

South Jersey Republican

VOL. 6.-NO. 23.

HAMMONTON, N. J. SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1869.

2.00 PER YEAR

HAMMONTON!

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

IN PROSE. A GHOST STORY OF CHRISTMAS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

STAVE IV.—CONTINUED.
THE LAST OF THE SPIRITS.

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently, approached. When it came near him, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which the Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery. It was shrouded in a deep black garment which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible, save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detect its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

"I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come," said Scrooge. The Spirit answered not, but pointed onward with its hand.

"You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us," Scrooge pursued. "Is that so, Spirit?"

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him; and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it.

The spirit paused a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this.

It thrilled him with a vague, uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him; though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.

"Ghost of the future!" he exclaimed. "I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company—and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me?"

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.

"Lead on!" said Scrooge. "Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!"

The Phantom moved away as it had come towards him. Scrooge followed in the shadow of its dress, which bore him up, he thought, and carried him along.

They scarcely seemed to enter the city; for the city rather seemed to spring up and about them, as if it encompassed them of its own accord.

But there they were, in the heart of act; on "Change, among the merchants; who hurried up and down, and clinched their hands in business; men, Observing that the land

was pointed to them, Scrooge advanced to listen to their talk.

"No," said a great fat man with a monstrous chin, "I don't know much about it.

"When did he die?" inquired another.

"Last night, I believe."

"Why, what was the matter with him?" asked a third, taking a vast quantity of snuff out of a very large snuff-box. "I thought he'd never die."

"God knows," said the first with a yawn.

"What has he done with his money?" asked a red-faced gentleman with a pendulous excrescence on the end of his nose, that shook like the gills of turkey-cock.

"I haven't heard," said the man with a large chin, yawning again. "Lost it to his company, perhaps. Ha! hasn't lost it to me. That's all I know."

This plausibility was received with a general laugh.

"It's likely to be a very cheap funeral," said the same speaker: "for upon my life I don't know of anybody to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?"

"I don't mind going if a lunch is provided," observed the gentleman with the excrescence on his nose. "But I must be paid, if I make one."

"Another laugh."

"Well, I am the most disinterested among you, after all," said the first speaker, "for I never wear black gloves, and I never eat lunch. But I'll offer to go, if any body else will. When I come to think of it, I'm not at all sure that I wasn't his most particular friend; for we used to stop and speak whenever we met. Hullo! I!"

Speakers and listeners strolled away, and mixed with other groups. Scrooge—knowing the men and looked towards the Spirit for an explanation.

The Phantom glided on into a street. Its sugar pointed to two persons meeting.

Scrooge listened again, thinking that the explanation might be here.

They knew these men, also, perfectly.

They were men of business; very wealthy, and of great importance. He had made a point always of standing well in their esteem in a business point of view, that is, strictly in a business point of view.

"What odds then! What odds, Mrs. Dilber!" said the woman. "Every person has a right to take care of themselves. He always did!"

"That's true, indeed!" said the laundress. "No man more so."

"Why then, don't stand staring at us, as if we were afraid, woman; who's the wiser? We're not going to pick holes in each other's coats, I suppose!"

"No, indeed!" said Mrs. Dilber and the man together. "We should hope not."

"Very well, then!" cried the woman. That's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose."

"Well!" said the first. "Old Scratch has got his own, at last, hey?"

"So I am told," returned the second, "Cold isn't it!"

"Sausage for Christmas time. You are not a skater, I suppose?"

"No. No. Something else to think of

Good morning!"

Not another word. That was their meeting, their conversation, and their parting.

Scrooge was at first inclined to be surprised that the Spirit should attach importance to conversations apparently so trivial; but, feeling assured that they must have some hidden purpose, he asked himself

if, if he could have laid his hands on anything else. Open that bundle, old Joe,

and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain—I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it. We knew pretty well that we were helping ourselves before we met here, I believe. It's no sin. Open the bundle, Joe."

But the gallantry of her friends would

not allow of this, and the man faded

black, mounting the breach first, produced

his plunder. It was not extensive, a seal

or two, a pencil-case, a pair of screw-butter

tongs, and a brooch of great value, were

all. They were severely examined and ap

prised by old Joe, who chafed the sums

he was disposed to give for each, upon the

wall, and added them up to a total when

he found that there was nothing more to

come.

"That's your account," said Joe, and I

wouldn't give another sixpence, if I was

to be boiled for not doing it. Who's next?"

Mrs. Dilber was axt. Sheets and towels,

a little wearing apparel, two old-fashioned silver teaspoons, a pair of sugar-tongs and a few boots. Her account was stated

on the wall in the same manner.

"I always give too much to ladies. It's

a weakness of mine, and that's the way I

ruin myself," said Joe. "That's your ac-

count. If you asked me for another penny

and made it an open question, I'd repeat

of being so liberal and knock off half-a-crown."

"And now undo my bundle, Joe," said

the first woman.

Joe went down on his knees for the

greater convenience of opening it, and hay-

ing unfastened a great many knots, drag-

ged out a large, heavy roll of some dark

stuff.

"What do you call this?" said Joe.

"Bed-curtains?"

"Ah," returned the woman, laughing

and leaning forward on her crossed arms.

"Bed-curtains!"

"You don't mean to say you took 'em

down rings and all, with him lying there?"

said Joe.

"Yes I do," replied the woman, "why not?"

"You were born to make your fortune,"

said Joe, "and you'll certainly do it."

"I certainly shan't hold my hand when

I can get anything in it by reaching it out,

for the sake of such a man as he was, I

promise you. Joe," returned the woman coolly. "Don't drop that oil upon the

blankets, now."

"Bad," he answered.

"We are quite ruined."

"No. There is hope yet, Caroline."

"If he relents," answered, "there is

nothing past hope if such a miracle has

happened."

"He is past relenting," said her hus-

band. "He is dead."

She was a mild and patient creature, if

her face spoke truth; but she was thank-

ful in her soul to hear it, and she said so

with clasped hands. She prayed forgive-

ness the next moment and was sorry; but

she first was the emotion of her heart.

"What the half-drunk woman, whom

I told you of last night, told to me when I

tried to see him and obtain a week's delay,

and what I thought was a mere excuse to

avoid me, turns out to have been quite true. He was not only very ill, but dying then."

"To whom will our debt be transferred?"

"I don't know. But before that time we shall be ready with the money, and even

though we were not it would be bad fortune

indeed to find no merciles a creditor in his

successor. We may sleep to-night with

light hearts, Caroline."

Scrooge listened to this dialogue in hor-

ror. As they sat grouped about their sofa,

in the scanty light afforded by the old man's lamp, he viewed them with detestation and disgust which could hardly have been greater, or though they had been obscene demons marketing the corpse itself.

"Ha, ha," laughed the same woman,

when old Joe, producing a funnel bag with

money in it, took out their several gains

upon the ground. "This is the end of it,

you see. Ha! frightened every one away

from him when he was alive, to profit him

when he was dead. Ha, ha, ha."

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, shuddering from

head to foot. "I see, I see. The case of

this unhappy man might be my own. My

life tends that way now. Merciful Heaven, what is this?"

He recold in terror for the scene had

changed, and now he almost touched the bed:

a bare unvarnished bed; on which, beneath

a rugged sheet, there lay a something cov-

ered up, which though it was dumb, an-

nounced itself in awful language.

The room was very dark, too dark to be

observed with any accuracy, though Scrooge

glanced round it in obedience to a secret

impulse anxious to know what kind of

room it was. A pale light rising in the

outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and

on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched,

unseen, uncared for, was the body of this

HARPER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE
THE AMERICAN MONTHLY
Newspaper Directory.

CONTENTS:
Harper's Magazine, All the Newspapers and Periodicals published in the United States and Territories, and Domestics of Canada, and British Colonies of North America, together with a description of the towns and cities in which they are published.

NEW YORK:
Geo. P. Howell & Co.,
Publishers and Advertising Agents,
40 Park Row, 1869.

1 Headings Octavo Volume of 300 Pages,
Bound in Cloth.

PRICE FIVE DOLLARS.

A work of great value to Advertisers, Publishers and others, who desire information in relation to the Newspapers and Periodicals of North America.

This edition will be limited, and persons desiring copies will do well to send their orders immediately to

GEO. P. HOWELL & CO.,
Publishers and Advertising Agents,
40 Park Row, New York.

HARPER'S WEEKLY,
BLESSEDLY ILLUSTRATED.

Critical Notices of the Press.
The Model newspaper of our country—completely in all the departments of an American newspaper. Paper—Harper's Weekly is a weekly journal for itself, and for the world. It is a Journal of Civilization.

The future historians will enrich themselves out of Harper's Weekly long after writers, and printers, and publishers are turned to dust—New York Evangelist.

The Best of its class in America—Boston Traveller.

Harper's Weekly may be unreservedly declared the best newspaper in America—N.Y. Independent.

The articles upon public questions which appear in Harper's Weekly from week to week form a remarkable series of brief political essays. They are distinguished by clear and pointed statement, by good common sense, by judicious breadth of view, by a wide comprehension of matters covered, by high principle, and strong feeling, and by their interest among the best news-sheets of the writing of the time—North American Review, Boston, Mass.

SUBSCRIPTIONS—1869.

Harper's Weekly, one year..... \$4.00
An extra copy of either the Magazine, Weekly, or Harper's Weekly, will be supplied gratis for every club of Five Subscribers at \$4.00 each, in case remittance of one copy for \$20.00.

Subscriptions to Harper's Magazine, Weekly, and Harper's to one address for one year \$10.00; or two of Harper's periodicals to one address for one year \$7.00.

Book Numbers can be supplied at any time.

The annual volume of Harper's Weekly, in cloth cloth binding will be sent to express free of expense for 48 each, and extra cost, comprising the eleven monthly issues, receipt of cash at the rate of 12 per year, freight at expense of purchaser. Volume XII ready January 1st, 1869.

The postage on Harper's Weekly is 20 cents per year, which must be paid at the subscriber's post-office.

Subscriptions sent from British North American Provinces must be accompanied with 20 cents additional, to pay the United States postage.

HARPER & BROTHERS, New York.

"Undoubtedly the best sustained work of the kind in the World."

HARPER'S
New Monthy Magazine.

Critical Notices of the Press.

The most popular Monthly in the world—New York Observer.

We must refer to terms of entry to the high-class and varied excellence of Harper's Magazine, and to a monthly circulation of about 100,000 copies—in whose pages are to be found the choicest light and general reading of the day. We speak of it as much as an avocation of the culture of the American People; and the popularity it has acquired is merited. Each number contains fully 160 pages of reading matter, appropriately mixed, and well selected, and it comes with itself the gay monthly and the philosophical quarterly, blended with the best features of the daily journal. It has great power in the dissemination of a love of pure literature.—Truman's Guide to American Literature, London.

We can account for its success only by the simple fact that it meets precisely the popular taste, furnishing a variety of pleasant literature reading for all.—South Jersey, Boston.

SUBSCRIPTIONS—1869.

Harper's Magazine, one year..... \$4.00
An extra copy of either the Magazine, Weekly, or Harper's Weekly, will be supplied gratis for every club of Five Subscribers at \$4.00 each, in one remittance, or six copies for \$20.00.

Subscriptions to Harper's Magazine, Weekly, and Harper's to one address for one year \$10.00; or two of Harper's periodicals to one address for one year \$7.00.

Book Numbers can be supplied at any time.

A sample set, now comprising thirty-seven volumes, is next closing, will be sent to express free of expense, freight at the expense of purchaser, for \$1.25 per volume. Single volumes, by mail, postpaid, \$1.00. Cloth cases, for binding, 50 cents, by mail, postpaid.

The postage on Harper's Magazine is 20 cents a year, which must be paid at the subscriber's post-office.

Subscriptions sent from British North American Provinces must be accompanied with 20 cents additional, to pay the United States postage.

HARPER & BROTHERS, New York.

"Undoubtedly the best sustained work of the kind in the World."

THOMAS R. AGNEW,

800 & 822 GRKEN WILKIN STREET,

Corner of Merv Street.

NEW YORK,

Has reduced the price of Tea, Coffee, Spices,

and all kinds of Groceries,

From 20 to 50 per cent.

Best Tea, \$1.00.

Spiced Coffee, \$1.00.

Spiced Cinnamon, \$1.00.

Spiced Cloves, \$1.00.

Spiced Nutmegs, \$1.00.

Spiced Peppermint, \$1.00.

Spiced Sassafras, \$1.00.