

HAS WASHINGTON A GHOST?
Mysterious Midnight Sounds in the
Mansion at Mount Vernon.

It was the custom in the family of George Washington to shut up unused for two years a room in which death had occurred. So, after the death of the first President in the stately chamber with the great four-poster bed which is still shown to visitors, Martha Washington, with her lonely heart, nightly climbed the attic stairs to lie in a low-ceiled, sloping-roofed room with one window—a room intolerably hot in the summer, with little or no means of securing a draught except by a triangular opening where the lower corner of the door had been cut off to make room for the passage of the cat. Martha Washington died before the two-year period had ended.

If she had occupied the death chamber would she have seen the ghost of her dead husband? They say that the stalwart, stately figure of the brave general stalks through the passage with martial tread and clank of astral sword in spectral scabbard.

It is a good ghost. No one fears it.

Perhaps there are not many who really believe in its existence, but of the few are those who know most about the old house. Again and again it has happened that people detained at Mount Vernon on the business of the Mount Vernon Association have declared, on "waking from a sleepless night," that they had heard the ghost's sword and strike and seen its tall, commanding figure, dressed in the old uniform that it wore.

No lights are permitted in the old house, for fear of fire, except during the meeting of the regents, and then only candles. Ghosts are said to love dark or ill-lighted houses.—New York World.

A PLACE OF REFUGE.

Where Grant Could Secure Safety If Scared.

Summer Hill, close to Studley, Va., is a very interesting place, built over 100 years ago, and was the arena, says the Boston Transcript, of much active warfare about the year 1862. Mrs. Newton resides there, the widow of Captain W. Newton, a scholarly gentleman and brave commander of cavalry in General Fitzhugh Lee's brigade, who was killed at the battle of Culpeper Courthouse. He was a brother of the late Bishop John Brown-
ington Newton. Summer Hill was taken for headquarters by General Grant, and there he had a council of war with General Hancock and General McDowell. General Grant told Mrs. Newton he was expecting an attack, and that a battle would be fought under her very roof-tree and added:

"I advise you strongly, madam, to go over into King William County with your little children. I will be glad to furnish you an ambulance and safe-guard to cross the lines."

She answered: "No I prefer to stay here. This old home is all I have left, and if its fate is to fall down it will have to fall on my head. I can put the children down in the potato cellar, and, General, if you should get scared when the firing begins, you can go down there with them."

General Grant laughed heartily, and said: "Have you ever heard, madam, that you are brave enough?" After the war was over he inquired very particularly of her, and expressed the hope that she came out all right.

Their Resources.

African honey birds, though wild, wait for opportunities to accompany the natives when they go to hunt for honey. This bird flies in advance, attracting the hunters to the place where the bees' nest is. The bird always gets a part of the honey thus obtained, and its understanding of the nature of the implied contract seems to be perfect. There are "weaver birds" that build extensive platforms, under which their nests are protected from the rain; and "tailor birds," that enclose their nests in big leaves, which they stitch together with plant fibres, one would sew pieces of cloth. Some kinds of birds build their nests over water, so that no enemy can get at them. The Baltimore oriole seeks safety by hanging its nest from the end of a limb. In the southwest certain humming birds make their nests inside the thorny cacti, and the common yucca, or Spanish bayonet, affords similar protection to a species of shrike. The shrike's nest is so placed on the midst of the projecting bayonets that it cannot be reached.

They Use Sharks' Teeth.

The natives of some of the Pacific Islands, being provided with neither metals nor any stone harder than the coral rocks of which the shells they inhabit are composed, would seem off indeed for material of which to make tools or weapons were it not that their very necessity has bred an invention no less ingenious than curious and effective. This is nothing less than the use of sharks' teeth to give a cutting edge to their wooden knives and swords.

The month of the shark contains three hundred teeth, all not only pointed and keen-edged, but finely and regularly serrated, so great a faculty have these teeth for wounding that the implements and weapons upon which they are used have to be handled by their owners with no little care.

Couldn't Be Fooled Twice.

There is a fox terrier of remarkable intelligence installed as ruling factor in a very happy and harmonious household up town, says the New Orleans Times-Democrat. One of the favorite amusements of the terrier is playing with a soft rubber ball. The terrier pounced upon the ball, chewed down on it, squirted the water down his throat and dropped the ball. After repeated efforts he emptied the ball of water and enjoyed his play. The next day he again found the ball full of water, and for a while seemed very disconsolate as he gazed sadly at the toy. He left it for a few minutes and then, rushing at the ball, deliberately stepped upon it with one of his front feet and stood upon it until the water was all squeezed out.

Edible Oil of Egypt.

In Egypt and the Sudan, in India and all through the east an enormous trade is carried on in vegetable oils which take the place of our butter and margarine products. One of the principal edible oils is obtained from the ground nut, known in France as "arachide oil." Over 1,000,000 hundred-weight of these nuts are annually imported into that country for its production. Belgium also takes vast quantities. Arachide oil is an excellent soap, easier being an edible oil, and when cotton oil is high in price will compete well with it in this branch of industry. In France alone there is already a very large consumption of it, to be counted in tens of thousands of tons.

Wisconsin Town Busted by Fire.

Fire originating from burning forests destroyed half of Cumberland, Wis., a city of 1,500 people, causing a property loss estimated at \$225,000. About twenty-five families are homeless. Five children are reported burned to death.

Business Part of Ipswich, S. D., Destroyed.

The shoe lasters, all over southern Massachusetts are out on strike on account of the refusal of the lasting machine companies to withdraw agents they had put into the factories. The strike is the largest known in that section in years. It started in Brockton.

Close Call for J. O. Davis.

J. C. Davis, a prominent cattleman and city marshal of Wellington, Kan., was sitting in a window in the third story of the Carey Hotel when he felt backward and his foot caught in the shutter. He hung suspended for several minutes, but was finally rescued.

George Gould Will Have to Pay.

George J. Gould, by a decision of the New York Court of Appeals, will be compelled to pay the State \$132,754 as a sum on a \$5,000,000 bequest left him by his father, the late Jay Gould.

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New Lord Mayor for London.

Sir John V. Moore, an alderman of the city of London and senior partner of Moore Brothers, leather merchants, has been elected lord mayor of London, England, to succeed Horatio David Davies, the incumbent of that office.

Fifty Armenians Killed.

Turkish authorities from Van say fighting has occurred at Alashkert between the Turks and a number of Armenians from Russia. About fifty Armenians were killed.

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