

"And what made you wish to do things for me, Dorothy?"

It was rather a hard question to answer, but Dolly screwed up her courage.

"I think it is because I love you, grandmother," she answered timidly.

There was no response to this little confession, and Dolly had time to recover from her feeling of trepidation.

At this juncture Parker appeared at the door with a cup of beef-tea in her hand.

Dolly rose and went forward to take it from her, rather surprised at her own boldness, yet with a fascination in her fear which made it almost a pleasure.

Parker glanced at her mistress, and then gave the cup into the child's hands and retired again. Dolly brought her burden to the table and carefully put it down, broke the pieces of toast into delicate morsels, and waited deftly upon the invalid. Her movements were noiseless, her voice gentle. She had overcome the extreme timidity which had once made her afraid to speak or move in Lady Temple's presence, and now that she had begun to realise her dream of "taking care of grandmother" she was supremely content, and the expression of the earnest little face showed that it was so.

"Thank you, Dorothy," said Lady Temple presently. "That was very nicely done. And now it is time for me to take my nap. You can go out into the garden if you would like; and you may ask Cotman to give you a bunch of grapes."

"Thank you, dear grandmother," answered Dolly with shining eyes; and after a little hesitation she added, "May I come back again by and by, please?"

"Would it give you any pleasure?"

"Yes, a great deal."

"At five o'clock I shall be taking my tea. If you would like to do so, I will allow you to drink yours with me this afternoon."

Dolly coloured with pleasure.

"Thank you, grandmother. I should like that very much indeed."

"Very well; now leave me. You may come back at five."

Dolly wandered away feeling very happy. The ice was broken. Her grandmother did not mind her presence in the room, and now that a beginning was made, who could tell what the end might be? Might not she even learn to love her in time?

She walked round the garden, gathered some roses and ate her bunch of grapes. Then she wandered a little about the house, looked over the treasures she had brought with her from the sea-side, and arranged them neatly in some empty drawers in a little cabinet she possessed, and then she washed her hands and brushed her hair, and sat down with a story-book till it was five o'clock.

When she found her way into Lady Temple's room again, she found a very dainty-looking tea spread out upon the table. There was fruit and cake, rich cream and strawberry jam; yet Dolly noticed that her grandmother touched none of these good things, but only ate toast or a little bread-and-butter.

She had brought her roses into the room with her, and Lady Temple told her to put them into a vase, and place them upon the table where she could see them.

"I think you are the only person who ever brings me flowers, Dorothy," she remarked in her stately way. "They are very sweet."

Dolly poured out the tea very prettily, and carried her grandmother's cup carefully round to her, buttered slices of toast, and anticipated all her wants. She was losing her shyness by degrees and talked a little of things they had seen and done at Denmouth; and if Lady

Temple said little, she seemed quite ready to listen.

Parker came to clear away the tea; but Dolly was not dismissed. She made a little tour of the room, looking at all the pictures that hung on the walls, and especially at a particularly finely drawn crayon head of her father, which took her fancy very much, and at which she stood gazing for a very long while.

When Parker had gone, the child returned to her low seat by Lady Temple's side.

"Are you tired, grandmother?"

"Not particularly, thank you, Dorothy."

"It does not tire you to have me here?"

"No, Dorothy."

"I am so glad," said the child with a happy smile, "for I like being here so much."

"I cannot talk much, Dorothy; but you need not go away unless you wish to do so. You can get a book and look at the pictures."

Dolly rose and looked at some large illustrated books which stood in a row in a small case beneath the window. She selected a large Bible and carried the last volume across the room, placing it carefully upon a chair before which she knelt, turning the leaves softly, and looking with great interest at the large and beautiful wood-cuts.

She was so much absorbed in her task, that she had no idea how earnestly a pair of keen eyes were fastened upon her, and she started by and by to hear herself addressed.

"What book have you got there, Dorothy?"

"The Bible, grandmother. It is such a beauty."

"What made you choose the Bible?"

The child looked up with a smile.

"I think it was because I am fond of it. I can understand all the pictures. They are beautiful."

"What makes you fond of the Bible, Dorothy?"

Dolly hardly knew how to answer that question.

"Mamma was fond of it," she said softly; "Mamma wanted me to learn to love it. I don't think I did then—not really—but I do now. It is all so beautiful, isn't it, grandmother?"

Lady Temple did not answer, though she made a slight movement of her head. Dolly turned again to her pictures, but she looked up before long and asked shyly—

"Grandmother, would you like me to read to you a little?"

"Do you wish to do so, Dorothy?"

"I like reading the Bible," answered the child; "I used to read to Molly every night. If I read to you now it might save your eyes to-night, might it not?"

She spoke with quaint, womanly gravity. Lady Temple answered in her formal way—

"Do so then, Dorothy. I am ready to listen."

"Where shall I read?" asked Dolly; "I should like to read one of your favorite chapters."

"You may read one of your own favorites," replied Lady Temple. "Read just what you like best, Dorothy."

The child turned the leaves thoughtfully and presently looked up.

"Shall I read you what Molly and I would have read together if I had been there? She will be reading it about now, I should think," said Dolly, glancing up at the clock.

"Yes, that will do as well as anything," answered Lady Temple.

So Dolly turned to the first Epistle of St John and read the third chapter.

She had a clear, sweet voice, and read well, with a comprehension of the meaning of the words unusual in a child.

When she had finished there was a long pause. Dolly turned once more to the pictures,

and her grandmother sat looking out of the window.

"What made you choose that chapter, Dorothy?"

The child started and looked quickly up.

"It was the one Molly and I would have read together."

"I know that. I want to know what made you choose that epistle at all. Children usually prefer the gospels."

"Yes, I think we do, too. They are easier to understand. But you see we had finished St. John—the Gospel, I mean—and there was a great deal about loving there, and Molly thought she would like to read his Epistles next, to see if there was any more, so we had just begun, and there is a great deal. It seems to me it is nearly all about loving one another."

"What made you and Molly wish to read upon that particular subject?" asked Lady Temple, fastening her gaze fixedly upon the child's face.

Dolly looked up and hesitated, but when she did speak it was with great and increasing earnestness.

"I think at first it was because Molly did not believe that people ought to love one another, and that loving each other would make them happier. You see they used to quarrel a good deal—the boys I mean—and Molly and Wilfred thought boys had to quarrel; and I don't think they minded it much. I mean they didn't know they minded; but it made them unhappy, I am quite sure; because they have nearly stopped quarrelling now, and are much kinder to one another; and it is very nice, and they all like it much better, and Molly is so much happier with them."

"What has made them stop quarrelling just now?" asked Lady Temple.

"I don't quite know," answered Dolly, raising her innocent face to her grandmother; "I suppose they thought it would be nicer to be kind than to be cross, and I know Molly and Wilfred wanted to learn to be good, and so do I; and love has a good deal to do with everything. And then when Bruce sprained his ankle, he got much nicer, and Wilfred and he got to be quite friends, and Molly liked to be with them, and it was all very nice. I think they are all fond of each other now, and don't want to quarrel, hardly ever; and they are much happier, I think."

Lady Temple made no answer for a while, but presently remarked—

"So you think quarrelling a very bad thing, Dorothy?"

"Oh yes, grandmother. Isn't it naughty to quarrel? St. John said so often that little children should love one another."

"And only children, Dorothy? Does he say nothing about the rest of the world?"

(To be continued.)

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