

rejoin the little eperie. The repast did credit to Mrs. Brown's snowy cap and snowy apron. The meal passed off cheerfully, as the hopes of the settlement only were discussed, and as no further allusion was made to Stanhope Kavanagh, Irish fortunes, or great families. Kondiarok and Brown were dressing the deer, and removing his splendid antlers, so as to surprise Olive with them nailed up in the hall next morning, she not having yet heard of the death of the animal. In due turn, they, too, took care of themselves in the kitchen; Mr. Brown telling his wife that she was really getting younger, and assuring Tim that he was a very respectable little squirrel. Thus pleasantly matters passed off in both divisions of the cottage, until it was time to retire, when soon high and low sought their couch—Olive to dream of Stanhope Kavanagh, Black Hawk to keep his eyes wide open for hours, and Mrs. Mornington to frown in her sleep.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### A GHOST STORY—AN IMITATION OF DICKENS.

FROM THE FRENCH, BY M. F. S.

"SINCE you have asked me for a ghost story," said my uncle, "you shall be gratified."

And he began thus:

One fine autumn evening, forty years ago, I was journeying from Shrewsbury to Chester. Being fatigued I sought for some hotel on the road in which to pass the night, when I was overtaken by a thunderstorm. My horse, terrified by the vivid lightning, became uncontrollable, and no longer obeying the rein, pursued his own course, until I finally succeeded in arresting him before a country inn of respectable appearance.

Well, thought I, this is not so bad after all! I shall at least find shelter here, so dismounting from my horse I gave him in charge of a vigorous young countryman who was standing at the inn door, and entered the house. The kitchen, which served also as a dining-room, was spacious, neat and comfortable. Several travellers, probably like myself forced to seek shelter from the storm, were grouped around the fire, and were warming themselves while the supper was in preparation. I joined the party by invitation of our hostess, and we soon found ourselves, to the number of a dozen, seated before a savory repast.

The conversation turned very naturally upon the adventures and mishaps incident to the sudden storm, and each one had some experience to relate connected with it. One had been thrown from his horse, another from his tilbury into a ditch; all had been drenched to the skin, and were unanimous in pronouncing the night only fit for witches and ghosts.

"Witches and ghosts prefer moonlight for their expeditions!"

These words were pronounced in a solemn tone, with peculiar emphasis, by one of the party, a large man of sombre appearance. My immediate neighbor, a handsome, dashing young fellow, with a frank, bold expression, after laughing heartily, said:

"You, sir, must be particularly familiar with the manners and customs of ghosts to affirm so positively that they are not partial to rain and mud."

The first speaker cast a dark, fierce glance at the young scoffer, and rejoined:

"Young man, do not speak so lightly of matters which you do not comprehend."

"Do you mean to say that phantoms are among the number?"

"Perhaps. You would scarcely have the courage to meet one face to face."

The young man crimsoned with anger and rose, but re-seated himself immediately, saying coldly:

"This insult should cost you dearly, did I not perceive that I should only be wasting my anger upon a madman or a fool!"

"A madman or a fool!" cried the man, throwing upon the table a heavy leathern purse. "That contains fifty guineas, and I will forfeit them all if within an hour I do not cause you to see, you who are so firmly convinced to the contrary, the ghost of one of your friends, and if after having recognized him you will venture to press a kiss upon his lips."

We all looked at each other, but my young neighbor replied in the same mocking tone as before:

"You wish to enter into this compact? You really wish to do so?"

"Yes," responded the other, "I will stake these fifty guineas, on condition that you forfeit an equal sum should you lose."

After a moment's silence, the young man laughingly rejoined:

"Reflect for a moment, most estimable and illustrious sorcerer, was ever a poor student of the university even suspected of being the possessor of so much gold! But here are five guineas, and I will wager them with all my heart."

"The man took up his leathern purse, saying in a contemptuous tone:

"You are afraid, if I understand aright. You wish to retract?"

"Retract!" cried the student, "retract! If I had only fifty guineas you should see if I wished to retract!"

"Here are four guineas," said I, "which I will add to your stakes."

Hardly had I made this tender, when the other travellers, interested by the singularity of the adventure, also put their money upon the table, until soon the fifty guineas were made up. The older man seemed so sure of winning, that he placed the stakes in the student's hand and began to make preparations for deciding the wager.

We chose for this purpose a little summerhouse, situated in a retired spot in the garden, and without any issue except a door and window, which we closed carefully after the young student's entrance. We placed writing materials on a little table in the summer-house, and removing the lamp, we remained outside, with the sorcerer in our midst. He then commenced, in a low, deep voice, a mysterious incantation.

This done, he said, in a solemn voice.

"You wish your friend, Francis Villiers, who was drowned, three years ago, off the coast of South America, to appear to you? What do you see now?"

"I see," replied the student, "a white mist rising near the window; it assumes no shape, but seems only dense v. por."

We, who were listeners to this strange colloquy, maintained the deepest silence.

"Are you afraid?" inquired the sorcerer, in a loud tone.

"No, I am not afraid," said the student, firmly.

After a moment's silence, the sorcerer stamped thrice upon the ground and began chanting a second incantation. Then he solemnly inquired,

"You, who would penetrate the mysteries of the tomb, what do you see?"

The student replied, in a calm voice, but like a man describing that which was passing before him,

"I see the mist assuming the form of a man; his head is covered with a long veil; he is motionless."

"Are you afraid?"

"No, I am not afraid."

Struck with horror, we all looked at each other in silence, and the sorcerer, elevating his arms above his head, in a sepulchral tone, began a third incantation.

"What do you see now?" he inquired.

"I see the phantom advance—it raises its veil—it is Francis Villiers—it approaches the table—it writes—it is his signature?"

"Again I ask, are you afraid?"

There was a moment's awful silence, and the student replied, but in an altered tone of voice,

"No, I am not afraid."

With strange, wild gestures, the man again commenced his incantations.

"What do you see?"

"It advances—it approaches me—it pursues me—it extends its arms—it seeks to embrace me! Help! Help! Save me!"

"Are you afraid now?" inquired the sorcerer, in a mocking voice.

A piercing cry, a smothered groan, were the sole response to this cruel question.

"Go to the assistance of this young man," added he, coldly. "I have, I think you will concede, won the wager; but it is enough for me that I have taught him a lesson."

Let him keep his money, but let him be more discreet in future!"

At these words he walked rapidly away.

We entered the summer-house and found the student in frightful convulsions. A paper, signed "Francis Villiers," was upon the table.

As soon as he returned to his senses, he furiously inquired for the infamous sorcerer who had submitted him to so cruel a test—he wished to take his life! He searched the hotel from top to bottom, then running, like a madman, he plunged into the woods in pursuit of him, and we never again caught sight of one or the other.

There, my children, you have heard my ghost story.

"But how does it happen, uncle," I inquired, "that after such an adventure, you do not believe in ghosts?"

"Because," he replied, "we never again saw the student nor the sorcerer, nor the forty-five guineas belonging to myself and the other travellers. The two rogues decamped after having enacted a farce which we were stupid enough to believe a reality."

#### Choice Extracts.

##### Maternal Love.

The *Union de l'Ouest* of Angers records a singular case of the murder of a husband by his wife, the only motive being "excess of maternal love!" The only son of a woman living at Blaison, in the Department of Maine and Loire, was drawn for a soldier. The mother, distressed beyond measure at the idea of parting with him, consulted her neighbor as to the means of procuring his exemption, and in the course of her inquiries she learned the piece of military law that if she were a widow her son would be exempt, as the prop of the family (*soutien de famille*). Upon this hint she murdered her husband.

##### The Cathedral at Palermo, Sicily.

The city of Palermo is surrounded by historical memories of rare interest. Founded by the Phœnicians, Panormus became the capital of the Carthaginian possessions in Sicily. It appears to have been a place of considerable importance in ancient times; the name, Panormus, signifying "All-port," may be regarded as indicating its early commercial consequence. It was taken by the Romans 250 B. C.; it was afterwards the capital of the Saracen States in the island. The Normans took the city in 1072. In 1282 it was the scene of that fearful massacre called the Sicilian Vespers.

The cathedral dates back to the tenth century, but it boasts of a modern cupola. It is remarkable for its many splendid sepulchral monuments in porphyry, among which are those of the Emperor Frederick II and King Roger the Norman. It is one of the striking attractions of the many rare curiosities of the old famous city of Palermo.

##### The Former Days.

The degeneracy of our times, especially in the matter of honesty and integrity in public affairs, is most sadly marked. A gentleman in middle life furnishes to one of the papers the following incident in his boyish days:

Having occasion to write he thought to supply himself with a sheet of letter paper from the desk of his grandfather, who at the time had an office under the Federal Government.

"What are you doing there?" said the old gentleman.

"Getting a sheet of paper, sir."

"Put it back, sir, put it back; that paper belongs to the Government of the United States."

How exceedingly old-fashioned that sounds in these days of wholesale speculation, fraud, robbery and plunder! Well may we sigh for the return of "Auld Lang Syne."—*N. Y. Sunday Atlas.*

##### Keeping the King to his Word.

The favorite of a certain Eastern king rebelled and headed a conspiracy to dethrone his master. The conspiracy was put down, and the traitor taken alive, and condemned to be shot to death by arrows, in the courtyard of the royal palace, in the presence of the king. The hour came, the arches were drawn up, and the prisoner was let out to

die. After kneeling down to meet his doom, he asked for a drink of water. A goblet was placed in his hand, but he hesitated and looked distrustfully from the levelled arrows of the archers to the face of his royal master. "Fear not, oh Hamet!" said the king, "thou shalt not die until thou hast drunk that water." Whereupon the face of the culprit lighted up with joy; flinging down the goblet, he cast himself at his royal master's feet, exclaiming, while the sands absorbed the spilled water—"In virtue of thy royal word, oh King, I claim my life! Lo, I cannot die until I have drunk that water which the sands have swallowed, but shall live many years to wipe out my treason in faithful services to my sovereign!" And the good king raised and embraced his repentant minister, and restored him to life and favor, which he ever more sought zealously to merit.

##### The Best Bed.

Of the eight pounds which a man eats and drinks in a day, it is thought that not less than five pound leaves his body through the skin. And of these five pounds a considerable per centage escapes during the night while he is in bed. The larger part of this is water, but in addition there is much effete and poisonous matter. This being in great part gaseous in form, permeates every part of the bed. Thus all parts of the bed, mattresses, blankets, as well as sheets, soon become foul to an unhealthy extent, and need purification.

The mattress needs this renovation quite as much as the sheets. To allow sheets to be used without washing or changing, three or six months, is regarded as bad house-keeping, but I insist if a thin sheet can absorb enough of the poisonous excretions of the body to make it unfit for use in a few days, a thick mattress which can absorb and retain a thousand times as much of these poisonous excretions, needs to be purified as often as once in three months.

A sheet can be washed. A mattress cannot be renovated in this way. Indeed there is no way of cleaning a mattress but by steaming it, picking it to pieces, and thus, in fragments exposing it to the direct rays of the sun. As these processes are scarcely practicable with any of the ordinary mattresses, I am decidedly of the opinion that the good old-fashioned straw bed, that can be changed every three months with fresh straw, and the tick washed, is the sweetest and the healthiest kind of beds.—*Dr. D. Lewis.*

##### A Curious Marriage.

A curious fact in regard to the marriage of John Kemble is told in Bannister's memoirs. One of the daughters of a noble lord, formerly holding high office, but then living in retirement, had fallen in love with the graceful and showy actor, merely from seeing him on the stage. Kemble was sent for by the father, and, to his astonishment, acquainted with the circumstances. The noble lord told him further, that it was in his power to do him either a great evil or a great favor; and that if he would do the latter, by relieving him from all apprehension of the lady's indulging her fantasy, and relieve him effectually, by marrying any one else for whom he might have an attachment, his wife should receive a dower of five thousand pounds. Kemble immediately proposed for Mrs. Brereton, a pretty actress in the company, and the marriage took place without delay. But the amusing part of the tale is, that the afflicted and magnanimous father instantly recovered his spirits, and lost his memory. On being applied to for his thousands, he declared that he had no recollection whatever of the compact, nor, indeed, any of the idea, further than some general conversation on such matters with the "very intelligent person in question," adding, "that if he was to pay five thousand pounds for every whim of his daughter's, he must soon be a much poorer man than he ever intended to be." It is certainly believed that Kemble never got a shilling from this very sensitive nobleman, and that, for the rest of his life, he attached a new value to the vulgar etiquette of signing and sealing beforehand, even with the most plausible of mankind.