

TALENTS.

"I remember," said Grannie, "when I was a little girl of seven years old, my father kept a butler—a very solemn, but very kind old man.

"Every night, when, exactly, as the clock struck eight, my aunt sent me out of the dining-room to go upstairs to bed by myself—for little girls were brought up very strictly in those days—old Thomas was always waiting in the hall to hand me my little brass candlestick to light me up the stairs to the room. I always said, 'Good-night, Thomas!' and he would reply in a very slow, solemn way, 'Good-night, Miss Nannie; don't forget to take account of your servants.'

"What he meant was this: My Uncle William, who had come home from India when I was about six years old, had been very kind to me while he stayed with my father, because he saw that I was a very lonely little child in a very big, empty house; for I had neither mother, brother nor sister. So he would often take me on his knee and tell me Bible stories.

"One day, when we were sitting together in an old summer house in the very small back garden which town houses generally have, he told me the parable of the 'Talents.'

"'Nannie,' he said, 'I am going away very soon, and I want you to promise me that every night before you get into bed you will "take account of your servants."

"There are many "talents" God has given other children and not to you, for you are a lonely little girl—no mother to love you, no brothers or sisters to play with you. But there are many "talents" you have which some other children have not.

"See here,' he said, taking my little hands in his, 'here are ten little fingers, and down there inside your shoes are ten little toes; and inside that mouth is a little tongue; and at each side of this neat brown head is an ear; and looking straight up at me are two brown eyes. Now, these are all your servants, or "talents," given to you by God to use—while many little children are lame or dumb or deaf or blind—and you are his little servant, and I want you every night to "take account of your servants," and find out if they have been pleasing God or only pleasing yourself all through the day.

"For all those servants of yours are "talents," or gifts, from God, and he is watching every day now what you give them to do, and one day he will make you give an account of their doings.'

"And then, after I had promised to do as he told me, he kissed me and set me down, and away I ran to my kind old friend Thomas, to tell him an my own way all about what Uncle William had said.

"And from that time until my aunt took me away to live in the country, old Thomas never forgot every night to say, 'Don't forget to take account of your servants, Miss Nannie.'" — Great Thoughts.

Jules Verne's young readers will be glad to know that they are to have one more volume from his prolific pen. The last book written by him is now in the press, and will be published almost immediately. By the way we notice in a French journal, the "Eclair," a kindly reference to the testimonial offered to the veteran story-teller by the members of the Boys' Empire League, of which Mr. F. Carruthers Goulon is president and the Archdeacon of London and Sir A. Conan Doyle are vice-presidents. One of the first acts of the League was to beg Mr. Jules Verne's acceptance of a gold-headed walking-cane, which he valued very highly as the gift of his youthful English admirers.

RAILWAY MEN TO VISIT CANADA.

The arrangements for the long tour of the delegates of the International Railway Congress, which is to be held at Washington, D.C., the early part of May, have been completed and include in the itinerary a trip through a portion of Canada. The party who will take advantage of this trip will be composed largely of oversea delegates, who would naturally desire to travel over the Grand Trunk Railway System, the pioneer railway of Canada and of which they have for so many years heard a great deal—particularly now that the new trans-continental line—the Grand Trunk Pacific—is an assured fact, and that the Grand Trunk is the only double-track line between Chicago and Montreal and the principal points in Canada.

The party will leave Washington on the evening of May 14th and after visiting several of the principal cities in the West, will be taken by the Grand Trunk in a special train, leaving Chicago on the evening of May 22nd, reaching Niagara Falls early next morning, at which point they will be shown the attractions of Niagara and given an opportunity of inspecting the electrical developments which are now under way at this point. Leaving Niagara Falls at an early hour the next morning, the party will proceed over the double-track lines of the Grand Trunk en route to Montreal, arriving at Lachine Wharf at 4:00 p.m., the same day, taking special steamer there and running the Lachine Rapids arriving Montreal 5:00 p.m., where carriages will be in waiting to drive them around the city, ending up at the "Montreal Hunt," where dinner will be served. On the morning of May 25th they will board their special train, which will leave Bonaventure Station at 9:00 a.m., en route to New York. The delegation will be a most influential one, comprising the heads of many foreign railroads in Great Britain and on the Continent and exceptional facilities will be arranged for them to inspect the improvements that have been completed in recent years on the Grand Trunk, and that have solved engineering problems entirely new in Canada and which have rendered the line equal, if not superior to any railroad in America. The progress of these huge undertakings have proved most interesting to those who have been familiar with them and a resume of the principal features of reconstruction and improvements that will be brought to their notice will be of paramount interest to the visitors.

CRABS AS COCOANUT STEALERS.

In Africa there exists a certain member of the crab genus commonly known as the Great Tree Crab. This peculiar shell fish has an offensive trick of crawling up the cocoanut trees, biting off the cocoanuts, and then creeping down again backwards. The theory is that the nuts are shattered by the fall, and the Great Tree Crab is thus enabled to enjoy a hearty meal. Now, the natives who inhabit regions infested by this ill-conditioned creature are well aware that the lower portion of the crab's anatomy is soft and sensitive, and they believe that the animal was thus constructed in order that he might know when he had reached the ground, and when, consequently, he might with safety release his grasp of the trunk. So what they do in order to stop his deprecations, which often ruin the cocoanut crops, is this—While the crab is engaged in nipping off the cocoanuts they climb half-way up the trees, and there drive in a row of long nails right round the tree, allowing an inch or so of the nails to project. The crab has no knowledge of distance nor yet of the fitness of things. As he descends, the sensitive part of his body suddenly touches the nails. Thinking that he has reached the ground he releases his hold and falls, killing himself.

THE MODERN MOTHER.

Children shudder at castor oil, and with good reason. Castor oil is a relic of out-time barbarism. Not only is it repulsive to the taste, but it gripes and tortures delicate children. Modern mothers use Baby's Own Tablets, a gentle laxative which does not grip; a comforting medicine which may be given to a new-born babe without fear of harm. These tablets cure all the minor ills of little ones, and promote natural sleep and repose. Mrs. K. H. James, Fenagivale, Ont., says:—"I find great satisfaction in the use of Baby's Own Tablets, and do not know how I could get along without them. They make children well and keep them well. And you have a guarantee that there is not one particle of opiate or harmful drug in this medicine. Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box by writing the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville,

LEAVE CHILDREN ALONE MORE.

REV. DR. MERRILL S. C. WIGGAT, in an address on parental discipline before the City Mothers' Club of New York, urged this course:

"Give the children more active accomplishments. I consider that to bring up one child might be called an art, but to bring up many must be a handicraft. Children get licked and whipped and rounded into shape among other children. They get independence in this way, and that is really the experience of the work. It seems to me you can't let a child too much alone. I wouldn't break a child's will for anything, nor take the bloom from its nature. There is nothing in the world like the real nature of a child. And parents sometimes attempt to break the will of the child when they themselves are out of temper and punish without cause. Instead they should keep head cool and reason calm if the child needs punishment."

We must do many little things, but we need not do any petty things. We may not accomplish much, but the quality of our work may give it greatness.—Rev. Charles G. Ames.

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