caller at the MacTavish home, and Jim MacTavish, always with an eye for a pretty woman, finds her attractive. He is flattered when the widow asks him to go over to her bouse to help her. Laurence Martin, with whom Meg has kept company for two years, calls that night. Rejected for military service, Laurence had gone to the county seat to work for old Judge Graham. Jim MacTavish announces rulitily that he is roing for a nounces guiltily that he is going for a walk. When Laurence arrives he is in good spirits and announces that Judge Graham is going to retire within a year and wants him to take over. "I want you to marry me, Meg." She hesitated a long time.

CHAPTER V

He was freshly shaven, immaculately groomed—and, she told her-self, almost a little surprised, he was downright handsome. He looked less than his forty-nine years, holding himself erectly, as though in an effort to disclaim the threat of impending overweight.

"For a walk? At this time of night?" she protested, surprised. "It's seven o'clock, and there'll be a moon," her father told her almost curtly.

Almost before she had finished there was the brisk ring of purposeful footsteps on the old bricked walk, and a moment later the outer door opened and Laurence came in, beaming as he saw her, greeting her eagerly. He shed his light top-coat and hung it with his hat in its accustomed corner of the closet beneath the stairs.

"That looks good." He greeted the open fire and stood before it, warming his hands. "It's a bit nip-py out tonight, and darker than a pocket. I was glad of my pocket flash before I got here."

"There is no moon?" asked Megan in surprise.
"Not yet," answered Laurence.
"Not before nine, I should say."

He stood, tall and boney, and a fittle stooped, as though his height had run away from his weight. His thick, dark hair was brushed neatly back from an intelligent fore-head. His eyes were brown and steady behind the hornrimmed eyeglasses, his jaw was square and dogged, his mouth thin-lipped, rather generous but pleasant.

Suddenly he grinned at her, and said, "Well? Do you see anything different about me? Have I changed?"

Megan's eyebrows went up a lit-e. "No — has something happened?"

'Well, the old Judge called me in well, the old Judge caned me in this afternoon, and told me that he plans to retire next year." Lautence told her eagerly. "The old fellow's getting on and he is pretty hred. But he wants me to take over, beginning now, so that in a year he can slip gracefully out of the picture and I can carry on!"

"That's splendid, Larry—but no more than you deserve," Megan told him swiftly and eagerly.

He nodded, his eyes very steady and very serious behind his rimmed glasses. "Thanks, honey," he answered, and went on before she could take note of the endearment, "It affects you, too, of course. That is, I hope it does."

His smile was confident, assured. Obviously he was so sure of her that his qualification of the state-ment had been merely a surface

'It's no secret to you. Meggie. that you've been my inspiration all these years, and you must have all along that as soon as I got to the point where I felt sure I could take care of you, I wanted you to marry me," he went on quietly. "I've got to that point now, so-will you, Meggie?"

But for some queer reason, Mehesitated before answering. Hesitated so long, her eyes on the fire, her hand lax beneath his own, that Laurence looked at her in sudden sharp alarm and said quickly. "Hi, look here, lady-it's polite to speak when you're spoken to.'

"I'm sorry, Larry." She turned to him in quick, contrite apology.
"It's just that—well, I scarcely know what to say."

Laurence was surprised and a little dashed. But his hand closed more warmly over hers and he said with an effort at lightening the threatening tension, "Well, 'yes' would be nice."

"I wish-it could be 'yes'," she

admitted frankly.

Laurence turned sharply, so that he was sitting sideways on the lounge, facing her squarely. His thick, dark brows were drawn gether in a puzzled frown and his eyes were apprehensive. "See here, Meggie, what are you

giving me? You're not suddenly go-ing all coy on me?" he demanded anxiously.
"Of course not." She tried to

taugh at the idea, but it was not a convincing laugh.

"Of course, I didn't do it with the proper build-up," he admitted with a little crooked grin. "Maybe I should have dropped on one knee in front of you, with one hand on my heart, the other outflung in a pleading gesture, and said some-thing like, 'Miss MacTavish-Miss Megan—may I call you Meggie?
Will you do me the honor to accept
my undying devotion?" Shall I do
it that way?"

"Don't be an idiot!" Megan was grateful for the lightness and tried to rise to it. "It's only that—well, you have taken me a little by surprise_'

"Oh, come, now, Meggie—not this is so sudden," he protested mockingly.

"I know-I do sound like a fool," she admitted quite honestly.

The raillery was gone from his voice and his eyes when he spoke again. His tone was quiet and steady, his eyes gentle and warm.

"You have known all along, Meggie, that I love you. I think it first started when we were kids. Every man has somewhere in his mind or his heart, or both, a picture of the ideal—and there's never for a mo-ment been anyone but you in that place for me. Everything I've done, every thought I've had for the future, has had you all woven into it and through it. It's been pretty bad these last two or three years watching you struggle to hold on to things here and not being able to help you. But now-well, all that's changed, Meggie. I've got an in-come that is modest enough in all



Laurence turned sharply, so that he was sitting sideways lounge, facing her squarely.

conscience, but it can take care of you, Meggie, and I promise it will be easier for you than it has been in the past. I'll see to that! So-will you let me, Meggie? Because I love you and because I can't visualize any kind of life without you."

There were tears in her eyes, and her heart gave a warm throb as she turned to him and said, "Yes, Larry-if you're sure you want me."

Laurence said huskily, "As if I could ever be as sure of anything else in my life!"

He took her into his arms, awk wardly, as though she had been something so infinitely fragile and precious that the slightest careless touch might destroy her; yet there was a strength and an urgent tenderness in his touch that made her heart stir unaccustomedly. She loved his very awkwardness, loved the fact that when he bent to kiss her, his lips touched her cheek be fore finding her lips. She was the one love of his life; his inexpertness, his confusion, told her that. And the fact that he had not had enough experience with other girls to be deft and smooth with her endeared him to her.

There were so many things to be considered, so many problems to be settled. But tonight was no time for them. Tonight it was enough just to know one's self deeply beloved; to know that she was first in Laurence's thoughts, as she had

been for a long, long time. When he left, with fifteen minutes to catch his bus, she went slowly up the stairs to her own room and sat for a while in the darkness, lit by the silver square of autumn moonlight that spilled through the window. She was ashamed of her-self that she should feel, not the exultant, delicious happiness of a girl newly engaged, but only a weariness that seemed to drug her limbs and

She was still awake when she heard her father come in, and, puzzled, she looked at the little clock on the dressing table. A quarter past twelve! An incredible time for him to come in from a mere walk. when he had left the house at seven. To add to the surprise of his coming in so late, she could not but mark the caution with which he mounted the stairs, the wariness with which he walked, heavily on tip-toe, past her door to his own room. Only by straining her ears could she hear his door close. And then she gave herself a mental shake and got up to prepare for

The explanation of her father's late return was quite simple, after

all. He had been playing pinochle with some of his cronies, probably with some of his cronies, probably in the back of the barbershop, which, she knew, was a favorite meeting place for some of the rather raffish citizens who were his particular friends. And with that explanation, she crawled into bed and finally fell

asleep.

The news of her engagement to The news of her engagement to Laurence was accepted without any surprise whatever in Pleasant Grove. Mrs. Stuart summed up the attitude of the town when she said, comfortably, "Well, it ain't no surprise to none of us. 'Course, we're all mighty glad and we know you and Laurence are goin' to be happy. He's a fine how and you're both lucky.

and Laurence are goin' to be happy.

He's a fine boy and you're both lucky to get each other."

Megan, doing the Saturday morning baking, with Annie's assistance, felt her cheeks warm as she managed the conventional reply.

"You all goin' to live in Meaders."

"You all goin' to live in Meaders-ville, I 'spose?" Mrs. Stuart went on, accepting with relish a slice of the hot gingerbread Annie offered. Megan paused in her kneading of the smooth white dough that was

going to be hot rolls when she had finished with it.

"I suppose so," she admitted almost reluctantly. "It wouldn't be very sensible for Larry to try to go to and fro, on the bus. It's too uncertain." certain.

Mrs. Stuart nodded understandingly.
"I reckin then you'll sell the

"Sell the farm?" Megan repeated in astonishment. "We really haven't had time to discuss that," she admitted finally. "We aren't going to be married until the spring, and that will give us plenty of time—"

"Well, now, I dunno," Mrs. Stuart well, now, I dunno," Mrs. Stuart countered, licking the last fragrant, spongy crumbs of the gingerbread from her fingertips. "Folks that's going to farm a year always wants to get in and settled by January, or February at the latest. If you're going to sell you better let feller. going to sell, you better let folks know right away. Reckin you won't have no trouble gettin' a good price for the place, farmland bein' higher

than it ever has been before."
"I suppose so," Megan agreed.
She was secretly, if unashamedly, glad when Mrs. Stuart took herself

With the last of the baking in the stove, and Annie safely in charge, Megan stripped off her apron, went out of doors, and whistled to the dogs.

Reaching the top of the hill, where the big flat stone lay at the foot of the tallest, most majestic pine, she sat down and drew up her knees and encircled them with her arms. The dogs rushed about, delirious with joy.

Below her to the left she could see the roof and the backyard of the Westbrook place. There was the remnant of an orchard on the slope back of the house; shrubbery that had never been pruned and so grew riotously tall, formed a sort of hedge along the front. The nearest neighbor to the Westbrook place was Stevens, which was around a bend in the road and so out of sight of the shabby little old house.

Behind her, Megan knew the Ridge sloped into a valley that was threaded by the small brook that watered her own meadow, and that

watered her own meadow, and that widened out a little so that there were rich bottom lands bordering it. It was a peaceful scene in the mild autumn morning. Here in this shel-tered coastal country, winter played a mild hand; there was hardly ever any ice, seldom a killing frost. Two crops a year grew from the farms, and life was peaceful and placid. Or it had been until Alicia Stevenson came to live here. Megan jerked her thoughts away from the un-pleasant riddle of Alicia Stevenson, because she had something of far least, to think about.

Mrs. Stuart had taken it for granted that Megan would sell the farm when she married Laurence. Nobody who knew Jim MacTavish could visualize him running the farm or even living there after Me-gan was gone. He'd take the money gan was gone. He'd take the money Megan got from the sale and run through it and be "on" Laurence and Megan's hands for support the rest of his life. Megan was unapologetic for the thoughts; she was not conscious of any disloyalty towards her father in holding such a thought. She was simply facing facts. She knew him so well that she did not make mistaken plans that maybe Jim would look after himself. She

didn't even expect it. She looked out over the beloved acres of the old farm. Not to be here when the early spring broke, not to go out with tractor and har-row and turn back the rich dark earth, to drop the tiny seeds into the ground and witness the age-old, ever-recurring miracle that brought food and sustenance from the dark earth by means of those tiny, hard seeds. She was of the soil; she had been born to it; she had biherited it, not only from her mother but from her mother's people before her, people who had turned their backs on a known and beloved Scotland, who had faced the terrors and hardships of a brand new world, that they might have land that was their own. Land that had been cleared by her forefathers, land that had been fed and watered by the very sweat of their tired bodies; every inch of the place was part of her. (TO BE CONTINUED)

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL CUNDAY JCHOOL Lesson

Lesson for August 11

Lesson subjects and Scripture texts se-lected and copyrighted by International Council of Religious Education; used by

JESUS AND HOME RELATIONSHIPS

LESSON TEXT—Exodus 20:12; Mark 7:9-13; Luke 2:51, 52; Ephesians 6:1-4. MEMOR! SELECTION—Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—Exodus 20:12.

Home-that place so dear to the heart of each one of us—is even more precious in the sight of God. He is concerned about our homes and those who live in them.

Right relationship between children and parents have much to do with the peace and prosperity of a community and a nation. Experience has demonstrated that to be true, but even more basic is the fact that it is in accord with the promise of God.

One of the sad breakdowns in modern life is that of proper honor and obedience to parents by children. In all too many homes God's order has been reversed and in-stead of honoring and obeying their parents, children (both young and old) have taken the place of "boss," and mother and father must obey if they want peace and rest.

The problem of juvenile delin-quency, or perhaps we should say more correctly, parental delinquency, is right on our doorsteps now. That means that the need for our lesson is both great and acute. The future happiness of hundreds of thousands of children and the present welfare of thousands of neglected and boss-ridden parents will depend on the intelligence and faithfulness with which this lesson is taught in our churches, and the honesty of heart with which we all receive its truth.

I. The Responsibility Stated (Exod. 20:12).

"Honor thy father and thy mother"—how good, and substantial, and right those words sound.
We are told by Paul that this is

the "first commandment with promise" (Eph. 6:1-3), The Lord was not making a bargain with man, or seeking to draw out obedience by a prize, but there is obviously a great reward in the observing of this com-

Then too as the children of God (if we are such) through Jesus Christ, the first and most important consideration to come before us is, What is the mind and will of the Maker of us all regarding this mat-ter of the relationship between parents and children? His words are plain; we are to "honor" our fathers and our mothers.

The word "honor" carries with it a great many things, but per-haps the three outstanding elements are respect, obedience and affection. men do not wish to follow God's direction, so we see next

II. The Responsibility Evaded (Mark 7:9-13).

Such an important commandment naturally held a high place in the thinking of the community. To vio-late it involved a measure of shame which men sought to avoid. So the Jews of Christ's day devised a scheme which made it possible for a man to appear to be very religious even as he deprived his parents of the honor and help to which they were entitled by the law of God.

The man who did not wish to sup-port his aged and needy parents could entirely evade that God-given responsibility by declaring that his property was "Corban"; that is, dedicated by a vow to God. Thereafter no matter how great was the need of his parents they could receive nothing, and yet he could keep it and use it for himself.

Thus do men make "the word of God of none effect" (v. 13) through their traditions. The method differs but the spirit persists even in our day.

Jesus made short work of such trickery and evasion. He declared their mas-made creeds and traditions to be simply a means of mak-ing the dommand of God of none effect. Once more he condemns that formal religious observance which serves as a cloak for sin and

III. The Responsibility Fulfilled (Luke 2:51-52; Eph. 6:1-4).

The manner in which children should be obedient to their parents and honor them in the home is beautifully exemplified in the life of our Lord, living as a boy in Nazareth. In the home the growing youth finds the best place for normal, wellrounded development (v. 52). There

is no substitute for the home. The words of the Holy Spirit through Paul in Ephesians 6:14 stress the same truth and enlarge upon it.

This matter of honoring and obey-This matter of honoring and obeying parents "is right," says Paul. It is the Lord's way, but it is also that which commends itself to every right-thinking person.

There is tremendously important truth on the other side of the picture. Parents are not to provoke their children to anger, to disrespect or disobedience.

calmly inquires about their com-fort and continues to carry on a lively conversation. Psychologists who have examined the pert blonde child agree that her rapidly expanding vocabulary is highly unusual for her age. Donna Jean uses 400 words in complete words in complete wariably replies: "I do, of course." spect or disobedience. May God help us who are parents that we may take to heart this part of our lesson. Our children are our most valuable possession.



MAJOR UNDERTAKING-As highlight of its year's activities the Youth Council of Richfield Springs, N. Y., annually stages an I Am an American program. The above picture shows members of the high school orehestra and a vocalist participating in the program.

IN THESE UNITED STATES

Youth Council Sets Pace In Developing N.Y. Town

By E. L. KIRKPATRICK

A town with a past can live in the present and look to the future, say young people of Richfield Springs, upstate New York center with 1,200 popula-tion. This is the consensus of the town's Youth council, started more than three years ago from a panel discussion on "Young People's Pres-ent Day Problems."

Some of the charter members as well as their followers were out-ofschool young people. On the present membership list are the names of a beautician, bookkeeper, clerk, farmer, housewife, laboratory techmachinist, secretary, school custodian, telephone operator, stenographer, and typesetter, so erybody gets in and pitches or helps play the field. Each works where he fits and is most needed."

Stage Annual Program.

Chief activity is I Am an Ameri can Day program staged annually under the council's direction. Use is made of school band and chorus, American Legion, church groups, town board and boys' and girls' clubs. Highlights of this year's program were demonstrations by Cub, Boy and Girl Scouts, remarks by a new voter and an address by one of the town's ministers.

This youth group tackles other things as the months come and go. They "dig a bit into the annals of history" for indication of what's happened to Richfield Springs, which in the Gay Nineties was New York State's most popular spa be-cause of the healing powers of its sulphur spring waters. "Then, we had hotels filled with visitors, livery stables of fine horses and all kinds of carriages that outshone most cars in today's modern ga rages," an old-timer recalls.

"So," the group asks, "what can we do about what's left with us?" They consider how to clean and make use of deserted hotels and other buildings, explore the needs and possibilities of local industries

such as cannery and dairy.

Outstanding project is a forum to study the creation of good citizenship to world affairs. This reaches 150 youth and adults who meet weekly during

BIG CHEESE TO "BIG CHEESE"-Wisconsin's dairy queen, Cather-

ine Mueller, 21, of Lake, Wis., presents Selden F. Waldo, newly elected president of U. S. junior chamber of commerce, with the first Wisconsin natural rindless cheddar (American) cheese ever offered the public

at national Jaycee convention in Milwaukee. Heralded as major devel-opment in dairy industry, the cheese does not form a hard crust when

cut, has no rind and possesses a texture of processed cheese with all the flavor of natural cheese. Waldo is municipal judge of Gainesville,

Fla. To the left is Henry Kearns of Pasadena, Calif., outgoing Jaycee

2-Year-Old Child Has Unusual Vocabulary

home of Thomas Stabile are amazed

when they are greeted by his two-year-old daughter Donna Jean who

CRANSTON R. I.-Guests at the | sentences whereas average vocabu-

60 to 200 words.

lary for two-year-olds ranges from

In checkers which is her favor-

ite game of wits Donna Jean al-ready has learned a self-appeasing

trick. Because she always

the winter to formulate ques-tions and work out unbiased answers to them.

Under direction of the council sponsor and the high school social science teacher it has quickened initiative, developed new view-points, broadened horizons and brought needed co-operation in def-inite community projects. One of these was a community carnival, which was a financial success and a concrete demonstration of how folks can and will work together. Another was the realization of \$1,000 through contributions and a community dance for Christmas boxes and gifts to 200 hometown men and women in the service.

List Accomplishments.

To prove that other communities can "do as well as ours," Youth Council members explain that in their farming section of cash crop-ping, dairying and poultry raising, a dairy manufacturing plant, two fishing tackle factories and a sports wear mill have been established as a result partially of their interest and agitation.

As war clouds lift, the council

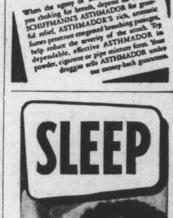
proposes to improve facilities for tourists at nearby Canadaraga lake, which offers boating, fishing and swimming in summer and skating in winter.

While we are planning for things ahead, we are doing more real living in the present with due respect to the past for cornerstones to build on," say Richfield Springs young people.

Texas Politicians Slow in Own Towns

TAYLOR, TEXAS .- Two Williamson county politicians, Mr. A. and Mr. B., are running against each other. Mr. A. went to Mr. B.'s hometown and reported jubilantly that 'e had contacted 100 voters and that 90 of them promised to vote for

Mr. B. then visited Mr. A.'s hometown and reported with deep satisfaction that he had talked to 100 people and that 90 of them had in-dicated they would definitely vote



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