

# The Examiner.

AND SEMI-WEEKLY INTELLIGENCER.

THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY WHEN FREE-BORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC—MAY SPEAK FREE.—MILTON'S EURIPIDES.

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## The Blind Boy.

BY AN AMERICAN POET.

It was a blessed summer day,  
The flowers bloomed—the air was mild,  
The little birds poured forth their lay,  
And every thing in nature smiled.

In pleasant thoughts I wandered on  
Beneath the deep wood's ample shade,  
Till suddenly I came upon  
Two children who had thither strayed.

Just at an aged birch tree's foot  
A little boy and girl reclined,  
His hands in hers she kindly put,  
And then I saw the boy was blind.

The children knew not I was near;  
A tree concealed me from their view,  
But all they said I well could hear,  
And I could see all they might do.

"Dear Mary," said the poor blind boy,  
"That little bird sings very long;  
Say, do you see him in his joy,  
And is he pretty as his song?"

"Yes, Edward, yes," replied the maid,  
"I see the bird on yonder tree;"  
The poor boy sighed, and gently said,  
"Sister, I wish that I could see."

"The flowers you say, are very fair,  
And bright green leaves are on the trees,  
And pretty birds are singing there—  
How beautiful for one who sees."

"Yes! the fragrant flowers can smell,  
And I can feel the green leaf's shade,  
And I can hear the notes that swell  
From those dear birds that God has made."

"So, sister, God to me is kind,  
Though sight! He has not given;  
But tell me, are there any blind  
Among the children up in Heaven?"

"No, dearest Edward, THERE are all see—  
But why ask me a thing so odd?"  
"Oh, Mary, HE'S SO GOOD TO ME,  
I THOUGHT I'D LIKE TO LOOK AT GOD!"

His long disease his hand had laid  
On that dear boy so meek and mild;  
His widow'd mother wept and pray'd  
That God would spare her sightless child.

He felt her warm tears on his face,  
And said—"Oh, never weep for me,  
I'm going to a bright—bright place  
Where Mary says I GOD SHALL SEE."

"And you'll be there, dear Mary, too;  
But, mother, when you get up there,  
Tell Edward, mother, that, tis you—  
You know I never saw you here!"

He spoke no more, but sweetly smiled,  
Until the final blow was given—  
When God took up the poor blind child,  
And open'd first his eyes in Heaven.

## The Haunted House in Charnwood Forest.

From Howitt's Country Year Book.

(Concluded.)

At this crisis, the terrified guest would usually utter a fearful shriek, and often go into a swoon. The whole family would be roused from their beds by the alarm; but on no occasion had any traces of the cause of terror been found, though the house, on such occasions, had been diligently and thoroughly searched. The annoying visit was described as being by no means uniform. Sometimes it would not take place for a very long time, so that they would begin to hope that there would be no more of it; but it would, when least expected, occur again. Few people of late years, however, had ventured to sleep in that room, and have never since the forementioned clergyman was so terribly alarmed, about two years ago, had it once been occupied.

"Then," said John Basford, "it is probable that the annoyance is done with forever. If the troublesome visitant was

still occasionally present, it would, no doubt, take care to manifest itself in some mode or place. It was necessary to test the matter to see whether this particular room was still subject to so strange a phenomenon."

This seemed to have an effect on the farmer and his wife. The old man urged his suit all the more earnestly, and, after further show of extreme reluctance on the part of his entertainers, finally prevailed.

The consent once being given, the farmer's wife retired to make the necessary arrangements. Our friend heard sundry goings to and fro; but at length it was announced to him that all was ready, the farmer and his wife both repeating that they would be much better pleased if Mr. Basford would be pleased to sleep in some other room. The old man, however, remained firm to his purpose; he was shown to his chamber, and the maid who led the way stood at some distance from the denoted door, and pointing to it, bade him good night, and hurried away.

Mr. Basford found himself alone in the haunted room, he looked around and discovered nothing that should make it differ from any other good and comfortable chamber, or that should give to some invisible agent so singular a propensity to disturb any innocent mortal that nocturnated in it. Whether he felt any nervous terrors, we know not; but as he was come to see all that would or could occur there, he kept himself most vigilantly awake. He lay down in a very good feather bed, extinguished his light, and waited in patience. Time and tide, as they will wait for no man, went on. All sounds of life ceased in the house; nothing could be heard, but the rushing wind without, and the bark of the yard dog occasionally amid the laughing blast. Midnight came, and found John Basford wide awake and watchfully expectant. Nothing stirred, but he lay still on the watch. At length—was it so! Did he not hear a rustling movement, as it were near his door, or was it his excited fancy? He raised his head from his pillow, and listened intently. Hush! there is something!—no!—it was his contagious mind ready to hear and see—what? There was an actual sound of the latch! He could hear it raised!—He could not be mistaken. There was a sound as if the door was cautiously opened.—List! it was true. There was soft, stealthy footsteps on the carpet; they came directly towards the bed; they paused at its foot; the curtains were agitated; there were steps on the bed; something crept—did not the heart and the very flesh of the rash old man now creep too?—and upon him sank a palpable form, palpable from its pressure, for the night was dark as an oven. There was a heavy weight on his chest, and in the same instant something almost icy cold touched his face.

With a sudden, convulsive action, the old man suddenly flung up his arms, clutched at the terrible object which thus oppressed him, and shouted with a loud cry:

"I have got him! I have got him!"

There was a sound of a deep growl, a vehement struggle, but John Basford held fast his hold and felt that he had something within it, huge, shaggy and powerful. Once more he raised his voice loud enough to have roused the whole house; but it seemed no voice of terror, but one of triumph and satisfaction. In the next instant, the farmer rushed into the room with a light in his hand, and revealed to John Basford that he held in his arms the struggling form of a huge Newfoundland dog!

"Let him go, sir, in God's name!" exclaimed the farmer, on whose brow drops of real anguish stood, and glistened in the light of the candle.—"Down stairs Caesar!" and the dog released from the hold of the Quaker, departed as if much ashamed.

In the same instant, the farmer and his wife, who now also came in dressed, and evidently never having been in bed, were on their knees by the bedside.

"You know it all, sir," said the farmer; "you see through it. You are too deep and strong minded to be imposed on. We were, therefore, afraid of this when you asked to sleep in this room. Promise us now, that while we live you will never reveal what you know?"

They then related to him, that this house and chamber had never been haunted by any other than this dog, which had been trained to play the part. That, for generations, their family had lived on this farm; but some years ago, their landlord having suddenly raised their rent to an amount that they felt they could not give, they were compelled to think of quitting the farm. This was to them an insuperable source of grief. It was the place that all their lives and memories were bound up with. They were extremely cast down. Suddenly it occurred to them to give an ill name to the house. They hit on this scheme, and, having practiced well, did not long wait an opportunity of trying it, it had succeeded beyond their expectations. The fears of their guests were found to be of a force which completely blinded them to any discovery of the truth. There had been occasions where they thought some clumsy accident must have stripped away the delusion; but no! there seemed a thick veil of blindness, a fascination of terror cast over the strongest minds, which nothing could pierce through. Case after case occurred; and the house and farm acquired such a character, that no money or consideration of any kind would have induced a fresh tenant to live there. The old tenants continued at their old rent; and the comfortable ghost stretched himself every night in a capacious kennel, without any need of disturbing his slumbers by calls to disturb those of the guests of the haunted chamber.

Having made this revelation the farmer and his wife again implored their guest to preserve their secret.

He hesitated.

"Nay," said he, "I think it would not be right to do that. That would be to make myself a party to a public deception. It would be a kind of fraud on the world and the landlord. It would serve to keep up those superstitious terrors which should be as speedily as possible dissipated."

The farmer was in agony. He rose and strode to and fro in the room. His countenance grew red and wrathful. He cast dark glances at his guest, whom his wife continued to implore, and who sat silent and as it were, lost in reflection.

"And do you think it a right thing, Sir," said the farmer, "thus to force yourself into a stranger's house and family, and, in spite of the strongest wishes to the contrary, into his very chambers, and that only to do him a mischief? Is that your religion Sir? I thought you had something better in you than that. Am I now to think your mildness and piety were only so much hypocrisy put on to ruin me?"

"Nay, friend, I don't want to ruin thee," said the Quaker.

"But ruin me you will, though, if you publish this discovery. Out I must turn, and be the laughing stock of the whole country to boot. Now if that is what you

mean, say so, and I will know what sort of man you are. Let me know at once whether you are an honest man or a cockatrice?"

"My friend," said the Quaker, "canst thou call thyself an honest man, in practising this deception for all these years, and depriving thy landlord of the rent he would otherwise have got from another? And dost thou think it would be honest in me to assist in the continuance of this fraud?"

"I rob the landlord of nothing," replied the farmer. "I pay a good fair rent; but I don't want to quit the old spot. And if you had not thrust yourself into this affair, you would have had nothing to lay on your conscience concerning it. I must, let me tell you, look on it as a piece of unwarrantable impertinence to come thus to my house, and be kindly treated only to turn Judas against me."

The word Judas seemed to hit the Friend a great blow.

"A Judas!"

"Yes—a Judas! a real Judas!" exclaimed the wife. "Who could have thought it?"

"Nay, nay," said the old man, "I am no Judas. It is true I forced myself into it; and if you pay the landlord an honest rent, why, I don't know that it is any business of mine—at least while you live."

"That is all we want," replied the farmer, his countenance changing, and again flinging himself by his wife on his knees by the bed. "Promise us never to reveal it while we live, and we shall be quite satisfied. We have no children, and when we go, those may come to the old spot who will."

"Promise me never to practice this trick again," said John Basford.

"We promise faithfully," rejoined the farmer and wife.

"Then I promise too," said the Friend, "that not a whisper of what has passed here shall pass my lips during your lifetime."

With warmest expressions of thanks, the farmer and his wife withdrew; and John Basford, having cleared the chamber of its mystery, lay down and passed one of the sweetest nights he ever enjoyed.

The farmer and his wife lived a good many years after this, but they both died before Mr. Basford, and after their death he related to his friends the facts which are here detailed. He, too, has passed, years ago, to his longer night in the grave, and to the clearing up of greater mysteries than that of—the Haunted House of Charnwood Forest.

THE EXAMINER.

Saturday, January 11, 1851.

To Our Readers.

THERE are intervals in the career of a Public Journalist, when, relaxing from the conflicts of Party, and forgetting for a time all the other movements of the busy World without, courtesy and custom sanction the indulgence of personal gossip, when the editor is freely permitted to scan the relationship subsisting between himself and his readers, reviewing his conduct during the Past, and anticipating what it may or ought to be for the Future. The present sheet being the last of the First Volume of our New Series, we feel that we have attained to such an