

THE HAUNTED MAN.

[Eugene Field in Chicago News.]

In a rude cabin on one of the beautiful hills that environ the city of Cork there once lived a hod-carrier whose name was Michael Grady. He was so very poor that his only possessions were a few pieces of household furniture, the honest hod with which he plied his trade, and a speckled sow which had been given him on a St. Patrick's day by a more prosperous neighbor. Michael's family consisted of a wife and a bright little boy who had been christened Michael. Small as his family was it required a vast amount of thrift on the part of Michael and his good wife Bridget to keep the bailiff from their cabin door. However, by the death of an aunt, who had been housekeeper to a priest, Michael fell heir to several hundred dollars, and upon this money Michael and his family emigrated from Ireland to America, taking with them to their new home the honest old hod and the equally honest old family sow. But in less than a year after his arrival in America Michael, having participated too generously in a political campaign, was prostrated by disease, and, feeling that death was at hand, summoned his family about him, and with his last breath made a distribution of his little property. To his wife he gave \$200 in money, and to Michael he bequeathed the old family sow. Having thus disposed of everything, and having invoked the blessing of Heaven upon the teafful group, the stricken father fell back on his humble hulk mattress and expired.

The mother soon found employment to which her sex and humble condition suited her, and the son set out in the world to earn his own living. Being at this time about 19 years of age, Michael rented a sty in the rear of a certain stable, and in this he housed the old sow which had been given him by his moribund parent. He himself was employed about the stable, and therefore his care of the old sow partook largely of the nature of recreation. His kindness to the amiable creature was duly rewarded, for one morning she presented him with thirteen as beautiful little piggies as ever squealed in chorus or gladden a mother's eyes. In a few months Michael netted quite a handsome sum on this brood, for if you have ever tasted roast pig you will admit there never was a more savory viand served on a platter, and you can depend upon it there were epicures in the city where Michael lived.

Now, having profited so considerably by this means, it occurred to Michael that there awaited him a goodly fortune in the pig business, and, with the capital he now had in hand, he removed his sow to the suburbs of the city, where he ensconced her in a larger sty, near which she soon established a capacious and odorous wallow. In these improved quarters the old sow duly became the mother of eleven piggies, and, in less than eighteen months thereafter, she was the grandmother of threescore and ten grandchildren, male and female. So, you see, Michael, by practicing frugality and industry, had, in a comparatively short time, become exceedingly well-to-do. He leased other sties and other wallows, until the whole neighborhood wherein he lived seemed to be devoted to the pig industry. Then Michael built a smoke-house, and it was not long before his hams and bacon came to be known as the choicest in the market. Meanwhile the number of his pigs increased, and both near and far was Michael called the hog-king.

It was about this time that Michael became enamored of a pretty girl who waited on the table he patronized in the corner restaurant. Finding that she reciprocated his passion he proposed marriage, was accepted, and in time was wedded to the object of his affections. The following spring he erected a monstrous slaughter-house on the ground previously occupied by the pig sties and wallows, and from that time he became a prominent figure in the community. His wealth could scarcely be estimated. From thousands of dollars it swelled into millions—yes, it was simply fabulous!

Now, it was quite natural that, finding him so abundantly provided with gold, society should recognize Michael as its darling. All at once it was discovered that Michael possessed rare qualities of head and heart and that his wife was a lady of exceeding beauty and grace. The newspapers flattered the precious pair and society paid them homage in the thousand delicious ways known only to society. What wonder was it that Michael's head was turned and that his wife was wheeled by these smiling hypocrites? How should the simple stableman and the innocent restaurant-girl know

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It was not long before Michael found it necessary to build a residence, for his family was increasing and society made demands which required honoring. His mother had died—God rest her honest soul!—and he had the humble birth of no other relative to be ashamed of. So it was a magnificent mansion he erected on the most fashionable avenue in the city—a palatial dwelling surrounded by a beautiful park, and furnished in a truly regal manner. And here lived Michael and his family in sumptuous style. Their neighbors were the ornaments of society—people of as large wealth and gentle blood as Michael and his spouse. To their right dwelt one who had begun life as a peasant-vender on a railway train; to their left lived a merchant prince, who had peddled suspenders in his early days, and who had married a butcher's daughter; over the way was the splendid brown stone mansion of the wealthy broker who had but recently returned from Canada by the grateful grace of the statute of limitations. Oh, it was, I can assure you, the most aristocratic neighborhood in all that great city.

It was about this time that Michael changed his name. One of his aristocratic friends assured him that Grady was not a worthy name, and that Michael was positively vulgar. So, by paying \$500 to a very scholarly gentleman who made a business of tracing and providing pedigrees, Michael learned that he was a lineal descendant of that grand old Norman knight Michel Grayde, who came with William the conqueror into Great Britain, and was awarded one-half of all Ireland for his valor and his allegiance to his sovereign. It was developed that this Michel Grayde had a wondrous coat-of-arms—a shield accosted vert, bars gules, purple, stags counter courant, a falcon issuant and recursant, a unicorn at gaze, chevron gules and a banner flottant dexter. So it came to pass that Michael Grady became Michel Grayde, and flaunted, as well became one of his pedigree and wealth, a splendid coat-of-arms.

Was Michel happy?

He literally rolled in wealth. One million hogs per annum served as a mint to swell his coffers. He lived in a sumptuous home. Society worshiped him. He wore broadcloth and diamonds. His wife arrayed herself in the costliest silks and the finest jewels. His sons were chivalrous, and his daughters were beautiful. The boys were being educated in Europe, and the girls were already reigning belles.

Was Michel happy?

No; he was utterly miserable. And this is how it came about. One night he had returned from a grand party at the home of a great parasite whose family pandered to the vanity of the rich, and he had just got into bed and pulled the silken quilts over him when he beheld a strange apparition approaching the couch. This ghostly visitant, intangible as the mists, appeared to be in the shape of a monstrous pig. Slowly it approached the bed, and never once did it take its sullen, bead-like eyes from Michel's trembling form. Michel tried to shut out the horrible wraith by drawing the curtains of the couch, but the specter waved one ghostly foreleg threateningly and Michel sank back cold and terrified upon the pillow.

"Do you know me?" demanded the specter, in hollow tones, and each particular bristle on her ghastly back stood erect.

"Yes," gasped Michel: "you are—the—the old sow—the old family sow!"