



## Another



### Dr. Wright Turns Demonologist

Dr. Wright's reflections were interrupted suddenly by heavy footsteps on the board-walk near the gate. More trouble approaching? What did this downcast fellow want?

A stranger mounted the steps and said "Good evening" in mournful voice. He was suffering from visions, he said, and couldn't sleep. Visions? Another case.

The doctor pulled out his watch and pressed two fingers against the man's pulse. "All right there," he remarked after a minute of silence. The thermometer indicated a normal temperature, also. "These visions," inquired the doctor, "what do you see?"

The man's face brightened. "O, different monsters. Terrible. Give me the creeps. Last night a giant thing like a crocodile was about to swallow me when I fell out of bed. Didn't sleep a wink, after that. And I sweat oceans!"

The doctor pursed his lips, a habit which he had when pondering a problem. "H-m-m! Too bad. Reading Rider Haggard and eating spaghetti, I presume. You look well fed."

The man looked puzzled. "No, I don't go in for horseback riding," he replied, "and I hate that Eyetalien spinitch. I got a whale of an appetite; eat three squares a day and a bite before going to bed—cheese and crackers with a bottle of beer, or a hamburger and onions."

The doctor sat back in his chair and took a deep breath. Visions of scallions—all gone! "An interesting coincidence," he said. "I couldn't sleep, last night, either, and I went to the pantry, ate some scallions, and then came out here to quiet my nerves. While I was watching the fireflies dancing about over the church green, old John Hickory went by shouting his drunken gibberish and out of a cloud of dust at his heels a little man emerged and perched on that hitching post

—right there! He was about the size of a Brownie, and when he grinned his little round face seemed to fold up. He wore a high hat over his right ear and carried a shiny stick like a baton."

The doctor pointed down the street. "This is Doctor's Row—this triangle," he explained. "Over there at Broad and Elmer Streets, is Dr. Harrison's; opposite Mountain Avenue, is Dr. Cooper's, and across the way, on the corner next to me, is Dr. Kinch's. That little scalawag pointed his baton from house to house and called in a squeaky voice: 'Hoakum, pokeum, soakum'; and when he reached me he shook with laughter. 'And you croakum!' he cried. With that I lost my temper and looked around for something to throw at him; but he made a face at me and hopped over the fence onto one of those gravestones. Then he sang:

"Joy and tem'prance and repose,

'Slam the door on the doctor's nose.'" . . .

The doctor drew himself out of his chair, stretched and entered the house. He reached for a bottle in the cupboard back of his desk and poured some small white pills into an envelope. Returning to the veranda, he directed his patient to "take one of these every night after dinner for a week. They won't do you any harm. That's two dollars. Thanks."

"But Dr. Wright, you didn't finish your story. What happened to the spook?"

"What usually happens to those things? Take the advice of one who has observed the various phenomena of demonology and stop eating cheese and onions before going to bed. Take a walk instead. That's the way I expect to get rid of the little cuss with his hoakum, pokeum, soakum and croakum. Fiddlesticks. It's imagination. Good night. Let me know how you make out with the crocodile."