

"you" whom He loves, "you" whom He shields, "you" whom He saves, "you" whom He will always keep. No matter how poor or small or weak you may be; still "you" are the object of His eternal love.

As the sweet assurance presses home, how the shadows lift to make way for the glad sunbeams; how the burdens grow light because of the Mighty hand that is pressed beneath them; how the fears vanish; how the rugged way grows smooth again; and all because you and I are not alone, but have trusted our all "Unto Him who is able to keep us."

Day-Dreams of the Future.

THE DREAMER.

CHAP. II.

While my mind was taking in these wonderful discoveries, the old man had quietly left his seat, and walking over to where some vines grew, which I had not yet noticed, he plucked and brought to me a bunch of grapes.

"Eat these," he said, "and they will refresh you while I tell you my story; for it is long, and some of it will be sad to the listener. What it must be to tell, I will leave you to judge."

I thanked him for his kindness and tasted one of the grapes. Beautiful as they were to look at, what most surprised me was their flavor, and as I ate them it seemed as if new life and vigor found its way into my blood. My head grew clearer, and my mental powers gained new strength to listen to what the old man had to tell.

"To make my story complete it will be necessary for me to go back to the period of time which marks the close of your consciousness of events. Looking back to that time, and judging from my present knowledge and experience, your conclusions as to men and things must have been fairly correct, although I was not then able to arrive at any just estimate of current events, which was entirely my own fault. It is true that I was a professing Christian, a member of a recognized church, membership of which was an open sesame to all the privileges and respectability which such a position could confer. I avoided everything which was outwardly immoral, contributed largely, as I thought then, for church work, and, in fact, was looked upon as an average Christian man."

The same look of sadness and regret which I had noticed before clouded his face, and a sigh which seemed to come from the bottom of his heart broke the silence. I waited quietly until he was ready to go on, but in the meanwhile

something else had claimed my attention. A flock of beautiful birds had alighted near, and were pluming their feathers and cooing softly to each other, when, to my horror, I saw coming along an animal from whose appearance I judged that the birds were in danger; but to my astonishment, instead of the murderous gleam I expected to see in its eyes, and the destruction which might follow, I watched the animal walk softly in among them, evidently with no wish to harm the birds, and without causing any alarm in them; and some words seemed to float across my mind, "They shall not hurt nor destroy." This had all passed with such dream-like rapidity, that I was quite ready to give my attention to my companion, who had recovered from the effect of his saddened memories.

"You must pardon me," he said, "and I will not again allow my thoughts to wander; but when I look back at my conduct from my present standpoint, I am astonished that I dared to call myself a Christian. It was all a mockery, for the one all-absorbing passion of my soul was the accumulation of money. I called it a desire to secure a comfortable provision for old age, and mentally set a figure which would meet the demand; but no sooner was that reached than my desires expanded and a larger sum seemed necessary; and so it went on, until every pure desire, every generous impulse, every higher aspiration were swallowed up by this all-engrossing greed of gain. What makes the remembrance all the harder to bear is that there was in my home surroundings no incentive to such conduct, for there was nothing which did not breathe a spirit of the truest piety; the word of God was not only studied, but practised, and the name of Jesus was honored and loved. We had two children who, under their mother's influence and training, developed characters similar to her own, and both became while quite young sincere, earnest Christians. As I look back to the time when wife and children were mine, I am overwhelmed with astonishment at my own blindness and folly, for while I never openly opposed any of the details of my home life, there were often times when I secretly fretted under the restraints it imposed on my besetting sin, but which I hid most carefully from my loved ones. And yet there must have been many a time when my words and actions grieved and surprised them, with all my care to hide my fault which grew on me so steadily."

"I notice that you always speak of your wife and children in the past tense," I remarked.

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Hood's Sarsaparilla Cures not bear the slightest touch. When I had taken one bottle of this medicine, the soreness had gone, and before I had finished the second the bunches had entirely disappeared." **BLANCHE ARWOOD, Sangerville, Maine.**

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"And so they are," he answered sadly; "and as I proceed with my story you will understand why I do so. While I was so selfishly and blindly engrossed in getting rich, wonderful strides were being made in the world at large. Inventive and mechanical genius grew as never before, while the desire and facility for travelling became greater, making an increase of knowledge a matter of course. Perhaps no one element was as great a factor in all this development and working out of human knowledge as the principle of electricity. This power, which so long had wandered round the world and brought disaster and destruction so often with its touch, was now converted into a servant, and like a giant in harness wielded a power for usefulness the world had never known before. Speed, strength, light were all eliminated and increased a hundredfold, but not more than was needed to meet the demands of a growing need of mankind. The education of the young became of daily growing importance, and nothing was neglected which could make it more thorough and efficient. This was the case in all Christian countries, while the influence of Christian teaching was carried into so-called heathen lands, and by degrees the gospel of Jesus Christ found its way over the whole earth, and all nations had the option of accepting or rejecting it."

(To be continued.)

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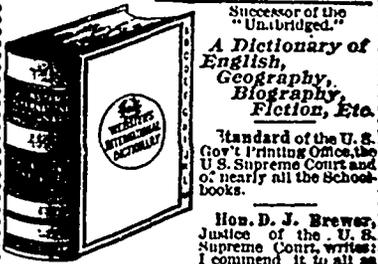
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