

Our Story.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF McNEIL.

BY AMELIA E. BARR, Author of "Jan Velder's Wife," "The Daughter of Fate," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

It was at this moment Helen said quite clearly, "Father!" "I am here, Helen."

"There is a paper in my jewel-box on the table." He went and got it. It was only a small strip, folded crosswise.

"Read it when I am beyond all pain. I shall trust you, Father! Colin, dear Brodick!"

Colin could not speak. The minister stooped and said softly, "Is it well, Helen? Do you feel the bonds of death, my child?"

"I trust in those pierced hands that have broken the bonds of death! Oh, breadth! Oh, depth! Oh, boundless length! Oh, inaccessible height! Oh, Christ's love!"

The mystical grey shadow stole over her face to these last words. Brodick stood praying with lifted hands. It was soon all past—

She had outlasted the shadow of our night, and that unrest which men misname delight. They dressed her in her bridal gown, and three days afterwards laid her among the generations of her people—

the fighting thanes of the olden years—the brides and widows and children of the McNeils for many a century. Her kindred on the other side were far greater, far more numerous, than those in the earthly home she had left.

And the poor heart-broken father thought of this, and derived a strange comfort from the thought. "They were good men according to their lights," he said to Colin; "rough men doubtless, but they were good men according to their lights."

"I know! I remember it! I thought that day a living sorrow was maybe worse than a dead one."

In which she bitterly complained of her inability to come to him in his loneliness and sorrow. "He won't let me! He won't let me! I cannot leave without his permission! He would bring me back, if I was at the gate of the castle."

"The whole letter was the cry of a soul almost in an extremity of anguish, and Colin had roused himself to say some very decided words about his cousin's position."

True, she was drinking the cup her own hands had mingled; but that was the last of Colin's meditations on the subject. He thought of her as Helen's sister, as his own cousin, as the young girl who had been his companion and friend; and he recalled her beauty, her good-nature, her gay temper and pretty accomplishments; and then he thought of Maxwell. He was angry at himself that he had ever said a word in his favour; he remembered now many doubts and suspicions against him to which it would have been well had he given heed and speech.

It made him burn with indignation to know that Grizelda was in the power of such a man. On Christmas Day the Laird and her, after their dinner, sat down together. The Laird was on one side of the hearth, Colin was on the other. They were quite silent for a long time, then Colin—who had been thinking of Grizelda in the manner indicated—suddenly rose, and walking impatiently about the hall in room, said: "I want to go to Rome, uncle. I have been thinking of Grizelda until I am scarcely master of myself. I am sure she is in great trouble."

"Poor Grizelda! It is just two years since she was married. A sad thing! A sad thing!" "And a year ago she lay at the point of death! Where is she now? In what circumstances? We have not heard a word from her since that pitiful letter after—"

"I know! I remember it! I thought that day a living sorrow was maybe worse than a dead one."

"Shall I go and see her? I am ready at any hour."

"I wish you would, Colin. I wish you would; still, we had better ask what Brodick thinks. It isn't a light thing to come—ever so little—between a man and his wife, unless there are reasons overt and not to be denied. Then, who would go for my child quicker than I would? And who would meet that cowardly, cruel wretch as gladly?"

"And he seemed to me, when I first knew him so handsome and agreeable, I thought him a very fair man."

"I wonder at it, Colin. Handsome as he was I saw the imbruted serpent of selfishness in him. I saw the cruelty of the wolf in him. I saw also that he was full of vulpine cunning. Even the gentle Christ called such a one a fox."

"Patience, Laird! Patience! Who are you calling ill names at the Christ-mas-tide?"

"It was the minister who spoke. He had entered unobserved by the excited father, and in spite of his protestation had listened with sympathy to his opinion of Maxwell."

days of her youth and beauty. He chafed at her little triumphs. He deprived her of all the reasonable *devoirs* and pleasure which are the natural results of her position. And the *preservers of happiness* are the cruellest of all tyrants. Afflictions from the hand of God, troubles that are independent of will, and beyond control, may be endured with resignation; but oh! how resentful the heart feels to those who willfully and maliciously destroy the daily happiness which has been lovingly trusted to them!

It was in this direction Grizelda's bitterest feelings lay. She was young, she was beautiful, she was well-born, she had all the natural and accidental requirements necessary to make her a happy woman. Every day and every hour Maxwell trampled upon them. After he renewed his acquaintance with Miss Cassels, Grizelda soon abandoned all hope of regaining her influence over him. A distant relationship and an old intimacy gave him numberless opportunities and favours, and he pressed these with such tact and zeal that he soon became an invaluable aid and confidant, not only to Miss Cassels, but also to the Countess of Lauder.

They consulted with him on all occasions. If they had an appointment at their *modistes*, or a necessity to shop, he was their patient cavalier on all such tiresome excursions. If there was a dinner or a ball at Lauder House, Maxwell assisted them to arrange its details. If they went visiting they looked to him for those little attentions which give a certain dignity and respect to visiting ladies. If they rode he was generally their escort.

The Countess did not even think it necessary to call on Grizelda. "A country girl—the daughter of a Scotch laird, without a penny of fortune." How she pitied poor Maxwell to her friends! "Such a drawback on a promising young man. It was too bad. How did it happen? Oh, a summer in some Scotch wilderness, where Maxwell had bought an estate—a pretty face contiguity, and nothing else to do. Half the miserable and unsuitable marriages there are come from such elements," she sighed. "Was Lady Maxwell in London? Yes. A fretful, nervous invalid; made a very good appearance in her first season, but could not stand the demands of fashionable life. These poor country gentry never could. A person must be born in the purple to endure the weight and strain of it."

Nor was Countess Lauder at all ill-natured in her remarks. Her scornful pity was not for Grizelda personally, it was for the weakness of all the men and women who promoted such a set of uncomfortable and unsuitable circumstances. Julia endorsed her aunt's opinions with the generality of Maxwell's discussers. To himself she gave the much more seductive sympathy of sighs and smiles and a comforting familiarity which was easily excused on the ground of their distant relationship, old acquaintance, and pity for the matrimonial blunder which he had made.

(To be continued.)

Sabbath School Work.

LESSON HELPS. LESSON XII., June 23, 1889.

JESUS RISEN. Mark xvi. 1-13.

COMMIT VERSES 6, 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Now is Christ risen from the dead, and becomes the first-fruits of them that slept.—1 Cor. xv. 20.

CENTRAL TRUTH. The risen Saviour is our Resurrection and Life.

DAILY READINGS. M. Mark xvi. 1-20. W. Matt. xxvii. 55-66. Th. Matt. xxviii. 1-20. F. Luke xiv. 1-52. S. John xi. 1-31. Sw. 1 Cor. xv. 12-58.

TIME.—Early Sunday morning, April 9th, A. D. 30; the third day after the crucifixion.

PLACE.—The tomb in the garden, near Calvary, Jerusalem.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. xxviii. 1-15; Luke xxiv. 1-12; John xi. 1-18.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—The burial. Friday afternoon, between four and six o'clock, in a new sepulchre, near Calvary, aided by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. *Preparations* the Sabbath (Matt. xxviii. 62-66). In order to prove the resurrection, the death must be proved beyond doubt. In the providence of God, the centurion testified to the death of Jesus; the soldiers pierced His heart; the tomb was new, and at the request of the chief priests the tomb was sealed and guarded. The resurrection very early Sunday morning (Matt. xxviii. 2-4), accompanied by an earthquake and by a shining angel. 5. A young man: Matthew says an angel in shining garments. 12. In another form, not a different body, but only their eyes were holden so that He appeared different (Luke). Into the country: to Emmaus, eight miles north-west of Jerusalem. (See Luke xxiv. 13-31.)

ORDER OF EVENTS.—(1) Mary and others come to the sepulchre. (2) Mary returns immediately to tell Peter and John. (3) The other women enter the sepulchre. (4) They go to report

to the disciples. (5) Then Peter and John come to the sepulchre and return. (6) Mary again draws near the sepulchre and sees Jesus.

OUR LORD'S APPEARANCE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.—(1) To Mary Magdalene (John xv. 11-14; Mark xvi. 9). (2) To the women returning from the sepulchre, Matt. xxviii. 9. (3) To Peter (Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5). (4) To two disciples at Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-35). (5) To the eleven at Jerusalem (Matt. xvi. 14). (6) To the eleven at Jerusalem (John xx. 19-26). (7) To seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John xxi. 1-24). (8) To the eleven on a mountain in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16-18). (9) To the 500 brethren, possibly identical with (8) (1 Cor. xv. 6). (10) To James, probably at Jerusalem (1 Cor. xv. 7). (11) To the eleven, just before the ascension (Luke xxiv. 50-51).

THE RESURRECTION PROVED.—(1) By the testimony of the apostles. (2) They had every opportunity of knowing. (3) They were convinced against their own expectations. (4) They attested their belief by their lives and by death. (5) Multitudes, at the time and on the spot believed. (6) It changed the lives of the apostles. (7) The change of the Sabbath testifies to it. (8) The story of His enemies contradicts itself.

SUBJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND SPECIAL REPORTS.—The burial.—How long Jesus was in the tomb.—The resurrection.—How many times Jesus appeared after his resurrection.—Proofs of the resurrection.—Importance of the resurrection.—The body with which Jesus rose.—The false story of the guard.

QUESTIONS. REVIEW.—When and where did Jesus die for our sins? How long was He upon the cross? How many times did He speak from the cross? SUBJECT.—THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS. I. THE BURIAL.—How did His enemies make sure that He was really dead? (John xix. 31-34.) Where was Jesus buried? (Matt. xxvii. 57-60.) How did His enemies make sure that there could be no deception concerning His resurrection? (Matt. xxvii. 62-66.)

II. THE RESURRECTION.—How long was Jesus in the tomb? (1 Cor. xv. 4.) On what day did Jesus rise from the dead? At what time of the day? What signs accompanied His resurrection? What promise was thus fulfilled? (Matt. xvi. 21; xx. 19.) What does Paul say about the importance of this event? (1 Cor. xv. 12-20.) Did Jesus rise with the same body with which He was crucified? (John xv. 25; Luke xxiv. 39-48.) Was it then like the bodies we shall have at the resurrection? (1 Cor. xv. 50-52.) When did that change take place in Jesus' body? (Luke xxiv. 51.) Could we prove that Jesus rose from the dead unless He came back with exactly the same body that died?

III. THE STORY OF EASTER MORNING (vs. 1-8).—Who came first to visit the tomb? (v. 1; Mark xvi. 1.) What does their example teach us about keeping the Sabbath? What hindrance did they expect? (Mark xvi. 3, 4.) How was it removed? What lesson may we learn from this? Whom did the women find at the tomb? (Luke xxiv. 4-6.) What message did the angels send? Why was the appearance in Galilee only mentioned? (1 Cor. xv. 6; John xxi. 10-17.)

IV. THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION (vs. 9-13).—To whom did Jesus appear first? To whom next? (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.) How many other times did Jesus appear? (See Helps.) Give an account of the one referred to in vs. 12, 13. (See Luke xxiv. 13-31.) During how many days did Jesus appear? (Acts 1. 3.) Are the proofs that Jesus rose from the dead abundantly sufficient? Does the work that Jesus is now doing in the world prove that he is living? What proof did he give in Paul's conversion? (Acts ix. 5.) What was the last act of Jesus in the body. (Mark xvi. 19, 20; Acts 1. 9-12.)

V. THE TEACHING OF HIS RESURRECTION.—How does the Resurrection complete the proof that Jesus was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world? (1 Cor. xv. 13-17.) What does it teach us about the reality of life beyond the grave? What does it teach about our resurrection? (John vi. 40; xi. 23-25.) What does the Bible teach us further about our resurrection? (1 Cor. xv. 35-54; Phil. iii. 20, 21.) What comfort do you find in this truth? (Rom. vi. 1-8.)

Is this doctrine a comfort to the wicked? (Rev. xv. 13; John v. 28, 29.) How does it give largeness and grandness to the life of the good? What comfort to those who have lost friends? What support in the hour of death? How is the change of the Sabbath to the first day of the week a witness to the resurrection of Jesus?

LESSONS FROM THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS. I. It proves that Jesus was the Son of God.

II. It proves that we have a living Saviour, able and willing to help and save us.

III. It proves that death does not end all, but that there is life and immortality beyond the grave.

IV. It proves that we also shall be raised from the dead.

V. It is a symbol of our moral resurrection from the death of sin to spiritual and eternal life.—Peloubet.

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