and milk would be dashed to the ground by an unseen hand; or if the younger ones were left alone for a few minutes, they were sure to be found screaming with terror on the return of their nurse. Sometimes, however, he would behave himself kindly. The cream was then churned, and the pans and kettles scoured without hands.

There was one circumstance which was remarkable:—the stairs ascended from the kitchen, a partition of boards covered the end of the steps, and formed a closet beneath the staircase. From one of the boards of this partition a large knot was accidentally displaced; and one day, the youngest of the children, while playing with the shoe horn stuck it into this knot-hole. Whether or not the aperture had been formed by the Boggart as a peep-hole to watch the motions of the family, I cannot pretend to say. Some thought it was, for it was called Boggart's peep-hole; but others said that they had remembered it long before the shrill laugh of the Boggart was heard in the house. However this may have been, it is certain that the horn was ejected

with surprising precision at the head of whoever put it there; and either in mirth or in anger the horn was darted forth with great velocity, and struck the poor child over the ear. There are few matters upon which parents feel more acutely than that of the maltreatment of their offspring; but time, that great soother of all things, at length familiarised this dangerous occurrence to every one at the farm, and that which at the first was regarded with the utmost terror, became a kind of amusement with the more thoughtless and daring of the family. Often was the horn slipped slyly into the hole, and in return it never failed to be flung at the head of some one, but most commonly at the person who placed it there. They were used to call this pastime, in the provincial dialect, "laking wi't Boggart;" that is, playing with the Boggart. An old tailor, whom I but faintly remember, used to say that the horn was often "pitched" at his head, and at the head of his apprentice, whilst seated here on the kitchen-table, when they went their rounds to work, as is customary with tailors.

At length the goblin, not content with flinging the horn, returned to his night persecutions. Heavy steps, as of a person in wooden clogs, were at first heard clattering down stairs in the dead hour of darkness; then the pewter and earthen dishes appeared to be dashed on the kitchen floor; though in the morning all remained uninjured on their respective shelves. The children generally were marked out as objects of dislike by their unearthly tormenter. The curtains of their beds would be violently pulled to and fro, then a heavy weight, as of a human being, would press them nearly to suffocation, from which it was impossible to escape.

The night, instead of being the time for repose, was disturbed with screams and dreadful noises, and thus was the whole house alarmed night after night. Things could not long continue in this fashion: the farmer and his good dame resolved to leave a place where they

could no longer expect rest or comfort ; and George Cheetham was actually followed with his wife and family the last load of furniture, when they were met by a neighbouring farmer named John Marshall.

"Well, George, and soa you're leaving th' ow'd house at last," said Marshall. "Heigh, Johnny, ma lad, I'm in a manner forced to't, thou sees," replied the other: "for that weary fu' Boggart torments us soa, we can neither rest neet nor day for't. It seems loike to have a malice again't young ans, an it ommost kills my poor dame here at thoughts on't, and soa, thou sees we're forc'd to flitt like." He had got thus far in his complaint, when, behold, a shrill voice from a deep upright churn, the topmost utensil on the cart, called out, "Ay, ay, neighbour we're flitting, you see." "Od rot thee!" exclaimed George, "If I'd known thou'd be flitting too, I wadn't a stirred a peg. Nay, nay, its to no use, Mally," he continued, turning to his wife, "we may as weel turn back again to th' ow'd house, as be tormented in another not so convenient." They did return ; but the Boggart having from the occurrence ascertained the insecurity of his tenure, became less outrageous, and was never more guilty of disturbing in any extraordinary degree the quiet of the family.

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