

"An' why s'ull I help ye oot? I'm nae sae mikle obleeged to ye for onything ye ha'e done, that I s'uld risk my ain neck to serve ye."

"Weel, then, I maun just stay here," was the sullen reply. "I'm tired wi' strugglin', an' I canna' get oot—so good-night to ye."

This dogged courage pleased Sandy, who chuckled a little.

"Na, Maister Robert, I didna' say I wad na' help ye. Hoo did ye fa' in?"

"I saw a bonnie birdin fly in here, an' I thought mebbe I wad find its nest, and I forgot about the holes, and so I fell in."

"Ay, an' noo hoo are ye to get oot again? Eh, doggie, winna' ye be still, an' lat me think?" said Sandy, pushing the little terrier gently away.

It was a dreary place. All around were the holes, like great open graves, from which the peat had been dug; many of them half full of water as black as ink. The dim, weird light made it seem doubly lonely and terrible. Every here and there were tufts of coarse grass, which afforded a footing, insecure enough, but still the only way of crossing the moss with safety. Sandy stood on one of these, musing over the situation.

Robert began to get impatient. The hole into which he had fallen was luckily less full of water than were many of the others; but it was deep, and the sides were slimy to the touch and altogether unable to afford a foothold; so his efforts to free himself had only brought him fatigue of body and vexation of spirit.

"Sandy, man," he exclaimed, "canna' ye lean on the turfs an' gi'e me yer hand?"

"Weel, I'm nae ower gude at leapin'. I ha'e na' practeed it much, ye see," retorted Sandy, grimly.

Robert's face flushed hotly, and he prudently said nothing further.

By and by, Sandy began to advance slowly and cautiously, feeling the ground with his crutch before venturing on it. By this means he proceeded safely till within a few feet of Robert Allison, who watched his progress with eager interest.

"Noo, Maister Robert," he said, pausing, "I ha'e ane word to say to ye. I ha'e often wished for the chance to do ye an ill turn, an' mebbe I wae ha'e done it noo gin it had na' been for my mither. An' I just want ye

to reflect that ye micht ha'e staid where ye are the haille night, if Sandy had had an ill min' as weel as an ill skin."

Robert hung his head. "Sandy, I'm sorry," he said presently.

"Weel, there's naething mair to be said. Tak' a grip o' my stick an' I'll try to pull ye oot."

Robert was heavy, and the strain on Sandy's back hurt him cruelly; but still he persevered, and after some time he had the satisfaction of seeing the other on firm ground again.

"Eh, Maister Robert, sic a plight as ye're in!" and Sandy looked at him in unfeigned dismay. The black mud had clung to his garments, and even besmirched his face.

"Noo be carefu' hoo ye walk," he said, leading the way back to the road.

Robert would have liked to offer thanks, but did not dare to do it, so followed on silently. When they had nearly reached the cart track, Sandy stopped.

"I canna' gang on, Maister Robert," he said faintly: then a sudden pallor overspread his face, and he fell heavily to the ground.

Robert uttered a cry of alarm, and, springing forward, tried anxiously to raise him; but he was forced to give up the attempt, and sitting down beside him, he resolved to wait, in hopes of some one coming. His dog lay down at his side, howling mournfully from one to other.

The minutes passed like hours, and still Sandy lay unconscious. Robert was almost giving way to despair, when he heard the creaking of wheels, and to his great joy a cart soon came in sight. The two men who were in it both jumped out when they saw the melancholy little group by the roadside.

"Aye, but this is ill new... for his puir mither," said one, compassionately, as they lifted the boy tenderly into the cart.

"Noo, Maister Robert, get in wi' yer doggie, an' we'll take ye hame."

Sandy's little basket of moss was still where he had left it, and Robert, with a sudden rush of bitter recollections, took it up carefully, and climbed into the cart.

"Noo," said one of the men, as he stopped before the kirk, "ye maun run on, Maister Robert, an' tell the lad's mither, an' we'll com' slowly after ye."

"Oh, I canna'..." said Robert, huskily.

"Maister Robert, ye maun just do it; we've all to do things we dinna' like, whiles."

And Robert, with downcast eyes and wildly-beating heart, started on his mission. The mother made no outcry; her face grew a shade paler, that was all.

"Is he deid, laddie?" she asked, as Robert finished his rather incoherent account.

"No, no," said the boy, eagerly; and then the cart stopped at the door, and Sandy was carried in and laid on the bed.

"There's a great London doctor up at 'The Towers,' seein' my mother. I'll fetch him."

And Robert dashed out of the house and up the street, not pausing even to notice his crony, Will Burton, who called after him to know what was the matter.

He soon returned with the doctor, who remained a very long time in the little inner room where Sandy was lying.

By and by, Sandy's mother came out, and Robert caught her dress as she passed, not seeing him in the dusky gloom.

"Will he die?" he asked.

"Na, na, laddie; he'll no' die," she answered, gently; "an' the doctor say he'll mebbe be able to do something for the lad's back yet,—he'll no' be like ither folk, but he'll mebbe walk wi'oot his crutch."

And Robert, dropping his face in his hands, burst into sudden tears.

"Eh, laddie, ye maunna' greet; ye'll ha'e both gotten a lesson the day ye'll no' forget," she said, tenderly. Then, with true delicacy, she left him to himself.

Sandy opened his eyes, when she again bent over him.

"Weel, mither," he said, faintly.

"Weel, Sandy."

"What was it ye read about the crooked things bein' made straight? Mebbe I'm ane of the crooked things that He'll be makin' straight up there."

"Aye, Sandy, my lamb; but no' yet. Ye're to stay wi' yer puir auld mither noo," she answered, fondly.

He smiled contentedly.

"Weel, mither, I could na' stay wi' onyane better, except the Ane that's above us a'."

The next few weeks were calm and peaceful ones. Sandy was soon able to sit up, and under the new treatment prescribed by the doctor, grew rapidly better. He soon began

to work at his baskets again, and his new friend Robert was never so happy as when scouring the country in search of curious mosses wherewith to fill them. And when Will Burton ventited a remonstrance, he was told plainly that only by kindness and courtesy to the poor cripple could he retain the liking of his former constant companion; and he, always accustomed to be led by the bolder spirit, consented now to let it lead him in the paths of kindness and humanity.

Robert's devotion was not a mere impulse; he became more and more attached to his humble friend; and for years after the happy day when the invalid was able to go about again in the pleasant sunshine, there were no firmer friends in the little village of Glenburn than Robert Allison, the laird's son, and Sandy, the hunchback.—*St. Nicholas.*

THE SORROWING MOTHER

In the Indiana Penitentiary, I was told of a man who had come there under an assumed name. His mother heard where he was. She was too poor to ride there, and so she walked. Upon her arrival at the prison she at first did not recognize her son in his prison suit and short hair; but when she did see who it was, that mother threw her arms about that boy and said: "I am to blame for this; if I had only taught you to obey God and keep the Sunday you would not have been here." How many mothers, if they were honest, could attribute the ruination of their children to their early training. God has said if we don't teach them those blessed commandments He will destroy us, and the law of God never changes. It does not only apply to those callous men who make no profession of religion, but to those who stand high in the Church if they make the mistake.—*Selected.*

To scold is the impulse of undisciplined human nature, in which both men and women share. It shows weakness of character, as well as infirmity of will, and is almost always a complete demonstration of a feeble mind. A strong, well-balanced, cheerful, sunny make-up, mental and physical, has not to descend to vituperation and offensive talking.