

Our Story.

BARBARA STREET.

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

CHAPTER XXXV. (Continued.)

GRACE was very quiet all the way home, while Waterhouse talked gaily to every one but her. Hester glanced at one and the other very gravely. An idea had come to her with a sudden shock, and all the way home the question was repeating itself internally, "What do these 'of courses' mean?" Dinner passed off very pleasantly; and then Waterhouse went away, but not without arranging to join them in a walk in the evening. All Grace's high spirits seemed to have departed since Waterhouse's appearance. She went up-stairs after dinner, and was not seen again till tea-time, and Kitty was quite disconsolate. Mrs. Norris seemed the only person at ease, and manifestly glad of Waterhouse's arrival. She apparently saw nothing strange in Grace's behaviour. As for Hester, she knew not what to think. She was very uneasy, but dared not attempt to penetrate Grace's reserve. Her heart, fed by its new joy, which was not a selfish one, and which set it at rest in a wonderful way, responded promptly to the call for interest and sympathy on behalf of her sister. It occurred to her that to give her own confidence to Grace would be the way to win a return. So, stifling a sense of reluctance to disclosing her heart's hidden treasure, which almost seemed like parting with some of it, she determined to tell all to Grace that evening. Her mother, too, must now be, to some extent, taken into confidence, and she could consult with Grace as to the best way of doing that.

At twelve o'clock that night, Hester was not in bed. She sat at the window of the little sitting-room, looking out into the soft darkness of the summer night. Philip Denston's letter lay on her lap. All the rest had gone to bed, and in Hester's room Kitty was fast asleep. On the table lay the answer she had just written. It was very short, and ran thus—

DEAR MR. DENSTON,—Indeed I do not draw back. I thank you very much for your confidence in me, and for your letter. I will take good care of your sister while you are away. My mother is going to write to you. The others join me in farewells and good wishes. We hope and expect, and will pray, that you may come back well.—Yours very sincerely, HESTER NORRIS.

It had taken Hester a very long time to write this, short as it was, and she had made several unsuccessful attempts to express what she wanted to say. Most of them were too cold and formal; for though she longed with all her nature to respond to Philip's kindness, Hester dreaded more than anything else that she should express too much. She had hesitated a long time over the clause, "and will pray." Should she put that down or not? Why not? It was true: prayer for him would be her chief comfort and stay; and, perhaps, it might be some comfort to him at times to know that he was being thought of and prayed for. Did she not remember well how dearly he had said that there was no one to miss him? Every sad word and look was stamped on her recollection, and the recalling of them had often wrung her heart. How wonderful it was to know that, unwittingly, she had been of help then, and had so strangely strengthened him from the midst of her own weakness! The thought of it smote her with a keen joy, which was akin to pain, and for which she thanked God in her heart, with a passionate gratitude. Several times during the day, when the pressure of the actual life around her threatened to cause this secret joy to elude her grasp, to fade and grow illusory, she had drawn out the letter again to read once more the wonderful, strange words, and now in the darkness she kept them near her still as an evidence of possession. Since the blow fell that memorable night, Hester had had no thought of any happiness in store for her as vivid as this. She was not conscious that she was reaping as she had sown, that she had struggled bravely against self and its meaner instincts, and had kept her head above despair by holding fast to the saving impulses of sympathy and service; and that by doing so, she had earned for herself the comfort that came to her now.

It seemed to her a marvel that her words, so few and simple, should have moved Philip so, unconscious as she was that there had been a heroism in her mental attitude then that was more potent in its unrecognized influence than any spoken words.

At last Hester moved to go to bed, and the uneasiness about Grace's affairs, which had for the last hour been out of her mind, returned as she did so. For though she had had her proposed talk with her sister, the result had not been satisfactory. Grace had left her an hour or so ago, after such a talk as had recalled those days of closer fellowship in Barbara street. They had sat without a light at the open window, and Hester had ventured to take Grace's small hand into her own. She did not show Grace the letter, for she passionately craved to keep that for her own eyes only, but she told her the substance of what was contained in it.

"And so you are happy, Hester?" Grace had asked, wonderingly.

"Yes," said Hester, calmly.

"Poor Hester!" and Grace stroked her sister's hand. At the sound of Grace's voice, a sudden revulsion to self-pity came over Hester, and from the height of her exalted happiness she suddenly found herself sobbing.

"You cannot live with that woman! You shall not!" cried Grace, impetuously.

"Oh, yes, I can," said Hester, checking herself.

"Don't you see that it would be the happiest life I could have, working for—"

Grace guessed what the unfinished sentence meant. Then they had talked of their mother, and what they should tell her, and decided that she should know nothing of the troubles concerning Philip, but only of the reason why Hester's devotion would but serve to lessen a debt. For otherwise they believed that she would not consent to part with her. And then it grew late, and nothing had been said concerning Hester's new anxiety, and it seemed more than ever difficult to mention it. But just as Grace was going, Hester had at last managed to say, without looking at her sister—

"Grace, were you not very surprised to see Mr. Waterhouse to-day?"

"No, not at all," said Grace, lightly, but with a slight edge of resistance in her voice, which made Hester shrink.

What more could she say? She forced herself, however—

"I was," she said, "and I could not resist coming to a startling conclusion, which perhaps was foolish."

"It is not wise to come to conclusions," laughed Grace, a little consciously; "always avoid them, or you will make mistakes. Good-night."

But Hester's courage rose to meet this further rebuff, and, holding Grace away from her before she kissed her, she said earnestly—

"But I hope I may come to the conclusion that you will not make him suffer, Grace. I do not want to see him suffer."

"Oh, he is not one of the suffering sort," replied Grace, persistently playful. "He is a man that will always get what he wants."

And then she had gone away, leaving Hester puzzled, and still uneasy. She did not understand Grace very well, and that was not surprising, considering how diverse were the two natures, and neither was her trust in her, though growing; what it would have been had they always lived as near to each other as they had begun to do of late.

CHAPTER XXXVI. AN ENCHANTED PENNY.

MR. WATERHOUSE had professed to come to Martenhook merely to bid a hasty farewell, but he showed no sign of haste. Several days passed, in which he met the others on the sands in the morning and joined them for walks in the evening. What delightful walks they were! Across the fields the evening sun shed a mellow light slantwise, and threw long shadows of the figures on the young wheat and the tall grass as they walked in single file down the narrow paths. Out in the lanes they would stroll in an irregular group, plucking nosegays from the hedgerows, which were a lovely tangle of glowing maple, red-brown oak, bramble, with the bees flitting from blossom to blossom, dog-rose, and honeysuckle. There was little, outwardly, to encourage suspicion, but Hester was now keen to observe slight tokens which would have passed unnoticed before. Grace was certainly not herself; some new uncharacteristic diffidence or restraint seemed upon her; her eyes did not meet Mr. Waterhouse's frankly, her tongue let slip many opportunities of merry rejoinder. She avoided *elle d'elle*. She was evidently not happy. Yet Mr. Waterhouse did not appear at all discouraged, but, on the contrary, very gay and radiant; and that made Hester disturbed and anxious. For her own part had endowed her with a new fellowship with others' pain, which, though she did not know it, was worth the price she had paid for it. No further reference had been made to the matter in the sisters' intercourse. Hester had not dared to speak again.

But at length Waterhouse said he must go, and the last evening arrived. As usual, they all took a walk together. In the course of it they came to a farmstead lying in a rich nook of meadow-land, with great elms near it, in which the rooks were cawing. They stood looking over the low wall of the farmyard at some red-brown cows brought up from pasture, till Kitty discovered she would like some milk, and they went on to ask for it. A little toddling child came with its mother to the door, and as the woman would not take payment for the milk, Waterhouse felt in his pocket for something to give the child, who peeped shyly at the bearded stranger from behind its mother's gown. But the careless fellow found his pockets empty, and Mrs. Norris supplied the lack. But Kitty said, as they were walking away—

"Mr. Waterhouse, did you feel in your waistcoat pocket? You have got a penny there, haven't you?"

Waterhouse laughed.

"You little witch! How did you guess that?" he asked, glancing at Grace; and Hester could have fancied a slight redness in his cheeks.

"Oh, don't you remember telling me one day that you always kept a magic penny there for luck? But, perhaps, you were making fun of me?"

"Not at all; it was honour bright, I assure you. But, if it is a magic penny, how could I part with it? Here it is," and Waterhouse pulled out a penny from his pocket. "It looks like any other penny, you see; but that is the way with enchanted things. A fairy gave it me, in exchange for a bunch of violets, and it was the only thing she ever did give me—not much, was it?—and I wanted some; thing much more valuable from her."

Waterhouse spoke lightly; and when Kitty asked, "But what does the penny do?" he walked on with her, inventing a story of magic properties. Grace had fallen behind, and to Hester's amazement, had coloured violently.

(To be continued.)

AUNT DINAH'S SEARCH.

AN INCIDENT OF THE CHARLESTON EARTHQUAKE.

"Oh, oh, oh!" gasped little Mabel Emory, as she opened her eyes, and found her rosewood half-canopy bed bounding across the room. "What's the matter?" And she began to cry.

"It's the end of the world, honey. The good Lord's done come for the judgment day," said Aunt Dinah, the old black mammy; and hastily catching the child up, she wrapped her in a shawl, and rushed out into the hall.

There they found the family gathered in terror, Mr. Emory supporting his invalid wife, while the solid walls of the house rocked from side to side.

"Papa take Mabel—Mabel's so 'fraid," said the child, holding out her arms to her father.

"Papa has mamma, darling. Won't you let mammy take care of you?"

"Yes, I will," said she, clasping her arms around the black neck; "but kiss Mabel once."

"God grant we may come safely out of this!" said the father, as he kissed the dear little upturned face.

"Dod'll take care of us, papa; you tole me so your own self."

"Bress de chile!" said Aunt Dinah, holding her close as they groped their way through the darkness.

It was the never-to-be-forgotten night of August 31, in Charleston, the beautiful city by the sea. The confusion in the street was terrible; the shrieks of the horror-stricken people, the rumble of the upheaving earth, the thud of falling buildings, made a din that cannot be described.

To the park, to the park!" cried a loud voice; and thither the terrified people fled.

while she sprinkled her mistress's face from a bottle of cologne which she had in her pocket.

"Now," said Mr. Emory, "follow me, as closely as you can, to the park." And with a hasty glance behind he hurried on.

Aunt Dinah turned for her charge, but, to her dismay, no Mabel was to be seen. She rushed from one side to the other, calling "Mabel, my lam! my honey, chile! whar is yer? Come back to you ole black mammy."

But the dull crash of the falling buildings was her only answer, and the people around, thinking she was affrighted at the scene, and not understanding her words bade her be quiet.

Suddenly a thought struck her. Might not the child have become confused, and wandered back into the house they had just left? She hurried to the entrance, and was about darting in when a man caught her arm. "Don't you see, aunty, the house is just going to fall!"

"My chile, my chile! I've feared she's in thar, marster," she said, wringing her hands, and trying to break away from him.

"No," he said, kindly, "there's no one in there, I've just been through."

"Move back, move back!" cried the crowd. "And with a roar and a groan the wall fell outward. A great piece of plaster came down on Aunt Dinah's head. Her bandanna turban kept it from doing fatal harm, but it stunned the old woman, and turned her sick and giddy, and that, with the fright, dazed her completely. She lost her wits, and wandering aimlessly about the streets, calling—

"My lam, my little white dove! whar is yer? Come back to yer ole black mammy!"

Hundreds of people heard the plaintive cry and shuddered, clasping their own darlings closer as the mournful wail sounded near and then receded in the distance.

At last her wandering steps brought her to the park, where Mr. Emory was devoured with anxiety for his child; he yet dared not leave his wife alone. But at the first sound of the familiar voice he started up from the iron settee and rushed towards her crying, "Where is Mabel, Aunt Dinah?"

Then as he caught sight of the distraught face, and saw that her arms, although pressed close to her breast, were empty, he seized her by the shoulder, and cried, "What's the matter? Where's my baby? What have you done with her?"

"O marster! she's gone," sobbed the poor creature. "My chile, my little lam! whar is yer? Come to yer ole mammy."

That was all he could gather from her. "She has lost her mind, and no wonder," he groaned. "But where is my baby, lost in this terrible city?"

"Henry," said his wife, in an agony of tears, "leave me, and go and look for her."

"Will you stay, Aunt Dinah, and take care of Miss Emily while I go and search for Mabel?" said he.

"I los' her, marster, I'll find her;" and she broke away and wandered on.

"Shall we ever find her?" cried the poor mother. "God grant it!" was the answer; but we must wait for the morning."

And Mabel where was she?

When the old woman sat the child on the ground to attend to her fainting mistress, a second tremble of the ground, faint compared to the first, but plainly to be felt, swept over the earth, causing an accession of terror and a fresh rush of the multitude out to the parks and down to the Battery.

The frightened little one, left alone for the first time in her life, shrank back with terror at the confusion, and in a second the crowd surged around her, and she was carried on in their midst; and when Aunt Dinah looked for her charge she was half-way down the block, a helpless atom in that cruel, crushing crowd.

But if her cries fell unheeded upon the ears of those about her, there was One who heard and noted the pitiful wail from those baby lips.

"Mabel's so tired! Mabel wants papa. Where's my mammy?"

It almost seemed as if an invisible shield surrounded the little one, for, except for her terror, she was untouched by harm, and when, at the crossing of the Boulevard, the crowd parted to the right and left, she was left alone on the curb. Tired though the little feet were, there seemed no place for them to rest; the shrieks, the crashes, the glare terrified her more and more, and she wandered on. But the One who had kept her unhurt in the terrible crush of the crowd, guided her footsteps now, and on down to the Battery, where the cool breezes from the sea blew in to moderate the heat of the city, she went.

The silken shawl had long fallen off, and the tiny figure, clad in her little white embroidered night-gown, with yellow curls streaming down her shoulders and pattering bare feet seemed strangely unsuited to that gloomy midnight hour in the terror-stricken city.

"Oh, look! Dick, here's an angel coming," said a rough stevedore standing on the wharf, as the blue-eyed baby came on towards him. She looked into the kindly face, and, holding out her arms, said:

"Take Mabel. Mabel's so tired."

Tenderly, as her own father could have done, he lifted her in his arms; and, with a little sigh, she nestled her head on his shoulder, and closed her eyes.

"Here, Bill," said the other, his voice choked and his eyes shining, "we can make her a bed on this lumber."

With their flannel shirts they made a couch, and there the little one slept. Who can doubt that He had given His angels charge over her?

As the first beam of the morning sun shone on the water, Aunt Dinah wandered down to the Battery, still crying: "My lammie, my little lammie! whar is yer?"

That dear voice, which was the first sound that Mabel had ever learned to know, penetrated the child's sleep, and opening her eyes wide, she called: "Here's Mabel, mammy, here's Mabel."

Quick as a flash the old woman swooped down upon her nursing, clasped her in her arms as if to make amends for ever having let her go, and sobbing and crying, "Bress de Lord, bress de Lord."

Sabbath School Work.

LESSON HELPS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

JESUS RISEN.

LESSON V., October 31st. John xx., 1-18; memoirs verses 15-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—The Lord is risen, indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.—John xxiv. 34.

TIME.—Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30, early dawn.

PLACE.—Jerusalem in the vicinity of Calvary.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—John xix. 31-42; Matt. xxvii. 57-66; Mark xv. 42-47; Luke xxiii. 50-56.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. xxviii. 1-15; Mark xvi. 1-11; Luke xxiv. 1-12.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—(1) The burial: Friday afternoon between four and six o'clock, in a new sepulchre near Calvary, aided by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. (2) Precautions: The Sabbath (Matt. xxvii. 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. (3) The resurrection: very early Sunday morning (Matt. xxviii. 2-4), accompanied by an earthquake and by a shining angel. (4) The women at the sepulchre: early Sunday morning (vs. 1, 2). 1. Mary Magdalene: accompanied by several others. 2. Then she runneth: she went ahead, saw the stone rolled away, and hastened back without looking in. The others waited, looked in and saw an angel. (5) Peter and John visit the sepulchre (vs. 3, 10). 3. Believed: that Jesus was really risen from the dead. (6) Two angels appear to Mary Magdalene (vs. 11-13): Mary returned more slowly, and reached the tomb just after Peter and John had left. (7) Jesus reveals himself as a risen Saviour first to Mary Magdalene (vs. 14-18). 14. Knew not that it was Jesus: she did not look up; her eyes were dimmed with tears; his garments must have been different; she was not expecting to see him. 17. Touch me not: do not stop now to express your wonder and praise, but hasten on and tell the disciples the news. I am not yet ascended: I have not gone yet; there will be other times for you to see me. Jesus appeared on eleven different occasions during forty days.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The burial.—Precautions as to his death and burial.—The resurrection.—The empty sepulchre.—The vision of angels.—The first appearance of Jesus.—Why Mary did not recognize him.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—At what hour did Jesus die? Where was he buried? Why in a new tomb? What two men took charge of his burial?

SUBJECT: THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

I. THE RESURRECTION.—On what day did Jesus rise from the dead? How long had he been dead? What promise was thus fulfilled? (Matt. xvi. 21; xx. 19) What signs accompanied the resurrection? What precaution had been taken so that there could be no deception? (Mark xv. 44; John xix. 33, 34; Matt. xxviii. 61-66)

II. THE EMPTY SEPULCHRE (v. 1-10).—Who came first to visit the tomb? Who were with her? (Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 10) To whom did she report? What did the other women see? (Mark xvi. 5-7) What two men came next? Had they expected the resurrection of Jesus?

III. THE RISEN LORD (vs. 11-18).—What did Mary do on her return? What did she see? Who approached at this time? Why did Mary not recognize him? Whom did she suppose it was? How did Jesus make himself known? Why must she not touch him? With what message did he send her? How many times did Jesus appear? During how long a time? (Acts i. 3)

Why is so much said about the resurrection of Jesus? What does Paul say about its importance? (1 Cor. xv. 13-20) What comfort and hope does it give us?

Did Jesus rise with the same body with which he was crucified? (John xx. 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?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. We have here an excellent example of keeping the Sabbath.

II. The very efforts of opposers God compels to minister to the success of the gospel.

III. Our eyes are often holden from seeing our Lord because he comes in unexpected ways and strange providences.

IV. The resurrection of Jesus is (1) the crowning proof that Christ is the Son of God; (2) the proof of life beyond the grave; (3) the assurance of our own resurrection; (4) that our Saviour has power over death and all enemies; (5) it is a symbol of our moral resurrection.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole school in concert).—1. When did Jesus rise from the dead? 2. To whom did he appear first? 3. How many times did he appear to his disciples? 4. During how long a time? 5. During forty days.—Peculiar.

CANNOT BE HEARD.

THE SWEETEST SOUNDS Are those most near akin to silence, Such as sea whippers rippling at the prow When the loud engine ceases; muffled bells, Or echoes of a far-off wave of song In hollow minsters; and the sweetest thoughts Are those far whispers of humanity. And love and death, which none can ever hear Amid the mighty voices of the world.

WILLS, WON'TS AND CAN'TS.—There are many kinds of boys and girls in the world, but there are three kinds which deserve special mention. They have been called the "Wills," the "Won'ts" and the "Can'ts." The "Wills" accomplish everything, the "Won'ts" oppose everything and the "Can'ts" fail in everything. The "Wills" are the ones wanted in the army of the Lord. There is no room for the "Won'ts" or the "Can'ts" in *The Foreign Missionary* host.—*The Foreign Missionary*