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Naaman was not yet incapacitated for soldierly duties, and for half a generation the king had successfully defied the whole power of the Assyrian Empire through his clear brain and brave heart. But King Benhadad did not rise to a true conception of the prophet's character or function. He seemed to think him a court magician like his own, subject to the order of a king. So the letter was addressed to Jehoram rather than to Elisha. Great treasures were also carried, as if a cure could be bought by them.

"Sinking times are praying times." When Jehoram was in adversity he resorted to the prophet gladly, but now that he is riding the crest of the wave, he had actually forgotten the very existence of the prophet. He thought he read between the lines of the king's letter a pretext for war. He was in abject horror and alarm, and gave the Oriental sign of it. Elisha humbled the king at the same time that he relieved his fears by his message. "Let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." There was the dignity of conscious power.

Any one who imagines that Elisha was grumpy and surly toward Naaman misses the spirit of this incident. The leper brought his old heathen ideas with him to the prophet's very door. He had to be dispossessed of them. The prophet wanted not merely to cure him, but to convert him. Naaman thought Elisha would come to him like a Syrian neomancer, take a ceremonious attitude, repeat some formula of incantation and wave his hand in solemn gesture. Instead of this, the prophet gave a brand-new receipt for leprosy. All Naaman's money and show went for naught, for the meaneast Syrian slave could have met the terms prescribed by the prophet. And that was the very lesson to be learned. The cure was to be without money or price, but by the power of Jehovah. So the man who had come with gifts and pomp, according to heathen ideas, to induce the prophet to work the cure by some subtle charm or necromancy, must be emptied of his crude notions and humbly submit to a ceremony which was patently inoperative of itself. He must accept his cleansing as a gift. He must express his faith in an act of obedience.

Naaman's greatest victory was his victory over himself. His pride, his stubbornness, his heathen faith—he slew them all and buried them along with his leprous incrustations, deep in the waters of Jordan.

THE TEACHER'S LANTERN. Private war, freebooting on land, piracy on sea is at an end forever. That is one mark of the progress of civilization. Such wars as that in which the little maid of Israel was taken are no longer tolerated.

This little girl did not mope over her hard lot. She showed a cheerful and helpful disposition. Her contribution was caught up and woven into the providence of the ages, which is to make God known to man.

Help often comes from unexpected quarters. It was not the first nor the last time when a word of wisdom was on the lip of a slave. And when misfortune is severe no advice is too contemptible.

Naaman's contemplated gift was probably not far short of \$50,000, not including the ten changes of raiment, which were probably of finest texture, shot with threads of gold and silver, and sewn with pearls and other gems. The reason Elisha refused these gifts was that he was unwilling to put himself on the plane of heathen magi. He would have Naaman know also that Jehovah only had helped him, and that his gifts and gratitude must go to Jehovah alone.

"Kaiser's beard" came to be known as the term expressing a fictitious cause of war. A water bucket was once *casus belli* between two Italian cities. No wonder Jehoram thought Benhadad sought a quarrel with him.

No wonder Naaman admired the rivers of his country. Abana means golden-flowing, and is said to shine like an emerald in the morning and like a sapphire in the evening. It makes Damascus an oasis. Jordan, on the other hand, was a muddy stream, but the very inferiority of the stream was to show that the healing was not by the water at all.

"A mighty man—but." That "but" is the wolf-note that destroys the harmony. The meaneast Syrian scullion would not have exchanged outcries with Naaman.

It is to Naaman's everlasting honor that he returned to give thanks. He is brother to the Samaritan among the ten lepers of Jesus' time.

The incident is a parable of sin and salvation. Sin is a morbid condition of the moral nature resultant upon an evil choice. It can only be corrected when the will is enlightened, strengthened, and disposed to make the good choice.

There can be no adequate and true sociology which ignores this condition. Some sociologists, like the king of Israel, have forgotten there is a Prophet, who is at the same time a Saviour.

There is a current preference of the streams of education and culture to the river of salvation.

Look at the Moon. A clear moon indicates frost. A dull-looking moon means rain. A single halo around the moon indicates a storm.

If the moon looks high cold weather may be expected. The new moon on her back always indicates wet weather.

If the moon looks low down warm weather may be expected. If the moon be bright and clear when three days old, fine weather is promised.

If the moon changes with the wind in the east, then shall we have bad weather. When the moon is visible in the daytime, then may we look forward to cool days.

When the points of the crescent of the new moon are very clearly visible, frost may be looked for. If the new moon appears with its points upward, then the month will be dry; but should the points be downward, a good deal of rain must be expected during the three weeks.

"I wonder why most of these real estate booms are called 'land improvement' companies."

"Simple enough. Their promoters are determined to make the land improve their fortunes, that's all."

The Forests of Iceland.

One would hardly expect the subject of the forestry of Iceland to call for much serious attention, but a lengthy investigation of the trees of that country has recently been made by no less a distinguished person than Dr. C. V. Prytz, Professor of Forestry at Copenhagen. He says that the prevailing notion that Iceland has a single tree only is a fallacy, and that there is quite a pretentious growth of trees on the land, the soil not being unsuited for the growth. The tree growth of the country has suffered from injudicious cutting, he says, and makes recommendations for the reforestation of the lands and offers suggestions about the planting of birches. The latter, here, spring up naturally, and it is thought that by sowing these in places where the snow lies deep that long immunity from destruction by sheep might be gained; as it appears to be only in winter, when grass is not to be had, that these animals devour the birch trees.

Show Stockings in Court.

Mrs. Emily Richards and Mrs. Lizzie Armstrong, young women of Columbus, Ga., quarreled about the ownership of a dozen pairs of stockings and went to law over it. Mrs. Richards said a washerwoman stole the hosiery from her and sold the articles to Mrs. Armstrong. Judge Ray, after each of the litigants had described the personal property, said he could not decide until he had seen the stockings, whereupon Mrs. Armstrong furnished the evidence required. It was duplicated by Mrs. Richards, who claimed that the two pairs matched. The display was so unusual that his honor was thrown off his balance for a moment. Then he dismissed the case, saying he had no doubt many women in the city wore similar articles.

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