

was not going to allow that any importance was to be attached to it.

"You might know," she said, "that Captain Jack, as folks call him, though by all accounts he's no real captain now, seeing he had to leave the Army years ago, has impudence enough for anything. He would push himself into our mistress's company without saying, 'By your leave, miss,' and he would stick by her side like a leech, just to show off. What could she do?"

"They meet in company sometimes, though very seldom, and a good thing too, and of course, she couldn't say straight out, 'Go away, I don't want to be seen speaking to you.' And now, William Burns, if we are to be friends, you'll not say another word to any living soul about having seen that man walking with our young mistress."

"I wish nobody knew but me, Patty, and then no one else should know. But plenty of people saw them walking together, your own father for one, as they came up to the gates. And everybody would tell you, same as I have done, that Miss Mountford looked as merry and pleased as could be. As to not turning the side the Captain was on! Why, you know he's a rare handsome man, and good looks sometimes go further than good lives in gaining favour."

William Burns cast a sly glance at Patty as he gave utterance to this opinion, which was intended to express a well-known truth, and to be a quiet reproof to the listening damsel. William was Patty's open admirer, but thus far had not received the measure of encouragement his devotion merited. He attributed his ill-success to the fact that

he had a rival, whose personal appearance was allowed to be far superior to his own, and who having seen service in the neighbourhood of London, knew far more of the great world and its ways than honest William, who had never been far from his native village.

"Don't tell me about looks," retorted Patty. "Many an apple looks tempting enough outside, but sets your teeth on edge when you taste it. I prefer good ways to good looks."

Patty smiled on her faithful admirer more kindly than was her wont. She was like many another girl, proud to show her absolute power over him. But despite the various snubs she had thought fit to administer during the conversation, William went away happy and hopeful after this last conciliatory speech.

(To be continued.)



## ON SYMPATHY.

It is just the key to fit all hearts, by which, rightly used, entrance to each one can be obtained. Never be in a hurry. You start on your day's work with a long list in your mind that you "must get through." If you are quite resolved on getting just that exact amount of work done then leave sympathy out of the question. When I first began this work I used often to write out a list each day of the people I wanted to visit. But before long I found such a list worse than useless. It often happens, for instance, that one tells you of another in need of a visit. This is not on your list, but it lies in your way.

When you enter a house one glance tells you the state of matters. Never stay long on a washing-day, if indeed you enter the house at all. But the people are so innately polite that they will welcome you and press you to come in, sometimes at great inconvenience to themselves. I think courtesy is one of the chief characteristics of the poor. When the conversation commences, generally speaking it is best, I think, to let your hostess take the lead. Encourage her to talk quite simply about the things she knows best and is most interested in. By this means you at once get to know the lead of her mind and the tone of her household. Before you ever ask a question put yourself in her place and ask yourself,

"Should I like to answer such a question? Would I ask it of an equal?" I think the habit of asking questions is very often the rock on which people split. Many a time have I been told "I don't like So-and-So. She asks too many questions, and 'tis no business of hers." I always sympathise with them in this. I have known of many ladies positively requested to "leave the house and never darken the door-step again," all through that fatal and impertinent habit of asking questions, and also for interfering, or stating brusquely that things might be much better managed. We shall never win love or confidence in this way, and surely to gain these is our desire. We should make them feel, "I do not come to you in the proud spirit of a superior to criticise, to spy upon your ways and means, and to direct you from a higher level; but in the spirit of love and humility I come as your sister-woman, longing to sympathise, longing to help you if you will let me, or if you need me. It may be that your life is a more Christ-like one than mine, and then, my sister, often do you teach me." In humility then and with a loving heart of sympathy listen to their story, however long, however tiresome. You will never, in the end, regret time thus "wasted." True sympathy will not only feel for, but will enter into and feel with its object. If you have not the gift

of, or faculty for sympathy, you will never get into the hearts of the people. You will find them more or less entirely selfish, only interested, for the most part, in their own narrow bit of the world. Do not condemn them for this out of your own wider horizon, which after all, also has its limits. You may be able in time gradually to widen their horizons for them, but most probably you will not be able to accomplish even this small result.

I believe entirely in what might be called the lever method of working. Use your opportunities, but at the same time do not be in a hurry to make them. God will do that for you in all earnest work. This knowledge has come to me as a very glad result of experience.

Never let a wrong thing pass altogether, but in the spirit of love and gentleness and prayerfulness wait God's time, and the opportunity He will give you. It may be at once, it may be weeks, even months after when tempers have had time to cool. God's Spirit will guide you in this unerringly. By-and-by, when you have won your way and they are sure of your sympathy in all things, you will find so much to gladden you. You will be told of neighbours or friends in trouble, and begged to go and see them, perhaps only to relieve temporal needs, but often to read, to talk, to pray with them.