

# THE PRIZE STORY.

No. 14.

One lady or gentleman's Solid Gold Watch, valued at about \$75, is offered every week as a prize for the best story, original or selected, sent to us by competitors under the following conditions:—1st. The story need not be the work of the sender, but may be selected from any newspaper, magazine, book or pamphlet wherever found, and may be either written or printed matter, as long as it is legible. 2nd. The sender must become a subscriber for TRUTH for at least four months, and must, therefore, send one dollar along with the story, together with the name and address clearly given. Present subscribers will have their term extended an additional half year for the dollar sent. If two persons happen to send in the same story the first one received at TRUTH office will have the preference. The publisher reserves the right to publish at any time any story, original or selected, which may fall to obtain a prize. The sum of three dollars (\$3) will be paid for such story when awarded. Address—Editor's Prize Story, "Truth" Office, Toronto, Canada. The following attractive and well written story has been chosen as our prize story for the present week. The sender can obtain the Watch offered as the prize, by forwarding twenty-five cents for postage and registration.

## THE KNIGHT, THE HERMIT AND THE MAN.

SENT BY E. REYNOLDS, PAKENHAM, ONT.

### THE KNIGHT.

Sir Guy de Montfort was a brave knight as ever laid lance in rest, or swung his glittering battle axe. He possessed many noble and generous qualities, but they were obscured, alas, by the strange thirst for human blood that marked the age in which he lived—an age when "love your friends and hate your enemies," had taken the place of "But I say unto you love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

Ten knights as brave as Sir Guy, and possessing as many noble and generous qualities had fallen beneath his superior strength and skill in arms; and for this, the bright eyes of beauty looked admiringly upon him—fair lips smiled when he appeared—and minstrels sang of his prowess, in ladies' bower and festive hall.

At a great tournament given in honor of the marriage of the king's daughter, Sir Guy sent forth his challenge to single and deadly combat; but for two days no one accepted this challenge, although it was three times announced by the herald; but on the third day, a young and strange knight rode, with vizor down, into the lists and accepted the challenge. His slender form and carriage, and all that appertained to him, showed him to be no match for Guy de Montfort—and so it proved. They met—and Sir Guy's lance, at the first tilt, penetrated the corselet of the strange young knight, and entered his heart. As he rolled upon the ground, his casque fell off, and a shower of sunny curls fell over his fair young face and neck.

Soon the strange news went thrilling from heart to heart, that the youthful knight who had kissed the dust beneath the sharp steel of De Montfort, was a maiden, and none other than the beautiful, high spirited Agnes St. Bertrand, whose father Sir Guy had killed but a few months before in single combat, to which he had challenged him. By order of the king, the tournament was suspended, and rampant knights and ladies gay, went back to their homes in soberer moods than when they came forth.

Alone in his castle, with the grim faces of his ancestors looking down upon him from the wall, Sir Guy paced to and fro with hurried steps. The Angel of Mercy was nearer to him than she had been for years, and her whispers were distinctly heard. Glory and fame were forgotten by the knight—for self was forgotten, the question—a strange question for him—"What good?" arose in his mind. He had killed St. Bertrand—but why. To add another leaf to his laurels as a brave knight. But, was this leaf worth its cost—the broken heart of the fairest and sweetest maiden in the land? nay, more—the life drops from that broken heart.

For the first time the flash of triumph was chilled by a remembrance of what that triumph had cost. Then came a shudder as he thought of the lovely widow who dropped in Arto Castle—of the wild pang that snatched the heart-string of De Montfort's bride as she saw the battle axe go crashing into her husband's brain—of the beautiful betrothed of Sir Gilbert de Maron, now a shuddering maniac—of Agnes St. Bertrand.

As these sad images came up before the knight, his pace grew more rapid, and his brow upon which large beads of sweat were standing, were clasped between his hands with a gesture of agony.

"And what for all this?" he murmured. "What for all this? Am I braver or better for such bloody work?"

Through the long night he paced the halls of his castle; but with day-dawn he rode forth alone. The sun arose and set; the seasons came and went; years passed, but the knight returned no more.

### THE HERMIT.

Far from the busy scenes of life, dwelt a pious recluse, who, in prayer, fasting and various forms of penance, sought to find repose for his troubled conscience. His food was pulse, and his drink the pure water that went sparkling in the sunlight past his hermit cell in the wilderness. Now and then a traveller who had lost his way, or an eager hunter in pursuit of game, met this lonely man in his seclusion. To such he spoke eloquently of the vanities of life, and of the wisdom of those who, renouncing these vanities, devote themselves to God; and they left him, believing the hermit to be a wise and happy man. But they erred. Neither prayer nor penance filled the aching void that was in his bosom. If he was happy, it was a happiness for which none need have felt an envious wish; if he was wise, his wisdom partook more of the selfishness of this world, than of the holy benevolence of the next.

The days came and went; the seasons changed; years passed, and still the hermit's prayers went up at morning, and the setting sun looked upon his kneeling form. His body was bent though not with age; his long hair whitened, though not with the snows of many winters. Yet all availed not. The solitary one found not in prayer and penance that peace which passeth all understanding.

One night he dreamed in his cell that the Angel of Mercy came to him and said:

"It is in vain—all in vain! Art thou not a man, to whom power has been given to do good to thy fellow-men? Is the bird in the tree, the beast in his lair, the worm that crawls upon the earth thy fellow? Not by prayer not by meditation, not by penance, is man purified; not for these are his iniquities washed out. Well done, good and faithful servant. These are the divine words thou hast not yet learned. Thou callest thyself God's servant; but where are thy works? I see it not. Where the hungry thou hast fed? the naked thou hast clothed? the sick and the prisoner who have been visited by thee? They are not here in the wilderness."

The angel departed and the hermit awoke. It was midnight. From the bounding heavens beamed down myriads of beautiful stars. The dark and solemn woods were still as death, and there was no sound on the air, save the clear music of the singing will as it went on happily with its work even in the darkness.

"Where is my work?" murmured the hermit, as he stood with his hot brow uncovered in the cool air. "The stars are moving in their courses; the trees are spreading forth their branches, and rising to Heaven; and the stream flows on to the ocean; but I, superior to all these—I, gifted with a will and an understanding, and active energies—am doing no work. Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Those blessed words cannot be said of me."

Morning came, and the hermit saw the bee at its labor, the bird building its nest, and the worm spinning its silken thread.

"And is there no work for me, the noblest of all created things?" he said.

The hermit knelt in prayer, but found no utterance. Where was his work? He had none to bring, but evil work. He had harmed his fellow men—but where was the good he had done? Prayers and penitential deeds wiped away no tear from the eye of sorrow—led not the hungry—clothed not the naked.

"De Montfort it is in vain; there must be charity as well as piety!"

Thus murmured the hermit, as he arose from his prostrate attitude.

When night came the hermit's cell far away in the deep, untrodden forest was tenanted.

### THE MAN.

A fearful plague raged in the great city. In the narrow streets, where the poor were crowded together, the hot breath of the pestilence withered up hundreds in a day. Those not stricken down, fled, and left the suffering and dying to their fate. Terror extinguished all human sympathies.

In the midst of these dreadful scenes, a man clad in plain garments—a stranger—approached the plague-stricken city. The flying inhabitants warned him of the danger he was about to encounter; but he heeded them not. He entered within, and took his way with a firm step to the most infected regions.

In the first house he entered, he found a young maiden alone, and almost in the agonies of death, and her feeble cry was far sweeter to his ears than any other sound. He placed to her lips a cool draught, of which she drank eagerly; and then he sat down to watch by her side. In a little while the hot fever began to abate, and she slept. Then he lifted her in his arms and bore her beyond the city walls where the air was purer, and where were those appointed to receive and minister to the sick who were brought forth.

Again he went into the deadly atmosphere, and among the sick and the dying, and soon he returned once more, with a sleeping infant that he had removed from the enfolding arms of its dead mother. There was a calm and holy smile upon the stranger's lips as he looked into the sweet face of the innocent child ere he resigned it to others, and those who saw that smile said within their hearts, "Verily he hath his reward."

For weeks the plague hovered over that devoted city—and during the whole time, this stranger to all the inhabitants passed from house to house, supporting a dying head here, giving drink to those who were almost mad with thirst there, and bearing forth those in his arms for whom there was any hope of life. But when "the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and wasteth at noon-day," had left the city he was nowhere to be found.

For years the castle of De Montfort was without a lord. Its knightly owner had departed, though to what far country no one knew. But at last he returned—lost on mailed charger, with corselet, casque, and spear—a beautiful knight, with hands crimsoned by his brother's blood—not as a pious devotee from his cloister, but as a man, from the city where he had done good deeds amid the dying and the dead. He came to take possession of his stately castle, and his broad lands once more—not as a knight, but as a man—not to glory once more in his proud elevation, but to use the gifts with which God had endowed him, in making wiser, better, and happier, his fellow-men.

He had work to do, and he was faithful in its performance. He was no longer a knight errant, seeking for adventure whenever brute courage promised to give him renown; he was no longer an idle hermit, shrinking from his work in the great harvest-fields of life, but he was a man, doing valiantly among his fellow-men truly noble deeds, not deeds of blood, but deeds of moral daring, in an age when the real uses of life were despised by the titled few. There was the bold knight, the pious hermit, and the man; but the Man was the greatest of all.

T. S. ARMITAGE.

Every man ought to act and speak with such integrity that no one would have occasion to doubt his simple affirmation.

It is one important condition of a nation's true progress that each member looks up to those who surpass him, not obsequiously or cringingly, but with a deference proportioned to the worth of that in which they are his superiors.

### BRIEF NOTE OF PEOPLE OF NOTE.

The wife of Minister Lowell is dead. Mr. Spurgeon has the gout, at Montreal. Her Majesty the Queen has been ill with bronchitis, but is now convalescent.

Professor Huxley is going to America where Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope is living.

During his illness the wife of Professor Huxley has written and his daughter have illustrated a pretty book for children.

The son of Prince Napoleon has gone to Egypt to take part in the campaign there.

Rubenstein dreads sickness as to death, that it is probable he will never visit America again.

The ex-Khedive is short, stout, and well haired—a familiar figure at the West of London.

Lieutenant Greeley's friends are much concerned about his health, which they are failing.

General Grant has lately lost an uncle, the one eighty-five and the other ninety-two years old.

The widow of Dr. Pavy, of the Egyptian expedition, is on the staff of the Orleans Times-Democrat.

The widow of Rear-Admiral Goldsborough, who has just died in Washington, was the daughter of William Wirt.

Mr. James McNeill Whistler announced his lectures to begin at 10 o'clock p.m., that he and his listeners may dine comfortably first.

Mr. Holman Hunt asks just one hundred dollars for his "Flight into Egypt," on which he has been seven years.

Mr. Lowe, Berlin correspondent of the London Times, is engaged in writing a biography of Prince Bismarck, which will appear in the spring.

Governor Cleveland's private secretary, Colonel Lamont, doubts if there is a man in the country who works as hard as the President-elect.

Christine Nilsson has received from Alfonso the cross of the Order of Isabella, founded by his mother. She has always been a pet of ex-Queen Isabella.

M. Chevreul, dean of the College of France, and for many years director of the Gobelins Factory, will be a hundred and one next August. He has always been a teetotaler.

Admiral Courbet, of the French forces in China, has a tall, slender, pink complexion, white hair, and a pleasant manner. His appearance is not that of General Hooker.

Mr. John Paul Seiling, the artist, has found more beautiful women in ice than in all the rest of Italy; they combine the North German type and of the Orient.

Mr. John F. Quarles, a colored man, New York, recently deceased, was a colored man admitted to the bar in England. He married a granddaughter of Napoleon's Marshal Jacqueminot.

Prince Metternich has written to to and one of the Rothschilds for the music for an opera in which Prince Metternich and her daughter among the performers.

A bouquet recently carried by the coast of Wales was of Russian shape of a fan, a Jacqueminot centre, over which a hummingbird spiral wire fluttered with every breeze.

The late Porter C. Bliss, a scholar, and diplomat, wrote many notices on his death-bed at St. Hospital, and gave them to the press in interviews. His recollections in the midst of suffering, and the sadness of his story, won their way to the hearts of his readers.

Edmund Yates does not live in Leigh Hunt did, with Shelley, Byron, Moore, Lamb, Hazlitt, to visit him and shower letters upon him. He can have but one newspaper, no visits except under orders from the magistrate; the government has charge of his letters, and he has his exercise in one of the middle grounds.