

life, her anxiety about making ends meet, the bereavement she has experienced, and even bodily suffering bring into more vivid relief the greater advantages you possess?

Perhaps your life is one of ease and comfort. You may have never known an anxious moment in regard to the supply of your daily wants. Parents are indulgent, friends plentiful and kind, vigorous health makes every movement a pleasure, and the future tempts your gaze by its fair promise.

Is it not natural to think of all these things, as a sorrowing friend tells the story of her trouble, with quivering lips and tears which will break their bounds, though she tries hard to restrain them?

Surely under such circumstances sympathy is easy. If it is of a practical kind and costs you anything, it is only what you will never miss. What is easier than for you to give kind words, to mingle a summer shower of tears with the bitter ones your friend is shedding. You are the happier if you weep with those who weep.

If, however, positions are reversed and your heart is heavy, whilst your friend's is light and full to overflowing with a great joy in which she seeks your sympathy, your task is not so easy. Such a call bids you put self aside and crush out every envious thought as you look on at her feast of happiness, feeling the while that you would be thankful indeed if the crumbs from such a banquet might fall to your lot.

At first sight it seems easier to rejoice with them than do rejoice than to weep with them that weep, but in practice it is otherwise. Our natures need a great deal of schooling before they get rid of the vein of selfishness which hinders us from giving a full and honest sympathy to those who rejoice.

Since we began our twilight meetings an opinion which I formed long ago has been repeatedly strengthened and confirmed. It is this, that people, especially young ones, generally give their confidence to friends outside of home. Many would sooner confide in absolute strangers than in those who are most closely united to them by the ties of kindred. At the first glance it seems as if there might be something wrong, especially between parents and children, when such is the case; but I am by no means sure of this. It is only sometimes that all the members of a family are also confidential friends, and the young find it difficult to overcome a certain shyness and timidity which hinder them from opening their hearts to their parents. The difference in age and pursuits is so great. The heads of the family seem to tower above their children, as the full grown trees do over the pliable saplings round their roots. Sometimes, too, their opinions are so firmly fixed, that no circumstances will induce them to bend a little in order to bridge over the wide gap between mature age, childhood and youth.

All the while those young shoots are so pliable that a child's hand can bend them in any direction, but at the same time they are hard to break. All of us know that, who have tried to tear a young shoot from the parent tree, and surely this fact teaches a lesson to the elders as well as to the young.

The union between parents and children ought to be a strong one, a bond not easily broken. It behoves us elders to guard it carefully, to draw our young shoots more closely to us, by loving care and by cultivating a spirit of trust in those young creatures whose training God has entrusted to us. It is worth our while to take every possible pains to win and to deserve the full confidence of our children.

They will trust some one. They must satisfy the natural craving for sympathy to be found in every human heart. Let us take care that they may not be able to find any human friend so ready to listen, to cheer, to

sympathise and to help as ourselves. Let us also trust our children so far as it is possible, in order that they may trust us in turn.

And oh, let us be as faithful in dealing with the young as we should be if trusted by an older friend. Let us never forget that the confidence, even of a child, is a sacred thing and not to be violated.

I know, and I am sorry to write it, that mothers do not always consider this. They regard the child's trust, not as a thing to be lovingly cultivated and prized when won, but as a something they have a right to claim and even to betray if they choose.

Never whilst I live shall I forget the effect produced on my mind when I was little more than a child, by a mother who uttered some half-jesting, half-taunting words to her daughter, in connection with a girlish secret. The daughter had opened her heart to her mother in full expectation of sympathy, and her sweet confidence had been turned into a subject for laughter, in the presence of a still younger girl.

What a look of disappointment, indignation and pain combined came on that daughter's face as she stood for a moment gazing at her mother; then turned from her without a word, but with her heart full of bitterness. We walked rapidly side by side for some little time before she spoke. Then came the words, "I will never trust my mother again; never. To think she could make game of me, and before you. She was a girl once and had her little confidences, I daresay, like mine. I wonder if she was ever treated as she has treated me. No. If she had ever felt as I do, she could not have been so cruel."

I tried to say something to comfort her, but of what use could my words be? She only answered, "Never mind, dear. I shall get over it in time, and I have learned my lesson. Try to forget what you heard; though I am not afraid of your telling it again. Only, I should not like you to learn to doubt your mother, because of what you know of mine."

It is sad to record it, but the incident I have given built up a wall of separation between the mother and daughter which was never removed, though the former, bitterly regretting her breach of faith, tried to efface the impression it had made. In the eyes of their neighbours they were an indulgent mother and a dutiful daughter, but outsiders did not know that the inner self of the one was as a sealed book to the other.

Do any of you, my girl-friends, ask why I have told you this, seeing that the warning it gives is for parents, not for you? I answer for more than one reason. First, because I have touching proofs that our gatherings include many mothers, as well as an ever-widening circle of girls. Only a few days ago I met a lady who has grown-up children. After a little talk on other subjects, she said, "You would not perhaps guess that I always sit with you and the girls? In the Twilight Side." I look forward to our talks, and I find them quite as helpful as my daughter does."

Many mothers have said similar words, and letters have come from dear friends of mature age who are dwellers in far-away lands, containing the same testimony. These facts have induced me to say a warning word about the sacredness of a child's confidence. A still stronger inducement came with the thought that on you, the young daughters of to-day, will devolve the sweet and solemn duties of wives and mothers in the future, so a word with regard to such responsibilities cannot be deemed out of place.

Do not let the one sad incident, just related, discourage you from confiding in those who ought to be, and I trust are, nearest and dearest to you.

It often happens that there is a mutual

longing on the part of both mother and daughter to speak to each other on the most important of all subjects—of God, the salvation of the soul and the life to come.

The seeking soul on whom the first ray of divine light has dawned, rejoices in the sweet experience and longs that others may share it, especially those of her own household. If, cheered by the sweet messages of invitation, promise and encouragement in God's word, which have become realities to her through the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, she sets a first trembling footstep on the "narrow way," how she yearns for the companionship of all whom she loves. She wonders how others feel at this solemn starting-point, and yet, with her mind full of her new-born joys and hopes, her lips are sealed towards her mother. Mothers are often as reticent, and though ready to speak confidentially to their children on the things of this present world, they are slow to open their hearts about things eternal.

At the close of a gathering of mothers some years ago, I was spoken to by a dear woman, a widow and the parent of a family of daughters, some of whom were grown up. After speaking of the manner in which her heart had been stirred by the message of God's infinite love in Christ, and of her resolution to become His true disciple she said, "The worst of it is, I feel so lonely. I have no one at home to speak to. It would be such a comfort to have a friend that I could open my heart to."

"Would not your daughters be glad if you spoke to them? Is there not one that would be likely to feel with you in this matter?" I asked.

"I don't know. They are good, steady girls and hard workers. I have had no trouble with them. But somehow I feel shy about speaking to the young ones. It seemed easier to speak to you."

Only a few days later one of the speaker's daughters asked for a few words with me, and from her lips I heard the same story repeated that her mother had told—of the Gospel message brought home, the self-dedication, and the great longing for a companion to whom she might speak of what was in her heart.

"Why not speak to your good mother?" I said.

"I didn't like. She's very good to us, but—"

There was a pause which I well understood, but you will easily guess the result of these two confidences. The mother and daughter were brought into closer union than they had ever known before, and afterwards walked hand in hand, and heart to heart, as followers of Jesus.

There comes to my mind another little incident which took place in a Scotch hydro where I was staying some years ago with my husband and children. A great number of young people were guests at the same time, and added to the brightness of a well-ordered temporary home. Amongst these was a fine young man of about twenty-five, who was always pleasantly conspicuous for little thoughtful kindnesses to the older people. I was passing along a corridor, work in hand, in search of a cosy corner when he spoke to me.

"You are going to sit for awhile, are you not?" he said. "Do come to this window recess. There is no such another cosy corner in the house."

He straightened the cushion, placed a footstool, then asked, "May I have a chat with you whilst you sew?"

"Certainly," I said, wondering a little what had induced this stalwart young fellow, in all the pride of early manhood, to forsake the tennis and the boating in order to talk with me.

I soon enlightened me. "I have none