

SOMETIMES we laugh at the love of the public for a happy ending. Let us not laugh at it. The outspoken craving of the human heart is not for the clap-trap of marriage bells, but for spiritual compensation. It will suffer itself to see the hero die, if only he dies in a good cause, if only his death is the crown of his life, if only it can feel that, though everything passes away from him—youth, fortune, love—one thing remains—spiritual compensation.

We look around and we see wrongdoing victorious and rightdoing in the dust; the evil man growing rich, and dying in his bed; the good man becoming poor and dying in the streets; and our hearts sink, and we say, "What is God doing, after all, in this world of His children?" But our days are few, our view is limited; we cannot watch the event long enough to see the end which Providence sees. Well, am I irreverent? The place of the great novelists, the great dramatists—Tolstoi, Hugo, Scott, Shakespeare—is that of a temporal Providence—to answer the craving of the human soul for compensation, to show us that success may be the worst failure, and failure the best success; that poverty may be better than riches. I count him the greatest man who teaches men that the world is ruled in righteousness.—*Hall Caine, before the Nineteenth Century Club, on "Moral Responsibility in the Novel and Drama."*

THE KNOX COLLEGE MONTHLY

AND

PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

TERMS: \$1.00 per annum in advance. Single copies 10 cents.

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