

THE QUIET HOUR.

The Master's Call.

"I asked the Lord to let me do
Some mighty work for Him,
To fight amidst His battle hosts,
Then sing the victor's hymn.
I longed my ardent love to show,
But Jesus would not have it so.

"He placed me in a quiet home,
Whose life was calm and still,
And gave me little things to do,
My daily life to fill.
I could not think it good to be
Just put aside so silently.

"Small duties gathered round my way,
They seemed of earth alone;
I who had longed for conquests bright
To lay before His throne,
Had common things to do and bear,
To watch and strive with daily care.

"So then I thought my prayer unheard,
And asked the Lord once more
That He would give me work for Him,
And open wide the door—
Forgetting that my Master knew
Just what was best for me to do.

"Then quietly the answer came:
'My child, I hear thy cry;
Think not that mighty deeds alone
Will bring the victory;
The battle has been planned by Me;
Let daily life thy conquests see.'"

When Mary of Bethany, crushed beneath her sorrow, sat still in the house, without energy or spirit to do anything, she was roused by the message, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." She lost no time in obeying that welcome call, and soon found that even her great grief could be changed by Him into joy. The message was given secretly; those who were so vainly trying to comfort the broken-hearted woman only saw her action, they did not understand the reason of her sudden awakening from a state of hopeless despair.

This beautiful scene has been re-enacted many a time since then. Many a loving disciple has answered the Master's secret call, and found that His service brings a lasting joy and peace which can be found nowhere else.

"Mollie's" dear invalid aunt, of whom she wrote in one of her bright, newsy letters, sent me a little book last Christmas, one chapter of which is about the "Divine Master." The writer suggests that the words, "my Master," should be worn next the heart, next the will; sinking into the very springs of both, deeper every day. He goes on to say: "Let me get up every morning with this for the instantaneous thought, that my Master wakes me. I wake, I rise, His property. Before I go out to plow, or feed, or whatever it may be, upon his domain, let me, with reverent and deep joy, go into his private chamber, as it were, and avow Him as my Master, my Possessor; absolute, not constitutional; supremely entitled to order me about all day, and, if He pleases, not to thank me at the close . . . let me continually, in the habit of my thought, be coming again into that Presence-chamber, to renew the act of that dedication and submission."

I know these words can only be understood by those who own the Lord Jesus as their Master, not only in name, but in living reality. It is as true to-day as it was in St. Paul's time, that the preaching of the Cross is to some "foolishness," while it is to the others "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." What a difference it makes in the day's happiness, and in the quantity and quality of the work done, when we remember at frequent intervals that the Master is here, and that we are in very truth called to work for Him. He speaks in secret and says to each servant, "Do this," and he doeth it. The world goes on, unconscious of the still, small voice, so plainly heard by all who are listening for it. Sometimes the Master takes the everyday work and offers it bit by bit to His servant, saying, "Do this for me." Sometimes it is a sudden emergency call, interrupting the routine of everyday. As a rule we don't like interruptions from the outside, when we are really interested in what we are doing, but that is no matter. Our time belongs to our Master; not an hour of it is our own, and he has a right to stop us whenever He sees fit. Let us say with St. Paul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and as soon as we understand the order rise up quickly and obey it. Instead of drifting along without aim or object in life, let us make it our business to do our Master's will every day, in small things and in great. His business here was not to do His own will, but the will of the Father, and what higher object can any of us have!

Let us listen for the Master's call, answering readily and cheerfully as Samuel did, "Speak

Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Surely He is calling each faithful servant to obey Him not only in outward action, but also in heart and mind, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

"I should not love Thee now wert Thou not near,
Looking on me in love. Yea, Thou dost meet
Those that remember Thee. Look on me still,
Lord Jesus Christ, and let Thy look give strength
To work for Thee with single heart and eye."

HOPE.

It Doesn't Cost Money.

It doesn't cost money, as many suppose,
To have a good time on the earth;
The best of its pleasures are free to all those
Who know how to value their worth.

The sweetest of music the birds to us sing,
The loveliest flowers grow wild,
The finest of drinks gushes out of the spring—
All free to man, woman, and child.

No money can purchase, no artist can paint,
Such pictures as nature supplies
Forever, all over, to sinner and saint,
Who use to advantage their eyes.

Kind words and glad looks and smiles cheery and brave
Cost nothing—no, nothing at all;
And yet all the wealth Monte Christo could save
Can make no such pleasures fall.

To bask in the sunshine, to breathe the pure air,
Honest toil, the enjoyment of health,
Sweet slumber refreshing—these pleasures we share
Without any portion of wealth.

Communion with friends that are tried, true, and strong,
To love and be loved for love's sake—
In fact, all that makes a life happy and long
Are free to whoever will take.

—Our Dumb Animals.

The Quest.

There was once a restless boy,
Who dwelt in a home by the sea,
Where the waters danced for joy,
And the wind was wild and free;
But he said, "Good mother, oh, let me go;
For the dullest place in the world, I know,
Is this little brown house—
This old brown house
Under the apple tree.

"I will travel east and west;
The loveliest homes I'll see;
And when I have found the best,
Dear mother, I'll come for thee.
I'll come for thee in a year and a day,
And joyfully then we'll haste away
From this little brown house—
This old brown house
Under the apple tree."

So he travelled here and there,
But never content was he,
Though he saw in lands most fair
The costliest homes there be,
He something missed from the sea or sky
Till he turned again, with a wistful sigh,
To the little brown house—
The old brown house
Under the apple tree.

Then the mother saw and smiled,
While her heart grew glad and free,
"Hast thou chosen a home, my child?
Ah, where shall we dwell?" quoth she.
And he said: "Sweet mother, from east to west,
The loveliest home, and the dearest and best,
Is a little brown house—
An old brown house
Under an apple tree."

For the Flat-chested Girl.

The flat-chested, or worse yet, hollow-chested girl ought to be ashamed of herself. She stoops or does not breathe properly. To straighten herself is her first duty to her health and to society. And it is the simplest thing in the world as well as one of the most important to fill out the hollows in a sunken chest and to develop the lungs, says the New Commercial, and thus do away with most of the coughs and colds that sap so much of the strength of many women, even at this time of year.

To "transform" a hollow chest:
Stand in a doorway, placing the flattened palms of your hands on the casings just at the height of your shoulders. Then, without removing your hands, walk through the door. Do this 40 times night and morning. You will be amazed to see how your chest will rise. You'll look like a grand opera singer in a few months. Any exercise that sends the shoulders back and brings the chest muscles into play is helpful and good. When you begin treatment measure yourself just under the arms. In six weeks' time measure again. You'll have a surprise.

The Gold Beyond the Gray.

I have been sitting here beneath the pines this sweet September afternoon, thinking of the gold that lies beyond the gray. A few fences away, there is a shorn harvest-field. The fences are gray and rickety, and there are some old barns beyond them that are very gray and very rickety. Some ancient apple-trees stand near the barns, and it is through and beneath their green gray foliage that this warm yellow field glints like a topaz.

I look at the ugly fences, at the dull, rolling acres between them, the decrepit bays, the neglected trees, and a little shiver runs over me. Then I look beyond—if only we would "look beyond" oftener—and that corner of the harvest-field seems to glitter like a bit of exquisite gold lace. The shiver is gone. Here may be neglect, and odiousness, and poverty, but yonder is order, and beauty, and wealth. The gray is here, of course—and "pity 'tis, 'tis true"—but the gold is beyond it.

"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."

And the gold is always beyond. Isn't the sunlight always above the clouds? "Tho' the mist is on the river yet the sun is on the hill." You have seen the heavy fogs that we sometimes have on a winter morning, and you know how dark and fall-like they are, and how the willow and evergreens seem to cringe and moan with their weight of ice, and the distant poplars reach up like the plumes of a hearse and then the fog lifts! You have seen that too. You know how like a rainbow is every tree and shrub, how the telephone-wires droop like strands of fire, how the snowbanks are set with diamonds, and every eastern hillside is a pink opal. It is the gold that lies beyond the gray.

And, again, you know the gloom of a gray November sky at eventide. The fields are all gray there, too, and the watercourses do not laugh as in the April sunshine, and the rooks caw and flap about in their dismal way. I think there is nothing more conducive to depression of spirits than a gray November evening, particularly if one is far from home, among strangers and amid uncongenial surroundings. But sometimes there comes a dividing of the canopy and the sunlight flashes through over all the land. The tree-trunks have an ochre tinge then, and the brown furrows grow ruddy, and in the woods you see spots of vermilion and orange that you somehow missed before. It is just such a sunset as it was that evening when the oxen ran away with the stone-boat and dumped you into the fish-pond, or the evening when you strained the milk into the wash-basin by mistake and sister Jane told you about it in the morning, or that other evening when, on your first holidays, you strode from the sharp air into the home-kitchen, and feasted on "punkin" pie, and apple-butter, and johnnycake. Home doesn't seem quite so far away now. It is the gold beyond the gray.

I was driving through a beautiful cemetery a few days ago. Massive, shining monuments and vaults rose high here and there, brilliant with gold lettering, while others were dulled and discolored with the lapse of years. I stood in one spot where I could see the flat side of many headstones, large and small. They stretched on for a great distance, and as I looked at the long line of dreary, silent things, I thought of the line of dreary hearts that were left behind. That was the gray, and a very cold, strange gray it seemed. Then I changed my position a little, and lo! the gold appeared. Clusters of nasturtiums, and lilies, and yellow pansies and dahlias sprang up all along the line. Other beautiful colors there were, too, but I seemed to see only the gold. The gray was there, and the gold that the temporal eye can see, but what of that "pure gold" that lies beyond that is seen only by the eye spiritual?

"There is no death. The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore;
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forevermore."

We are so apt to let our lives become gray and monotonous, and mechanical. We are so apt to drift with the tide and yield to our inclinations, and, in the midst of our multifarious farm duties, lose sight of our dreams and aspirations and grow disheartened and hopeless when things go against us. But, remember, the gold is always beyond the gray, and we very often find proof of this when we least expect it. We may not be able to see it at times, but that is often our own fault. We don't try to see it. Perhaps we don't want to. If our indifference has reached this sad degree let us think of these words:

"Dear heart, alone and lonely,
Though shattered life's hope may be,
The Lord who cares for the wayside rock
Much more shall care for thee;
Thy deeds of tenderness, words of love,
Like flowers may spring and twine,
Till joy shall come into other lives,
From the very rents in thine."

CHRYSOLITE.