

THE QUIET HOUR.

Stand Firm.

"Build on resolve, and not upon regret,
The structure of thy future. Do not grope
Among the shadow of old sins, but let
Thine own soul's light shine on the path of hope,
And dissipate the darkness. Waste no tears
Upon the blotted record of lost years,
But turn the leaf and smile, oh smile to see
The fair white pages that remain to thee."

Fight Wisely.

"So fight I, not as one that beateth the air."

To fight wisely is not to fight at a venture, "as one that beateth the air." The image is drawn from the boxing-match in the Isthmian games, and in it the Apostle declares that in the spiritual combat he does not wear out his strength by vain flourishes of his hands in the air, but plants each blow certainly and with a telling aim. We read, indeed, that King Ahab was shot by an arrow sent at a venture; that is, without deliberate aim: but this only teaches us that God can direct the aimless shaft whithersoever it pleases Him, but does not lead us to conclude that aimless shafts are likely to be successful. Yet what is the warfare of many earnest Christians but the sending of shafts at a venture? They have a certain notion that they must resist the evil within and without them, but they know not where to begin. Often their whole time and labor is thrown away in repressing symptoms, where they should be applying their whole energy to the seat of the disorder. The first work of the spiritual warrior should be to discover his besetting sin, or sins, and then he must concentrate his forces before this fortress. This bosom sin is eminently deceitful. Sometimes it puts on the mask of a virtue or a grace, not infrequently that of some other sin; but masked somehow or other it loves to be, and the longer Satan can keep it masked the better it suits his purpose. Let us give some examples of a bosom sin thus masking itself. With many people the besetting sin is vanity. Who knows not how this detestable sin frequently apes humility so as really to impress its possessor with the notion that he is humble? Intensely self-satisfied in his heart of hearts, he depreciates himself, his talents, his successes. What follows? A natural reaction of public sentiment in his favor. He has been fishing for compliments, and compliments have risen to the hook. Would he not have bitterly resented it in the inner man had any of the company taken him at his word and coolly agreed with him in his self-depreciation. Here is the adder of vanity coiled up in the violet-tuft of humility. To take another case. Some men cannot bear to be second. Whatever they do must be done brilliantly, so as to throw into the shade all other competitors. Accordingly, they are disposed to decline or abandon all pursuits in which they feel they can never excel. Now what is this feeling, when we examine it. The world dignifies it with the name of honorable emulation, and accepts it as a token of a fine character. And there is usually good stuff in the characters whose leading principle is such as described. This emulation is somehow intertwined with that energy and resolve which are the raw material from which earthly greatness is manufactured. But how does this sentiment sound? "Because I cannot outshine all rivals, therefore I will be nothing." When we apply to this feeling the Ithureil spear of God's Word and Christ's example, we find it to be the bosom-adder of vanity again, lurking under the marigold of honorable emulation.

Again: a bosom sin, that it may the more easily escape detection, will wear often the mask of another sin. Indolence, for example, is a sin which carries in its train many omissions of duty. Prayer or Scripture reading is neglected or hurried because we have not risen early enough to give room for it. Things go wrong during the day in consequence. We trace it all up to the omission of prayer of which we accuse ourselves. But the fault lies deeper. It was not really an indisposition to prayer which caused us to neglect it. Indolence really caused the mischief.

It often happens that a man, when touched upon his weak point, answers that whatever other faults he may have, this fault at least is no part of his character. This circumstance, then, may furnish one clue to the discovery; of whatever fault you feel that, if accused of it, you would be stung and nettled by the apparent injustice of the charge, suspect yourself of that fault,—in that quarter very likely lies the black spot of the bosom sin. If the skin is in any part sensitive to pressure, there is probably mischief below the surface. When, after prayerful self-examination, the same failures are constantly showing themselves, the conclusion is almost inevitable that there is something serious beneath. What is it? In what one direction do all the failures point? To selfishness? or to indolence? or to vanity? or to worldliness? Remember always, that in the symptom it may look like none of these sins and yet be really one of them.

Another plan may be helpful in the discovery of our bosom sin. Let us have our eye upon the occurrences which specially give us pain or pleasure: they will often be the merest trifles—a sneer, a mere passing breath of human praise or blame, but yet, be it what it may, if it touches us to the quick, the probabilities are that by tracing it to its source we shall get to the quick of our character,

to that sensitive quarter of it where the bosom-adder lies coiled up. When the discovery is made, the path of the spiritual combatant becomes clear. Your fighting is to be no longer a flourishing of the arms in the air; it is to be a definite combat with the bosom sin. We shall find also that in supplanting the besetting sin we shall be weakening the vitality of subordinate faults, which cluster together round that nucleus.

In conclusion, he who prays (as we should all do) "Show me myself, Lord," should take care to add, lest self knowledge plunge him into despair, "Show me also Thyself." The heart which showed so fair without, is but a whitened sepulchre, an Augean stable, full of corruptions and disorders, which Hercules could not cleanse, but the love and grace of Christ are stronger than ten thousand depravities and corruptions, though riveted down to the soul by the chain of evil habit.

E. M. GOULBURN, D. D.

UNCLE TOM'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES,—

I was recently asked by a young friend if "such a thing as true friendship really exists," and on thinking over the question, I resolved to make it the subject of my next chat with you. My young friend is a boy with high ideals, noble aspirations, and an impulsive, generous nature, scorning everything mean and ignoble. He told me that he had been looking and longing for a friend whom he could love, admire, trust, who would ever sympathize with him, and in whom he could confide. He said he was of so peculiar a disposition that even a few weak qualities would prevent his liking a person, and accordingly, because he cannot find an impossibly good boy whom he can call "friend," he is sad-hearted and unhappy.

Now, my first advice to all my boys and girls is, be friendly with all, but do not be over-hasty in choosing confidants. You are warm-hearted and impulsive, and meeting a young person of amiable manners or other attractions, you straightway offer your precious gift of friendship at his shrine without waiting to discover whether the recipient be worthy of it or not. After a time, perhaps, his true character is revealed and you discover that you have been dazzled by surface goodness only, and you withdraw your gift, bruised and marred by the unkind treatment received. This happens more than once perhaps, and you bitterly exclaim, "Ah! there is no such thing as true friendship, no one truly worthy to be called 'friend.'"

My dear young pessimists, take off your blue spectacles and I will replace them with rose-colored ones, that you may see things in a more cheerful light. True, this world is not the proper place in which to look for perfection, but there are many earthly friendships aiming at and arriving very near to that standard. Again I advise you to "make haste slowly" when choosing a friend, or in other words, "Let friendship creep gently to a height; if it rush to it, it may soon run itself out of breath." When you have found a companion (as my young questioner has done) who is "beautiful in character, noble, refined and good," and who evidently prefers you to any other comrade, do not permit any foolish sentiment to cause you to part with him too cheaply, but, as Shakespeare bids us—

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel."

The same author says, "A friend should bear his friend's infirmities"; and, with him, I believe that it is necessary to be generous in order to retain our friends. As none of us are perfect in every particular, we should not expect to receive more than we can give in return. It is wiser, then, to close our eyes to trivial faults, not demanding too great a sacrifice, lest, as Goldsmith says, "by drawing the bands of friendship too closely, we at length break them."

I know you will never choose a friend who has not some beautiful traits of character; then instead of carping at his defects, consider rather his virtues; not looking at the turbid water that rises to the top, but reaching for the gold that lies hidden beneath. Above all, be such yourself that your friend must respect as well as love you, so that by contact with your nobility he may rise to your level. In a reverse case, when one who is better than yourself offers you the priceless gift of friendship, value it justly and make yourself worthy of it. Let your own faithfulness be the measure of your confidence, and trust your friend as you would be trusted; make him a sharer in pleasure as in sorrow, for as the latter decreases so does the former increase by being imparted to a congenial soul.

In conclusion, do not, I pray, embitter your young lives with the morbid reflection that the Damon-Pythias story is a myth, and a real friend an impossible possession; for he who makes such an assertion admits his own inability to prove true. Josh Billings echoed my sentiments when he said, "I'd rather get fooled nineteen times out of twenty than lose all faith in human nature."

For the months of April, May and June I will offer the following prizes for puzzles: 1st, \$1.00; 2nd, 75 cents; 3rd, 50 cents; and similar ones for answers during the same period.

Your loving—UNCLE TOM.

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds:
You can't do that way when you're flying words.
—Will Carleton.

Puzzles.

All matter for this department should be addressed to Ada Armand, Pakenham, Ont.

1—BEHEADING.

Complete I mean to harass;
Behead me and I am a weapon;
Behead twice again and I am a riot.
ETHEL MCCREA.

2—CHARADE.

"I'm so fond of music,"
Mr. Trombone reckoned,
"That I'd give a TOTAL,
Just FIRST & SECOND."

3—NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

My 1, 3, 4 is a railway carriage.
My 5, 6, 7 is a small piece of ground.
My 2, 3, 8 is something worn on the head.
My 10, 9, 13 is twice five.
My 11, 12, 13 is to possess.
My total is a city in Canada.
ETHEL MCCREA.

4—CHARADE.

Now that the snows have passed away
And spring is here once more,
We hear the Total all the day
And lessons cease to pore.

The First frisks about in the meadow
To second ne'er giving a thought;
But we can just look thro' the window
And wait till the weather grows hot.
CLARA ROBINSON.

5—ENIGMA.

I'm in a dreary winter snow
That falls down from the sky;
I'm with the weary-looking owl
That floats about on high.

I'm in a weeping widow's weeds,
And much I grieve to say,
Though I'm a very little mite,
I'm always in the way.

I help all willing workers true,
And kindly keep in mind,
That in the city Ottawa
There surely me you'll find.

I form a part of every wish,
And though I never cry,
I'm in the sweetness of a laugh,
Adieu my friends, Good-bye.
W. M. S. BANKS.

6—RIDDLE.

I'm like to a book, and in the same way,
I'm like to a soldier who oft goes away.
In one thing I resemble an elephant great,
And also a common traveller's freight.
In a way I resemble a newly-made log;
And in two I am like a fox or a dog.
But a hard case am I, so people say,
Though my head may be decked with flowers so gay.
And my life is one of terrible pain,
For I'm out at all times, whether sunshine or rain.
W. M. S. BANKS.

7—CHANGED HEADING.

Courage brother! do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
This is what MacLeod doth say,
And I believe that he is right.

Mr. Banks, please heed this saying,
And do not be afraid,
Though perhaps you win no prizes,
For all puzzlers are not paid.

And our "puzzlistic cousin"
Has joined our merry primal;
Miss Hattie and Miss Ethel
Will lend a willing final.

Have I scared Miss Annie Hampton,
Will she please have it told;
If I have, will she please scuse me,
For I was rather bold.
J. S. CREERAR.

Answers to March 1st Puzzles.

1—Tomato. 2—Diphtheria.
3—I again seek the dear society of my cousins.
I have become lonely during my long absence from this Eden of Puzzledom, and I now wish to join Uncle Tom's happy family again.
I see that Miss Lily Day and C. S. Edwards still work with fortune and eclipse all others. Their friendly faces inspire me with a ray of hope.

Let us therefore help the ADVOCATE with a true Canadian loyalty, remembering that there are many strange ways of puzzling, and that our puzzles, whether great or little, will help to grace our corner.

4—Spare, pares, pears, reaps.

5—Chinese Empire.

6—Canada.

7—	Codle—cole	D
	Tract—tact	R
	Zone—zoe	N
	Spray—spry	A
	Rant—rat	N
	Cuep—cup	S
	Lead—lad	E
	Punt—put	N

Dr. Nansen.

SOLVERS TO MARCH 1ST PUZZLES.

Addison M. Snider, J. S. Creerar, Clara Robinson, Ethel McCrea.

The Woman Who Laughs.

For a good everyday household angel give us the woman who laughs. Her biscuit may not always be just right, and she may occasionally burn her bread, and forget to replace dislocated buttons, but for solid comfort all day and every day she is a paragon. Home is not a battle-field, nor life one long, unending row. The trick of always seeing the bright side, or if the matter has no bright side, of polishing up the dark one, is a very important faculty, one of the things no woman should be without. We are not all born with the sunshine in our hearts, as the Irish prettily phrase it, but we can cultivate a cheerful sense of humor if we only try.

We are always glad to see a copy of that excellent journal of fashion, *L'Art de la Mode*; its numerous original illustrations impart a host of ideas to the proficient dressmaker, and are of very great assistance in the home to those who do their own sewing.