

heart of our busy village.

No claim had it to solitude, as gathered from its surroundings. The market and post office, were just below, and busy careworn faces, that bore the impress of life's sorrows, and bright laughing eyes, the windows of joyous young hearts, passed, and repassed it, every hour in the day. Still it was very gloomy.

The large yard was covered, in summer, with tall rank grass, that seemed to draw an unwholesome nourishment, from the damp earth. There were no footpaths through it. Even the cats that prowled about, seemed loth to find shelter in its shade, and fled from pursuing urchins across the unprotected court, rather than enter it.

All about the front windows grew cinnamon roses, in a perfect swamp, as impenetrable as a thicket of buckthorn. Up the small pillars that supported the old-fashioned portico, lizards crawled on warm damp mornings, their shining, slimy bodies giving one unpleasant thoughts of grave yards and charnel houses.

Years ago, I can remember that the front door stood open on summer afternoons, and we school children, used to catch glimpses of the black oaken table and chairs in the hall, and the grim portraits on the walls.— Sometimes we heard the tingling of an old cracked piano, that stood in the parlor, and once in a great while saw a shadow, or what seemed like one in the distance, pass up and down the long stairway.

The house was large, and even in those days, the same look of loneliness and desolation was about its massive front and lofty stories, that chilled one's blood in later days.

We knew that its only occupant was a lone old woman, but so much mystery surrounded her, she was quite as fearful to us as the shadows and spirits that have been said to inhabit it since. So vague and dreamy were our ideas of her, and so little could we realize that she possessed a mortal body like our own, that we always spoke of her, and knew her by no other name than *the Shadow*. All that was known of her by the villagers we had often heard, but it did not seem to lessen our fears.

Many years before, the house had been purchased by a wealthy Jew, well known in the city, and strongly suspected of being an arrant knave. Soon after its purchase, a

tery had often been discussed by the villagers, but it could not be done without breaking into a furnished house, known to be under the care of a man competent to pursue, and punish any one daring enough to make such an attempt.

I am not superstitious—I do not believe in ghosts, yet I always found it impossible to divest myself of a feeling of dread, as I passed this gloomy building. My blood seemed to curdle, and my breath came painfully, as I thought of those vast untenanted rooms, on whose floors lay the dust of years, from whose walls those grim portraits still frowned upon the mouldering and worm-eaten furniture, and of that wondrous light, that night after night sent its wizard beams out upon the darkness.

About five years since, our villagers were thrown into a state of excitement by the advent of two human beings, in the low-browed porch of the haunted house.

How, or when they came, no one knew, but one spring morning, the heavy oaken door stood open, and the huge chimney sent forth a cloud of smoke.

That they were truly human, we could not doubt, for we soon saw a kindly looking matron bustling about the old kitchen, and a youth, evidently her son, came often to the door, and pushing back the vines that were matted and tangled about the portico, seemed scanning the village and such of its inhabitants, as curiosity or business led within range of his observation.

An olive complexion, relieved by coal black hair and eyes, well cut features, and a fine manly form went to make up a large proportion of beauty in the young stranger, yet there was a fierce glance of his eye, and an expression of reckless daring about the chiseled lips, scarce pleasingly.

Oh! Lawrence Garnet, woe worth the day you came to our village, to fascinate and steal away wee Winny Hedge.

Winny lived with her old blind grandmother, down by the willow brook, in a cottage that seemed a hybrid, half bee-hive, half ant-hill. It was so very small and moss-grown, and covered with woodbine, you would scarce believe it a dwelling house, but there were two rooms in it, and such fanny ones, that a visit to them, formed an era in the life of all young Dunwoodieites.

The house was an exact square, and through it cornerways, ran its only parti-

and here came Lawrence Garnet, first, to fish in the brook, then, to beg a piece of linen, to wrap a bleeding finger—I verily believe, wounded on purpose.

Ere long he came without excuse, and he and Winny, wandered up and down the brook, from where it leaps in a tiny stream, from Mt. Tom's craggy peak to its quiet union, with the waters of Dun Lake. At first, Winny was shy, and walked apart, answering the sprightly sallies of her companion with monosyllables, but soon she welcomed his coming with a glad smile, and joined his rambles with a joyous step. The narrow footpath was wide enough for both now; as with arms entwined, they followed its winding course, and we who loved her saw with pain, that the handsome young stranger had stolen her heart from all her old friends. She had lost the frank expression, which was the greatest charm of her childish face, and seemed ashamed or afraid to meet us. She knew we had remonstrated with her grandmother, at allowing such intimacy with a stranger, who had come among us under suspicious circumstances.

But the old lady was blind and deaf, and could not, or would not hear a word to his disadvantage. He had behaved very gentlemanly she said, and had brought her a pound of Scotch rappee from the city, and this settled his claim upon her good-will.

Several months passed, when one morning Granny Hodge was found dead in her bed, and Winny mourned for her with sincere and bitter grief. The old cottage was deserted and she found a home with a kind neighbor. The intercourse with young Garnet, was partially broken off by these events, yet he sought every opportunity to meet her and we waited with much anxiety to see how the affair would terminate.

Autumn had passed, and the first snows of winter had fallen; when one still starlight night, the cry of fire rang through our village. Every one was instantly on the alert to ascertain its whereabouts, and the sight that met our eyes was grand and beautiful, beyond description. From the center of the haunted house, rose a column of flame. High and clear it sprang, sparkling and crackling, and lighting up the whole village with unearthly light. As if actuated by one feeling, no man lifted a hand to arrest its progress. The door of the porch

Horrors of Gold Seeking.

A NIGHT IN MELBOURNE.

The following account of the difficulties met by the gold-seekers upon their first arrival in Australia is deeply interesting. It should be premised that Arrowsmith, who relates the adventures had been landed upon the wharf at Melbourne, from the ship in which he arrived from England, at night, in the midst of mud and rain. Leaving his two male companions to watch the baggage, he went up to the town to secure lodgings, and did not return until morning, when he gave the following account of his adventures.—ED. TRANS.

Everybody, said Arrowsmith, from all I can hear, is astonished and disgusted with the first night in Melbourne; but the first night of the arrival of three ladies, perfect strangers in the place, will show the extraordinary state of affairs here in a peculiarly strong light.

Arrived in the town, I at once began to hunt for lodgings, and went from street to street in vain, till at last, finding a house where they agreed to find room for three more—dead or alive, as the landlord invitingly said—I was on my way back to the wharf, when who should I see paddling along in the mud but our fellow passengers, Mrs. Watson, Miss Dashwood, and Mrs. Ponderby, who had very knowingly left the Rodneyrig with the earliest boat, in order to secure lodgings before they were all taken. They came luckily without any luggage but their night-bags. They had been from house to house almost, and during six or seven hours had been treated with such insult or unseemly ridicule at nearly every door, that each fresh application—which they undertook in turn—had been a greater effort, they said, than going to a dentist with an aching tooth. It had rained more or less the whole day, and they were wet to the very bones, as Mrs. Watson expressed it. Mrs. Ponderby was crying—indeed they had all cried several times in concert. Captain Watson had come ashore with them: but, never dreaming of this difficulty, had gone to dine and sleep at the private house of a merchant in the bush, with whom he

shared to the Captain dining in the bush; and Miss Dashwood, having good Irish blood, still tripped along, sore-footed as she was, with tears in her eyes, but saying that surely, perhaps, Providence after all would stand their friend. Now, in my own mind (I could have made that girl an offer on the spot—but that by the by), I had fully prepared myself for passing the night in the streets. I went on, pretending still to look for lodgings, but in reality I was looking for a dry archway, or other covered place with a moderate draught. Each of the ladies having a cloak or shawl, besides what they might have in their night-bags, I thought they might manage pretty well considering.

While looking out for such a place, and coming upon nothing but hideous lanes of mud and rubbish, I was beginning to think we must content ourselves with getting under the lee of some lonely wall (at the risk of being robbed and murdered—of course, I kept this fancy to myself), when passing the door of a long shed-like house; a tall man smoking a short pipe, said "walk in, mate." To this polite novelty I was about to respond with alacrity, but the fellow spoilt it by adding, "Oh, you've got women with you!" and turned on his heel. But catching sight of a woman inside whom I took to be his wife, I instantly went in and accosted her, representing the predicament of my fair companions, in which I was immediately supported by all three in despairing tones begging the mistress of the house to give them shelter for the night. The woman seemed rather moved by this case of real distress, but said she had no room. "Oh, put us anywhere!—anywhere!" cried my poor dripping companions. The woman hesitated, and as we renewed our intreaties at this glimpse of hope, she went to speak with her husband. In a few seconds she returned, saying she thought it could be managed; a "stretcher" would be put up for me in the lodgers' room below, and my friends could sleep "in the place above, where they would be quite safe, and to themselves." Rejoicing at this, and with a thousand thanks, we bade each other good night, the ladies following our kind hostess along a dark passage, and I groping my way as directed, towards a door on the left with a light showing through the chinks