

## Whatever's Lost.

Whatever's lost, it first was won!  
We will not struggle nor impugn;  
Perhaps the cup was broken here  
That heaven's new wine might shine more clear.

praise Thee while my days go on,  
I praise Thee while my days go on,  
I love Thee while my days go on!  
Through dark and death, through fire and frost,  
With empty arms and treasure lost,  
I thank Thee while my days go on.

—Mrs. Browning.

## THE YOUNG LAIRD.

A Story of the Shetland Isles.

(Continued).

CHAPTER V.

Mr Morham, like many men who are students and heads of families at the same time, did the greater part of his brain-work after his household had retired for the night, and the Manse was quiet.

On the evening of which I am writing, he was in his study till long after midnight. He did not know that Lowrie was out on the sea, for Jean had not thought it necessary to tell him. The boys often went off in that manner upon expeditions by land or sea, and it was enough if their sister was told where they had gone. There was no need to tell the minister, for if Jean's approbation was given, all was sure to be according to their father's wishes.

Jean had received Don's brief note long before the storm had become wild enough to cause any anxiety at the Manse. Such storms are usually revelling madly on the sea, hours before they are felt on land especially in retired localities. Moreover it must be confessed that Jean had thought more of what her lover said about himself than what he told of Lowrie's movements.

Don's hastily written, "I hope to see you tomorrow," drove everything else out of the girl's mind, and brought a certain amount of peace to her heart.

She sat in her room for hours trying to make up her mind what she ought to say, and how she ought to act, when Don came on the morrow. She knew there would be some pain in the interview, but she was naturally hopeful, and told herself that surely Don would let love lead him back to the path of rectitude.

Her woman's heart found many an excuse for him. He had been left to himself too much. He had never had his danger pointed out to him, until her father had done so, and that was of such a recent date that no one could say what effect it might have.

Oh, yes! Jean would hope everything and fear nothing, and having so made up her mind she lifted her window curtain that she might send a loving look and prayer to the Ha, before retiring to rest.

The wind was blowing fiercely by that time, and her attention was of course arrested at once. Then she remembered her brother, and became alarmed, knowing that he would certainly have come to the Manse if he had returned to Barda. She listened, and looked until her fears overcame her reluctance to alarm the minister. Knowing that he was still in his study, Jean went there, taking Don's note with her.

His girl's anxious eyes told Mr. Morham that something was amiss, and he was soon informed of the cause of the trouble.

"Dear me! Those boys!" exclaimed the minister, not at all realizing what a storm had come on; for the Manse was situated in a sheltered dale, and closed shutters and heavy curtains had shut out all voices of the tempest.

"Really, Lowrie ought to be thinking of more serious matters than midnight boating expeditions. He is not a child now. However don't frighten yourself, Jean. He is all right no doubt," and Mr. Morham walked across to his window and threw it up.

"Padre, it is blowing a gale; a storm is on the sea, and Lowrie is there," Jean cried in great distress. At that moment the garden gate was opened quickly, and a figure, which Mr. Morham and Jean had no difficulty in recognising as that of Mam Betsy, came hurriedly towards the Manse. The minister leaned out and asked "What is it, Betsy? what brings you out so late?"

"Oh, sir," Betsy cried piteously, "this is a fair hour for you and me. Our bairns, sir! our boys! Master Lowrie and my Ole are upon the sea this night! It's awful night!"

"Are you quite sure of that?" asked Mr. Morham, trying to steady his voice. "They may have run for some harbour. Plenty of voes along the coast. They know what they are about. There is not a better seaman than Ole in Barda."

"Yea! yea! sir, that is true. My Ole knows what to do when he is himself. But, alas!" and Betsy wrung her hands in agony. "Alas! my pair misguided boy. He was no himself, when he left hame this afternoon. I thought he had gone to the Ha, but a neighbour told me he was off in the Laird's boat. It's

over true. He is upon the sea—the woeful sea!"

"Yet they may have returned," said Jean, striving to comfort the others as well as herself. "Why they may be at the Ha now. They would likely go there first, to let Don know they were safe."

"Na, my dear, it is not so," sobbed Betsy. "I thought o' that, and I gae'd there. The laird—wae is me! I was no' in his bed, and I waked him up—he was in his chair in the library—and he kens what he has done. For oh! Miss Jean it was a' his doing. He says that himself. He kens it noo. Noo when we can do naught for our boys' alas!"

"Yes, there is something to do," said Mr. Morham very calmly. "There is much we can do. We can pray for the lads."

"Couldn't a boat—a big boat—go off in search of them?" Jean asked her father.

"The laird is seeing about something o' the kind," said Betsy. "He ran off, I think, to wake some o' the men, when I had tell'd him that his boat had no' come back. It was he that tell'd me a' about it. He said Master Lowrie gae'd in place o' him, and they were for the Voders! Think o' it! What man in his senses wad think o' going there on such a night?"

"Lowrie would surely never be so rash as that," said the minister, but even as he spoke his heart sank at the remembrance of his son's headlong ways. He knew, moreover, that his boys were always very willing to be led by Ole as well as by Don.

There could be no rest for Lowrie's father and sister in the Manse after that. They were soon out of doors, and proceeding towards the shore accompanied by poor old Betsy, who had recovered a little composure of manner through the example of her companions.

When the trio reached the creek where the fishing-boats were stationed, they found a small group of men collected there. These were so eagerly engaged in discussion upon some subject, that they did not observe the arrival of the minister and his female companions, who overheard a remark not intended for their ears. "Na! na! na!" an old fisherman was saying, "No' a' the money in the bank o' England wad tempt me to launch a boat just now. The laird might have kent that we wad hae gae'd for love, and no' for money or aught else if there was a chance of our coming back, or of our finding the lads."

"Sh-h-h!" whispered another, "here are Miss Jean and Betsy."

"Can't you venture off, men?" asked the minister in faltering tones. He knew very well what the answer would be. The men shook their heads, and one said, "We wad risk our lives if there was a chance o' finding them, but nobody kens exactly what course they took, and you see, sir, by this time—"

The pause was more expressive than any words, and Jean's heart sank for a moment.

"Who saw the boat go?" Mr. Morham asked.

"Nobody knew aught about their going besides the laird," was the answer. "If any man o' us had seen them make for going, we wad have told you, sir, and warned them, for any man wi' a bit o' sense in his head, could have seen hours ago what sort of a night it was like to be."

"Mr Grierson is not with them, then?" The minister was glad to know that it was not at Don's instigation that they had gone.

"Has the laird been here?" Jean asked.

"Ay, he was here, and wanted us to gang off wi' him. We wad do anything in reason for our young laird when he is himself."

"Where is he now?" the minister questioned.

"I canna say," replied an elderly man, who had before spoken for the party. "He gae'd awa' along the shore by himself when we tell'd him that it was utterly impossible to put off at this time. I am sure, sir, you see I am right."

"Yes, yes!" answered the minister with a heavy sigh, then turning to his daughter, he said—"You should not be here, my child. It can do no good to remain, and you will hurt yourself. Better go home, dear."

But Jean clung to his hand and begged that he would let her remain.

"The morning will soon be here," she said, "and I heard the men say that the wind would fall as quickly as it rose. They may come before long. They may be waiting beyond the tide-way till the storm passes over. I could not stay in the Manse just now."

So the watchers waited on the shore till the dawn of day. Then some climbed to the higher ground, and some hurried to the points of land jutting out into the sea, from where they hoped to be better able to discover the missing boat coming back to Barda.

But no welcome sail met their vision, and the storm continued to rage notwithstanding the prognos-

tications of the weather-wise fishermen.

In an island inhabited by a seafaring population, the Tempest-king is feared by all as a personal enemy. A sympathetic thrill passes through every heart when his dusky wings are unfolded, for none can tell where his darts will strike.

As the morning advanced the people of Barda sought their cottage doors and looked anxiously abroad, questioning each other regarding the safety of "wir men." Soon it became known that the minister's son and Ole Manson were at sea, and men shook their heads, while gentle women ejaculated, "Puir Miss Jean! puir Betsy!"

It was not till the day was far spent that Jean could be induced to return home, but Betsy had been carried to her cottage some hours before. The Manse boys had sought their father and sister, and it was their pitiful crying which first drew Jean from the indulgence of her grief. Their father, with the courage of a Christian man, continued to comfort the others, and even indulge a hope that the lost might be restored. His generous heart could even find room to pardon and pity the one who had indirectly been the cause of such sorrow, and he looked anxiously for Don that he might be assured of forgiveness and sympathy.

But the young laird did not show himself; and when Mr. Morham sent a message to the Ha, entreating Don to come to them, the answer was, "He is not there;" so the minister and his children could only return to their home, leaving the erring one, as well as the lost, to the guidance of God.

(To be continued).

## The Conductor's Story.

It was in the summer of 1873. I was running extras on the railroad. A circus travelling about the country, came into the town on our line. An order was issued for an extra train for Sunday morning. I received notice early on Tuesday morning. I read the order carefully. It gave the time of arrival in our city at 9 a. m. I looked again to see if it was not 9 p. m. I was a teacher in the Sabbath-school. I had a bright class of boys about sixteen years of age, just the right age to be interested in circuses, and to be wide awake when one arrived in town. My heart sank. I, a professing Christian, and, withal, a Sabbath-school teacher, detailed to run a circus train on the Sabbath, and to arrive too, in my own city, where everybody knew me, just as Christians were ready for church.

What should I do? I had worked hard nearly nine years as a brakeman, and I had been promoted to a conductor. Could I afford to lose all by my refusal to do as ordered? Then I thought of my family dependent upon me, and I said, I can not throw away all these years of hard toil to satisfy conscience. For I expected to be discharged if I refused to do as ordered. Then I thought of the boys in the Sabbath-school. What if some of them should happen to be at the depot to see the train, or if they were just on their way to church as we arrived, and should see me, as they doubtless would? I thought of the church and the prayer-meeting. What should I do? I thought of my own influence as lost for good, and there was a desperate struggle between the evil and the good.

I had four days in which to decide. How strange it was! Notice did not usually reach us until the day previous. What long, dreary days they seemed! And the boys heard of the order, and were guessing what I would do. They knew what I had said in prayer-meeting about desecrating the Sabbath, for some of them were there.

"Would he go? or would he quit?" "No, he would not quit, for he would not dare refuse to go," they said.

Saturday morning came. I must notify the office that day what I would do. Sleepless nights and weary days had passed, and I had thought and prayed, but I was decided. Duty seemed clear, very clear, and it was that a Christian man could not run excursion trains on the Sabbath.

My father was a deacon in the orthodox church, and, just before going to my work, I went to him and told him the story, reserving my decision to myself, and asking his advice what to do. I knew well what he would say. What a look went over his face as he spoke! "But," I said, "father, will you help me to get something to do? I shall lose my place, I have devoted nearly all my whole life to this business, and now I must turn to something else."

"Trust in God, my boy," he answered promptly, "and I will help you, too."

I returned to the office, and walked up to the manager as he sat, and said in a respectful tone: "I have been detailed to run the circus train Sunday-morning, and I can, not do it on the Sabbath."

Imagine my astonishment as he looked me in the face and said: "You've been detailed to run Sunday trains! I am surprised! You go right home, and don't you worry about Sunday trains."

I have never been detailed for Sunday work since. But the men who offered to do work for extra pay upon the Sabbath have long since been discharged.—*Congregationalist.*

## Cure For "Prayer-Meeting Ice"

Let each one, before going to prayer-meeting, retire to his closet and ask the Divine blessing on the meeting he is about to attend, and pray for the Holy Spirit to enter his heart and warm his affections toward God.

After arriving at the place of prayer, and after the pastor throws the meeting open to the brethren, then be ready to be the first one up and speak; pour out his soul in earnest prayer—not wandering all over the world for a subject to pray for, but ask for spiritual blessings for all present as needed right there. By the time three or four such prayers have been offered, with perhaps a song or two between, others will be ready to take part by exhortation.

There is great danger of too much of the latter. How many meetings there are where no prayer is offered from the opening prayer to the closing. Exhortation is well, but don't forget that the service is a prayer-meeting. We once heard a diffident young man in a little country prayer-meeting say: "If we can think of nothing to say, we can always think of something to pray about." Let those who say "I can't take part in meeting," remember this.

## What Christians They Would Make.

How do we know but that the very intensity of religious enthusiasm needed to speedily bring the world to Christ we are to find in the Orient? Dennis Osborne, in his book on *India and its Millions*, tells us of a famous Yogi who sits upon a stone on the banks of the Sacred Ganges, and has been sitting there more than fifty years without house or shelter of any kind. Through the torrid, scorching heat, through the freezing cold and drenching rain, there he has been sitting for half a century, until his head is white and his eyes are sightless, and his form is bent with age. Through the fearful days of the Sepoy rebellion he left not his place, but calmly braved the cruelty of the blood-thirsty hordes who ransacked the neighboring city. He is worshipped as a god now. Dennis Osborne inquired: "Why do you sit there?" He answered: "To meditate on Him who is above."

## Prayer.

Our daily devotions must be looked upon as the most needful of our daily works, and the most pleasant of our daily comforts.

Those that pray much will have much to give thanks for.

They who pray constantly when they are well, may pray comfortably when they are ill.

Whatever is the matter of our care must be the matter of our prayer.

The best way to obtain the benefit of the promises and privileges of the covenant, is to be earnest in prayer to God for wisdom and grace to do the duties of it.

When we have prayed to God for mercy, we must second our prayers with our endeavors; else, instead of trusting God, we must tempt him. We must so depend upon God's providence as to make use of our own prudence.—*Sel.*

## Self-Denial.

Did you ever buy a lisle thread glove instead of kid and devoutly lay the difference on the altar of God? Did you ever deny yourself a journey that its cost might go to missions? Do so in the name of the Lord, and you will have more pleasure than kid and going could give you—a pleasure that lasts.—*The Messenger.*

## Random Readings.

—Sin may be clasped so close we cannot see its face.

—God only knows how blessed He could make us if we would but let Him.—*Macdonald.*

—The heart that is fullest of good works has in it the least room for the temptations of the enemy.

—A holy act strengthens the inward holiness. It is a seed of life growing into more life.—*Robertson.*

—Just take hold of the first thing that comes in your way. If the Lord's got anything bigger to give you, He'll see to it.—*A. D. T. Whitney.*

—The first small sacrifice leads the way to others, and a single hand's turn given heartily to the world's great work, helps one amazingly with one's own small tasks.—*Lousid M. Alcott.*

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