

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, December 6th, 1868.

LUKE xii. 22-40: Jesus discourses continued.

Sunday, November 13th, 1868.

Concert. Or Review of the past three months' lessons.

For the year 1869.

We have in reserve for the Coming Year a large quantity of material for our youthful friends, comprising, besides a continued Story by a popular writer, Scenes, Pictures, Anagrams, Enigmas, &c., &c., which will appear from week to week, and give a constant supply of subjects for thought and enquiry.

Widow MacLean; or, lending to the Lord.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

CHAPTER I.

"I will not give her any more money," said the young clergyman. "I should not like her to learn any bad habits through me."

When Mrs. Anderson heard the words, "Learn any bad habits through me," she cast up her eyes to the ceiling behind his back, as one who was taken with a mild fit of despair. But she contented herself for the present with this little demonstration, for she knew that her time would come, and Mr. Dixon did not take kindly to a lesson of distrust, unless it was administered with a candid, dispassionate air, and without any apparent desire to make a deep impression.

He was a very sincere person. Hypocrisy seemed to him one of the most unbearable of sins. He could recognize it in certain glaring cases; but he was not prepared to find a little spice of it flavoring the discourse of most people who had anything to gain by it.

"She seems always very glad to see you, when you call, sir," said the artful housekeeper.

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Dixon; "she is certainly very much impressed. Her tears cannot always be the result of gin."

This last part of the sentence was said rather severely.

"Certainly not, sir," answered Mrs. Anderson. "Of course, it's ridiculous to think that you would mistake the sort of foolish, maudlin way she had, this morning, for her usual manner that I suppose she has when she's crying over her past life."

Mr. Dixon coughed rather doubtfully. He had not observed any great difference between that day and former days, as regarded the tears. The old woman had said she was crying about her sins, and he had believed her.

"It seems a pity she goes on telling fortunes so," observed Mrs. Anderson, with an indifferent air; "but then, it's a temptation, no doubt, —and, dear me, we're all weak when temptation comes."

"Does she?" cried Mr. Dixon.

"Dear me, yes, sir; of course she does. But should you think that a proof she was not a sincere penitent?"

"I should, indeed!"

"She told our own housemaid's fortune, this day week; but then, the girl went to her and asked her. And besides, how else is she to live, sir? for she won't take the parish pay, for fear of having to go into the house."

"There, you evil old hypocrite," she thought, as she quietly cleared away the dinner; "I don't think your light pudding will be baked in our oven again for some time."

She then retired, cheerful at heart; and presently, looking up from her sewing as she sat by the clean kitchen window, she saw Mr. Dixon thoughtfully walking about in the garden, and frowning as if his cogitations were not agreeable.

"If I have made him uncomfortable," she thought, "it's all for his good, and for hers too, for the matter of that! Not that I would have interfered just now, if new laid eggs were not so difficult to get, and our fowls had not left off laying. There is nothing that suits him so well as new laid eggs for his breakfast, and it aggravates me past bearing (when I've taken the trouble to walk miles to get them at the farm)—it does aggravate me past bearing, to be told to make them into puddings for that drunken, old hypocrite. Some folks are fond of saying, 'What a blessing it will be to recognize one another in heaven!' For my part, if I ever get there, I wish none of the pappers here may recognize me. What tales they'll have to tell him! It's not in nature that they can like me. But we must take the bad with the good. I should not like to know him in heaven, so I must make up my mind to shut my eyes to their doings here, or to his knowing of my ways up there."

CHAPTER II.

This tale, which concerns a chosen friend of mine, has to be so told that if she still lived she would not disapprove—that is, the places, the names, and circumstances have some of them been veiled and disguised.

How I came to know the Widow Maclean so well I will not avow, nor how it was that almost to me alone she gave so complete a con-

fidence; but I have now come to a point in my narration which must be carefully and distinctly told, though it is the only part that many people would hesitate to tell, or would be desirous to explain away.

On the night following that evening during which she had entertained the housekeeper at tea, she could not make up her mind to go to bed; she felt as if she was waiting for something; but she was in very good spirits and very wakeful, so she lighted a fresh candle about ten o'clock, and far into the night she sat up, knitting.

Such an unwillingness to go to bed had never happened to her before; there was nothing in that, perhaps, but by degrees there came into her mind an impression that she ought to sit up, and—whatever we may think as to its nature or reality—*hearing of it afterwards*, it is at least certain that she was still awake, and still burning the candle after two o'clock in the morning.

At that time, the very dead time of the night, and when the moon had gone down, she heard footsteps, and then she heard a sound as of some one feeling in the dark for the handle of her door. She got up without hesitation, flung it open, and there walked, or rather staggered in, a sailor.

He seemed dazzled with the light, though it was but of one candle, and reeled with difficulty into a chair, where he sat down and gazed about him.

"Boy," said the widow,—for he was but a youth,—"what did you come into my garden for?"

He answered, naturally enough, "Because I saw the light in your window."

"What is your business?" she next inquired; and while still speaking she recognized him.

"I've no business," he replied, spreading out his hands forlornly; "I've no place, and I've no home."

Upon this, he laid his head against the wall as he sat, and burst into tears, crying out and weeping most passionately.

"Sir," said the widow, "why should you make such ado! What is the matter with you? I know who you are. You'll soon be at home; you are going to Castle Casey."

"No," said the youth, shuddering; "I'm coming from it."

"Coming from it?" exclaimed the widow, aghast; "coming from it? Why, aren't you the young gentleman that ran away for a sailor?"

"I thought he would take me in again," said the youth, sobbing like a child. "I thought he would forgive me."

"Your father, do you mean?" said the widow, in a low voice; for she was awe-struck at the terrible notion that the youth had been disowned.

In reply, he made a sign of assent, and seemed to be relating something, but his whispers were so faint and low that she came and leaned over him, when she was shocked to hear the words, "He said I was dirty."

After this he said, "Let me lie down on the floor," which he did, and fainted.

The widow was a good deal alarmed, but she soon found her vinegar bottle, and wetting his forehead and the palms of his hands, fanned him with her apron till he recovered his consciousness, when he stared about him, saying drearily, "It's quite true what he said. I've made my own bed, and I must lie on it."

"Did the old Squire say that?" thought Widow Maclean. "Ah, my poor Pamela! my dearest dear! I wish I might have such a chance of taking you home again."

She then lighted a fire, and bestirred herself to get something hot to eat and drink for her poor guest; but it was not till everything was ready, and a chair set by the decently spread table, that the youth would lift his head from the floor. When, however, he did so, he opened his hungry eyes, and sat down thankfully to eat, what she had provided. He was so eager over the meal that she could not help feeling surprised, for there was that in his whole manner which seemed to tell of extreme need.

"You're hungry, sir," she observed, and then went to her cupboard and brought out some cheese to add to the meal.

"How should I be otherwise?" he replied, bitterly. "I had only threepence in my pocket, and it's two hundred miles."

The widow would like to have asked a few questions—when had the poor youth landed, and how came he to be so destitute. "One thing seems certain," she thought, "that wicked old man gave him not even a crust."

"Well, sir," she said, cheerfully, "you're kindly welcome, I am sure, to what you see before you."

"Thank you very much," he answered; and then the hysterical feeling coming again, he sobbed, and exclaimed, "I was always working, and toiling, and starving myself to get home. I thought if I could only get home I should be all right; but I wasn't—I wasn't."

"Don't fret yourself, just now," said the poor widow, "we must see what can be done in the morning—perhaps it was a mistake."

"It's not a mistake," he replied, passionately; "I tell you he said I was a disgrace, and so I am; but since I got out of that prison I have tried to do well,—indeed I have,—and I worked my way home before the mast."

"Sir, I have heard nothing against you, excepting that you ran away from home, and I don't want to hear anything. You're young, you have most of your time before you, and if you repent and do well, you will be forgiven, and folks about you will forget; but," said the widow, "when I talked of a mistake, I meant that I thought your father had made one in thinking he was best without you when you had asked to be forgiven; depend on it, that

by this time he wishes he had not sent you away."

"I can't go to him again," said the young man.

"But I can, sir; I shall set off as soon as it's broad day, and I'll warrant he will be glad to find that he can have you home after all. Parents have very tender feelings. Your father was in a passion at first, no doubt."

"If he means to insult me again as he did this evening—"

"Sir, sir," said the widow, "do you mean to say that you could not forgive his anger, if he could forgive what you did to provoke him?"

The youth hung his head. "You may try him if you will, and say that I hope he will take me in. I did ask his pardon."

"Of course I shall try him, and don't you be afraid. It's now nearly four o'clock. I am strong and hearty enough for my age. I shall be over at Castle Casey by nine, for I shall set off as soon as I have had something to eat."

"You are a good friend to me," said the young sailor, "and I think you are right. He cannot well help forgiving me if you go to him, and he is asked the second time; but when I asked him what I was to do, he said I could work my way to Australia, and take to sheep farming,—anything, he said, so that he never saw me again."

"Well, we must not think of that, sir," interrupted the widow. "What we have to think of, you and me, is, that he spoke hastily."

"I said I was so destitute," continued the youth, "that I could not do even that unless he would help me with a few pounds. I have no clothes whatever but these that you see me in, and they are almost in rags."

The first early sunbeams were beginning to shine into the casement as the youth spoke, and the widow sat down to eat, saying to him: "Keep up your spirits, sir, and believe nothing but good, unless I come and tell it to you myself,—which I shall not do, please God. I know what the feelings of parents are."

"Ten pounds," continued the poor fellow, in a desponding tone, "even ten pounds, if you could get it for me, would be enough to enable me to earn my living. It would get me a good outfit, and I could work my way before the mast, as he said."

The widow paused in her meal when she heard him say this; "Perhaps he knows his father better than I do," she thought. "What if he should deny to have any compassion, after all? But I must not think of it—it's enough to take away my strength; and I shall want all I've got left after being up all night, and the fright of seeing him faint before my eyes with misery and hunger. I'll think, instead, of my poor Pamela, and that will make me sure that this hard-hearted squire will feel as if he had a knife in the only soft part of his heart, by the time I reach him. He'll be glad enough, I'll warrant, to forgive."

"You'll try to get me the ten pounds, anyhow," said the young man, with wistful earnestness.

"La bless you, my dear," answered the widow, impatiently,—"for you talk so like a child that I must answer according,—of course I'll get you the ten pounds, if I get you nothing better. I PROMISE YOU THAT."

She then finished her meal, dressed for her walk, and directed the young sailor to go to bed and rest till her return, which she thought might be about one o'clock in the day. "If I am not in by that time," she said, "you can get up, sir, and eat what you find in the cupboard."

So saying, she shut the door behind her, and stepped out into the sunshine of the early morning.

"It is a very strange thing," she thought, as she walked, "that I should have felt that sort of wish to sit up; and there cannot be a bit of doubt in the world, that it was in order that I might go and ask the old squire to forgive Master Roger. I feel as sure as possible that he will relent. And I wonder where he would have been by this time, poor fellow, if he had not seen by the candle that somebody was up."

So she walked on, brave and excited, and got over half the distance before she sat down to rest. Then, after a short pause, she proceeded again, cheerful, full of hope, and conning over to herself the speech she intended to make to the father.

She rang at the bell of the back entrance, and was admitted. What occurred in the house, however, she never told; she did not even make it known whether she ever obtained an audience with the old squire. All I know is, that about one o'clock she found herself again on the outside of that door—hungry, weary, and utterly despirited.

Failure, complete and final, she had never anticipated; she had been prepared, for anger, for argument, for delay; she had even made up her mind that the poor youth might have to endure a period of probation before he was received and forgiven; but to have to go back to him and confirm his own belief—to tell him that he had been right and she had been wrong—was as surprising to her as it was terrible. And why was it so surprising? Why, because she had persuaded herself that she was sure to succeed, in consequence of the impression which kept her waking, and kept the candle alight that had drawn him to her door.

She had a tender conscience; and now, as she plodded on in the noontide heat, a fear that she had been presumptuous, and had mistaken her own wish and will for the leading of Providence, took possession of her heart. She sat down in the shade of a tree, spent with fatigue, and shed a few tears, and trembled a little, wondering whether the young outcast was expecting her by that time, and considering how she should break these evil tidings to him, and what she should do.

As she rested she became calm, and considered within herself, "Why do I make this ado? I've had a blessing bestowed on me. I've been let to take in this poor boy, and do good; perhaps I've kept him from harm, or from going back into those bad ways that I think he must have walked in. Is not that enough for me? Why am I so shocked and disappointed, because God had not bestowed this other blessing that I wanted for him?"

"He never promised that Mr. Roger should be taken home at my request. Perhaps to go back into that wicked house would not be really a blessing for him; but how strange that his own flesh and blood can turn from him, when my heart bleeds so for him for my poor Pamela's sake."

After resting about half an hour, and during that time deciding what to do, she got up and walked to the railway station, which was a quarter of a mile from that place, and which would put her down in the town about three miles beyond her cottage. In this town was the savings bank. She always carried her book about with her, and she meant to go to the bank and draw out her money.

Her heart beat with agitation as she walked to the little station. "The way to look at this is, that I'm going to lend it to the Lord," she said; and as she walked, she repeated over and over again, "to lend it to the Lord."

Her spirits rose as she reached the station, and during the short journey she felt excited, but happy. Her only fear was, lest Mrs. Anderson might be in the town, and meet with her. She felt a cowardly dread lest Mrs. Anderson should find out, somehow, what she was going to do with the money; and though she reflected within herself that it was her own, and she had a right to do as she pleased with it, yet the light in which such an act would appear to her friend—the imprudence, as most people would consider it, of giving away all she possessed, stared her in the face. She longed, she desired, above all things, to do it; but, "Oh," she thought, "that it was but done, and that no one but the Lord might know of it!"

With stealthy steps and anxious looking about her, she went through the streets of the town. It was market-day. She met one or two acquaintances, and among others a farmer's wife, who offered her a seat home in her cart. This she gladly accepted, for she was to the last degree tired, and so hungry that she stepped into a baker's shop, which was opposite to the savings bank, and spent one of the few pence she had left in buying a penny roll. Then she walked a few minutes, eating the bread, and watching up and down the street, till she could slip into the bank unperceived. She accomplished this feat. She came out with ten pounds in her pocket, and sought her friend, the farmer's wife, who was just ready to start homewards. The slow drive home, under the shade of wayside trees, was very pleasant. She felt as light-hearted as if some great good had happened to her.

"I've got something in my pocket that I'm going to lend to the Lord," she thought. "I hope He'll accept of it. I hope I shall not find, when I get home, that it is not wanted."

To be continued.

Scientific, &c.

The largest equatorially mounted reflecting telescope in the world has just been completed at Dublin, to be used at Melbourne in the observation of the nebulae of the Southern Hemisphere. It consists of a tube of boiler iron, 7 feet long, to which is attached a skeleton tube of steel bars 21 feet long. The large mirror is 4 feet in diameter, and 80 feet focus, and the whole instrument weighs 8 tons.

Chromate of iron has recently been used for alloying iron and steel to a considerable extent and with highly satisfactory results, the steel made from the mixture being the hardest known.

A Western editor, in response to a subscriber who grumbles that his morning paper was intolerably damp, says "that is because there is so much *due* on it."

The machine shop at Charlestown, Mass., has completed the largest planing machine in the world. It will plane a piece of iron 40 feet long 20 feet wide and 20 feet high. One of the bed-pieces weighs over forty tons.

A French chemist says that thirty pounds of flesh, thirty-two pounds of blood, and sixty-two pounds of bone contain as much nitrogen as one thousand pounds of farm-manure; and hence the carcass of a horse is worth more than a ton of the best farm yard manure for the purposes of vegetation.

Winter is now fairly upon us, and the teams are hastening to the lumber woods in various parts of the country. Our advice to every man who goes to the woods, be he captain, cook, teamster, or any other man, is to take along a good stock of "Johnson's Anodyne Liniment," and "Parson's Purgative Pills." Many months of labor (in the aggregate) may be saved by this precaution.

Bad enough to look and feel bad yourself; but no excuse for having your horse look and feel badly, when for a small sum you can buy "Sheridan's Cavalry Condition Powders," which given in grain two or three times a week, will make him look and feel well.