

"Yes, I knew that was it! It's your grand London friends you are thinking of. If they are too grand to come here, let them stay away. Father is a greater man than any of them, if he is not rich."

"Girls, girls, girls, what is all this?" Miss Briggs pulled aside the curtain over the doorway, and came hurriedly into the room. "I heard your voices across the hall. Are you quarrelling the first day Hilary is at home? Don't let your father hear, I beg you, he would be terribly grieved. What is the matter?"

"It's Hilary's fault, she has done nothing but grumble all day long, and I can't stand it. She has made Lettice miserable; the servants are as cross as they can be, and there's no peace in the house."

"Norah has been very rude to me, Miss Briggs. I am obliged to find fault when things are wrong, and I can't help it if the servants are cross."

Miss Briggs looked at the younger girls. "Go upstairs, dears, and change your dresses for dinner. I want to speak to Hilary by herself," she said quietly, and Lettice and Norah left the room with awed faces. The kind old governess did not often interfere with the girls now that they were growing up, but when she did, there was a directness about her speech which was very telling, and this afternoon was no exception to the rule.

"Hilary," she said slowly, when the door had closed behind the two younger girls, "I have been with you now for ten years, and have watched you grow up from a little girl. You were my first pupil, and I can't help taking a special interest in you. You were a dear little child. I thought you would grow up into a sweet, lovable woman, but you will have to change a great deal, Hilary, if you are to do that! You will think me very unkind, but your mother is dead, and I must be truthful with you for your own good. I think you have behaved very unkindly to your sisters to-day. You have been away enjoying yourself while they were left at home;

they did their best to fill your place, and counted the days until your return, and you have made them miserable from the moment of your arrival. The house is as you left it, but even supposing you had noticed a few things which were not to your taste, you could have put them right quietly, or spoken of them in a pleasant, kindly manner. Things have gone on smoothly and quietly while you were away—more smoothly than when you are at home, my dear, for though Lettice is not such a good manager, she has a sweet, amiable manner which makes the servants anxious to please her by doing their best. You are very young, Hilary, and you make the mistake of over-estimating your own importance, and of thinking you are necessary to the welfare of the household. You can easily make yourself so, if you wish, for you are a very clever housekeeper, but if you continue to be as self-satisfied and as regardless of the feelings of others as you are at present, I tell you plainly that you will end in being a hindrance rather than a help. I am not saying that the other girls are faultless, that would not be true—but instead of setting them a good example, in nine cases out of ten, you are the one to begin a quarrel. You think me very cruel to speak like this—it's not easy to do, Hilary—but you may thank me for it some day. Open your eyes, my dear, and try and see yourself as you really are, before it is too late!"

Miss Briggs swept from the room in a flutter of agitation, and Hilary sank into the nearest chair, and gazed blankly at the fire. Her heart was beating in heavy thuds, and she put her hand to her head in stupefied fashion. For several minutes she sat motionless, unable to form any definite thought. She only felt a curious shattered sensation, as though she had come through some devastating experience, which had laid waste all her fondest delusions. What had Miss Briggs said? The household arrangements had been managed better in her absence

than when she was at home. If she did not alter, she would end in being a hindrance rather than a help. She set a bad example to the younger girls and was the instigator of quarrels! Hilary's cheeks burnt with a flush that was almost painful. Her pride was wounded in its most sensitive point. She would have been ready enough to acknowledge that she was not so sweet-tempered as Lettice, or so clever as Norah, but she had been secure in her conviction that no one could touch her in her own department, that she was a person of supreme importance, without whom the whole fabric of the household would fall to pieces. And things had gone on better while she was away! Better! Hilary writhed in humiliation, and the flush burnt more fiercely than before. If she could only manage to disbelieve it all, and wave it aside as a piece of foolish prejudice; but she could not do this, for her eyes were opened, and she saw the meaning of many things which she had mis-read before. Miss Carr's quizzical, disapproving glance; her father's anxious gaze; the little scornful sniff on the face of the old cook as she took her morning's orders. Could it be that they all felt the same, and were condemning her in their hearts, as a stupid, consequential little girl, who had no importance whatever except in her own estimation? And—"a hindrance!" The word brought with it a throb of something deeper than wounded pride, for, with all her faults, Hilary was devoted to her father, and her brothers and sisters, and the thought stung like a whip that they might not care for her—that the time could ever come when they might even wish for her absence!

The light was growing dim in the deserted room, and, as Hilary laid her head back in the old-fashioned chair, the tears which rose to her eyes and trickled slowly down her cheeks were the bitterest she had known in the course of her short life.

(To be continued.)

HINTS ON HOME NURSING.

GIVING OF MEDICINES

(1) A marked measure glass should be used when possible. (2) The medicine must be given regularly. (3) Measure carefully and correctly. (4) Pour out on the side furthest from the label. (5) Wash the glass or spoon after each dose. (6) Keep applications for external use only in blue fluted bottles, and in a different place from those medicines to be taken internally, for fear of mistakes. (7) Always read the label before pouring out.

COD LIVER OIL

is best given early in the day and after food; it may cause diarrhoea, especially in hot weather; if so, a different preparation may be tried.

IRON

should be taken after meals, and it often gives rise to constipation, so watch should be kept and an aperient given when necessary. Should indigestion be set up by iron, a different preparation may be tried.

TO GIVE CASTOR OIL.

This may either be given in strong coffee or warm milk; the latter method is the better way for young children. Another way is to give it in boiling water, which breaks up the fat globules and renders it less greasy; or the castor oil may be given in soda water.

SOOTHING POWDERS

should not be given to babies unless ordered by a doctor, they often contain opiates, and may do grave harm.

EFFERVESCENT MEDICINES

should be brought to the patient in separate glasses and mixed when the patient is ready to drink.

POWDERS

may be mixed with jam, sugar, or glycerine, or put to the back of the tongue, and a drink of water given to carry it down.

IN SCARLET FEVER,

the most infectious time is when the patient is convalescent, and the skin is peeling; it is a good plan to rub the patient with some disinfectant ointment or oil to prevent the particles of skin from flying about. Flannel ought to be worn next the skin, especially over the region of the kidneys, so as to avoid any chance of a chill, which is a serious matter, after even a slight case of scarlet fever.

IN DIPHTHERIA

all the discharges are highly infectious, all rags, etc., used should be burned at once. The patient should be kept lying down as much as possible to give the heart rest, and be watched afterwards for any sign of paralysis. The first indication of this is very often the liquid food comes down the nose, instead of being swallowed naturally, owing to the muscles at the back of the mouth being paralysed.