

Step by Step.

BY MARIANNE FAENINGHAM.

"He knoweth the way that I take."
The fog hangs thickly about me
As I start to begin the day,
I see not the hills or the meadows,
No beauty is on the ways;
And carefully step by step I take
Lest I lose myself, or fall,
But ever the path is opening out,
And the sky is high over all.

The way is never so hidden
But the next step can be seen,
And a Guide is ever beside me
Who always a light has been;
And every hour the sun on high
More strongly and brightly shines,
And the beautiful landscape afar is shown
As the sun in the west declines.

Long is the reach of life's journey,
But the way grows strangely fair,
And the nearer I get to its ending
The sweeter the songs in the air.
The heart laughs out in its gladness
As the home is coming in sight,
And the western skies are all golden,
Where the day melts into the night.

Courage, O weary pilgrim,
Timidly journeying on;
The mists that are thick about thee
Will soon be over and gone.
Take the step that is nearest to thee,
And soon shall the shrouded way
Brilliantly open before thee
In the full fair light of the day.

THE YOUNG LAIRD.

A Story of the Shetland Isles.

(Concluded).

CHAPTER VI.

Don had been completely sobered by the calamity which had occurred, and his feelings may be better imagined than described when Conscience accused him of being the cause.

His first impulse was to act. To do something—no matter what—for in action only could he get rid of the upbraiding voice within him.

How willingly would he have given his life for the lives in peril through his folly! How bitterly did he regret his sin! How gladly would he do anything to atone for the madness which had led to such a disaster; and when he found that no persuasions would induce the fishermen to go off with him in search of the missing boat, he was tempted to fling himself into the sea rather than stand passive and bear the reproaches of self—always so much harder to bear than those of others.

He wandered along the cliffs, straining his eyes in a vain hope of beholding the boat; but when hour followed on hour hope began to fail, and then he threw himself upon the ground and gave way to an agony of despair and sorrow.

I will not dwell upon this. You who have so erred, and who have been arrested by the awful consequences of your folly, will know better than I can tell what darkness beset Donald Grierson then. And to those who have not yet met the unhappy results of their own indiscretion, I would venture to say *take warning* by this "over true tale," and put the curb upon your "weakness" before it becomes your master.

The poor people of Barda were too much engrossed by sad thoughts of the missing youths to ask how their young laird spent that day. No one remembered him in connection with the calamity except Jean and her father, and they, knowing how bitter his feelings must be, refrained from seeking him. They took for granted that he was at his home.

It was a long, sad day to all—saddened and longest to Don. The storm continued with great force, so that when evening fell once more all hope of the boat's return in safety was abandoned.

When night drew near Don rose up from the solitary spot where he had spent the day and slowly walked towards Betsy Manson's cottage. He was broken in spirit, and somewhat exhausted for want of food. The mental suffering which he had endured had made him look years older, and had stamped a look of remorse upon his face which told its own tale. But from his feelings of shame and self-accusation sprang the true repentance for sin which is not a mere wall over one's own wickedness, but a strong and successful effort to retrieve.

"Mam Betsy," murmured the young laird as he sat down by his nurse and covered his face with her thin and shaking hand, "Mam Betsy, I know you have forgiven me, though I can never forgive myself, never!"

"He was a' I had," the poor woman cried; then drawing her foster son close to her, she added, "Dinna be ower hard upon yourself. My pair Ole ought to have kent how to guide himself. The Lord's will be done! and we mon try to comfort anither. Pair lad!" (for Don was sobbing then)

"Pair lad! it falls worst' upon you, after a; but ye mon gang to the Lord for help, as I hae done, and found it."

Betsy continued to talk to him

in that strain until he had recovered his composure a little, then she brought food and coaxed him to eat. And so the evening crept on, until Don became aware of the lateness of the hour, and insisted upon leaving his nurse to her much-needed rest.

But for him there was still no rest, and he could not return to the Ha, so taking the path which led to the shore he resumed his solitary watch upon the cliff, looking wearily upon the sea and sadly reviewing his own life, and making resolutions for the future.

The storm was not exhausted when the dawn came and found Donald on the same spot. Peace had not come to the warring elements, neither could his heart find rest. Yet that morning brought new purpose to the young laird of Barda. With a prayer on his lips he turned to seek his home. But first he cast a glance upon the far ocean, whose turbulent waves were beginning to weary of their strife, and were rolling with a somewhat more subdued motion than on the previous day. Still their white crests were tossing high around the Voders, and still their mighty voices were wailing loud echoes from the Humba rocks.

What did the light reveal to the solitary watcher? what did he see on the far ocean that could so swiftly bring the flush to his cheeks and fresh vigour to his bearing? He could scarcely believe his own eyes, and stood panting and straining his vision until assured that he was not deceived. Then almost beside himself with hope and excitement he rushed towards the nearest hamlet rousing the men with a shout of "There's a signal from Humba! There's somebody on the Humba rocks!"

How quickly the news fled! Soon a loud knocking was heard at the Manse door, and excited voices repeated the news. "A signal from Humba. There's somebody on the Humba rocks!"

The minister and his whole household were speedily among the crowd upon the shore gazing towards the little isle, and asking incoherent questions. It was not without difficulty that the signal which Don's keen eyes had noted made itself apparent to Mr. Morham and Jean, although the fishermen had readily discovered it, and they were slow to believe in the unexpected tidings which could not fail to awaken hope if true.

Then the instinct which makes a woman turn for help in her hour of extremity to the man she loves rather than to any other, though he may be less able to assist than many besides prompted Jean to ask, "Where is Mr. Grierson? someone said that it was he who had seen the signal. Where is he?"

"He was here seeking a volunteer crew."

"I will go, and my son Jim," said Mr. Morham; then added, "I dare not ask any of you to join us. I can't expect you would risk your lives for my boy."

"We have our families to think about," said one man; and another remarked, "The storm is going down, and in a few hours we might venture."

"But," cried Jim Morham excitedly "if that signal comes from Lowrie and Ole they've been there two nights and a day."

Then Jean exclaimed, "Without food or shelter! Perhaps hurt! Thirty-six hours on Humba in such a plight! Oh, every moment is precious."

"Come along, Jim," said the minister. "Get down a boat, men, and some one run to the Manse for food and wine. It is not such a risk as it looks. No! don't launch a big boat, a small one will be safer. Where is Don? He will go with me. Quick, find the laird—where can he have gone?"

"There he is!" half-a-dozen voices suddenly answered at once, and every eye turned in the direction indicated by the speakers.

A tiny boat—Donald Grierson's own especial boat, in which he took much pride, for it had been built under his own directions, and was said to be the beau-ideal of a good sea-boat—had that moment put out from the little wharf, and the light shone upon the solitary figure seated in the stern, with one strong hand on the helm, and the other grasping the sheet.

It did not need Jean Morham's passionate cry of "Come back, Don, come back," to tell him it was that had so launched himself upon the storm.

He never looked behind, or perhaps he would have seen Jean and her father, and that might have brought him to his senses. He could not hear the shouts of those on shore. He saw nothing, thought of nothing, but that signal floating above the Humba rocks.

The men who had gone forward to obey their minister's directions regarding a boat, paused, and one said, "Sir, you and the lad can never gang your lanes."

"No. It would be madness,"

groaned the minister. "I dare not do it, and may God preserve Don."

Here some young men, who had been held back by female relatives, pushed forward, saying, "It's a shame o' us to stand by and see our laird go to his death like yon, and our minister's son maybe perishing out yonder! We are ready to risk a' Mr. Morham."

"No! no! my lads. Thank you, with all my heart, but I will not take such a sacrifice from my people. My boy and his companion, and the young laird too, are in God's keeping. We will bide His time."

Said an old salt, "She's a canny boat, yon bit shell, and there is no one o' us wha kens better about the sea than oor young laird."

"Nevertheless we are going after him," replied a sturdy young fisherman. But the others would not allow it, and the volunteer crew were obliged to yield. "Wait," was the oft-repeated word. "Wait," and see how the laird gets on! wait till the storm abates! Wait! Ah! there is no harder word in our language, no injunction so difficult to follow.

Jean had heard and seen nothing of what was going on around her. Her eyes were fastened upon Don's little boat, and every faculty seemed lost in that of sight. Each wave that met the boat seemed to have risen to swallow it. The white foam dashed around it greedily. When it dipped between the billows it seemed as though the white horses rushed wildly together with intent to overwhelm the frail skiff. But still it held on its way, and still the manly figure sat immovable in the stern, and the on-lookers began to have some confidence in his success as they saw how well he guided the boat, how beautifully she obeyed his command. At last the *knowing* ones agreed that the boat would float, that there need be no fear for her on the open sea. The danger to be apprehended was not in that direction, and soon the men began to speculate on the graver point. "Will he bring her along-side the rocks yet, think you?" Jim asked an old sailor, who shook his head but answered cautiously, "There is no telling—if he can take the lee-side of the isle, and run her into the big *geo*. The boat is little and easily managed, a bonnie boat in truth, and the laird is a canny hand."

Now I wish I could tell you, as some of those watchers could, how bravely Don steered his bonnie boat across that raging sea, with what cool courage he made for the lonely island wreathed in foam; in what a masterly way he brought up along the rocks, just touching them as he floated onward, and for a moment of time contriving to keep the boat almost at rest, so that Ole and Lowrie standing ready could lay a hand on the gunwale and leap on board. How nearly the three adventurers lost their lives would never be known to any but themselves, when the boat grazed the rocks and was almost swamped as the able hand at the helm brought her round upon another tack. But she weathered the danger, and by-and-bye the Barda folks saw her, with head boldly turned to the "teeth o' the gale," making tacks for the land. It was the work of hours to come back, though the going out before the wind had been done in a brief space of time. The shore was thronged by the people of Barda, whose anxiety and excitement found expression in many a wild, poetical-voiced speech.

It is at such times that the warm imagination of the Shetland people exhibits itself in peculiar, almost Eastern beauty of language.

But what a thrill of joy passed through every breast when Jim Morham, flinging his cap in the air, shouted, "There are *three* in the boat!" The shout was caught up and echoed by every man and boy there, and the mighty noise of their joy reached Betsy Manson who could not fail to interpret such a cry as the noise of gladness. She came hurriedly from her cottage in time to meet the boat which was run up the beach by a hundred ready hands; while men, women, and children rushed upon the three young men and almost overpowered them with delighted caresses.

Jean stood a little apart with her hands clasped. She had not ceased to lift up her soul in prayer from the time Don embarked till he came back; and now, when she saw her brother and Ole in the midst of the happy crowd, the girl could scarcely restrain the impulse which bade her run and hide her glad face upon her lover's breast.

Don was very grave, and he did not hold himself with the proud consciousness of a man who has done a noble deed. The memory of his sin was too painful to admit one thought of self-gratulation; and when the minister clasped his hands and blessed him for bringing Lowrie safe back the young laird hung his head and would not listen to one word of thanks. He would not even look at Jean, but hurried away

to the Ha' by himself, leaving the happy crowd to make its own comments upon his behaviour.

I do not think that those comments were of a very critical nature. I know that every soul in Barda loved Donald Grierson, some worshipped him, and I am very sure that his faults were not remembered that day.

In the days to come he gave no one cause to remember the error of his youth, for he cast it from him for ever, and I do not think there is a happier wife in the world than Jean, the Lady of Barda.

JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

A Sequel to "Saved in Three Minutes."

In his sermon to the students of Bates College, the Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D., said: "Six weeks ago, I, as it seemed, very accidentally, was called to preach in a strange place and went much against my will, as I was so busy I did not see how I could go. In the course of my sermon, I related the touching story of the young man that had been saved in three minutes. On the Saturday following I was asked to attend the funeral of a man who had died, and, as I drew near the casket and looked into his face, I said, 'I know that man; I knew him fifteen years ago, when week after week his Christian wife used to rise in my meeting and request prayer for him. For years I have not seen him, and here I am called to attend his funeral. And while I was talking, a young man stepped up to me and said, 'I would like to see you for a moment. I heard you preach last Sunday, and tell of a man who was saved in three minutes. When I got home I was so filled with it that I said, 'I will go in and tell this sick man.' I went in, sat down by his bedside, and just told the story as you had told it, about the young man that was saved in three minutes; and the gray-headed man said, 'That is remarkable, is it not? I think I could do that.' He did just the same thing; he confessed Christ, sent for his family, and they gathered around him; and there, with his dying breath, he too confessed Christ, the Lamb of God.' And so God used that word twice, and I have told it the third time this afternoon. Perchance some careless one or some serious one, perchance some thoughtful one, may just believe it, and in the silence of this hour lift his eyes to him who hung on the cross, and is now on the throne, and say, 'O Lamb of God, I trust thee, I take thee.' May God sanctify this message to us all for his son's sake."

How To Get Faith.

I hear a great many people say, "How am I to get faith? I would come to Christ, but I don't know how to get faith." It would take months and years to get that. Now, I was a long time getting faith. I was anxious to work for the Lord, but I wanted faith. I wanted to get faith, but I went about it in the wrong way. I prayed for it, and did nothing else. That ain't the way to get faith—to pray for it and neglect the word of God, the way to get faith is to know who God is; and I never knew a man or woman that was well acquainted with God that wanted faith. Some one said to a Scotch woman, "you are a woman of great faith." "No," she says, "I am a woman of little faith, but I have a great God." Now, would you just turn a moment to the twentieth chapter of the gospel of John, and the thirty-first verse: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Now the whole gospel of John was written for one purpose. John took up his pen, and he wrote that gospel that we might believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and that believing we might have eternal life. And so, instead of praying for faith, and mourning because we haven't got faith, let us study the word of God and get acquainted with the God of Israel, and then we will have faith in him. You can't find a man or woman that is acquainted with God, but that has strong faith in God—*Moody*.

Holiness is self-demonstrative. He whose heart is pure, surrounds himself with a spiritual atmosphere and adorns his life with a constant succession of godly and benevolent actions. As a man traveling to a distant country thinks, reads and talks of the land he longs to see, so the holy man thinks, reads and speaks of the city of God whither he is journeying. Hoping to receive an inheritance in that dwelling-place of sinless souls, "he purifieth himself as he is pure." The strongest desire of his soul is expressed in these lines of St. Ambrose:

"Meet for thy realm in heaven
Make me, O holy King!
That through the ages it be given
To me thy praise to sing."
—Zion's Herald.

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