

But after that morning he never felt wholly without hope. He could not tell precisely why. Draxy did not seek seek him, did not avoid him. She was perhaps a little less merry; said fewer words; but she looked glad and more than glad. "I think it's the eyes," he said to himself again and again, as he tried to analyze the new look on Draxy's face which gave him hope. These were sweet days. The very air was loaded with significance to them. Always there was hope of meeting; always there was consciousness of presence; everywhere a mysterious sense that the loved one has passed by. More than once Seth Kinney knelt and laid his cheek on the stairs which Draxy's feet had just ascended! Often sweet, guileless Draxy thought, as she went up and down, "Ah, the dear feet that go over these stairs." One day the Elder, as he passed by the wall of the room where he knew Draxy was sitting, brushed his great hand and arm against it so heavily that she started, thinking he had stumbled. But as the firm step went on, without pausing, she smiled, she hardly knew why. The next time he did it she laid down her work, locked and unlocked her hands, and looking toward the door, whispered under her breath, "Dear hands!" Finally this became almost a habit of his; he did not at first think Draxy would hear it; but he felt, as he afterwards told her, "like a great affectionate dog going by her door, and that was all he could do. He would have like to lie down on the rug."

These were very sweet days; in spite of his misgivings, Elder Kinney was happy; and Draxy, in spite of her unconsciousness seemed to herself to be living in a blissful dream. But a sweeter day came.

One Saturday evening Reuben said to Draxy,—

"Daughter, I've done somethin' I'm afraid'll trouble you. I've told th' Elder about your verses, and showed him the hymn you wrote when you was tryin' to give it all up about the land."

"Oh, father, how could you," gasped Draxy; and she looked as if she would cry.

Reuben could not tell just how it happened. It seemed to have come out before he knew, and after it had, he could not help showing the hymn.

Draxy was very seriously disturbed; but she tried to conceal it from her father, and the subject was dropped.

The next morning Elder Kinney preached—it seemed to his people—as he never preached before. His subject was self-renunciation, and he spoke as one who saw the waving palms of the martyrs and heard their shouts of joy. There were few dry eyes in the little meeting-house. Tears rolled down Draxy's face. But she looked up suddenly, on hearing Elder Kinney say, in an unsteady voice,—

"My bretherin, I'm goin' to read to you now a hymn which comes nigher to expressin' my idea of the of resignation God likes than any hymn that's ever been written or printed in any hymn-book;" and then he began:

"I cannot think but God must know," etc.