

## CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP SECTION

### HUMILITY

By ARTHUR MEE

WE SHOULD never be ashamed of humility. In this great world, with all the majesty of Nature 'round about him, the proudest man may well be humble.

A man may boast of his knowledge, but it is as a grain of sand on the seashore compared with what he does not know. A man may boast of his possessions, but it is poverty compared with the wealth that belongs to us all. A man may boast of his talents, but he is helpless when Nature comes to him and says, "Thou shalt not do this." The wisest and richest and cleverest of men have need of great humility.

It will help us all our lives to be humble, to be ready to learn, and not to boast overmuch of the powers that came to us from God, not to bear too proudly the precious gifts we were not responsible for. It will help us to sit at the feet of those who can teach us wisdom. It will never help us to pretend to know the things we do not know.

It is good to have the strength of a giant, but it is not always good to use it so. It is good to know whatever there is to know, but we need not parade our learning as a jeweler shows his diamonds in a window.

It is humility that has given the world its greatest pride. It is the desire to know that has given us all our knowledge. All the glory that is written in books, all the wonder that is painted in pictures, all the immortal music that seems to lift us up to heaven, has come from men who came humbly into the world, went through life

in great humility, and were not too proud to learn to serve that they might command, to seek that they might find.

There was a great Frenchman named Pasteur. He was to cover his name with the glory that will shine forever in the history of the world. He wrote to his father at the beginning of his great work praying that he might be able to add one little stone to the temple of human knowledge. He prayed to add one little stone, but in the end he set up a mighty temple in which the human heart will worship as long as human mind endures.

And, long before Pasteur, there was a great Englishman named Isaac Newton. No man in England knew more than he. A marvellous work he did, astonishing discoveries he made, and all the world is richer because Sir Isaac Newton lived. Yet this great man, one of the greatest of all time, declared that he felt at the end of his life as if he had been picking up a few pebbles on the seashore while the ocean of truth lay unexplored round about him. He had filled the whole world with wonder and set up a kingdom of knowledge, but he felt at the end of it all like a little child picking up pebbles.

So Pasteur begins, so Newton ends, in deep humility, and we do well to be humble, seeing the wonders that they wrought. We need not be ashamed to keep them company; we need not be too proud to pick up pebbles, and so add some little stone to our share of the building up of the glory that awaits us all.