

# THE STORY TELLER

## THE LITTLE ATTIC ROOM.

In the cottage of my father was a little attic room. Where the unmoisted spider wove his silver trap of doom. For the flies that sought the sunlight by the single window-pane. And buzzed a lazy, hazy, day's-enough-for-me refrain; And I used to seek that attic, of its shadows unafraid. And view the shattered glories that were everywhere displayed; The broken fragments of the past, stray bits of light or gloom, That were wont to haunt and hold me in that little attic room.

The sword my grandsire carried on the fields of Mexico; An epaulet unmade, making still a tinsel show; An ancient trunk, fur covered, as a tree is clad in bark. So old I had a notion that Noah bore it in his ark; The corn that hung in strange festoons from rafters brown and bare— The years might come, the years might go, that corn was always there; A shoe my Uncle Sammy wore—I never saw his face— These, and a thousand things beside, were in that attic place.

I can't explain the charm it bore, that homely room, for me. Although perhaps 'twas somewhat like a living memory. But often when my mother thought that I with urchins played, I dreamed among its shadows, by their phantoms undisturbed; And I seemed to hear the pitter of ghostly feet that pressed The rough floor of the garret where their treasures lay at rest; The treasures that they cherished while their lives were still in bloom, Ere they sought the dust and cobwebs of the little attic room.

Somewhere within the heart of man, in sunlight or in gloom, I fancy there is ever found a little attic room. Where he keeps the broken treasures of an unforgetful past— A tiny shoe, a fractured doll, a ship without a mast; Half hid by cobwebs of the years, they all are waiting there. And he views them with a dreamy smile, or, sometimes, with a prayer. As the old faces greet him, with their never-changing bloom, While he sits among the shadows of his little attic room.

—Alfred J. Waterhouse, in N. Y. Times.

## THE PHANTOM'S WARNING.

BY WALTER S. HIATT.

ABOUT the broad hearth in its customary manner the family had assembled after the evening meal, and Henry Carroll, the city cousin, come to the country to restore failing health, found his first visit into a Kentucky home not so dull as he had anticipated. The hospitality of country folk, who knew well the art of entertaining, was his. Mr. Rankin, his wife, and above all, the daughter, Martha, ingeniously led the guest to talk of himself and his short history, and of that branch of the family from which he was directly descended, until the hour of 12 was reached long before he would have guessed it.

The conversation lulled. Silence was broken only by the ticking of the clock. Suddenly Carroll heard the faint pit-a-pat of a galloping horse on the frozen turnpike. He walked to the window overlooking the road, and the sharp air bore the sound more clearly to him.

"I wonder who that can be, riding so wildly at this time of night?" he asked.

"Some drunken fellow going home, I suppose," said Mr. Rankin, indifferently, but with a significant look at his wife.

Carroll pressed his face to the window pane and once more looked out upon the moonlit country. He had a full view of the pike, and some distance down the little valley, just where Dix river was bridged, he saw the dim figure of a horseman dashing along. The horse crossed the bridge with terrific clatter, the rider not drawing rein for an instant. Every board in the wooden structure seemed to start and tremble, arousing all the drowsy echoes of the valley.

"He rides like a wild man!" exclaimed Carroll. "Come here! Look at him! One would think both man and beast were huffed—were fleeing from the devil himself!"

Martha ran to the window and gazed for a moment at the fast-disappearing horseman. "Papa, maybe it's our ghost—'Rob the rider'—that Aunt Dinah once met."

The mournful bay of foxhounds disturbed by the hoof beats and the suggestion of a chase gave her remark a tinge of color. The young people stood side by side at the window, curiously watching the silent horseman. In a few moments he was lost in the mist which hung over the valley, and the sound of the hoof beats, growing fainter and fainter, were heard no more.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Rankin had kept their seats while the rider passed, and now tried in vain to lift the gloom his appearance had left in passing. Carroll noticed this and half laughingly inquired if Martha's ghost was a reality.

"Not at all; simply a stupid old story of the negroes," said Mr. Rankin. He spoke in an unconvincing manner, however, and the fireside group relapsed into a moody silence. Carroll saw the glance of the host wonder from time to time to that corner next the window, where the hardwood floor was carefully hid-

den by an enormous rug. Finally he rose to go to bed, and bade his hosts good night with a vague feeling of foreboding.

He slept little that night in the great room assigned to him. Among the old pictures on the walls, which he casually looked over as he undressed, he was struck by a tarnished portrait of a girl who closely resembled Martha. Though clothed in a long-since-forgotten garb, he found the same tender brown eyes and dark hair, the same sensitive mouth. No name was written on the worn gilt frame, but on the dust-covered back he found scrawled, "Martha Rankin, 1830." Even when Carroll put out the light that face stood between him and sleep. Those eyes haunted his brain. So, too, did the flying horseman and the troubled face of his host, and the remark of the young Martha. He remembered to have heard his mother tell of a romantic love story with a tragic ending which had happened in this frontier house, built by his forebears when they came from Virginia after the revolution. What was it about? The first gray of dawn found him still asking himself this question, and the cock had told of the approach of a new day before he dropped into a perturbed slumber.

The brilliant, fitful sunlight of a spring day strayed into winter was streaming into his room ere Carroll awakened. The refreshing bath and the wholesome smell of the country cleared his head and he smiled at the foolish fancies of the night. Carelessly he ran down the broad stairs of the stately mansion in a manner calculated to startle into life the sweet-faced dames and the starched-collared soldiers of the revolution whose portraits smiled from their gilded frames Studding the hallway. His host was genial; Mrs. Rankin the soul of matronly solicitude. Had he slept well? Did he find everything he needed in his room? Martha gave him a demure good-morning and the reassembled family went out to breakfast. No mention was made of the events of the previous night.

Martha's remark about Aunt Dinah's ghost remained in Carroll's head, however, and having nothing to do, he strolled out to her cabin to hear her story. It was Aunt Dinah's favorite yarn, and she unbent with right good will, proud of having the stranger cousin for a listener.

"Good Lawd, honey, an' you achshally ain't heared dat tale? Wal, you see, it wuz long time ago, 'most 'fore I wuz bawn, I reckon. Miss Martha wuz her name, an' she loved Mars Rob Gregory, what had a heap o' fine horses. He kep' comin' heah ter see Miss Martha twell everybody said dey sho' would marry. Den dey had a fallin' out an' he didn't come no moah. Miss Martha didn't let on, but she sartainly did love Mars Rob, an' kep' pinin' an' pinin' away twell she wuz nigh dead. One Sunday dey all went to church at de Cross Roads, 'cepten her. When dey come back her maw, Miss Ellen, found her on de floah in de parlor—dead. She had shot herself in de corner by de window, whar she an' Mars Rob uster set.

"Wall, I don't jes' rekellec, but folks do say Mars Rob died jes' after. Anyway, he took her death mighty hard, 'cause it wuz his fault, an' he ought to have made up with her. An' so he got mighty wild an' reckless like. Some say he wuz kind o' teched in de haid. He uster ride 'bout de country on his big geldin' jes' like mad. One night I seed him go by heah like all de devils wuz followin'. De nex mawnin' dey found him by de crick, his big geldin' standin' over him. He had shot hisself in de heart.

"I dunno, chile, but eber since den dey say dat Mars Rob ride by heah when sweethearts ob de county fall out. I seed once when Mars Walker an' Miss Mary Rogers had dere trouble—but dat's another tale, honey. Anyway, folks don't come dis away nights no moah. Mars Rankin, he make b'lieve hit ain't so; but he keeps de blind spots on de parlor floah covered up, an' he don't ride home in de night."

And so Aunt Dinah rambled on, eager to tell other stories of the past. Carroll kept the incident in his mind for a while, and then let it drop as a dark superstition. He devoted himself to the task of building up his health, going hunting, riding to neighborhood fox meets, driving Martha to dances and parties, and in other ways filling out the routine of life in the country. In following this social round he found that the chase after health can sometimes be made a cheerful occupation, especially with a girl like Martha to help one. They rapidly became good friends, and Carroll was astonished to discover how necessary her company was to his comfort and pleasure. It seemed that he was always seeking a pretext to be with her. Were there errands at the grocery store or the post office in town, only he and Martha could do them conjointly. As these errands were numerous, they drove to town in the buggy nearly every day.

With the passing of the spring rains these drives became more and more delightful. Nature awoke to full life and the earth throbbled with maternity. The dull, sodden fields of grain and the frozen pastures unfolded their cloaks, and Carroll saw for the first time the full beauty of the blue grass region. Field of blue followed field of blue in slight rises and falls until the eye's sight was lost in the vaguely outlined foothills of the mountains. Was it any wonder, then, that the two lovers felt the pulse of nature stir within them, that they felt the joy of living and turned to thoughts of love?

The slightest reason often serves

to turn the balance for or against love. Lovers are now hot, now cold, and at the mercy of every wind that blows. One afternoon, as Carroll and Martha were returning from town they let their horses take their own pace and settled themselves comfortably back on the buggy seat and listened to the hum of the wheels and drank in the charm of the country, which the soft sunlight was revealing in its richest mood.

Looking dreamily into Martha's eyes as the carriage rolled homeward, the question, which he had as yet put to himself only vaguely, came to him, "Does she like me?" He dared not trust himself to ask as to love. While he was turning about this to him startling suggestion, a young farmer of the neighborhood whom Carroll had often imagined to be covertly fond of Martha cantered down the road toward them. He pulled up sharply, bowed to Carroll, and directed to Martha a few commonplace inquiries about her family, the crops, and the next party to be given. Carroll thought he saw a blush steal over her cheek as the young man talked, and after he had ridden on, half in jest but a bit in earnest, he asked if that were her sweetheart. The blush mounted higher as she denied it. Carroll unreasonably and jealously insisted that he was, and finally Martha poutingly suggested that in any event it was a matter that did not concern him. The clouds had fallen. Carroll had had his question answered.

At supper he announced to his host that his health was now fully regained and that an urgent letter from home would take him away the following morning. Mr. and Mrs. Rankin expressed regret. Martha coldly said she was sorry, and continued the meal in silence.

That night Carroll retired early to his room, but not to sleep. His pride was deeply hurt, and he was indignant. He called himself "Idiot!" and other pleasant things. "She didn't have the heart to say she was sorry! Love! Bosh!"

Finally, putting on a light overcoat, he started for a walk upon the pike. It was near midnight when he turned again into the little valley. The long walk had fatigued him, and the night air cooled his heated brain. The full light of the moon was obscured by a mist which rose from the river and spread over the valley. The mansion was dark. The world was asleep. The brooding silence of the night was broken now and then by the distant cry of a fox hound, the low neigh of a horse, or the tinkle of a sheep bell.

"Clackety-clack! clackety-clack!" There was borne in on Carroll's ears the distant sound as of a galloping horse upon the turnpike. Could it be the phantom of Aunt Dinah's story? "Clackety-clack!" The horse was coming nearer. An atmosphere of mystery that now seemed all about him forced the thought into being. The forgotten tale spang vividly into Carroll's mind, and he felt the chill of the unearthly creep over him. Sweethearts had quarrelled! The phantom rider was due! Bang! Crash! Crash! and Carroll saw a wildly speeding horseman flash across the bridge and come up the road toward him with uncontrolled gait.

Carroll, forgetting all of the improbability of the tale, ran to the roadside and tried to scale the stone fence. But it was too high for him to scale in his nervous condition, and he crouched against it, his eyes glued upon the ever-advancing figure. It thundered along. Now it was almost upon him. A vision of a horse of thoroughbred build, with foam flying from its mouth, with flanks heaving, and of a darkly clad rider with gaze fixed ahead, a cloud of dust, a sound of distant hoof beats, and Carroll, completely cowed, fled toward the house. There he saw lights were moving uneasily about. On the veranda he met Martha, strangely pale.

He clasped her in his arms and whispered: "I won't go home tomorrow."—N. Y. Times.

**His First Bicycle.**

Mischief is the crow's occupation. The crow of India appears to be particularly malicious. He delights to torment other birds, and will wantonly pull a nest to pieces. Mr. A. J. Ramford, in "Turban and Tails," describes the crow as having admirable self-possession, and usually a most perfect control over his countenance.

I have only once seen a crow, to use a familiar phrase, taken aback—forced to own himself discomfited. It was one morning before breakfast, and I was speeding across the maldan on my bicycle. A crow, to which the machine was perhaps a novelty, for at that time there were not many in use in Calcutta, came flying toward me to satisfy his curiosity. The bright steel spokes were, of course, invisible to human eyes, and, as is proved, to his.

In the spirit of impudence and frolic, exhilarated, perhaps, by the early morning freshness, he made a dash to go through what seemed to him to be simply a hoop on which my saddle rested.

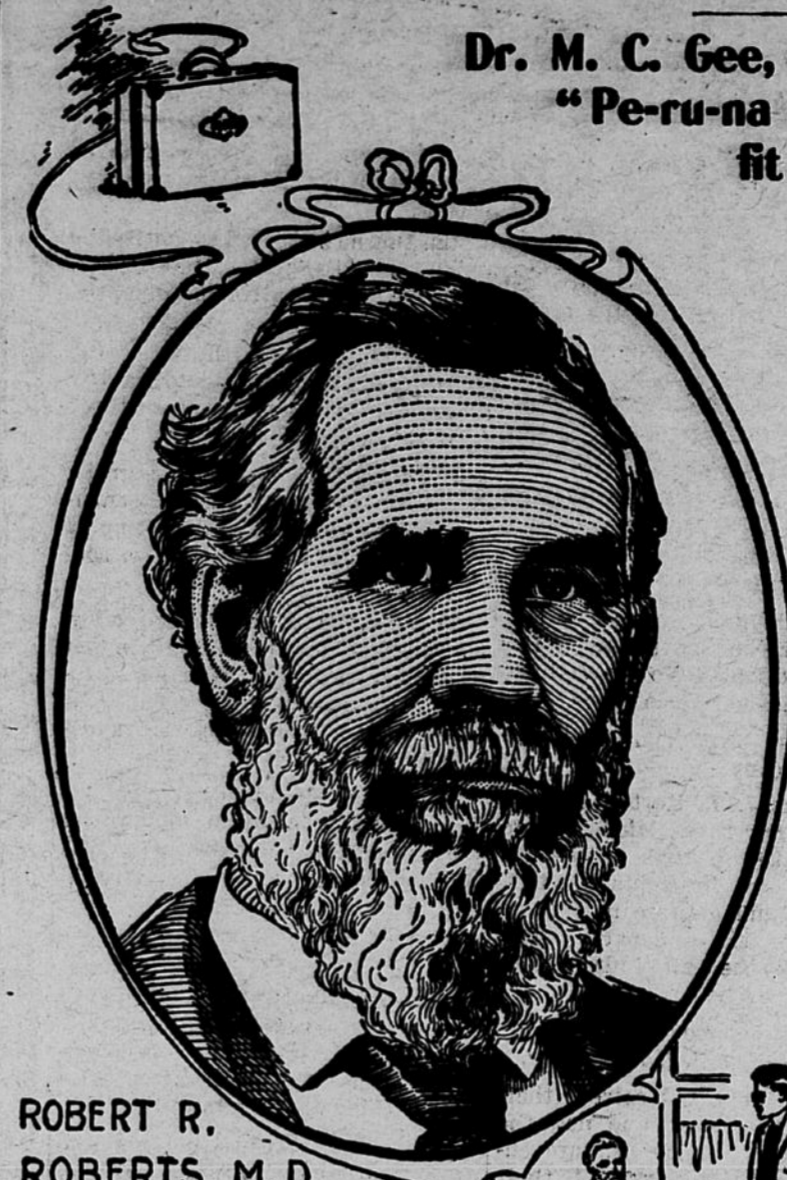
It need hardly be said that he did not get through. I looked back. He lay on the ground, evidently much surprised. His saw expressed perplexity mingled with disgust. His head was sore, his feathers ruffled; and when he got up and went away to think about it, he looked more like a crow ashamed of himself than any I had ever seen before.

**Sure Thing.**

"Name the world's greatest composer," said the musical instructor. "Chloroform," promptly replied the young man who had studied medicine.—Chicago Daily News.

# PROMINENT PHYSICIANS PRESCRIBE PE-RU-NA.

Dr. M. C. Gee, of San Francisco, Says, "Pe-ru-na is of Especial Benefit to Women."



ROBERT R. ROBERTS, M.D.

Robert R. Roberts, M. D., Washington, D. C., writes: "Through my own experience as well as that of many of my friends and acquaintances who have been cured or relieved of catarrh by the use of Hartman's Peru-na, I can confidently recommend it to those suffering from such disorders, and have no hesitation in prescribing it to my patients."—Robert R. Roberts.



A CONSTANTLY increasing number of physicians prescribe Peru-na in their regular practice. It has proven its merits so thoroughly that even the doctors have overcome their prejudice against so-called patent medicines and recommend it to their patients.

Peru-na occupies a unique position in medical science. It is the only internal systemic catarrh remedy known to the medical profession today. Catarrh, as every one will admit, is the cause of one-half the diseases which afflict mankind. Catarrh and catarrhal diseases afflict one-half of the people of the United States.

F. H. Brand, M. D., of Mokena, Ill., uses Peru-na in his practice. The following case is an example of the success he has through the use of Peru-na for catarrh.

Dr. Brand says: "Mrs. 'C.', age 28, had been a sufferer from catarrh for the past seven years; could not hear plain and had watery eyes. She came to me almost a physical wreck. She had tried the Copeland cures and various other so-called specialists, and had derived no benefit from them. She told me she did not want to spend any more money on

medicines unless I could assure her relief.

"I put her on Peru-na and told her to come back in two weeks. The effects were wonderful. The catarrh disappeared, the system improved, and her eyes did not trouble her any more.

"This is only one case of the many I have treated with your valuable medicine."—F. H. Brand, M. D.

Catarrh may invade any organ of the body; may destroy any function of the body. It most commonly attacks the head, nose and throat, but thousands upon thousands of cases of catarrh of the lungs, stomach, kidneys, bladder and other pelvic organs have been cured by Peru-na.

Peru-na is able to cure catarrh wherever it may be located by its direct action upon the mucous membranes. Catarrh means inflamed mucous membranes. Peru-na acts at once to cleanse and invigorate the catarrhal condition of the mucous membrane no matter where it may occur in the body. Its action is the same on the mucous lining of the nose as on the mucous lining of the bowels. It cures the catarrhal inflammation wherever it may occur.

Dr. E. Robbins, Muskogee, I. T., writes: "Peru-na is the best medicine I know of for cough and to strengthen a weak stomach and to give appetite. Beside prescribing it for catarrh, I have ordered it for weak and debilitated people, and have not had a patient but said it helped him. It is an excellent medicine and it fits so many cases.

"I have a large practice, and have a chance to prescribe your Peru-na. I hope you may live long to do good to the sick and suffering."

We say Peru-na cures catarrh. The people say Peru-na cures catarrh. Prominent men and women all over the United States from Maine to California do not hesitate to come out in public print to say that Peru-na is what it is recommended to be, an internal, systemic catarrh remedy that cures catarrh wherever it may be located.

**Dr. M. C. Gee's Experience.**

Dr. M. C. Gee is one of the physicians who endorse Peru-na. In a letter written from 618 Jones street, San Francisco, Cal., he says:

"There is a general objection on the part of the practicing physician to advocate patent medicines. But when any one medicine cures hundreds of people, it demonstrates its own value and does not need the endorsement of the profession.

"Peru-na has performed so many wonderful cures in San Francisco that I am convinced that it is a valuable remedy. I have frequently advised its use for women, as I find it insures regular and painless menstruation, cures leucorrhoea and ovarian troubles, and builds up the entire system. I also consider it one of the finest catarrh remedies I know of. I heartily endorse your medicine."—M. C. Gee, M. D.

Women are especially liable to pelvic catarrh, female weakness as it is commonly called. Especially in the first few weeks of warm weather do the disagreeable symptoms of female weakness make themselves apparent. In crisp, cold weather chronic sufferers with pelvic catarrh do not feel so persistently the debilitating effects of the drain upon the system, but at the approach of summer with its lassitude and tired feelings, the sufferer with pelvic catarrh feels the need of a strengthening tonic.

Peru-na is not only the best spring tonic for such cases, but if persisted in will effect a complete cure. Write for a copy of "Health and Beauty," written especially for women by Dr. Hartman. If you want to read of some cures also, write for a copy of "Facts and Faces." That will surely convince you that our claims are valid.

If you do not derive prompt and satisfactory results from the use of Peru-na, write at once to Dr. Hartman, giving a full statement of your case and he will be pleased to give you his valuable advice gratis.

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