

Our Story.

BARBARA STREET.

A FAMILY STORY OF TO-DAY. BY THE AUTHOR OF "OUR NEIL," "A SAILOR'S DAUGHTER," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

OUR friends were fortunate, for soon after they had turned into the Chester Road, a rough yellow tetter flew towards them with great demonstration of joy.

"Hallo!" cried Waterhouse, "here comes the great dog Pan, and the others will not be far behind."

And soon Grace and Kitty appeared in sight, with Mrs. Norris and Hester just behind. When Grace caught sight of the two men walking arm-in-arm, she exclaimed—

"Dear me! look at Damon and Pythias coming to meet us, and I am afraid we are disgracefully untidy."

Kitty stared round for one astonished moment, being unable to imagine who these acquaintances of Grace's could be, and then the two parties met face to face. Hester was the least taken by surprise, for she had observed the advancing couple before any one else had done, and had already rehearsed the coming small drama in the several ways in which it might chance to be enacted. Yes; Mr. Waterhouse was pointedly raising his hat to Grace, addressing her, turning round by her side. Mr. Denston fell behind, greeted Mrs. Norris and Hester, and walked on with them. Hester, eager within, calmness itself without, found that the drama had gone as it should. A gay chatter was going on in front.

"Where have you been, may one ask?" began Waterhouse.

"You ought to be able to find out from our appearance."

"Ah! I don't observe anything very different," said Waterhouse, eyeing the party doubtfully.

"Thank you, Mr. Waterhouse! I don't think we look quite so shabby as this generally, do we, Kitty? But don't you see what rosy cheeks we've got? We have been taking two-pennyworth each of country air."

Waterhouse laughed.

"How did you procure that homœopathic dose?"

"By taking the tram-car as far as it goes, then we walked on till we really could see nothing but fields, all golden with buttercups, that is, of course, by judiciously turning our backs upon the new houses and the brickyard. It was lovely, wasn't it, Kitty?"

"Yes," said Kitty; "we sat down in the shade of a hedge."

"Do you like the country, then, Miss Norris?"

"Like the country! Grace spoke rather scornfully, and gave a little twist to her parasol. The question seemed too dense a one to be tolerated.

"You might as well ask, do I like to breathe."

Waterhouse made no reply, being occupied in constructing a castle of aerial substance, if the plan of which had been manifest to his companion, she would not have calmly continued to walk by his side. But he must say something, so he roused himself from his too pleasant reverie.

"Why, we might be in Paris, to hear you talk. So you sat down under a hedge, and gathered buttercups, en famille! I should not be surprised to hear that you drank snob, and danced round hand in hand. It is the best fun to see French people in the country. It is such a charming pretence at rusticity, and they enjoy it so mightily."

Grace, who, to do her justice, was seldom offended, was not over-pleased with these remarks, which poor Waterhouse had only made in order to say something.

"You should not laugh at our poor little pleasures, Mr. Waterhouse, because you can procure greater ones."

Waterhouse felt so taken aback that he knew not what to say. Grace would suppose that he had spoken in the insolence of wealth. He could have bitten his tongue out.

Grace, perceiving from his silence that her rebuke had taken effect, was at first glad and then sorry that she had given it. So that she was quite ready to be gracious when by and by, he said—

"I may be a blundering fool, Miss Norris, but I hope I am not a snob."

"No, of course not," said Grace, heartily. "I showed my bad taste in not relishing your comparison. I am sure it would be well for English people if they could enjoy themselves more in the simple French fashion. You would not see that, I suppose, in the streets of Paris?"

And they moved aside out of the way of a reeling man.

And so the little breach was healed, and they all reached home well content with each other.

Hester had not joined much in the talk, but she looked handsome and animated.

Kitty's mind was much exercised by a wonder that had taken possession of it.

"Grace," she said, when the family were alone, "why aren't you rude now to Mr. Waterhouse, as you used to be?"

Grace took on a rather comical air under this home-thrust. She slightly coloured, and slightly smiled.

"I'll tell you a fable, Kitty. An icicle once hung in the sun, and said, 'I won't melt!' but in half an hour's time it was all gone. Why did it melt? Answer me that, and you'll answer yourself."

"Why, it could not help it," said Kitty.

"Quite so; and being human I suppose I find that I can't be always cross, though the fact never struck me before."

"Well, I'm glad you can't!" and Kitty ended with this little retort.

Waterhouse meanwhile had not lost sight of that pleasing idea that Grace loved the country—at once pleasing and pitiful. It was pitiful to think of her long denial; it was pleasing to indulge the idea that he possessed at least one possibility of offering her what she would value, for he had seen no reason yet to encourage him to any confidence in wooing her. He had grown very downcast under the constant reflection that he possessed nothing calculated to attract her, and that what other women might have considered his advantages, Grace held very cheap. Nevertheless, the end of such reflections invariably was that he set his teeth and determined to win her. No one else, he declared, could love her as well, take care of her as well, value her as well. He thus combined, it will be perceived, that modesty in view of his mistress's high merits, and that determination in view of any rival's pretensions, which have always been held to be characteristics of the ideal lover. Just now his mind was wholly taken up by an idea suggested by Grace's country expedition. Why not

concoct some affair of the kind in combination with Denston, to make it less personal?—nay, why not use Denston to give it a colour? A happy thought indeed! Why not go to the Ridley Woods, where one of his friends had one day taken him? Truly the very spot, with its stretches of rich turf, dotted with clumps of thorn, its dusky glades and fine old beeches and oaks—an easy distance by rail, a capital old inn in the town—one advantage after another recurring to his mind, he chuckled aloud, and rubbed his hands in the solitude of his sitting-room. But how to convey the invitation, how to combine the deepest cunning with the most delicate tact, the most skillful art! The next day, which happened to be Saturday, he consulted with Denston, who fell in with the scheme, in a certain dry, yet half eager way, all his own. So it came to pass that, in the afternoon, as the family were all seated at work, Sarah made her appearance, with a note for Mrs. Norris. Broken open, the following words were disclosed, which Mrs. Norris read aloud—

"MY DEAR MADAM.—I have been thinking that it would do Denston a world of good to take him out into the country. I do not, however, feel that it would be the thing for me to undertake alone the responsibility of looking after him. He might get his feet wet, for instance, if a lady were not with him. May we venture to look to you for assistance? I could take good care of you both. We think of going to the Ridley Woods. Would it not be pleasant to your daughters also to join our forces? It would be an additional favour if they would do so, and in this hope we venture to send them the enclosed invitation.—I am, my dear madam, very sincerely yours, JOHN WATERHOUSE."

"P.S.—If convenient to you, we propose to go on Monday, as it seems a pity to lose this fine weather."

By the time Mrs. Norris had finished reading this composition, she was smiling, as were also her elder daughters—Grace, indeed, laughed maliciously, while Kitty exclaimed in delight. Mrs. Norris laid down the letter, and met her eldest daughter's eye, but no one spoke—the fact being that no one wished to take the initiative—each in secret being inclined to desire the scheme to be fallen in with, but by no means inclined to say so.

"Look here, mamma—you are dropping another paper!" cried Kitty, turning to pick up a fluttering piece of note paper.

"Come, Grace, you had better read this," said Mrs. Norris; and Kitty took it to her sister.

"Well, some one has enough assurance!" exclaimed she; but she looked rather amused than angry as she read the following:—

"To the fairies Peasblossom, Cobweb, and Mustardseed.—Since at times ye stoop from your airy dignity to appear to certain two beings of the grosser kind, these mortals dare to offer their clumsy greeting. To fairies pent in city streets it may be necessary to announce the arrival of May, which their small compeers who peep from the oaks and the elms are already celebrating with their merriest pranks. They have already spread summer snow over the hawthorns, have upreared the sweet-smelling chestnut pyramids; in the woods they have trained the young boughs and decked them with green, and have made known to the birds that it is time to sing lustily. Moreover, a certain spot is known to him who pens these lines, where by moonlight the fairy assemblings are held, where there is turf of the finest for fairy friskings, daisies of broadest still for parasols, and buttercups to hold draughts of dew; while overall the sturdy oak spreads out flickering shade, and the lady beech drops young leaves of transparent silk. Come, then, ye fairies three, leave your city streets, and fear not to trust your dainty selves to the mortals who would fain bear you to the woodland haunts that become you. Peasblossom! sprite most airy and nimble, come, who deignest in the guise of a maiden to be the maker of the earthly tart—an occupation which thy tongue, though not thy heart, doth occasionally suggest—into which thou puttest an unearthly and ambrosial flavour. Cobweb! deign likewise to be favourable to us—she who appeareth to mortals as a fancy-weaving maiden, bearing under an abstracted demeanour a kind and gracious heart. Mustardseed, thou sprite, come likewise! A puff of wind would blow us thee—nevertheless, a mustardseed, if thou canst understand my words, is capable of great increase. Come, then, whether as fairies or as maidens, and render happy TWO MORTALS."

"Well!" exclaimed Grace, with a smile, when she had finished reading, and said no more, being occupied in glancing over the document again.

"Why, who wrote it?" cried Kitty, full of solemn wonder.

"Mr. Waterhouse has sent it, and we may suppose he wrote it," replied Hester.

"Fancy!" exclaimed Kitty, peering over Grace's shoulder.

Grace looked up.

"Don't you suppose it?" asked she of Hester.

"I was only thinking that the style is not quite what one would expect from him."

"Why not?" asked Grace, laughing. "I saw the 'Essays of Elia' on his table this morning, and I believe this concoction is a bad imitation of one of them. I half-remember one in which the fairies figure."

"Let me look at it," said Hester, holding out her hand.

Hester looked it through, but read several times over the invitation to "Cobweb," and compared it thoughtfully with that to "Peasblossom."

"What is that about you, Grace?" asked Mrs. Norris; "for I suppose 'Peasblossom' stands for you, does it not? I did not catch the meaning as you read."

"Hester, read it again," said Grace.

"That is all very well," remarked her mother, when Hester had reached the more personal part of the invitation; "why did not Mr. Waterhouse stop there? Well, what is that about Grace?"

Hester read it.

"Her 'tongue' and 'heart'!" repeated Mrs. Norris. "Is not that rather impertinent, Grace?"

"Shocking! so, mother," said Grace, whose face was brimming over with merriment. "Hester, your reformed Mr. Denston can hardly have written that. Besides, what cause has he to consider my ambrosial tarts the most impressive feature of our intercourse?"

Hester coloured. She believed Mr. Denston had written the invitation, but had hardly imagined her belief so patent.

"What does 'ambrosial' mean?" asked Kitty, thus creating a diversion very welcome to Hester, who did not wish the words addressed to her to undergo public examination.

She read them as unimpressively as possible and they passed without comment, though Grace glanced at her sister curiously. She was struck with the touch of sentiment occurring in this part

only. Had Denston written it? A surmise as disturbing as it was novel awoke in her mind; but on her mother's account, no less than to spare Hester's evident sensitiveness, she let the matter pass in silence.

"Why, Mustardseed," she said, drawing Kitty on to her knee, "I feel quite jealous for you! The author, whoever he may be, seems to hold this little girl very cheap. A puff of wind would blow us thee, indeed! I would stand firm on my dignity, and say, 'I will not be blown, good sir!'"

"But I want to go," said Kitty, opening her eyes.

Grace laughed.

"And what is to be the answer to all this?" asked Mrs. Norris. "I suppose young people will have their jokes. I don't know that I am altogether pleased with this one; but—"

"But the fact is," interrupted Grace, who had put Kitty away from her, and was now kneeling before her mother, her favourite position when any coaxing had to be done, "that, like Kitty, we all want to go! I want to see the woods, I want to smell the hawthorn, I want to hear the birds—I want to go!"

There was more than playfulness in Grace's tone, there was a note of passion, of longing that fell on the ear startlingly. Her mother looked down at her in wonder. Hester felt that the matter would be settled as she wished, without need of any word from her.

"But," said Mrs. Norris, "Mr. Waterhouse will wish to pay for us."

"Well," said Grace, a comical turn coming into the corners of her mouth, "you know we have given him a great deal of attention. You know you darn his socks every week when they come from the wash, don't you?"

Mrs. Norris smiled. The anxious Kitty waited by, eager for a word; but Hester smiled too, and felt that the matter was safe.

"Besides," continued Grace, "it is not Christian to be so savagely independent. We deprive kind people of the pleasure of giving pleasure."

"Is Saul also among the prophets?" murmured Hester, quite revived under the influence of hope.

"My dear," said Mr. Norris, "surely you are a little forsaking your own principles."

"I am tired of being on stilts," said Grace, rising, and giving a sigh; "and I do want to see the country."

Mrs. Norris smiled, and said, after a pause, "But we could not leave Sarah on Monday—washing-day."

"No," said Grace, "of course not. Oh, you gentlemen of England, that sit at home at ease, how little do you think about—give me a good line, Hester, quickly—the cares that maidens tease! Why, that is quite an inspiration, I declare. Run, Kitty, for the pen and ink before I lose it. Don't you see my eye rolling in a fine frenzy?"

Kitty ran to obey with all her usual alacrity, and did all she could, by leaning eagerly over Grace's shoulder, to assist her in the composition. Rhymes were in great requisition for a while, and then the answer was despatched by Sarah.

CHAPTER XVIII. OVER THE WALL.

All the next day Waterhouse carried about with him, in the breast pocket of his coat, a certain folded paper which had been handed to him by Sarah on the Saturday evening. It was the first written communication he had yet received from the hands of his mistress, and as such, it was justifiably a sacred possession, though a communication in spirit less sentimental could hardly have been conceived. He had unfolded it, read it, and folded it again so often that by the evening of the next day it was getting quite worn at the folds.

With Denston this precious communication had to be shared, so far as consisted in allowing him to read it through. The two spent Sunday afternoon together in Waterhouse's room.

"It is easy to see who wrote this, don't you think?" said Denston, holding the paper rather tenaciously, as it seemed to Waterhouse's jealous eyes.

"How can I say?" asked Waterhouse, with hypocritical carelessness.

"Very well, I should imagine; one might hear Miss Norris' voice all through."

"Well, I don't suppose the stately Hester would stoop to such folly, eh, any more than you would yourself?"

Waterhouse observed his companion attentively. Denston returned the look steadily.

"She has been a little overshadowed by her sister, I fancy. I don't think Hester has reached her full growth."

"Perhaps not," said Waterhouse, putting his hands in his pockets, and walking to the chimney-piece. "But the further growth the more unlikely there will be to her sister."

"Oh, I did not compare the two," said Denston. Waterhouse fancied he detected a flavour of irony in this reply, and smiled to himself, not uncomplacently. If Denston admitted Hester, why, he admired Grace, and that was a very good division of things. He supposed they would each find it necessary to make allowances for the bad taste of the other.

"This is a good handwriting," said Denston, fingering the document again.

"Pity the fellow has not a specimen of Hester's to prefer," said Waterhouse to himself; aloud he said, slyly, "I don't know Hester's."

Denston took no notice of this remark.

"I think you had sufficient cheek in your address to Miss Norris; your invocation to Hester, I remember, was in quite a different key—a touch of sentiment there."

"I fancied I knew my ground."

There was a little stiffness in the reply. The fact had been that Waterhouse, not daring to betray the slightest hint of his real feelings towards Grace, had, conscious of innocence, been less careful in the address to Hester.

"By-the-by," he continued, taking up a book and seating himself, "I have made it all right about going to-morrow. I explained to Mrs. Norris last night that we shall be away all day, and should require no dinner-cooking or anything of that sort. So we must fix the time of starting before you go."

The two men settled down to reading, and dropped the discussion concerning the sisters.

(To be continued.)

We have to thank the friends who have renewed their subscriptions to the REVIEW by prompt payment in advance. We have respectfully to request that those in arrears for renewal would take advantage of our most favourable rates. The individual amount is only ONE DOLLAR, but the aggregate is very considerable. The friends who wish to assist us in producing, at as cheap a rate as possible, a good religious weekly will help us very materially by remitting in advance.

Sabbath School Work.

LESSON HELPS.

SECOND QUARTER.

JESUS THE CHRIST.

LESSON XI., June 13th, John vii., 37-52; memorize verses 43-46

GOLDEN TEXT.—Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.—Matt. xvi., 16.

TIME.—Oct. 17, A. D. 29. Six months after our last lesson, at the feast of Tabernacles.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in the court of the temple.

JESUS.—Nearly 33 years old, six months before his crucifixion.

INTERVING HISTORY.—Matt. chaps. xv., xviii.; Mark, chaps. vii., ix.; Luke ix., xviii., i., record the events between the last lesson and this.

INTRODUCTORY.—Jesus, after spending a year and a half in Galilee, came to Jerusalem to the feast of the Tabernacles. He suddenly appears in the temple during the feast, and teaches the multitudes.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—The feast of Tabernacles: was a thanksgiving feast, and also commemorated the 40 years' wanderings in the wilderness (Lev. xxiii., 33-44; Ex. xxiii., 16) It was the most joyous of the feasts. 37 In the last day: the seventh. One of the ceremonies at this feast was the drawing water in a golden pitcher from the pool of Siloam, and pouring it on the altar. It was done with a great procession. It was just after this, in a pause of the ceremonies, that Jesus probably spoke *Thirst*: in his soul. Men thirst for God, for life, for pardon, for goodness, for comfort, for a better life, for a noble object of living, for love, for friendship, for eternal life. Come unto me. all these thirsts are satisfied in Jesus. 38 Out of his belly: his heart. *Shall flow*: the good is for others and not self alone. *Rivers*: denoting abundance. 39 *Holy Ghost not given*: in the abundance of which characterized the new dispensation. See day of Pentecost. *Jesus glorified*: by his atonement, resurrection and ascension on the right hand of God. 40 *The prophet*: Deut. xviii., 15. 41 *The Christ*: the Anointed, the Messiah. 52 *Out of Galilee no prophet*: not true, Jonah was from Galilee 2 Kings xiv., 25, probably Elijah (1 Kings xvii., 1), and (Nahum i., 1).

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The intervening history.—Feast of the Tabernacles.—Ceremony of pouring out the water.—Thirsts of the soul.—How Christ satisfies them.—The outgoing nature of true religion.—The Holy Spirit like living water.—Never man spake like this man.

LEARN BY HEART vs. 37, 39; Isa. lv., 1-3.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How much time intervenes between this lesson and the last? Where did Jesus spend this time? What were some of the chief events? Where are they recorded?

SUBJECT: JESUS SHOWN TO BE THE MESSIAH.

I. THE SCENE AT THE FEAST OF THE TABERNACLES.—To what feast did Jesus go? (John vii., 2, 10) Where was it celebrated? Give some account of this feast. (Lev. xxiii., 33-44.) Describe the ceremony of bringing water from the pool of Siloam. Give a fuller description of this ceremony and of the last day of the feast.

II. JESUS SHOWN TO BE THE MESSIAH BECAUSE HE ALONE GIVES THE LIVING WATER (vs. 37-39).—Where was Jesus on the last day of the feast? (John vii., 14) What ceremony had he probably just witnessed? Of what was it a symbol? (Num. xv., 4-12; 1 Cor. x., 4) What did Jesus proclaim to the people? Could any mere man say this with truth? What is meant by thirst here? For what do people thirst? Can anything in this world satisfy the thirst of the soul? How does Jesus satisfy them? What is it to come to Jesus? What promise did he make to those who believed on him? What is meant by living water? How does it flow from Christians? Why is it spoken of as "rivers"? In what respects is the gift of the Holy Spirit like living water? Where was this fulfilled? (Acts ii., 1-18)

III. BY THE VERY OBJECTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST HIM (vs. 40-44).—What discussion arose among the people? Why did some think he was the Messiah? What objection did some make? Did Jesus fulfil these scriptures? (Matt. ii., 1-8. Acts ii., 22-32)

IV. BY HIS MESSAGE TO MEN (vs. 45-52).—Who had been sent to arrest Jesus? (John vii., 32.) Did they succeed? Why not? What was their report of Jesus? In what respects did Jesus speak differently from other men? How did Nicodemus defend Jesus? What have you read of Nicodemus before? What kind of arguments did the Pharisees use? Do sneers ever help the truth? Were the rulers inconsistent? Is this usually true of those who argue against Christianity? Was Nicodemus a true disciple? Was he growing nearer to it? Did it require special courage for him to do as much as he did?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. All have thirsts of the soul which this world cannot satisfy.

II. Among these thirsts are the longing for life, love, comfort, pardon, goodness, a life worth living, happiness, heaven, God.

III. Jesus Christ alone can satisfy these thirsts.

IV. The living water is pure, refreshing, abundant, life-giving, cleansing, free, abiding, flowing to others.

V. Those who have this living water love to impart it to others.

VI. Jesus speaks as never man spoke (1) as to truth, (2) with the authority of one who knows, (3) in the best manner, (4) accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

REVIEW EXERCISE.—(For the whole school in concert)—12. To what feast did Jesus go? **ANS.** The feast of Tabernacles, in October. 13. What was one of the ceremonies? **ANS.** A great procession bringing water from the pool of Siloam. 14. What did Jesus do during the feast? (Repeat v. 37.) 15. To what did the living water refer? **ANS.** The gift of the Holy Spirit. 16. What did some officers say of Jesus? **ANS.** "Never man spake like this man."

THE Rev. Robertson Smith, late Free Church professor, the well known Arabic scholar, and notorious in the Pentateuch controversy, has been appointed librarian of the University of Cambridge, England, over Mr. Christopher Wordsworth, a son of the late Bishop of Lincoln, who was a candidate.