

Heaven.

A True Incident.

The lesson hour was nearly past
When I asked of my scholars seven,
Now, tell me, each one, please, in turn,
What sort of place is heaven?"

"O meadows, flowers and lovely grass!"
Cried poor little North Street Kitty,
While Dorothy, fresh from the country
lanes,
Was sure 'twas a "great big city."

Bessy, it seemed, had never thought
Of the home beyond the river;
She simply took each perfect gift,
And trusted the loving Giver.

Then up spoke Edith, tall and fair—
Her voice was clear and ringing,
And led in the Easter anthem choir—
"In heaven they're always singing!"

To Eather, clad in richest furs,
'Twas a place for "outdoor playing;"
But Bridget drew her thin shawl close,
For "warmth and food" she was
praying.

The desk bell rang. But one child left,
My sober, thoughtful Florry.
"Why, heaven just seems to be a place—
A place where you're never sorry!"

Slaying the Dragon.

BY MRS. D. O. CLARK.

CHAPTER XXI.

BY ST. GEORGE KNIGHTS.

There came a day when Doctor Slocum admitted that he had done all he could for the young man, and asked for a consultation. Three physicians from Salem came to Fairport. They shook their heads gravely, as they made a diagnosis of the case. The substance of their conference was that dissipation had weakened the young man's constitution, and his life hung upon a thread. Another night would be the crisis point in the disease.

Mrs. Seabury had taken Olive and gone to her friends at the beginning of Ralph's sickness. The stepmother had no love for the sick boy. Hers was a shallow nature. She seldom looked beyond her own selfish interests. So it happened that the vigil around Ralph's bedside was kept by the nurse, the doctor, Mr. Felton, and the Judge.

For eight weeks the fever had raged, and that pale, wasted figure yonder would hardly have been recognized as the handsome Ralph Seabury. The hours passed slowly. The moments seemed like ages to the unhappy father and uncle, as they realized that another hour would seal the boy's fate. The hands of the clock pointed to the hour of midnight, and still the young man lay in a death-like stupor. At last he moved slightly and opened his eyes.

"Where am I? What's the matter?" he inquired, in a feeble voice.

"You have been very sick, and now you must go to sleep," said the nurse, bending over him. Ralph seemed satisfied with this explanation and fell into a natural slumber.

"The crisis is past, and your son will live," said Doctor Slocum.

Mr. Felton's face worked convulsively, and he left the room to hide his emotion. The Judge bowed in acquiescence, while something suggestive of a tear glittered in his cold, gray eyes.

The news of Ralph Seabury's convalescence spread through the village, and many comments were passed upon the fact by the gossips of Fairport. "Should think his son's disgrace would humble the Judge," said one.

"It wa'n't no more typhoid fever than measles is typhoid fever." 'Twas a clear case of delirium tremens," said another.

"Guess the Judge will advocate temperance reform now," chuckled a third.

In some respects Judge Seabury was a changed man. He had passed through a bitter experience and had been confronted by wholesome truths. He realized that his method of training his son had been a failure, and that he was in part to blame for the disgrace which had attached to the name of Seabury. But the man was not yet humbled. He had taken a certain stand before the community, and he was too proud to say, "I was mistaken." He resolved to remove all liquors from his table, so that his son should not meet temptation there, but as to clearing out his wine cellar, he could not, and he would not. His daily glass or two had become indispensable to his comfort. Mr. Felton reasoned in much the same way.

To the world the Judge carried himself with the same arrogance which made him so unpopular to many. Few dared approach him on the subject of Ralph's recent illness. Mr. Strong felt it his duty to visit the old man, and see if he would not now lend his influence in aiding temperance work in Fairport. As he had called nearly every day to inquire after the sick boy, he felt that, at least, he was entitled to courteous treatment. But he was bitterly disappointed. The Judge met him with a haughty, repellent air, and refused flatly to take any different stand on the temperance question.

"I have chosen my course, Mr. Strong, and desire no interference on your part. I do not dictate what my neighbours must believe, and I wish no one to dictate to me."

With a sad heart, the minister took his departure.

"And must Ralph Seabury be sacrificed?" he cried.

Meeting the young man as he was walking out for the first time since his illness, he invited him into the parsonage to rest. The invitation was accepted, and the two fell into pleasant conversation. The subject of Ralph's terrible sickness was not broached until the young man, of his own accord, turned to Mr. Strong, and said frankly:

"You must know the cause of my recent illness. Now, Mr. Strong, what can I do to overcome my appetite for liquor?"

"My dear fellow," replied the minister, grasping Ralph's hand, "I thank God that you have asked me this question. Take the total abstinence pledge, and determine, with God's help, to keep it, and I am confident that you will have strength given you to resist the tempter. There is no other safe ground for you or for any one. Will you do this? Or, do not decide now, but think the matter over, and come next Wednesday evening to the meeting of the St. George League and there decide. We are expecting to receive some new members that night, and you may be interested to see what the pledge has done for some of the worst men in Fairport."

Ralph thanked the minister for his words, and promised to attend the meeting. Mr. Strong prayed as he had never prayed before that this young man might be rescued from the dragon's clutches; still his faith was not strong enough to believe that Ralph Seabury would really attend the meeting.

But sure enough, the young man was there at the time appointed, sitting in the rear of the hall. It was "pledge night," and a speaker from Salem had been secured to address the League on the subject of "Intemperance and its Remedy." The gentleman was a ready speaker, full of eloquence, pathos and argument. He spoke from the depths of a bitter experience, and his words had a powerful effect upon his audience. Mr. Strong followed with a few stirring, gospel words, and then those who desired to become St. George Knights were invited to step forward and sign the pledge-roll.

A silence, eloquent with meaning, followed. Then there was a stir, and a man walked slowly to the front. Could it be? Yes, Tyler Matthews wrote his name with a firm hand. Then turning to the audience, he said:

"I've done visiting the Maypole. When I found out my boy was being led inter bad habits at the tavern, I made up my mind ter turn over a new leaf, an' I hope you'll all help me ter keep the pledge."

Enthusiastic applause greeted Matthews' speech. His example and words encouraged weaker ones, and Tom Barton and Thomas Riley came to the front and wrote their names. These men then went to the rear of the hall, and, surrounding Carl Schmidt, began to hold earnest conversation.

"Come on, Carl, and put your name down. It'll make a man of you, and you'll feel ever so much better. What you hangin' back fur? 'Fraid ter be one of the parson's string? I tell you it's a boss thing for a man ter be in sech good company as Parson Strong's. He's the man what's the friend ter coves like us."

At last, half ashamed of his cowardice, and emboldened by the words of his cronies, Carl came forward and added his signature to the list. Again the hall rang with applause.

"Velly goot," said the pleased German, "I not git von clap before."

"Are there any more who desire to join our ranks?" said Mr. Strong, when the laughter had subsided.

A firm step was heard walking to the front, and a manly form appeared by the minister's side. It was Ralph Seabury!

"I wish to sign the total abstinence pledge, and to become a St. George

Knight," said the young man, determination looking from his eyes. "Pray for me that I may be helped to overcome the dragon's power."

Ralph Seabury's name was added to the list, the accustomed hand-shakings and congratulations followed, and the meeting closed.

"Young Seabury is saved," said Mr. Strong to his wife. "He will make a noble Christian yet. The hand of God is in all this," he added reverently.

(To be continued.)

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON VII.—NOVEMBER 18.

THE TEN LEPERS CLEANSED.

Luke 17. 11-19. Memory verses, 17-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be ye thankful.—Col. 3. 15.

OUTLINE.

1. The Cry of Need, v. 11-13.
 2. The Miracle of Healing, v. 14.
 3. The Gratitude, v. 15. 19.
- Time.—Early in A.D. 30.
Place.—On the border line between Samaria and Galilee.

LESSON HELPS.

11. "As he went"—"This is the first distinct note of time in Luke's narrative since chap. 9. 51. It appears to coincide with the journey of which we read in Matt. 19. 1, Mark 10. 1, and is the commencement of the last progress through the regions in which our Lord had already carried on his ministry."—Ellicott.

12. "A certain village"—Unknown. "I never met him"—"As is the custom in the East, this dismal society hovered near the village which they might not enter." (Num. 5. 4; Matt. 8. 1, 2.) "Lepers"—"Fearful beyond words was their malady. "From the skin it slowly ate its way through the tissues to the bones and joints, and even to the marrow, rotting the whole body piecemeal. The lungs, the organs of speech and hearing, and the eyes were attacked in turn, till at last consumption or dropsy brought welcome death."—Gekkie. (1) Leprosy typifies the more fearful disease of sin. "Afar off"—"The space which a leper was bound to keep between him and every other person is estimated by some at four cubits (six feet), by others at one hundred cubits (one hundred and fifty feet)."—C. let.

13. "And they"—"As they were companions in suffering, they were also companions in prayer."—Clarke. "Lifted up their voices"—"That they might be heard at a distance. "Jesus, Master"—"Using appropriately here the term peculiar to Luke, which signifies rulership, authority."—Bliss. "Neither his honour, nor his name, nor his power is unknown to them." "Have mercy"—"In what manner needed no explanation."—"The plea was obviously equivalent to "Heal us of our dreadful malady."—Bliss.

14. "When he saw them"—His sympathies were aroused by their forlorn condition. "He said"—"Shouted out, for there must be many places between him and them by the requirements of the law. "Go show yourselves"—"When a leper was cured, before he could be restored to society he was required to show himself to the priest, to make an offering, and to be officially pronounced clean. (See Lev. 14; Matt. 8. 4.) But as he did not directly tell them that they were going to be healed, or that they were healed, this command was a remarkable test of their faith. "As they went"—Their faith was equal to the test, and God's salvation equal to their faith.

15. "One of them"—A Samaritan. (Verse 16.) He was on his way to his priests at Gerizim, while the nine had probably started for Jerusalem. "Turned back"—"The words imply that the work of healing was not accomplished till the company of lepers was at least nearly out of sight."—Plumptre. He delayed for a moment his cleansing, because the priests were ever at the temple, but if Jesus should go out of sight he might never see him again. "Glorified God"—"Gave public praise."—Clarke. (2) We should likewise give praise for sin forgiven.

17. "And Jesus answering"—"Not to any words that had been uttered, but to the language of the circumstances and the occasion."—Kendrick. "Were there not"—"There is a tone of mingled surprise, grief, indignation, in the question thus asked."—Plumptre.

18. "There are not found," etc.—"It is as if all these benefits were falling into a deep, silent grave."—Langa. "The best of us are far too like the nine lepers. We are more ready to pray than to praise, and more disposed to ask God for what we have not than to thank him for what we have."—Nevin. (3) How base a sin is ingratitude!

19. "Go thy way"—"To the priest, for without his certificate he could not again be restored to the society of his friends or the public worship of God."—Barnes. "Whole"—"The nine had had sufficient faith for the restoration of the health of their body; his had gone further, and had given a new and purer life to his soul."—Plumptre.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The ten lepers cleansed.—Luke 17. 11-19.
- Tu. Cleansing the leper.—Lev. 14. 1-9.
- W. Naaman healed.—2 Kings 5. 8-14.
- Th. Cured by a touch.—Matt. 8. 1-4.
- F. Prayer for mercy.—Psa. 85.
- S. Afar off.—Luke 18. 9-14.
- Su. Thanksgiving.—Psa. 80.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Cry of Need, v. 11-13.
Where was Christ journeying?
Whom did he meet on the way?
Why did they stand "afar off"?
Of what is leprosy a type?
Is its cure within the power of man?
What favour did they beseech of Christ?
Did they recognize the power of Jesus?
2. The Miracle of Healing, v. 14.
Did Christ respond to their cry?
Are his ears ever closed to a cry of distress?
If they had not believed in Jesus could they have been cleansed?
What did Christ command them to do?
What law did he recognize in this?
What was the result of their obedience?
What is always necessary in order to receive Christ's blessings?
3. The Gratitude, v. 15-19.
How did the lepers receive God's gift?
How many served him?
Do the average people of to-day rejoice in God, or are they simply glad to receive his good gifts?
Who was the one exception among the lepers?
What does God expect in return for his blessings? Golden Text.
How will true gratitude evince itself?

"Were there not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?" One thankful one out of nine! If the rest had really been thankful they would have said so



They were only glad for themselves, in a selfish way. They forgot about the One who had done this great thing for them.

The leprosy of sin makes us stand afar off from Jesus. But "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us



our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." By faith the ten were cleansed of their foul disease; but they did not experience that inward cleansing which was the reward of him who returned to Jesus and rejoiced for his renewed body. "Where are the nine?" we might ask of many who once professed conversion but seldom praise their Healer. And in just proportion we might point out the one who continues to follow Jesus, and say, "Be ye thankful."