

[SELECTED.]

Satan's Spectacles!



NEVER heard of such a thing!

Nor did I either, till within an hour. The idea would never have come into my mind, had I not been digging into an old author after gold, as they do in California, and I dug them up.

Some people look at certain objects, and have such a vision of them as could be true only on the ground that their eyes were under some kind of bad influence. Satan does not need any appendages to his vision. He is sharp-sighted and no mistake. But he has a good deal to do with other people's vision. And the different views he helps people to take of things, suggested the idea of spectacles to an old Puritan writer.

I thought if Satan made spectacles for people to look through in former days, it was likely he was not done with the business yet. If he was a liar and a murderer from the beginning, I thought likely he had been a spectacle-maker as long, since that species of mechanics, as I have learned, helps him greatly in both these occupations.

Since the old Puritan furnished me with the hint, I have been looking about me, and I have seen that a great many people are customers of this optician.

I found these articles of different kinds, just as other spectacles are, and adapted with great skill to different classes of persons. I will speak of a few pairs.

In a chat with a young man, the subject of religion came up, and the importance of his having a personal interest in it. That importance was founded on the dreadful ruin of the soul occasioned by sin. *His* soul in such a dreadful state of guilt and ruin! *He* in such terrible danger! Why, what has he been doing? He has never wronged a mortal. There was not the stain of a single vice upon him. He was kind, honest, true—what need he be more? He saw all the amiable things in his character, and as for any such affair as guilt, for which he ought to be alarmed, there was nothing of the kind visible. That my young friend had on a pair of spectacles, was as plain as day: and as I could think of nobody who could make *such* a pair with so much skill, and good-will too, I gave the credit of them to Satan.

I waxed warm in my argument with the young man, and the fire burned so hot within me, that I gave vent to the idea that no mortal of our fallen race ever saw little, and thought little of his sins, unless he had on a pair of Satan's spectacles; and I tried to make powder and dust of those the

young man wore, and I think I should, if the maker had not been nigh to give his customer a helping hand.

Another pair I found not long after in this wise: I fell in with a man who felt very comfortable in reference to his soul's salvation. He named divers things that pleased him mightily. He contributed for public worship and ministerial support, liberally and promptly. He was seldom absent from the sanctuary. He read his Bible with great regularity. He did divers other things akin to these; and they were all good things too. And he thought much of them. And they loomed up before him in great beauty. And he could not but speak of them; and they were great things in his view. And they were strong wings and beautiful, he thought, wherewith one might fly heavenward. And strange it would be, if those gates were not open to such a man. Any other agencies for getting the gates open seemed of little account compared with this. Any other gold was dim, even the most fine gold.

Now that man *saw*, and very bright and beautiful were the objects of his vision. And if he had not spectacles, then mortal man never wore them. And they were so nearly like a pair a man had on near two thousand years ago, that the same hand must have been in the making of them both. That old pair—that is, the effect of them—is described in an old book I have, and the account is by the man himself. He was a Hebrew, and of the strictest sect of the Pharisees—admirably expert in the old laws of those days, and touching the keeping of most of them blameless. And these and like matters in regard to character, had a most delightful aspect in his eyes. He could hardly have done gazing on them, so lovely did they appear; and he counted that they could not do any less for him than give him a home in heaven. But those spectacles, through which we saw so great beauty and glory—and the maker did his best at the workmanship of them—these same met with a dreadful mishap. There came along a giant, known by the name of MORAL LAW, who, as he had a grudge against the spectacles and the maker, gave them such a blow as to smash them into a thousand pieces, and liked to have killed the man who had them on. On looking at the record again, I saw the man was killed. "When the commandment came, sin revived and I *died!*"

But he came to life again, and so far from being sour and revengeful because his own spectacles had been shattered, he was a thousand-fold the happier for it, and he went to work to knock into dust and ruin all those which were like those he had worn. And more people lost them by his agency than by that of any other man living; which blew up a terrible flame of discord between the old optician and Paul, and at odds they were,