

Our first parents were led to commit their great sin against God by the subtlety of the devil, who made use of the serpent to beguile Eve.

And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.—Gen. 3. 13.

### ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

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There is a story told of a French prince, that when quite a boy he was taken by his father a considerable distance from home. A compass was then placed in his hand, and he was told to find his way back as best he could. The boy was pleased with the task set him, and, turning his face in the homeward direction, he made his way through woods and thickets, over hedges and ditches, until, guided by the compass, he arrived at his father's house in safety. He was not aware, however, that, unseen, a trusty servant had followed him the whole way, to see that no accident happened to him. The servant's succour was not needed; the prince finding his youthful strength and energy, and the guidance of his compass, sufficient for the task set him. A weakly or timid boy would not have been thus sent out. Without the compass the strongest might have lost his way and wandered aimlessly. The requisites for the accomplishment of the journey were personal strength and courage and a careful observance of the guiding compass.

And these are exactly the two things we find pointed out as requisite for the task set before Joshua. He had to take up the work laid down by Moses, to whom the people of Israel had been accustomed to look from childhood. There was the river Jordan to be crossed in the face of a whole country of enemies. On the other side were cities "great, and fenced up to heaven," (Deut. 9. 1;) mountain strongholds and narrow defiles where resolute men might easily keep an invading army at bay; "a people great and tall, the children of the Anakims," (Deut. 9. 2;) kings with hosts "as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many," Josh 11. 4. There was a whole nation to be dispossessed and driven out, and the land to be divided among the thousands of Israel. Had Joshua looked at the human side of the task, his heart might well have sunk within him.

For the performance of this work two charges were laid upon him.

The first was to "be strong and of a good courage."

This charge, given first through Moses, (Deut. 31. 6, 7,) is now three times repeated. At first sight it seems a strange one. We tell one another to "be brave," believing a

person can exercise some control over his fears and school himself to play the man. But, in reality, strength, of one kind or another, must come before courage. When a man is strong he may well show courage; in fact, if he is strong every way, he must show it. Strength of body, and, still more, strength of mind, is the source of valor. But of what use to bid a person "be strong?" From a human point of view none at all, any more than to bid him: "be witty;" "be talented." But suppose some monarch of unlimited wealth were to say to a poor man: "I know you have nothing of your own, but help yourself from my abundance. Take what you will, and be rich." Would such a command be too unreasonable? And just this was the command to Joshua. He who was ready to supply all his servant's need bade him "be strong." The charge contained in itself a promise.

The second charge was concerning the "book of the law;" "observe to do all that is written therein;" "turn not from it to the right hand or to the left." Here is the guide without which the strongest might lose his way. And Joshua was the first to whom this guide was given. The patriarchs had enjoyed, in a large measure, God's personal leading. When they had not this they went astray. The first pages of Holy Scripture were written by Moses, and they became the immediate heritage of his successor. Command, promise, and direction, were there set down, as we say, "in black and white," so that there could be no doubt about them.

And with these two charges, each containing in itself a promise, was given yet another promise—the perpetual presence of God—the Lord watching over him to keep him from all harm, vers. 5, 9, unseen indeed, but known and felt.

It is interesting to notice how he of whom Joshua was the type kept these two charges in his work on earth. He who laid aside his glory did not go forth in his own strength: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," (Acts 10: 38;) and so we read in the Psalms: "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, even the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself" Psal. 80. 17. And he could say: "Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Isa. 50. 7. He made the "book of the law" his guide. "It is written," "Have ye not read?" was his answer to the tempter and the adversary, and his whole life on earth was the fulfilment of the Scriptures. Moreover, of every moment of that life he could say: "He that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone." John 7. 29.