

THE QUIET HOUR.

A Great Man.

"We rise by the things that are under feet;
By what we have mastered of good or gain;
By the pride deposed, and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet."

Most people would like to be great, although their ideas of greatness may differ very widely. Riis says that the boys belonging to the "gangs" in the New York slums are ambitious to be ring-leaders in crime. The heroes they try to copy are daring criminals, like Tracey. Such an ambition is not very different from the savage idea of measuring a man's greatness by the number of scalps he can show, or the civilized theory that a man is great if he has killed a number of people in battle.

However, the ideal of greatness I want to put before you to-day is very different from these. Naaman, the Syrian, "was a great man with his master," we are told; and his character, as shown in the brief glimpse we have of it, is great indeed. He had those virtues which are admired in every age and every country—courage, generosity and kindness. His courage is plain from the words, "By him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor." His generosity may be noticed in his dealings with Elisha, when he vainly urged him to take a rich present, and afterwards gave Gehazi twice as much as he asked—the weight of silver being as much as two men could carry. If he had not been kind to his household, the little captive maid would not have been so eager to have him cured of his leprosy, neither would his servants have dared to offer unasked advice.

But these virtues are not uncommon even among the heathen, and Naaman was great in another way, displaying a very rare virtue indeed. He was willing to own himself in the wrong. He did this in a very practical fashion, by accepting his servants' advice and acting on it at once. It may not be quite true that "the only vice disliked by all men is advice"; but certainly a man is very seldom willing to accept advice from one of his own household, especially from one in an inferior position. Every man may not be as unwilling to admit that he might possibly be mistaken as a certain Boston editor. Someone came to him and said, "Your paper says that I hanged myself, and I want you to take it back."

"No," said the editor, "we are not in the habit of doing that, but we will say the rope broke and you escaped."

Naaman was great enough to understand that his dignity could be safely left to care for itself. He was eager to grasp any means of cure, as sick people generally are. That accounts for the vast number of "cure-alls" on the market, for the demand creates the supply. He scorned the simple remedy proposed by Elisha, and that too was natural enough. "I saw in the paper the other day that a man dying of consumption had cured himself by walking from California to Toronto. Whether that is a fact or not, it is certainly true that the simplest remedy for consumption, and also for many other diseases, is the best. Like Elisha's prescription, it is free as air. In fact, it is fresh air, which is now prescribed in large quantities by the best doctors. How many sick people might be cured, if they were willing to try this simple remedy. But, like Naaman, they are ready to "do some great thing," but scorn anything so simple and common as fresh air.

But we are wandering from our subject, which is true greatness. Solomon says, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Naaman lived about three thousand years ago, and knew nothing of the Christian doctrine about the blessedness of meekness and poverty of spirit; yet we enlightened Christians of the 20th century might learn a very useful lesson from him. We have hardly learned to admire meekness yet, much less to practice it, considering that it is almost the same thing as weakness. We talk very scornfully of a man being "poor-spirited," notwithstanding the fact that the very first words of our Lord's first sermon are "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Naaman, as I have tried to point out, was great in many ways, but greatest of all in his simple and direct ways of accepting advice which he knew to be good; without seeming to consider for a moment that he was lowering his dignity by owning himself mistaken in his first indignant refusal of the prophet's advice. Most of the petty squabbles which are apt to blossom into serious quarrels might be nipped in the bud if even one of the persons concerned would be great enough to acknowledge that he was, partly at least, in the wrong. There is generally wrong on both sides, and such a frank and honest acknowledgment often calls forth a similar confession from the other person concerned. It is not an easy thing to do, certainly, but no one can be truly great without effort.

Humility is a rare and very beautiful grace, one that it would be well for us all to cultivate; remembering that the high and lofty One not only dwells in the high and lofty place, but "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

"If that in sight of God is great
Which counts itself for small,
We, by that law, Humility
The chiefest grace must call;
Which being such, not knows itself
To be a grace at all."

HOPE.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

Prize Competition.

Those deserving honorable mention for their descriptions of the picture called "Perfect Bliss" are Elsie A. Zavitz, W. M. Deacon, Charlotte Hunter, Annie Baker, Abbie Alderson, Isabella Mackenzie, Mina McCullough, Roy Harris and Alice Armstrong. The list of prizewinners was given last month, and I hope they have received their prizes before this. Frank Hawkey's essay was particularly good, although it had to be shortened a little. Mary Kydd, too, deserves a special word of praise. I don't think many little girls of seven could write so well. Congratulations to you too, Florence; I am glad to see the children under twelve are not afraid to try.

COUSIN DOROTHY.

PRIZE STORY—CLASS II.

Perfect Bliss.

Well, I think the picture represents two little



"A FISH STORY."

children having a social chat and eating some hot roasted apples which they have bought with their money, and are resting after a hard day's work.

The little children are orphans, their parents both dying when the children were young, and as they had nothing to leave them, the little boy and girl were cast on the streets of New York to earn a living. The boy sold newspapers and the little girl sold laces around the streets of the city. By doing this they earned enough to buy food and to pay rent for a room in the basement of an old building.

One Saturday night, after they have paid up all their debts for the week, they find that they have enough money to buy some apples, and roast them by their fire. They seem to enjoy the apples very much, but the little boy seems to find his too hot to eat, and thus we see him cooling it. The girl seems to be able to eat hers right up and smile at the boy. The children seem very happy, and perhaps they are as happy as the children who have every enjoyment and are waited upon by servants.

FLORENCE FORTNER (aged 10).

Hyde Park, Ont.

CLASS III.

Perfect Bliss.

In the morning it was cold, so Willie put on his stockings and boots, cuffs and cap, and warm clothes. Jennie stayed home to keep the baby, and the sun came out warm, so she went bare-footed. She washed her feet, hands and face, and got a clean dress on, and her mother said she and Willie could have some hot apples and a cup of milk. Jennie saw Willie coming from school, and called, "Willie! Willie! Hurry—I've got something for you." Willie came running, and hung his bag on the back of the chair and grabbed an apple so eagerly that Jennie could not keep from laughing. When they are together they are per-

fectly happy. When the "Farmer's Advocate" comes there is "Perfect Bliss" in our house, for I love it the best of any paper that I know of.

MARY EVELYN KYDD (aged 7).

Thames Road, Ont.

"Night."

What is more ideal than nature's sweet repose? After the sultry day, the earth is cooled, and the flowers, pitifully wilted by the sun's fierce rays, now freshen, kissed by the dew of heaven, and with petals fondly folded, skimmer. The gentle zephyrs, alike, rock the tender grass and the stately trees to sleep, while nature's harps play fitful lullabys. The sun, which, through the long day, from its place high in the heavens, watched over us, now rests behind the western hills, and the moon, relieving that golden orb, with softer light, watches while we sleep. The singing birds, that warbled all day long, have sung their vespers, and in the peaceful quietness are resting. The radiant vault of heaven is studded with myriad stars, which are reflected by the placid waters of the shimmering lakes, and the passing clouds, delicately silvered by the moon's pale light, drift lazily across the heavens.

But the babbling brooks, that never rest, ripple peacefully along their course, while the lakes, when nature is in a gentle mood, fondly lap their pebbled shores. Over the still night air, from the pools and from the marshes, comes the monotonous croaking of the frogs and of the lizards. All through the long night these sounds are heard, but nature, undisturbed, sleeps, her rest unbroken by these accustomed sounds.

Home Cures.

If poisoned, take mustard, or salt, tablespoon. In a cup of warm water, and swallow right soon. For burns, try borax and a wet bandage, too; If blistered, then oil and dry flannel will do. For children's convulsions warm baths are the rule; With castor oil dose, too, but keep the head cool. Give syrup of ipecac when croup is in store; For fainting, stretch patient right out on the floor. To soak in hot water is best for a sprain—Remember these rules, and 'twill save you much pain.—Exchange.

"A Fish Story."

It is not often that the narrator of wonderful achievements can have the apparently rapt attention of four pretty girls to the tale he is telling them. The question is, whether there may not be a little make-believe in even their attitudes? They seem to have said, "Here he comes. Mind, not a smile, however amazing a story he may tell us. Let him go on until the climax is reached, and it will be our turn then." I think the very gravity of their faces portends mischief for the fisherman when he comes to the end of the "fish story" which he has brought, in spite of his almost empty bag, for their delectation.

H. A. B.