

"Just so, Uncle Jasper. So you have told me very many times, when you have feared my troubling him on certain matters. Now it has come to me from another source, that he is very ill. My eyes have been opened, and I see the fact myself. I wish to learn the simple and exact truth. I wish to see the doctor he has consulted."

"How do you know he has consulted any?"

"Has he?"

Uncle Jasper was silent for a moment. He felt in a difficulty. Did Charlotte know the worst, she might postpone her marriage, the last thing to be desired just now; and yet where had she got her information? It was awkward enough, though he felt a certain sense of relief in this accounting for the change in her appearance since yesterday morning. He got up and approached her side softly.

"My dear, I do own that your father is ill. I own, too, that I have, by his most express wish, made as light of the matter to you as I could. The fact is, Charlotte, he is anxious, very anxious, about himself. He thinks himself much worse than I believe him to be; but his strongest desire is, that now, on the eve of your marriage, you should not be alarmed on his account. I firmly believe you have no cause for any special fear. Ought you not to respect his wishes, and rest satisfied without seeking to know more than he and I tell you? I will swear, Charlotte, if that is any consolation to you, that I am not immediately anxious about your father."

"You need not swear, Uncle Jasper. Your not being anxious does not prevent my being so. I am determined to find out the exact truth. If he thinks himself very ill he has, of course, consulted some medical man. If you will not tell me his name I will myself ask my father to do so to-night."

"By so doing you will shock him, and the doctor does not wish him to be shocked."

"Just so, Uncle Jasper, and you can spare him that by telling me what you know."

"My dear niece, if you will have it?"

"I certainly am quite resolved, uncle."

"Well, well, you approach this subject at your peril. If you must see the doctor you must. Wilful woman over again. Would you like me to go with you?"

"No, thank you, I prefer to go alone. What is the doctor's name?"

"Sir George Anderson, of B—— Street."

"I will go to him at once," said Charlotte.

She left the room instantly, though she heard her uncle calling her back. Yes, she would go to Sir George at once. She pulled out her watch, ran up-stairs, put on some out-door dress, and in ten minutes from the time she had learned the name of the great physician was in aansom driving to his house. This rapid action was a relief to her. Presently she arrived at her destination. Yes, the doctor was at home. He was engaged for the present with another patient, but if Charlotte liked to wait he would see her in her turn. Certainly she would wait. She gave her card to the man who admitted her, and was shown into a room, very dark and dismal, where three or four patients were already enduring a time of suspense waiting for their interviews. Charlotte, knowing nothing of illness, knew, if possible, still less of doctors' rooms. A sense of added depression came over her as she seated herself on the nearest chair, and glanced, from the weary and suffering faces of those who waited anxiously for their doom, to the periodicals and newspapers piled on the table. A gentleman seated not far off handed her the last number of the *Illustrated London News*. She took it, turning the pages mechanically. To her dying day she never got over the dislike to that special paper which that half-hour created.

One by one the patients' names were called by the grave footman as he came to summon them. One by one they went away, and at last, at last, Charlotte's turn came. She had entered into conversation with a little girl of about sixteen, who appeared to be in consumption, and the little girl had praised the great physician in such terms that Charlotte felt more than ever that against his opinion there could be no appeal. And now at last she was in the great man's presence and, healthy girl that she was, her heart, beat so loud, and her face

grew so white, that the practised eyes of the doctor might have been pardoned for mistaking her for a *bona-fide* patient.

"What are you suffering from?" he asked of her.

"It is not myself, Sir George," she said, then making a great effort to control her voice—"I have come about my father—my father is one of your patients. His name is Harman."

Sir George turned to a large book at his side, opened it at a certain page, read quietly for a moment, then closing it, fixed his keen eyes on the young lady.

"You are right," he said, "your father, Mr. Harman, is one of my patients. He came to see me no later than last week."

"Sir," said Charlotte, and her voice grew steadier and braver as she spoke, "I am in perfect health, and my father is ill. I have come here to-day to learn from your lips the exact truth as to his case."

"The exact truth?" said the doctor.

"Does your father know you have come here, Miss—Miss Harman?"

"He does not, Sir George. My father is a widower, and I am his only child. He has endeavored to keep this thing from me, and hitherto has partially succeeded. Yesterday, through another source, I learned that he is very seriously ill. I have come to you to know the truth. You will tell it to me, will you not?"

"I certainly can tell it to you."

"And you will?"

"Well, the fact is, Miss Harman, he is anxious that you should not know. I am scarcely prepared to fathom your strength of character. Any shock will be of serious consequence to him. How can I tell how you will act when you know all?"

"You are preparing me for the worst now, Sir George. I solemnly promise you in no way to use my knowledge so as to give my father the slightest shock."

"I believe you," answered the doctor. "A brave woman can do wonders. Women are unselfish; they can hide their own feelings to comfort and succor another. Miss Harman, I am sorry for you, I have had news for you."

"I know it, Sir George. My father is very ill."

"Your father is as seriously ill as a man can be to be alive; in short, he is—dying."

"It there no hope?"

"None."

"Must he die soon?" asked Charlotte, after a brief pause.

"That depends. His malady is of such a nature that any sudden shock, any sudden grief will probably kill him instantly. If his mind is kept perfectly calm, and all shocks are kept from him, he may live for many months."

"Oh! terrible!" cried Charlotte.

She covered her face. When she raised it at last it looked quite haggard and old.

"Sir George," she said, "I do not doubt that in your position as a doctor you have come across some secrets. I am going to confide in you, to confide in you to a certain measure."

"Your confidence shall be sacred, my dear young lady."

"Yesterday, Sir George, I learned something, something which concerns my father. It concerns him most nearly and most painfully. It relates to an old and buried wrong. This wrong relates to others; it relates to those now living most nearly and most painfully."

"Is it a money matter?" asked the doctor.

"It is a money matter. My father alone can set it right. I mean that during his lifetime it cannot possibly in any way be set right without his knowledge. Almost all my life, he has kept this thing a secret from me and—from the world. For three-and-twenty years it has lain in a grave. If he is told now, and the wrong cannot be repaired without his knowledge, it will come on him as—a disgrace. The question I ask of you is this: Can he bear the disgrace?"

"And my answer to you, Miss Harman, is, that in his state of health the knowledge you speak of will instantly kill him."

"Then—then—God help me! what am I to do? Can the wrong never be righted?"

"My dear young lady, I am sincerely sorry for you. I cannot enter into the moral question, I can only state a fact. As

your father's physician I forbid you to tell him."

"You forbid me to tell him?" said Charlotte. She got up and pulled down her veil. "Thank you," she said, holding out her hand. "I have that to go on—as my father's physician you forbid him to know?"

"I forbid it absolutely. Such a knowledge would cause instant death."

(To be Continued.)

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubet's Select Notes.)

November, 11.—1 Samuel 15: 12-26.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. "Obedience." Nothing can be loved to God which does not shape itself into obedience. We remember the anecdote of the Roman commander who forbade an engagement with the enemy, and the first transgressor against whose prohibition was his son. He accepted the challenge of the leader of the other host, met, slew, spoiled him; and then, in triumphant feeling, carried the spoils to his father's tent. But the Roman father refused to recognize the instinct which prompted this as deserving the name of love. Disobedience contradicted it and deserved death.—*F. W. Robertson*. Luther said that he had rather obey than work miracles (John 2: 5). Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

II. If a boy at school is bidden to cipher and chooses to write a copy instead, the goodness of the writing will not save him from censure. We must obey whether we see the reason or not, for God knows best.—*Easter*. Matt. 12: 13. "Stretch forth thine hand." What, when it is withered! Yes; obedience says, Trust when ye cannot trace.—*Bowen*.

III. The hypocrite is like a watch which is so badly made that it stands or goes wrong from its very nature, and the only cure is to give it a new inside.—*Salter*. A hypocrite is the picture of a saint; but his paint shall be washed off, and he shall appear in his own colors.—*Mason*.

PRACTICAL.

1. If men reject us, God may take us up, but when God rejects, who shall help?—*Watson*.

2. The cause of rejection is disobedience.

3. Good intention can never be a right rule of conduct and a good guide of conscience.—*Sanderson*.

4. Obedience must be full, exact, implicit.

5. If sacrifice could replace obedience, God would never be obeyed, for men will sacrifice all rather than obey.—*Watson*.

6. Sacrifices ceased in Christ, obedience endures for ever.

7. Every ceremonial law is moral; the outward act is never enjoined but for the inward thing.—*Henricusberg*.

8. We must judge rather than justify ourselves if we would escape divine judgment.—*Henry*.

9. Before seeking the approval of conscience we must regulate conscience by the will and word of God.—*Worlesworth*.

10. Hypocrisy would make convenience the measure and rule of the execution of God's command; and under pretence of godliness seek gain.—*Oslander*.

11. The obedient man will learn to put implicit trust in the wisdom and justice of God's judgments (vers. 11-26).

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

While the leading thought of the lesson is True Obedience, the lesson as a whole discloses to us (1) A hypocritical claim for the merit of true obedience (ver. 12 1/2). In verse 13 the claim is made with a most brazen-faced assurance. In verse 14 the mask is stripped off, and the claimant convicted by patent facts. Next we have (2) A hypocritical excuse for something less and other than true obedience (vers. 15-23). In verse 15, Samuel pronounces the divine judgment upon it with the intent to produce in Saul self-conviction and condemnation (ver. 17). In verses 20, 21, Saul still denies responsibility. In verse 22, the prophet lays down the eternal law, the truth that gives significance to the whole interview, and in verse 23 he makes personal application. Contrast up to this point the disobedience of Saul with the obedience of Samuel. Stanley notes as significant that Saul was con-

verted suddenly, late in life; Samuel was a child of God from infancy. Following this we have (3) A hypocritical confession (ver. 24-26). In verses 24, 25, the confession is made. Note its hollowness, and contrast with David's (Ps. 51). In verse 26 is given the prophet's judgment upon it. Note that Samuel utters not his own wishes but the judgment of God.

MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE.

It has been noticed often in recent years at the examinations in our theological seminaries, that very few of our candidates for the ministry are able to quote Scripture with any great facility. A distinguished professor of systematic theology in one of our leading seminaries, no great while ago, was much mortified that his class, though able to answer the most difficult questions on all other points could not give accurately the Scripture texts in proof of even the most important doctrines of the faith. It is to be apprehended that this is a growing defect among the young people in all our congregations and Sabbath-schools. They are taught everything about the Word of God, without learning much of the Word of God itself. The defect is a serious one, and is poorly compensated for by any amount of brilliant declamation or discussion on the part of the teacher, which leaves the pupil ignorant, after all, of the Bible's own inspired words and doctrines. What is most needed is that the young mind, while the memory is still quick, strong, retentive, and unoccupied as to other things, shall be filled with an accurate and extended knowledge of the very words of Scripture. To what better use can the mind of a child be put than to the task, which most children find easy and pleasant of committing to memory selected portions of the New Testament? In all literature there are no words so beautiful and so precious as the words of Jesus and his divinely inspired apostles. In all history and philosophy there are no truths so important for a young mind to learn, and so salutary in training it, as these sublime and beautiful lessons of the Word of God. No theory of Christian education can ever be complete without them, nor can any young mind be properly developed in the absence of these divine lessons of love, of truth, of moral virtue, contained in the Word of God.

Now all experience proves that the only true and effectual process by which this indispensable part of education can be fully secured, is found in the old-time method of committing the words of Scripture to memory. With all our new devices and appliances, there is absolutely nothing, in our judgment, which can take the place of actually memorizing the Book of God. No young person is likely to know much about the doctrines and precepts of the Bible who does not commit its words to memory. There may, indeed, be some desultory acquaintance with its facts, but as to anything more, the knowledge will be, at best, superficial, uncertain, and defective. David could say, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee." What all students of the Bible, whether old or young, need to do, is to store the mind, the memory, the heart with the very words which the Holy Ghost did inspire, and which God has accordingly spoken in the Scriptures.

Admirable in spirit and perfect in all disciplinary methods, as are many of our best conducted Sunday-schools, with their beautiful libraries and self-devoted bands of teachers, we never enter one of them without feeling that there is a sad defect in that practical ignoring of the Word of God, which has resulted from setting aside the requirements to have the weekly lesson committed to memory. The loss to the child for life by reason of this omission is incalculable. Our deliberate opinion, confirmed by experience and long observation, is that no one thing could be learned in the Sabbath-school, so important in all its influences and results, as this one thing which is now universally omitted. That the Scripture lesson could be easily committed to memory if required, is demonstrated not only by the fact that it was once universally so done, but by the fact that in many schools, even now, the Shorter Catechism is so memorized—a thing immensely harder to the child than the memorizing of any equal portion of the Word of God, except, perhaps, its genealogical tables.—*Interior*.