

COMPENSATION.

The truest words we ever speak
Are words of cheer.
Life has its shade, its valleys deep;
But round our feet the shadows creep,
To prove the sunlight near.
Between the hills those valleys sleep—
The sun-crowned hills.
And down their sides will those who seek
With hopeful spirit, brave though meek,
Find gently flowing rills.

For every cloud, a silvery light;
God wills it so.
For every vale a shining height;
A glorious morn for every night;
And birth for labor's throes.
For snow's white wing, a verdant field;
A gain for loss.
For buried seed the harvest yield;
For pain, a strength, a joy revealed,
A crown for every cross.

THE BLUE CHAMBER.

A small party of ladies and gentlemen engaged in conversation were sitting around dinner in the spacious grounds of an ancient manor.

The doors of the mansion stood wide open. The evening breeze whispered and rustled through the branches of the huge lindens, the shadows grew longer and longer, ink-black beneath the leafy roofs of boughs, lighter on the patches of turf.

It was a mild summer evening, still, yet full of strange, mysterious sounds; the soft breeze floated into the doors, bearing with it the heavy fragrance of the flowers. In the gathering dusk the members of the group could scarcely see each other.

Conversation languished, passing from subject to subject; no one seemed inclined to enter upon a lengthy discussion.

Suddenly one of the party began to relate an anecdote of a ghost he had seen on an evening like this. The plan was successful. Several tales followed; but the young daughter of the house, Anna, continued to ask for more. It was so amusing to hear these marvelous stories, imagine the white and black spectres moving noiselessly in dense shadow or dazzling moonlight, feel a strange horror chill her blood and then lean against her mother, finding safety in her embrace. She could not endure Candidate Holst's way of taking these stories; his scornful comments tore ugly rents in the dreamy veil in which she wrapped herself.

He was a medical student and had witnessed many similar things in the hospital. It was owing to sickness acting upon different individuals. Either the patient, when his imagination was excited, mistook a towel, on which the moon was shining, for a phantom, and the shrieking of the wind in the old houses for ghostly cries and the clank of chains, or the whole affair was pure hallucination. A person in a healthy, normal condition never saw ghosts.

The whole party opposed his view. There was surely some truth at the bottom of all these tales. There were a thousand things which could not be explained by natural causes.

Anna was warmly seconded by Holst's younger brother, Victor, who had arrived at the house with him that morning; though he was influenced more by courtesy to the pretty young girl, than because he really felt any fear of ghosts. He could not bear to have his brother appear to place himself in such contemptuous opposition to a pair of such beautiful bright eyes, so he fought a stout battle against his own convictions.

"The history of such things," said the candidate, is contrary to sound sense and reason. They are miserable relics of the darkness of the middle ages, which can only check progress. It would be an utterly idiotic proceeding for dead folk to walk abroad and terrify the living. Tradition carries such tales from generation to generation, and if not subjected to severe scientific criticism they retain their vitality and are believed. It is the same kind of superstition as that which makes simple folk afraid to sit 13 at table. In nine cases out of ten nothing happens, and there isn't even one person who thinks of the matter. In the tenth, perhaps one of the company dies, which is certainly in accordance with the course of nature. Instantly it is said: 'You remember; we sat 13 at table that day.' So the superstition obtains nourishment for a long time. No, thank God, the fresh breeze of knowledge will sweep away all such things like dank unwholesome fogs."

"Yes, we old people must be pardoned," the mistress of the house gently interposed, "we don't come so much in contact with the fresh breeze of science as perhaps we ought. We live, they say, wholly in tradition and this thrives nowhere so well as in an old manor like this. It is very difficult to release ourselves from the ideas in which we were reared, and which our ancestors believed. I am far from being what is called superstitious; I have never been in contact with these strange spirits—yet not for all the world would I sleep in the blue chamber."

"The blue chamber?" cried the whole party in tones of astonishment.

"Yes, we have here, as in so many old manor houses, a room that is said to be haunted. Many hundred years ago a man was murdered there, and since then the ghosts have taken possession of it. The servants talk of strange

sounds and sights; none of them like to pass it after dark."

"I was sitting thinking that I should be delighted to occupy a real haunted chamber," said Holst, quietly. "It is a sin to have it remain unused forever. Perhaps I can help dispel this foolish superstition, for I am convinced I shall sleep undisturbed."

At first the mistress of the house would not listen to such a plan, but when the whole party urged, and Anna clasped her arms beseechingly around her neck she at last yielded.

Anna thought the scene wonderfully interesting.

"It is really terrible that you dare venture, Candidate Holst," she said, "but I hope you will look really frightened, when you come to breakfast in the morning."

After supper the whole party went to the "blue chamber," which meantime had been put in order to receive the guest. Every corner was examined with the utmost care.

The atmosphere was somewhat oppressive, though the windows were now open. The room was seldom ventilated, and the half moldy air took the liberty of settling in the furniture and curtains. It had evidently always borne the name of the "blue chamber," although the thick carpet was now faded. The furniture was very scanty, but what articles remained were old-fashioned. While time had transformed everything else in the ancient manor, making the stiff carved chairs give way to comfortable arm-chairs, and the old chimney pieces to tile stoves, this room seemed to have preserved its former appearance. It was delivered over to the spirits of the past; no one had attempted to drag it into the present. An article that did not contribute the least in enabling it to retain its ancient character was the huge, exquisitely carved four-post bedstead, which occupied a large portion of the room. The apartment was the last in one wing of the manor, looking out upon the ground, but so near the ground that a person, by the display of some little agility, might climb up.

"It is not impossible," said Holst, after a thorough examination of the chamber, "that the nocturnal noises mentioned may have been made by vagabonds who settled here for a comfortable night's rest. Victor, do me the favor to get my pistols; they are in my traveling satchel; but don't meddle with the triggers; they are loaded."

Victor went away with a light, and soon after brought the pistols to his brother. The latter primed them freshly, put on new caps and laid them on the table.

"Now, good-night, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all as comfortable rest as I expect to have myself."

"Good-night, wicked free-thinker," said Anna, half admiringly. "I hope you may have different opinions in the morning."

As they all went out Victor whispered to Anna: "I'll answer for it that he shall be thoroughly frightened."

The door was locked and Candidate Holst remained alone in the blue chamber. The sound of footsteps and voices died away; he listened at the door, but all was still. Going to the window, he stood there a few minutes, looking at the grove. The soft night breeze stirred the leaves and branches. Only the nearest trees could be dimly distinguished. Beyond, all was dense, impenetrable darkness, for there was neither moon nor stars in the sky.

"It's really very rare to be free from Madame Luna," said he, "she is so fond of intruding and playing the spy on sensible folk, spite of drawn curtains. For the rest, this is an uncommonly comfortable room. Probably no one of the whole party will have so good a bed to lie in as my lucky self."

"So a man was murdered here, and for the sake of this legend the room has now stood empty hundreds of years. If one could see a few blood stains or similar horrors—but there's no trace of anything of the sort. What matchless power superstition has, even in our enlightened days! I shall consider it a good deed to drive it from this comfortable stronghold."

Lighting a cigar, he paced to and fro smoking, then walked around the bed and closed his eyes with a half shudder.

"How timidly the young girl, Anna, is pressing her pretty face against the pillow at the thought that any human being dares to sleep in the blue chamber. She won't even venture to put out her night-lamp for fear of seeing the frightful white shape that must speedily come here and destroy me."

While thus soliloquizing he undressed, opened the canopy bed, and resolutely extinguished the lamp.

There was no sound in the room only it seemed as if he could hear a rustling noise like crickets and a mysterious ticking, as though the famous death-watch was under the carpet. He lay listening a moment, heard the night wind sigh through the trees and the great clock of the manor strike 11, then he fell asleep.

At the end of an hour he suddenly started up in bed, having heard a sound like the opening of a door. A strange shuddering sensation ran through his limbs as he stared fixedly into the room and beheld a white form moving slowly towards the bed.

Terror overpowered him, but the next instant he regained his coolness

and shouted in a firm voice: "Who's there?"

No answer, but the shape remained standing in the middle of the floor.

"Who's there? Answer, or as sure as I live I'll fire," he called again, cocking his pistol.

He was once more the quiet, cold-blooded physician, he had surely heard the creaking of a door; it must be a man, a rascal, a murderer, perhaps, but no specter.

Yet, in spite of the pistol's warning snap, the figure did not move.

"Who goes there?" he called again. Still no sound disturbed the silence of the room.

The physician stretched out his arm and fired.

A flash of light illumined the dusky chamber and the report shook the old tapestry. Scarcely had the sound died away, when a burst of discordant, jeering, derisive laughter greeted him, and something hard struck his forehead. It was the bullet.

Seized with terrible dread, he fired the other pistol at the motionless white form—again the frightful laughter echoed through the room and the bullet fell heavily back on his own breast.

With a loud shriek, he sank down on the bed.

The form glided noiselessly out of the door.

Early the next morning, while Anna was watering her flowers, Victor came up to her.

"Where is your brother?" she asked.

"He isn't up yet, poor fellow. He has had a terrible fright."

"What was it?"

"If you'll promise to keep silence, I'll tell the whole story. To revenge myself on him I played ghost, first taking care to draw the bullets from his pistol that he might not use the weapon recklessly. Wrapped in sheets, I visited him and threw the balls back at his head when he fired."

"Nothing could be better!" exclaimed Anna. But promise me not to speak of it. Your mother might be vexed and he himself must not be undecieved."

"Trust me, I'll be as mute as the grave." The physician did not come; breakfast waited in vain. At last some of the gentlemen went to wake him. He lay with his head stretched over the edge of the bed; his mouth was wide open, his eyes were starting from their sockets and his hair was white as chalk. Life had vanished. His discharged pistols were found by his side. One week after Victor was taken to the insane asylum.

A Midnight Cremation.

The body of an Indian gentleman has been cremated at Etretat, France, in curious circumstances. Baboo Sahed Chaitay, a Marabou gentleman, who had accompanied his son-in-law, Sampatras, the brother of the Maharajah Gaekwar, of Baroda, one of the chief princes of India, to Europe, died recently at Etretat of an abscess in the throat. Permission was requested of the mayor to cremate the body, and he immediately telegraphed the authorities for authorization enabling the Indians to perform their sacred rites. He aided them in every possible way to carry out their intentions. The permission having been granted, at midnight wood was carted down to the north end of the beach, behind a jutting point in the cliff hidden from the town, and there a pile of two or three feet in height was carefully built of logs crossed and re-crossed, with the ends toward the north and south. The ceremony of sprinkling the sacred powder over the body and anointing it was very simple. The fire was in a small earthen bowl and was made of sandalwood, which is difficult to obtain in Etretat. But in this case a carved box, a souvenir of India, was presented for the purpose to the mourners by an English lady, who happened to have it with her. The body was laid upon the pile, with the head toward the north, and then covered with more wood saturated with oil. It was now two o'clock, and the funeral pile was carefully built. The secret of the cremation had been well kept, so that not more than twenty in all were on the spot to witness it. The prince threw the burning incense in the bowl upon the north end of the pile, which instantly caught fire, and the Indians, with raised hands, again repeated, "Ram, ram!" Soon the whole mass was wrapped in a flame that climbed up the cliff, brought the spectators out strongly against the dark background and lit the foamy crest of the waves. In an hour the flames began to subside and more wood was piled on. Gradually the morning dawned upon the ceremony. The wind had blown away most of the cinders, and among those remaining only a few pieces of bone, keeping their form, could be found, and those crumbled when they were touched. What human ashes could be distinguished were gathered up, a part being thrown into the sea and the rest sealed up to be sent to India. By six o'clock every vestige of the cremation had disappeared.

Past labor is present delight.
One ill word asketh another.
Opportunity makes the thief.
Once a use and ever a custom.
Political confectionery—taffy.
Of two evils, choose the least.
Passion is ever the enemy of truth.
Better do well late than never.
Every may-be has a may-be-not.

Polecats.

Polecats are not by any means night hunters, although, no doubt, they slish a good deal of their prey under the cover of darkness. Their favorite time for hunting seems to be the early morning, and as soon as they leave the shelter of their domain they, as a rule, set off for some rabbit burrow—whether tenanted or not is immaterial—and indulge in a run through its winding tunnels. After this they will get to some hedgerow and hunt it down. If there be any old palings or a gate adjacent, they are sure to stop and rub themselves against the woodwork; and if several of the "varmints" be together, they may throw off their sober exterior and indulge in a little play; and then they set off in a serious fashion to obtain their food, which they draw as a rule in small portions from many victims. Like all the weasel tribe, the polecat seems to possess an extreme and bloodthirsty rapacity. It is never content to capture and kill sufficient for its own immediate use, but will destroy often as many birds and animals in one day as would serve it for a week, nay, often for a month's sustenance. Hence the large amount of damage this predaceous inclined little creature will commit. The catalogue of what is to its taste in the shape of birds and animals is a long one—all kinds of furred and feathered game, poultry even, to turkeys; rats and some kinds of mice; frogs, eels, and fish. The rabbit, where plentiful, is its most common victim, for it finds bunny a somewhat easy capture in its burrow, where, lying probably unconscious of impending danger, it may suddenly find the enemy at its throat, whence in a few seconds the marauder will have sucked its life-blood.

Possessed of powers of scent far keener than any hound, the polecat can and will track hares long distances in their wanderings, and eventually effect their capture. Upon the little nut-brown partridge or the more sober looking grouse, it will steal in the early dawn or at "even's stilly hour," and sometimes before the former is aware of the polecat's presence, it will have, by a sharp irresistible bite into its brains, transferred it and perhaps several others beyond the reach of the sportsman's gun. Being at need a strong and rapid swimmer, the polecat has often been known to take eels and other fish from the streams; but unless other food be scarce, it usually refrains from entering the unstable element in search of food. Among poultry, its operations are often wholesale, and must be disheartening to a degree to the industrious henwife, for, as we have said before, it does not confine itself to supplying its actual wants but given the chance of some wholesale killing, it indulges its cruel instincts apparently more for pleasure than for the necessity of the thing. It is this habit, common to all the animals and birds coming under the definition of "vermin," which renders them so extremely destructive. One thing may be said in the polecat's favor, which is, that it is a very determined enemy of the rat, although the latter's ferocity often prevents the former from bringing to a successful conclusion any crusade it may have opened against it. But the polecat is all the same a most courageous little animal.

Pocket Artillery.

In El Paso New Mexico, the other day I dropped into a large store which enjoys the reputation of selling more arms than any other house in the city. While inspecting a glittering array of pistols of all kinds which filled half a dozen show-cases, a young fellow of about 23 entered. He was dressed in approved frontier style—sombrero it would take three days to walk around the rim of, white handkerchief tied loosely round the neck, blue shirt, pants stuck in his boots and large Mexican spurs upon his heels, jingling as he walked. He wished to buy a gun. In the expressiveness and laconic tongue of the frontier a gun is a revolver, a rifle is called by the name of the maker and the weapon of the sportsman, uncurtailed of its fair proportions, is known as a shotgun.

Selected from a case a handsomely mounted Colt's 45-caliber revolver the clerk said: "How would you like this? It is the newest thing out—a double-action 45."

"Ain't worth a row of beans. No man 'cept a tenderfoot wants that kind of thing. Give me an old reliable all the time. Ye see a man that's used to the old style is apt to get fooled—not pull her off in time—and then he'll be laid out colder'n a wedge."

He was handed out a single-action Colt's of the same model, which, after carefully examining, he proceeded to cock and fire, twirling the pistol around his fore-finger and cocking and pressing the trigger the moment the butt came into the palm of his hand. After some little kick about the price, the weapon was paid for and the customer left the store.

"There are few men," observed the clerk as his customer left, "that can do that trick. I have been 10 years on the southwest frontier, amongst the worst classes and don't know more nor half a dozen." "Bill the kid could do it; so can Pat Garret, former sheriff of Lincoln county; so can Dan Tucker, deputy sheriff of Deming. Curly Bill could do it best of the lot, and that's

how he killed Sheriff White at Tombstone."

"How was that?" queried the correspondent.

"Well, you see, Curly Bill was trying to paint the town red, and White heard of it, and going up to him, covered him with his six-shooter, and told him he had got to give up his gun. Bill handed the gun out butt first, but kept his finger inside the guard, and as the sheriff reached for it he gave it that twist you've seen, turned her loose, and the sheriff passed in his checks."

"What kind of revolvers are in demand?"

"Forty-five and 44-calibres. Colt's models are the favorites, then comes Smith & Wesson, and a new model called the Merwin Hulbert. The latter is a favorite with men who are often in town and like to pack a gun. It has an interchangeable barrel. The long barrel is taken off and the short barrel put on, and then it can be carried in the hip pocket. The great trouble with all these pistols is that they are hard on the trigger. The boys get over this by having the catch filed down. The pistol of the cow-boy is as fine on the trigger as were the hair-triggers of the old dueling days."

"Do you sell 22 and 32-calibers?"

"No; that is to say, very seldom. A Texan or New Mexico boy would consider such pistols toys. He may stoop as low as 41 and there he stops. When a man or a boy shoots at another in this climate he shoots to kill, and has no use for such toys."

"I want to show you a kind of shotgun that has a limited use," continued the clerk, and he led the way to the back of the store where about half a dozen double-barreled shotguns were standing in the rack. They had all been cut off short, the barrels being only about two feet in length, but otherwise they were perfect. "These guns are prime favorites with sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, United States marshals, and officers of the law generally, and when they get the drop on you with one of them, it's a case of throw up your hands, no matter how much sand you may have got. They are very handy and you can stow them away under the seat of a buggy with ease. Wells-Fargo's messengers all carry them, and at short range they beat rifles and six shooters all to Hades. It was with one of them that Horn, who was deputy sheriff of Lordsburg, took in Curly Bill. Bill was riding out of the corral, and Horn had stationed himself just by the door-post. As Bill rode out he covered him and called to him to 'throw up his hand.' Bill only glanced at the weapon and up went his hands. Had it been a six shooter he'd have taken chances. A fool went and rode through the dining-room in the railroad hotel at Deming flourishing his pistol, and frightening the lady passengers bound west nearly into fits. Dan Tucker found the fellow on the street, covered him with her, and called 'hands up.' The idiot made a motion for his six-shooter, and Dan filled him chock full of buckshot."

A New Hampshire Judge.

Levi Woodbury, once a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, was an indefatigable worker. So much so as to be in some respects a terror to the bar, for he always seemed to think that other people could work as many hours in the day as he could. He was an immensely large man and did not like to move about. When he got his seat on the bench in the morning, with a large tumbler of ice-water before him, he was ready for any number of hours' work. He would occasionally have re-lays of cases. That is, when the jury went to dinner, he would call up some case in equity where no jury was needed and proceed with that. George W. Cooley, of the Boston bar, was an able lawyer but fearfully long-winded, and in one case Judge Woodbury kept him at it for nearly the whole term. When there was nothing else doing, he would send for Mr. Cooley and set him going until the jury came back or until counsel in some other cases had returned from lunch. Some lawyers would have got restive at such treatment, but Cooley never yet objected to hearing himself argue if anybody would listen. The worst of it was with Judge Woodbury, however, that, while cases were going on, he would amuse himself by writing ipecum lectures or letters, or by drawing up opinions in other cases which had been held under advisement. He never lost any time and when everybody was tired out, and the court must in decency be adjourned, he would slowly and reluctantly retire, and sleep the sleep of a righteous judge, who meant business and a good deal of it. Richard Fletcher, one of the ablest of all the Boston lawyers, came from New Hampshire as Judge Woodbury did, and had a great prejudice against the judge. Once, being annoyed at the dilatory proceedings, he whispered that the latter always seemed to "string out" matters as much as he could. "Yes," said some one, "but he is always patient."

"Oh, yes, patient as a jackass."

Our greatest ills are self-produced.
Do as little as you can to repent of.
Think much, speak little, write less.
Wounds given to honor never heal.
A thin bush is better than no shelter.
Gain got by a lie will burn one's finger.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

He that sips of many arts, drinks of none.

Draw not your bow till your arrow's fixed.

Due deliberation is half accomplishment.

He who has no shame has no conscience.

Every great passion is but a prolonged hope.

Be charitable and indulgent to every one but yourself.

He who lives but for himself lives but for a little time.

Innocence is like polished armor, it adorns and defends.

Human government is imperfect because human nature is.

Modesty and civility are prime factors of common sense.

Speaking without thinking is shooting without taking aim.

Natural abilities are like natural plants—they need pruning.

Love is the beginning, the middle, and the end of everything.

You may profit by folly—if you make use of the faults of others.

Our acts make or mar us; we are the children of our own deeds.

Fiction pleases the more in proportion as it resembles truth.

All life aims are vain that aim at anything less than Heaven.

Being found true of heart, Heaven is the goal of the humblest life.

Nature supplies the raw material; education is the manufacturer.

Next to love, sympathy is the divinest passion of the human heart.

Pity is the virtue of the law, and none but tyrants use it cruelly.

Falseness always endeavors to copy the mien and attitude of truth.

To count but few things necessary is the foundation of many virtues.

Happiness is like the statue of Isis, whose veil no mortal ever raised.

Malice sucks the greatest part of her own venom, and poisons herself.

Without earnestness no man is ever great or does really great things.

Flattery is the bad man's most effective means of corrupting others.

He who can conceal his joy is greater than he who can conceal his griefs.

Nothing is so credulous as vanity, or so ignorant of what becomes itself.

The more we help others to bear their burdens the lighter our own will be.

Avoid many obligations. You may incur debts impossible of payment.

He who has tasted a sour apple will have the more relish for a sweet one.

Kind hearts are more than coronets, and simple faith than Norman blood.

It is human nature to love to make experiments at the expense of others.

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from trouble.

A wife loses the sense of her own value in her love for a distinguished man.

There is no knife that cuts so sharply and with such poisoned blade as treachery.

To succeed one must sometimes be very bold, and sometimes very prudent.

Sincerity is the way to heaven. To think how to be sincere is the way of man.

Fortune often rewards with interest those that have patience to wait for her.

Sin and misery are not lovers, but they walk hand in hand just as if they were.

He who cannot command his thoughts must not hope to command his actions.

The virtue of prosperity is temperance, the virtue of adversity is fortitude.

The company in which you will improve most will be the least expensive to you.

A conscience void of offense before God and man is an inheritance for eternity.

husband; a husband truly appreciates himself first when he loves a noble wife.

It is easy to love our fellow men. Do good to them and you will be sure to love them.

As to trouble, who expects to find cherries without stones, or roses without thorns?

Vanity keeps persons in favor with themselves who are out of favor with all others.

We need not be much concerned about those faults which we have the courage to own.

Discontent with one's gifts destroys the power of those that one, has, and brings no others.

Let no man complain of the shortness of life until he has measured the full capacity of a day.

All the whetting in the world can never set a razor's edge on that which has no steel in it.

The "simplicity" which allows itself to be blindly led, does credit to neither the head nor the heart.

When truth offends no one, it ought to pass out of the mouth as naturally as the air we breathe.

He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper.

Silence is generally safe, and generally prudent, but there are times when it is disgraceful to be silent.

Wear a cheerful countenance. If your mirror won't smile on you, how can you expect anybody will?

Recollect every day the things seen, heard or read, which make any addition to your understanding.

It is a sign of wisdom to be willing to receive instructions; the most intelligent sometimes stand in need of it.

In the blackest soils grow the richest flowers, and the loftiest and strongest trees spring heavenward among the rocks.

"Oh, Ma!" exclaimed a little girl, glancing at the steam-gauge on a stationery engine, "it's 60 o'clock. I didn't know it ever got so late as that."