

THE QUIET HOUR.

"Larvæ."

My little maiden of four years old
(No myth, but a genuine child is she,
With her bronze-brown eyes and her curls of gold)
Came quite in disgust one day to me,
Rubbing her shoulder with rosy palm,
As the loathsome touch seemed yet to thrill her,
She cried, "O mother, I found on my arm
A horrible crawling caterpillar."
And with mischievous smile she could scarcely smother,
Yet a glance in its daring, half-awed and shy,
She added, "While they were about it, mother,
I wish they'd just finished the butterfly."
They were words to the thought of the soul that turns
From the coarser form of a partial growth,
Reproaching the infinite patience that years
With an unknown glory to crown them both.
Ah! look thou largely with lenient eyes,
On whatso beside thee may creep and cling,
For the possible beauty that underlies
The passing phase of the meanest thing!
What if God's great angels, whose waiting love
Beholdeth our pitiful life below,
From the holy height of their heaven above,
Could not bear with the worm till the wings should grow?

Our Next-door Neighbor.

How little we take in or try to act on the command to love our neighbors as ourselves. And yet, if we are pledged to obey the orders of our Lord and Master, this great division of the whole duty of man must not be disregarded.

Let us begin with the very important question: "Who is my neighbor?" The answer to that question, remember, was given in the intensely practical parable of the Good Samaritan, which certainly teaches that the person to whom we have an opportunity of showing a kindness is our neighbor, and has a direct claim on us.

City people sometimes are not acquainted with their next-door neighbors. Well, this is not addressed to city people, so we will not discuss whether that is a right or wrong condition of affairs. You who live in the country can hardly make that excuse for neglecting a neighbor. It is rather a poor excuse anyway, and will hardly be accepted at the last great day of account.

Possibly you don't like your neighbors and have as little to do with them as possible; wish they lived a hundred miles away, and then you wouldn't be bothered with them. But has your personal dislike very much to do with the question? Had the Good Samaritan much reason to like the man who was his bitter enemy? Did he leave him to look after himself for any such reason as that? Did you ever grasp the idea that your neighbors were not placed there by accident, but that God, in bringing them into close connection with you, had a purpose, which you have no right to thwart or ignore?

If you use the opportunity the gain will be both yours and your neighbor's; if you neglect it, then you are refusing the work God has offered you, and the loss will most certainly be great—a loss of influence and happiness.

Of course you will be kindly and helpful when any neighbor is in trouble—sickness or death work wonders in the matter of neighborliness—but cannot the same spirit of friendly sympathy be kept up all the year round? Why is it that so many Christians try to carry out the command to "weep with them that weep," but utterly disregard the direction to rejoice with those who rejoice?

Is there any reason why we farmers should always try to prove that our own orchards, fields or gardens are ahead of those of our neighbors; or, if we cannot imagine them better, feel injured because others have beaten us? A kindly word of appreciation often gives a great deal of pleasure. If a neighbor's child wins a prize at school, show your sympathy warmly. If he wins prizes at the fair, don't forget to congratulate him. There are many ways in which love for one's neighbor may be cultivated, for love grows by use just as many plants flower better when the flowers are picked constantly. A bunch of flowers taken to one, a ride in your buggy offered to another, a basket of fruit or early vegetables to another; if you are on the watch you will find any number of opportunities for doing the little kindnesses "which most leave undone or despise." In giving pleasure you will never fail to find it at the same time, especially the joy of offering little sacrifices of time and trouble to Christ, remembering His word, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

We are all guilty of the sins of omission, leaving undone so many kind actions, leaving unsaid so

many kind words, which might have gladdened the lives of others.

"Talk not of feelings, and of frames,
When duties round thee lie.
They are but empty sounds and names,
These a reality.
Waste not thy life in idle dreams
Of what that life should be,
But live it, use it—for it seems
With tasks for you and me."

Then there are plenty of ways of being unneighborly, which should be avoided. We have no right to impute motives. There is very little good accomplished by our practice of talking over our neighbor's faults or pulling him to pieces so remorselessly. There are plenty of good points to talk about, and by looking for them, and refusing to dwell on the bad ones, we may encourage them to show themselves more, and so work an improvement. And never forget that, as the unsightly worm develops into the beautiful butterfly, so there may be possibilities of saintliness hidden under the most unpromising exterior.

"Good will! Consider this—
What easy, perfect bliss,
If, over all the earth the one change spread
That Hate and Fraud should die,
And all in amity,
Let go rapine, and wrath, and wrong, and dread."

What lack of Paradise
If in angelic wise,
Each unto each, as to himself, were dear!
If we in souls desired,
Whatever form might hide,
Own brother, and own sister, everywhere!

Till these things come to pass—
Nay, if it be—alas!
A vision, let us sleep and dream it true!
Or—same and broad awake—
For its great sound and sake,
Take it, and make it earth's; and peace ensue!



"A PAINFUL PARTING."

"A Painful Parting."

This picture suggests several interpretations. There is evidently no anger between these two. The adoring sadness in the man's face and the dejected attitude of the weeping girl preclude that surmise. Can they be husband and wife? We think not, for somehow they don't look married, and, besides, husbands do not, as a rule, kiss their wives' hands in that loverlike manner. Here is a romantic theory: A cruel fate is separating these two, and she is obliged to marry someone else in order to perhaps save a home for others. Her lover has come to see her, and she tells him the bitter truth with breaking heart. Even the poor dog seems to enter into the sadness of the scene. Truly, one might weave many theories regarding this "Painful Parting."

And is it true that we must part,
We two who have loved so much?
I hold your hand in mine, beloved,
That hand I scarce may dare to touch.

Yet though cruel Fate has willed it so,
That we should meet not after this,
Forgive me, love, if now I take,
In deepest sorrow, this one kiss.

You weep, and oh! it is for me!
But cease to shed those falling tears;
Give me one smile to cheer my way
Through all the long and bitter years.

Please accept thanks for the beautiful watch won by me in the Great Canadian Puzzle competition. I had no idea I should be a winner against so many, as I am only 12 years of age—but there is nothing like trying. The watch is really a good one. I will do all I can for the ADVOCATE. Again many thanks for your promptness. Yours truly,
Morris, Man.

FLORENCE R. SWAIN.

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NIECES,—The greater social virtues, such as Truth, Purity, Temperance, etc., are like a cloak, which should be embroidered with the minor social graces, such as Courage, Tact, and Refinement. Of Courage we have already spoken: let us now have a chat on tact. Tact is partly the gift of nature, an instinct rather than a cultivated grace; yet it is capable of being developed by observation and experience, and can be artificially encouraged by a little forethought and consideration for others.

Tact has been called the "art of saying or doing the right thing in the right place and in the right way." It is a treasure that never loses luster. It is the oil that makes social wheels run easily, and it will often do more to make a troublesome political, social or religious machine move than the greatest mental, physical or moral strength. It is like a delicate nerve, not seen, but one which feels and which is felt by everybody everywhere, and yet is never too prominent. Tact never oversteps good taste or trespasses on privileges, or is other than graceful under ungraceful circumstances. Affairs often occur to place one in such an awkward position that the slightest touch on the wrong side would overbalance and throw one into utter confusion, and perhaps lead to serious results. It is in a case like this that tact is all-important,—that tact which, being an instinct rather than a forethought, can act on the instinct and avert mischief. Persons who have this quality are quick to see the right mode of action, and not only to see it, but to follow it up successfully. The truest test of tact is being able not only to say or do a happy thing in a happy moment, but to do or say a happy thing in an awkward moment. The former is easy, but the latter is much more difficult. Here is an example of tact from "Recollections of Washington and his Friends":

"Early on a bright December morning, a droll-looking old countryman called to see the President. In the midst of their interview breakfast was announced, and the President invited the visitor, as was his hospitable wont on such occasions, to a seat beside him at the table. The visitor drank his coffee from his saucer, but lest any grief should come to the snowy damask, he laboriously scraped the bottom of his cup on the saucer's edge before setting it down on the tablecloth. He did it with such audible vigor that it attracted my attention, and that of the several young people present, always on the alert for occasions of laughter. We were so indiscreet as to allow our amusement to become obvious. General Washington took in the situation, and immediately adopted his visitor's method of drinking his coffee, making the scrape even more pronounced than the one he reproduced. Our disposition to

laugh was quenched at once."

Tact, too, is a useful friend to Truth, continually preventing the latter from inflicting a wound on someone's feelings. You know the saying, "The truth is not always palatable," and some people take advantage of this to tell what are called *society lies*—that is, hiding one's real opinion for the sake of being pleasant. But, on the other hand, some say, "Tell the truth at all costs," and they proceed to give their opinion on certain things without the slightest regard for one's feelings—each word cutting like a knife and wounding very deeply their hearers' hearts. We all know how we avoid a person like this last. But now our happy little friend Tact comes to our help and smooths away the harshness and does away with the pleasant (?) society fib. For example, if we are asked our opinion of a friend's dress—perhaps a dress which we cannot sincerely admire—we need not say that it is extremely ugly, or unbecoming or in very bad taste. That would make our friend feel our remarks keenly; but we might, with the aid of tact, speak of the best points in the dress, such as its quality, cut, etc., without being at all insincere.

There are two kinds of tact—the heaven-born tact which help and sympathizes, and the evil tact which deceives and ruins. The latter is found in those men and women who think that breaking hearts is a pastime. What is more despicable than to see a giddy flirt do all in his or her power to win the affection of someone, and then mockingly to cast that one off, utterly regardless of wounded feelings? Surely this is a display of evil tact which they use to deceive their victims; but sooner or later they reap their own reward. The tact that