

Ballad of Christmas Ghosts.
[Andrew Lang in Harper's Magazine.]
Between the moonlight and the fire,
In winter evenings long ago,
What ghosts I raised at your desire
To make your sleeping blood run slow!
How old, how grave, how wise they grew!
What Christmas ghosts can make us chill—
Save those who troop in mournful row,
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

The bests can talk in barn and byre
On Christmas-eve, old legends know.
As one by one the years retire,
We men fall silent then, I trow—
Such sights has memory to show,
Such voices from the distance thrill.
Ah! they come with Christmas snow,
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

Friend, sursum corda, soon or slow
We part like guests who've joyed their fill;
Forget them not, nor mourn them so!
The ghosts we all can raise at will!

NATIONAL SERMONS
Based on the 23d Chapter of Matthew.
[Reported for the RALEIGH REGISTER.]
"We unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful on the outside, but are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

It was a custom, my friends, amongst the Jews to build domes or cupolas, or in some instances columns, over the graves of their dead. The domes were called tombs, and the columns were called sepulchres. It was also customary amongst Pagans to build tombs in honor of their dead. The Mohammedans erected monuments or little buildings over the graves of their saints at Zebedi. When the Mohammedan Lent was near at hand these were usually white-washed to give them an air of freshness, and repair their more conspicuous and attractive to the deluded worshippers. Perhaps our Lord had an eye to this as well as the tombs in Judaea. It was a custom with the Jews to whitewash their sepulchres annually. This was caused by the excessive rains of that country, which rendered it impossible to make such adornment as whitewashing durable. At the time our Lord uttered the text the whitewashing of the passover was just at hand, and Israel was about to assemble at Jerusalem at their national solemnities. Hence, to make ostentatious show of reverence for the dead, and to display great religious zeal, and give the sepulchres a cheerful appearance to the thousands of visitors, the whitewashing—the ornamentation—just before the annual gathering at the great national and religious festival. The Scribes and Pharisees were no doubt prominent in this work of adorning the sepulchres. They would give some notoriety—some eclat in the estimation of the giddy multitude who attended the annual feast. But all the art of outward embellishment could not alter the contents of the sepulchres. While they were confined to the exterior and rendered attractive to the eye, they contained within nothing but "dead men's bones and all uncleanness."

The comparison here used by our Lord has great force. There is nothing more offensive and repulsive to human sensibility than the odors of decaying human bodies. A dead body may be wrapped in silken garments and fine linen, adorned with finest jewels, bedecked with flowers of richest hue, and, if may be, encased in gold or silver burlap case, yet when putrefaction takes place it sends out the same sickening odors that shock the strongest nerves. The stench arising from the putrefaction of human bodies, they were not for the grave or its equivalent, but for the resurrection. The stench arising from the putrefaction of human bodies, they were not for the grave or its equivalent, but for the resurrection. The stench arising from the putrefaction of human bodies, they were not for the grave or its equivalent, but for the resurrection.

It is needful, my friends, that I should trace the parallel! You have, no doubt, already made the application. The whitewashed exterior of public officials, who have put on the semblance of righteousness, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity; the general corruption which has prevailed in governmental affairs, the hatred of the good, the notorious infractions of constitutional law, the institution of mock courts and the corruption of the fountains of justice, the partisan character of trials in exculpating the guilty and condemning the innocent on party grounds, the fear of exposure, the deception for concealment of official crime, the subornation of witnesses, the trickery in inciting election riots, the appeals to class ignorance with a view to arouse a sanguinary spirit which would endanger the innocent women and children, and the general strategy to crucify all opposition, are matters of history, and make up a catalogue in no way less than that laid out in the door of the Scribes and Pharisees by the Searcher of Hearts. We shall, my friends, see in the sequel how the Almighty—the Judge Eternal—treats national iniquities; how he tears to shreds the cloak of hypocrisy; how he deals with tyrants and avenges the wrongs of the innocent. We shall see how he vindicates truth and justice against national iniquity and corruption. We shall see the blackness of darkness as it gathers over national abuses, and we shall see the cause of right and truth in the ascendancy. For God shall reign King amongst the nations.

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iniquity and could not be tolerated by them. They had a wonderful dread of exposure and, judging from their utterances and conduct, were resolved to resist unto blood everything that might lead to it. As a grand factor in that purpose they applied to every available prejudice and hoped thereby to stir up the multitude to the horrible crime of assassination. Instead of endeavoring to promote peace and good order, they encouraged and incited their partisans to mob violence and to the murder of the Master and his disciples. They devised the most inflammatory proceedings and manufactured legends and good order, they encouraged and incited their partisans to mob violence and to the murder of the Master and his disciples. They devised the most inflammatory proceedings and manufactured legends and good order, they encouraged and incited their partisans to mob violence and to the murder of the Master and his disciples.

They had, my friends, a pet agency which they regarded supreme in every emergency. In this they had the most implicit confidence as the most effective means for accomplishing their basest designs. Having resolved, as a last resort, upon crucifixion of the Master, who was the source of all light and truth and justice, they found one disciple willing to betray him for a money consideration, for a bribe price deliberately agreed upon. With all the enormity of the crime, the offense, poor Judas has been a much slandered man and would none of it. Show me, my friends, a similar example of remorse in modern times. The chief priests and Scribes and elders entered into secret councils, and sent out a multitude "with swords and staves" to arrest the Master. Then followed the mockery of all mockeries. They organized a mock court with Caiaphas as judge and the Scribes and elders as prosecutors and jurors. They "sought witness against Jesus to put him to death." But the evidence was confused and irrelevant. "His true 'there arose certain, but false witnesses against him,' but their evidence also disagreed, although they brought all manner of false accusations against him. Had such a thing then existed they no doubt would have convicted him. The chief priests and Scribes and elders entered into secret councils, and sent out a multitude "with swords and staves" to arrest the Master.

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