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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

nobler minds among that goodly company which had abandoned all for the Gospel's sake, there was yet the feeling of patriotism, in spite of all ; the memories of the fair land never more to be seen, of the old home treasured in the recollections of childhood, of the national glories not yet obscured, of the land which had given birth to Calvin and Beza, Dumoulin and Blondel, Amyraut and Daillé, Dubosc and Bochart and Claude ; and in many a heart the vow was breathed, *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!*

And even of the persecuting King himself hardly a bitter word was spoken. They had learnt so truly the lessons of subjection to the earthly power, in a manner hardly intelligible to our modern civilization, but congenial to the spirit of primitive Christianity, that to suffer in silence seemed the fitting attribute of those who were Christians in more than their profession only. And when the great orator, Jacques Saurin, in 1709, was addressing to the congregation of refugees in the Court chapel of the Hague that memorable sermon on "Fleeting Piety," which deservedly ranks as one of the master-pieces of Christian eloquence, the climax of the splendid appeal to his flock was in a prayer for the great persecutor himself, for him at whose word they had been driven into exile—"that he who had so long been the instrument of God's wrath might become one day the minister of His grace and bounty." Surely there could have been no more fitting epilogue to the great historic tragedy than in this true imitation of Christ.

JOHN DE SOYRES.



ART. III.—BIBLE CLASSES FOR YOUNG LADIES.

THE following letter, which needs no editorial preface, will be read, we are sure, with deep interest :

It has given me great pleasure to accede to your request that I should write a short account of my Bible Class for Young Ladies.

I believe there are but few well-organized parishes in the land in which at least one Bible Class does not exist for domestic servants, warehouse girls, shop girls, etc., while not unfrequently the children of their employers are left, as far as religious instruction is concerned, sadly too much to their own resources.

How often it happens that while the maids in the kitchen or servants' hall are reading and searching their Bibles in preparation for their much-valued Sunday-School Class, the young ladies in the drawing-room are left entirely without special religious teaching, and chiefly spend their time in the most frivolous occupations or in devouring literature which, to say the least of it, is not of an elevating character.

I was much impressed many years ago in hearing from my husband of a remark made to him on this subject by a Christian lady of title. She said, "We" (meaning those in her station of life) "are the people who are most neglected by the clergy; for while they visit the working classes regularly, and do not scruple to speak to them about their souls, we and our children are left to ourselves, and seldom or ever, except in church, hear of anything but that which relates to this world." Possibly this statement made a deeper impression upon me than it would upon some, owing to the fact that for many years I had experienced the blessing of having received definite religious teaching in a Sunday School of a *unique* character—it being composed almost entirely of the children of professional men, Liverpool merchants, etc.

My beloved pastor (and afterwards brother-in-law) was Vicar of a parish in which there was no house under an annual rental of less than £20. Consequently it was impossible to collect a Sunday School of the poor. But he did not on that account dispense with such an agency; on the contrary, the children of the congregation met every Sunday afternoon for instruction in God's Word and the real teaching of the Book of Common Prayer.

It was there that some of my happiest hours were spent in receiving Christian instruction, not only from my teacher, but also from the simple, earnest, yet powerful address which each Sabbath fell from the lips of him who "now being dead, yet speaketh," and whose consistent life and holy example are bearing blessed fruit in the hearts of numbers of young people who will form part of his "crown of rejoicing" in that day when God makes up His jewels.

I would venture to say, in passing, that I feel sure if similar Sunday schools were more generally adopted in suburban parishes they would be found not only to be popular, but much appreciated. As a rule it is not the fault of the people that they do not more constantly study God's Word, but because they are not shown the privilege of such instruction being given both by the clergy and their helpers.

My first attempt at teaching girls of the upper classes was in this school, where, after my marriage, I had twelve placed under my charge; and greatly attached did we become to one another. Seldom or ever were the girls absent on the Sunday afternoon; and their earnestness and attention were quite touching, especially considering that I was only a year or two the senior of several of them. Two were the daughters of a well-known Christian nobleman, two or three others the children of extremely wealthy merchants, and some, though equal in birth and education, were not in so good a position. But they all met on equal ground, and the best and most Christian spirit pervaded the whole class. It was not only on Sundays that an influence for good was exercised upon them, for constantly during the week I received visits and letters from those who were in any religious doubt or difficulty, and most blessed and happy was the result.

Only a couple of years ago, I unexpectedly met a member of that class in London, who is now moving in the first society, and also devoting her large fortune and time to God's work; when telling me of trials, which by God's grace had been the means of drawing her nearer to her Saviour, she added with tears in her eyes, "but it was in that happy class more than twenty years ago that I first began to give my heart to God." She then told me of another member of the same class who is walking in the narrow way. Several other instances of the same kind have occurred. Surely such testimonies are worth a lifetime of toil, and are blessed confirmations of the precious promise, "My word shall not return unto Me void."

After about four years of happy and profitable intercourse, it was unexpectedly brought to a close by my husband accepting the charge of a large parish in the important town of Sheffield. Here our work entirely changed, and from being surrounded by none but the well-to-do class, we were plunged into the midst of a population of artisans and labouring people. Among other agencies we established several Bible Classes for young men and women, all of which by God's blessing prospered. Many were the cheering testimonies which we received of help and comfort to young people who passed out of our hands to other towns, and even to other countries. Every moment of our time was more than filled up, and it appeared as though the special work for which I had been so anxious was not what my Heavenly Father saw was best for me.

Thus about twelve years passed, and my thoughts were quite turned into another channel, when God in His inscrutable wisdom saw fit to lay His hand upon me, and for nearly three years I was comparatively laid aside by illness, and it was thought even by my medical man that I should never again be able to do the same amount in the way of parish-work. Thank God such was not the case, for at the present moment I am able to do more actual work than at any previous period of my life.

But "man's extremity is God's opportunity," for by this means I was as it were driven from outside work, and after earnest prayer for guidance to be "led in a straight path," I determined to try and gather together a few of the daughters of our leading manufacturers and townspeople to a Bible Class to be held at the Vicarage every fortnight.

I commenced with about fifteen members, and gradually increased until we numbered thirty, which was as many as our dining-room would accommodate. This continued until we were again removed from the parish and people among whom we had laboured with such pleasure and profit for seventeen years, my husband having accepted the charge of the Mother Church of Sheffield. This move, however, did not necessitate the relinquishing of my class, but gave me an opportunity of adding to its numbers. Within six months of our being settled between sixty and seventy additional names were enrolled, and I am thankful to be able to add that I am constantly being asked to receive new members, the only difficulty again being the size of our room.

I imagine that it may be suggested—Why not go to one of your parish rooms and accommodate a much larger number? I believe if I adopted this plan the class would lose much of its interest, for the girls come to the Vicarage, feeling to me as I do to them, as if we were a large family. The warmest and truest affection binds us together; they come to me with their troubles and difficulties, feeling certain of my sympathy and best advice, and I attribute this loving confidence to be chiefly owing to the feeling which is inspired by meeting together as one family, under a clergyman's roof, to learn something of the world beyond the grave, as taught in the Word of God.

That the class is appreciated is shown by the regular attendance of most of the members, and so anxious are some of my young friends to join it that they have asked me to keep a vacancy for them when they leave school. This is the more remarkable as there is no excitement of any kind, nor is any conversation carried on either before or at the close.

Our plan is as follows: We meet on the second and fourth Tuesday in each month; and, as a reminder, I have small cards printed (kindly done by a friend) with the name of the place and the hour of meeting on the outside, the inside being ruled for twelve months. Each young lady is asked to mark her own attendances on it, while I keep a similar register immediately after they leave. At the end of the year I read the number of

attendances, without mentioning names, thus showing the regularity or otherwise of the members.

We commence by prayer and singing a hymn, after which one text or more is read in order by each member, to prove some subject which has been given at the previous class; for instance: "Prove the omniscience of God," "of Christ," "of the Holy Ghost;" these would form three subjects, and the various attributes of each person would form a long catalogue. I also give subjects of a less difficult nature, as: "Mention the remarkable stones of Scripture," "The oaks," "The wells," "The women," etc. These questions create great interest, and are a source of pleasure and profit, not only to the girls, but also to some of their friends.

It may not be out of place here to narrate an incident in connection with this part of the work: When travelling by rail, about three years ago, two young men entered the carriage in which my husband and I were seated. They were known to him, but perfect strangers to me. He introduced them by saying: "Do you know Mrs. —?" When one of them replied: "Not personally, but very well by name; for I am quite interested in trying to find out the answers to her Bible questions which my sister, who attends her class, brings home; and many an hour on Sunday afternoons have I spent in searching my Bible for the answers."

But to return to my class. After all have given a text upon the question, I read my notes upon the portion of Scripture considered on the previous occasion, as a reminder to those who were present, and to form a connecting-link for those who were absent. We then read in rotation the regular portion of Scripture—the length of which depends upon whether we have formerly considered a similar passage—its interest, etc. Sometimes ten verses are sufficient, while on another occasion twenty-five verses are not too much; but whatever the length, I carefully prepare it, spending hours in seeking out all the information in my power, and reading every book upon the subject within my reach. I then make notes of the leading points, and, in humble dependence upon the aid of God's Holy Spirit, impart it in as interesting a manner as possible to my class.

I find by this means I can introduce all kinds of practical subjects, not only of a personal character, but also as regards the teaching and doctrine of our beloved Church.

The class, which is held in the middle of the afternoon, lasts exactly one hour, and I am very careful to be punctual, so that carriages may not be kept waiting, and engagements made without fear of disappointment. Most of the girls bring note-books, and it is most encouraging to see the eager way in which they write down whatever strikes them. I have from time to time tried to get them to ask questions, but find, with very few exceptions, that they dislike the publicity of it; this has led me to adopt the plan of asking them to write anything which may be troubling them on a slip of paper, and leave it in a basket in the hall, with the understanding that if possible I will reply to it at the next class. This has drawn forth much interesting and I trust valuable information, and it has also taught me that we have but little idea of the difficulties and doubts with which young people are assailed. Girls as well as boys go through various phases of religious doubts, and need to be dealt with in a most gentle and lenient manner. I believe that many a lamb of Christ's flock is sadly harassed by those to whom he or she looks for religious instruction and help, instead of being gently lead into the green pastures of comfort.

We are now going through St. John's Gospel, and although it was commenced two years ago we are only in the 18th chapter—the interest appearing to increase as we proceed—and the difficulty being to condense, without spoiling, the subject.

The way in which we fix upon the book to be considered is, when we get within a chapter of the end of the one we have been studying, I ask the members of the class prayerfully to seek direction as to what will be the most profitable portion, and then write on a slip of paper its title. These papers are put into a box and opened by me at the next class, the book most frequently named being chosen. By this means a considerable amount of interest is excited, and much done towards maintaining a good attendance. We have in ten years and a half gone through St. Mark's Gospel, the Book of Daniel, the Acts of the Apostles, and now we are in St. John's Gospel. The selection of Daniel was very remarkable, for without any communication with one another every one, with the exception of four, voted for its study, and a most blessed and elevating effect it had upon all. It gave me a considerable amount of extra preparation and careful investigation, but I was more than repaid by the result.

As an outcome of my class, about two years ago a lending-library of interesting and useful books was established for the use of the members. It was started by a few of them proposing to me that they should subscribe five shillings each towards the purchase of such books as I should approve. At first I scarcely saw my way to adding to my work, but after carefully thinking the matter over I came to the conclusion that it might be a means of placing good, wholesome and religious literature in the hands of some who only read that of the lightest description.

We commenced with thirty volumes, and have gone on gradually adding to them until now the library contains 110 works by such authors as Miss Emily S. Holt (to whom, in passing, I cannot express too warmly my appreciation of her excellent books, and the wish that they were placed in every library throughout the country), Bishop Ryle, etc. We have the "History of Posts and Telegraphs," "Hints on Nursing," biographies, etc., etc., all of which are eagerly read; and I am constantly being thanked for introducing this agency. There are about six rules as regards returning books—care as to infection, etc., etc., and the small subscription of 2s. per annum (which is optional), in addition to gifts, keeps up the supply. One of the young ladies acts as librarian before and after the class, and carefully enters in a book every volume lent or returned. We have a uniform cover of black calico and a label on each, bearing its title and number.

At the risk of being thought egotistical, I venture to add that I feel sure that a Ladies' Bible Class is much better taken by one lady. I find if I am obliged to put mine off, it is wiser to do so than to ask anyone else to undertake it for me. The girls are in this way sure of their teacher, and there can be no other inducement than a desire to "search the Scriptures."

Although the subject of this letter is "Bible Classes for Young Ladies," I trust that no one will suppose that my object is to press this special agency to the exclusion of other classes—for those which I hold for working girls and women are in their own way quite as interesting and important—but having been asked to take up this particular branch of work, it has been a great pleasure to accede to the request.

It will easily be understood that although there is abundant cause for thankfulness and encouragement in the work among young ladies, there is also much disappointment and sorrow mingled with it. It is very sad to see some of those who have appeared for a time deeply impressed, going into the world, apparently fascinated by its allurements; and my experience is that those whom it would be imagined were the least likely to be touched by religious influences and the study of God's Word, have proved the most satisfactory; while many from whom more was expected have

become careless and inattentive. Like all other work for the Master, it needs constant prayer for Divine aid, and strong faith in His power to help. The sowing and reaping are both in his hands ; if He see fit, He will give the increase ; and if in this life we are not permitted to see much fruit of our labour, we shall "in due season reap, if we faint not," in that day "when both sower and reaper shall rejoice together" in the Master's house above.

I am, yours very sincerely,

MARTHA BLAKENEY.

The Vicarage, Sheffield,
Oct. 20th, 1885.



ART. IV.—GENESIS AND THE BIBLE. PART III.

ETHICAL RELATIONS.

IF the Bible be regarded as containing the records of an advancing revelation, and as presenting the scheme of truth which that revelation yields on the whole, it will be in the doctrinal relations of the first book to the rest that we shall seek the most important evidences of preparation and decisive intimations of unity of design. These relations have been traced in a former paper in respect of ten principal doctrines, to which others will easily be added by the considerate student of the book. Instead of supplying these, it will now be better to advert to another class of relations, which, if they offer themselves less directly in the way of argument, have yet a suggestive bearing on the conclusion. If the ethical relations of Genesis with the later teaching of Scripture were undiscoverable or discordant, if its moral judgments, its principles of life, its casts of character, were not such as the Law would authenticate or the Gospel complete, the continuity of feeling would be broken with a disturbing and even dislocating effect. Perhaps this ethical character has naturally a more enduring vitality than belongs to definite opinions, as appears in the history of races, in which may often be traced the same moral tendencies and characteristics after creeds and institutions have been changed. So in the race which has its record in the Scriptures—I mean that of the Church or people of God—we expect to trace a moral tradition, a continuous tone and temper, which shall discriminate the line of spiritual descent, and create a conscious kindred with the first generations even in their distant posterity. This latent unity becomes indeed a necessity, when we regard the moral life of which we speak as the outcome of a divine seed, generating a race which,