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DAWNING OF CHRISTMAS MORN.

W. J. K.

'Twas Christmas eve, the night was bitter cold,
Winds whistled through the trees all leafless, bare;
I slept, forgetting every pain and care,
And saw in dream an angel,—grace untold!—
Who stood upon elysian banks of gold.
Around him glittered jewels bright and fair,
And richer, too, than any kings can wear.
Above his head sweet clouds of incense rolled.
Beside him, pure with Christ's redeeming blood,
The dazzling sea of man's salvation glowed.
Around him glittered rays of mellow light.
The angel looking, smiled, and soon a flood
Of music rare, enchanting, 'round him flowed,
And ushered Christmas morn upon my sight.

FOOTPRINTS.

BY R. W.

"There is nothing new under the sun," so the philosopher said many years ago. The same bright orb of day shone upon our ancestors as it shines upon us. They beheld the same starry dome of heaven. The places where we walk have been trodden by others before, and future generations will follow in our footsteps. It is only man who changes. The same life drama is being enacted now as was enacted in past centuries. The old actors disappear, and new ones succeed them upon the stage. Some in the past played their part well, received their meed of applause, and withdrew; some acted indifferently, and their presence was barely tolerated; while others failed ignominiously, and were hustled off the stage to make room for more successful rivals. The same may, in truth, be said of the actors at the present time. We all play our little part, the curtain falls, the scene is at an end, the actors disappear. But those who pass away leave behind them a memory: the more successful they have been, the deeper and more lasting the impression.

We are all in a certain sense imitators. The child loves to follow in the footsteps of his parent; the patriot of to-day models his life after that of Washington; the soldier ambitious for glory walks in the footsteps of Napoleon; the painter strives to imitate a Raphael; so each succeeding generation follows in the footsteps of those which have gone before. Ancient usages, also, have always had a strong hold

upon the human race. When Rome was at the height of her glory and splendor, her generals and statesmen would not tolerate innovations; they felt, if they walked in the footsteps of their ancestors, men of sterling worth; if they followed ancient customs, they could not go astray. So great is the tendency to do as others, have done, and to strive to outdo them if possible, that there are few lands undiscovered; there are few places which the enterprise and daring adventurous spirit of man has not impelled him to explore. The footsteps of man have traversed over the barren regions of the North Pole with its masses of perpetual snow; have penetrated into the desert wilds of Africa; have descended into the hidden recesses under ground, to wrench from mother earth the treasures concealed in her bosom.

It is well known that man exerts an influence upon those around him for good or evil. Example, as well as precept, has a share in moulding the character. If we walk in the footsteps of others, and others in turn follow after us, how important is it that the impressions which we leave behind should be clear and distinct. The hunter with his faithful dog tracks the wild beast to his lair by following the footprints in the snow, or the soft yielding soil; the traveller lost in the forest follows the footprints of the guide, in order that he may extricate himself from his unpleasant situation; desolation marks the progress of the advancing army; the mountain torrent in its mad, furious course carries destruction in its wake; so the paths which we have trodden are marked by the footprints which we leave behind. Let not man walk in those devious, winding paths that may cause another following after to stumble or lose his way; but rather let him walk in such a manner that another, perhaps wearied, following in his footprints, may catch a gleam of hope to cheer him on his journey. It is a mark of a wise man to follow the wise and good; but sometimes, indeed, owing to the weakness of human nature, the footprints of those whom we follow fall in marshy ground, and are for the time obliterated; but we who follow and observe well their footsteps may avoid the pitfalls and the discomfiture consequent upon their mishaps.

All have capabilities for great things. Man is hardly aware of his own power till circumstances call forth his latent energies. We should