

**The Empty Nest.**

BY MARY A. BARR.

A GRAVE old man and a maiden fair  
Walked together at early morn;  
The thrushes up in the clear cool air  
Sang to the farmer planting his corn.  
And, oh, how sweet was the fresh-turned  
mould!

And, oh, how fair were the budding trees!  
For daisy's silver and daffodil's gold  
Where full of the happy honey-bees.

"Ah, look! there's an empty nest," she said,  
"And I wonder where sing the last year's  
birds?"

Then the old man quickly raised his head,  
Though scarcely he noted her musing  
words:

He tore the nest from the swaying tree;  
He flung to the winds its moss and hay,  
And said, "When an empty nest you see,  
Be sure that you throw it far away."

"But why?" she asked, with a sorrowing  
face—

"Why may not the pretty home abide?"  
"Because," he answered, "'twill be a place  
In which the worm and the slug will hide.  
Last year 'twas fair enough in its way—  
It was full of love, and merry with song;  
But days that are gone must not spoil to-day,  
Nor dead joys do the living joys wrong."

The maiden heard with a thoughtful face—  
Her first false love had gone away—  
And she thought, is my heart become a  
place

For anger and grief and hate to stay?  
Down, heart, with thy sad, forsaken nest!  
Fling far thy selfish and idle pain;  
The love that is ours is always the best;  
And she went with a smile to her work  
again.

**LESSON NOTES.****FIRST QUARTER.****STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK.**A.D. 29.] **LESSON X.** [March 10**THE CHILD-LIKE SPIRIT.**

Mark. 9. 33-42. Memory verses 36, 37

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom  
of God as a little child, he shall not enter  
therein. Mark 10. 15.

**OUTLINE.**

1. True Greatness, v. 33-37.
2. True Loyalty, v. 38-40.
3. True Service, v. 41, 42.

TIME.—29 A.D.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

EXPLANATIONS.—*In the house*—Probably his own home as heretofore explained. *Disputed among yourselves*—Discussed or argued as they journeyed homeward. *The greatest*—That is, prime minister in the new kingdom—they discussed this again the night before the crucifixion. *Took a child*—Greek, "A little boy." *Casting out devils in thy name*—He must have been a true believer, and John's conscience smote him now, for they had done exactly opposite to what Christ taught in ver. 37.

**TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.**

How are we here to learn—

1. To seek to do good rather than to be great?
2. To take an interest in children?
3. To help all who are working for Christ?

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. What was the question which made the disciples ashamed? Who of them should be greatest. 2. What did Jesus teach concerning this question? That humble service was true nobility. 3. How little a service did he say would be accepted? Giving a cup of cold water. 4. Who did he say would be received as having paid true service? One who receives a little child. 5. Who did he teach would be rejected? "Whosoever shall not receive," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Humility.

**CATECHISM QUESTION.**

12. What blessing does he pronounce on believers?

To Peter he gave it thus:

Matthew xvi. 17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven.

A.D. 30] **LESSON XI.** [Mar. 17**CHRIST'S LOVE TO THE YOUNG.**

Mark 10. 13-22; Memory verses, 21, 22.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark 10. 14.

**OUTLINE.**

1. The Young Children, v. 13-16.
2. The Young Man, v. 17-22.

TIME.—30 A.D.

PLACE.—In Perea.

EXPLANATIONS.—*That he should touch them*—That is, that he might lay his hands on them to bless. *Of such is the kingdom*—That is, of those of such spirit and innocence. Some think that here is a promise that children are saved. *Inherit eternal life*—Or have eternal life; the idea of eternal life seems to have been a slow growth in the mind of the Jew. *Sell whatsoever thou hast*—The command was to test his willingness. It was the spirit Jesus wanted, and not the actual sale. *Take up the cross*—There was as yet no cross of Christ, so this must mean the willingness to be considered as humble and abject as one who bears a cross, if thereby you can help a mortal.

**TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.**

Where do we find in this lesson—

1. Whom Jesus loves?
2. How we may enter his kingdom?
3. What he requires of his followers?

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. Why were young children brought to Jesus? That he might bless them. 2. What did Jesus say about children being brought to him? "Suffer the little children," etc. 3. Who next came into his presence? A rich young ruler. 4. What test did Jesus prescribe for him? Absolute surrender to his will? 5. What did his sad departure prove concerning the human heart? "Except a man be born," etc. John 3. 3.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Regeneration.

**CATECHISM QUESTIONS.**

13. How does our Lord teach us his religion?  
By his word and by his Spirit.  
14. What is his word?  
The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are the sacred books of the Christian faith.

**HE WENT BACK.**

HE was a little fellow not over twelve years old, and he was sitting behind a box over at the Omaha depot the other morning, softly crying and looking very dirty and forlorn.

"What's the matter?" we asked.

"Hain't nothin' the matter," he said defiantly, sitting up straight, hastily brushing back his jacket a little so as to display the handle of an old revolver in his pocket. Then he looked off across the river at the strange buildings, and lost his bravery, and buried his head again and sobbed through his tears:

"Oh, mister, I've been runnin' away, an' I want to go home."

"What made you run away?"

"I thought it would be nice, but it hain't, no it hain't," and he rested his face in his hands and looked the picture of woe. "Dick Dagger had a heap of fun, but I hain't had a bit."

"Who was Dick Dagger?"

"Didn't you ever hear of him? He was the boy scout of the Rockies, an' I wanted to be like him. There

hain't no Indians what'll hurt a fellow 'round here, is there?"

"No."

"I wouldn't shoot 'em if there was. Dick shot 'em, but I don't want to. I want to get back home, but mebbey I never will again," and once more his tears flowed.

"Where did you live?"

"Oh, I lived down at Marion, in Illinois, and it just about killed me riding on that old freight-car, an' I hurt my knee, an' I'm cold and hain't had no supper, neither. I wish I'd never heard of Dick—I don't see how he got along so well—and if I ever get home again and see my—my—ma—" but the thought of his mother was too much for him.

"I don't want to hunt Indians or bears or nothin', nor rescue no maidens, an' I'm tired of that old thing!" and he pulled a rusty revolver out of his pocket that hadn't been fired for ten years, and threw it across the track. "Please, mister, get me something to eat, an' I'll work all day for you," and he looked up pitifully, and straightened his little cap on his curly head.

We took him along, and he ate three or four meals in one, but even after that he didn't say a word about exterminating the Indians. The next day a grave-looking father arrived looking for a very home-sick boy, and they went back together. So the Government lost another scout, but an anxious mother got back a boy who will never run away again.

**A LITTLE BOY'S PRAYER.**

A BOY who had been brought to the Lord Jesus at a mission Sunday-school was anxious that his father should know his Saviour too. His father was a wicked man, who kept a drinking saloon, and thus not only got drunk himself, but caused others to do so. The lad asked his Sunday-school teacher what he should do, for his father made him wait on the customers, handing out the poison to them; and if he had not better leave home.

His teacher told him not to leave home, but to begin at once to pray for his father, and she would also pray for him, and for his father too; and they both commenced to pray for that father.

In a few weeks he left off drinking, and soon also left off selling, and went to work to earn an honest living. "For," said he, with tears running down his face, "something has been the matter with my dear boy for some time; and the other day I heard a noise in the room where he sleeps; it was a mournful noise, and I listened; and he was praying for me! He prayed that I would leave off selling—for I had given up drinking some little time before. I felt I was doing wrong, and I have quit it all; and the next time you have a meeting I am coming with the boy.

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