

BARRIERS BURNED AWAY.

By Rev. E. P. Roe.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER XX.

MISS LUDOLPH MAKES A DISCOVERY.

Several hours were measured off from a neighboring steeple before Dennis's excited mind was sufficiently calm to permit sleep, and even then he often started up from some fantastic dream, in which the Bruders and Mr. and Miss Ludolph acted many strange parts. At last he seemed to hear exquisite music. As the song rose and fell, it thrilled him with delight. Suddenly it appeared to break into a thousand pieces, and fall scattering on the ground like a broken string of pearls, and this musical crash, as it were, awoke him. The sun was shining brightly into the room, and all the air still seemed vibrating with music. He started up and realized that he had greatly over-slept. Much vexed he commenced dressing in haste, when he was startled by a brilliant prelude on the piano, and a voice of wonderful power and sweetness struck into an air that he had never heard before. Soon the whole building was resonant with music, and Dennis stood spellbound till the strange, rich sounds died away, as before, in a few notes from the instrument that had seemed in his dream, like the song breaking into glittering fragments.

"It must be Miss Ludolph," thought Dennis. "And can she sing like that? What an angel true faith would make of her! O how could I over-sleep so!" And he dressed in breathless haste. In going down to the second floor, he found a piano open and new music upon it, which Miss Ludolph had evidently been trying,—but she was not there. Yet a delicate peculiar perfume which the young lady always used, pervaded the place, even as her song had seemed to pulsate through the air after it had ceased. She could not be far off. Stepping to a picture show-room over the front door, Dennis found her sitting quietly before a large painting, sketching one of the figures in it.

"I learned from papa that you were a very early riser," said she looking up for a moment and then resuming her work. "I fear there is some mistake about it. If we are ever to get through rearranging the store, you will have to curtail your morning naps."

"I most sincerely beg your pardon. I never over-slept so before. But I was out late last night, and passed through a most painful scene, that so disturbed me that I could not sleep till nearly morning, and I find to my great vexation that I have over-slept. I promise you it shall not happen again."

"I am not sure of that, if you are out late in Chicago, and passing through painful scenes. I should say that this city was a peculiarly bad place for a young man to be out late in."

"It was an experience wholly unexpected to me, and I hope it may never occur again. It was a scene of trouble that I had no hand in making, but which even humanity would not permit me to leave at once."

"Not a scene of measles or smallpox, I hope. I am told that your mission people are indulging in these things most of the time. You have not been exposed to any contagious disease?"

"I assure you I have not."

"Very well; be ready to assist me to-morrow morning, for we have no slight task before us, and I wish to complete it as soon as possible. I shall be here at half-past six, and do not promise to sing you awake every morning. Were you not a little startled to hear such unwonted sounds echoing through the prosaic old store?"

"I was indeed. At first I could not believe that it was a human voice."

"That is rather an equivocal compliment."

"I did not mean to speak in compliment at all, but to say in all sincerity that I have seldom heard such heavenly music."

"Perhaps you have never heard very much of any kind, or else your imagination overshadows your other faculties. In fact I think it does, for did you not at first regard me as a painted lady who had stepped from the canvas to the floor?"

"I confess that I was greatly confused and startled."

"In what respect did you see such a close resemblance?"

Dennis hesitated.

"Are you not able to tell?" asked she.

"Yes," said Dennis, with heightened color, "but I do not like to say."