

be entirely safe? People have been sorry enough for entering into temptation and danger, but no one was ever sorry for keeping to the safe side.

KEEP CLOSE TO FATHER.

"If I keep close to father I think I shall be all right. The rain can't hurt me then."

It was raining, and Albert and his father were walking home from the evening meeting at the village a mile away from their home. Father had his umbrella up to shield them from the storm; But Albert was not nearly so tall as the full-grown man who walked beside him. In fact, his head hardly came up to his father's waist, so that when a step or two away, he was not covered by the umbrella and the rain came down upon him.

"Yes. Take my hand, Albert, and walk close by me, and the rain will not fall on you," said father; and the boy did so, trudging bravely on unharmed by the storm.

Keeping close to father! What a good place to be in! to feel the protecting power of one stronger than ourselves. And thus is our heavenly Father willing to help and shield us. Are we walking close to Him? In early life the young feel so strong and able to care for themselves that often they do not see the need of anyone to assist them. This self-reliance flees away soon, for there comes a time when the young person realizes how weak he is. Then he will see that keeping close to his heavenly Father is his only safety. No earthly parent may be near to guide his footsteps; but no such parent could be more watchful over his children than is the All-Father: and he is always ready to help those who come to Him.

Keep close to your Father. Take His hand in yours. Trust Him to lead you through the storm and darkness. Talk with Him often. Read his message every day, and remember always that that message is for you—"Keep close to Father."

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"SO THOUGHTLESS."

"Walk home with you? Ye-es I think so! Would you mind if I took old Mrs. Dame instead? I'll tell you why, the next time I see you!"

I was used to my friend, and waited with all patience. The next time came in a day or two.

"There! I'll tell you just all about it! I knew you would understand. That little Annie Dame is so thoughtless! You know she's the youngest, and the only one left at home now. All the others have gone off and got married or something, and Annie and her mother are left alone to be company to each other. But I am afraid she isn't much company—Annie, I mean! I suppose she means to be, but I can't imagine myself going off with the other girls and leaving my mother the way she does. It's perfectly forlorn to see that poor woman—and such a nice little woman, too!—poking off alone by herself after meeting. You see Annie is so taken up with her friends and all that, she doesn't seem to see her mother hanging round and waiting for her, till even she can't wait any longer, and so she has to go alone,

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unless somebody else happens to think of her."

"But hasn't the mother any friends?"

"Mrs. Dame? Oh yes! Why, there was a time when she was the life of the church and all the festivals and everything. She is the brightest, most entertaining person! You can't imagine! You needn't think I go marching off with her out of charity. I enjoy it, though of course I shouldn't leave you for her, every day. But they've moved away down there out of the village, and there isn't apt to be anybody going her way, that's all. If there was, little Miss Annie might find herself at a discount, for I would rather talk with her mother than with her, any day. As it is, I do pity that poor lonesome little woman."

"Well, it is rather selfish. I am sorry, too, for Annie is such a bright, gay, affectionate little thing—"

"Oh, she doesn't mean to be selfish! Annie is perfectly devoted to her friends."

"So devoted that she can't see her mother!"

Well, I don't like to call it selfish, but she is "so thoughtless!"

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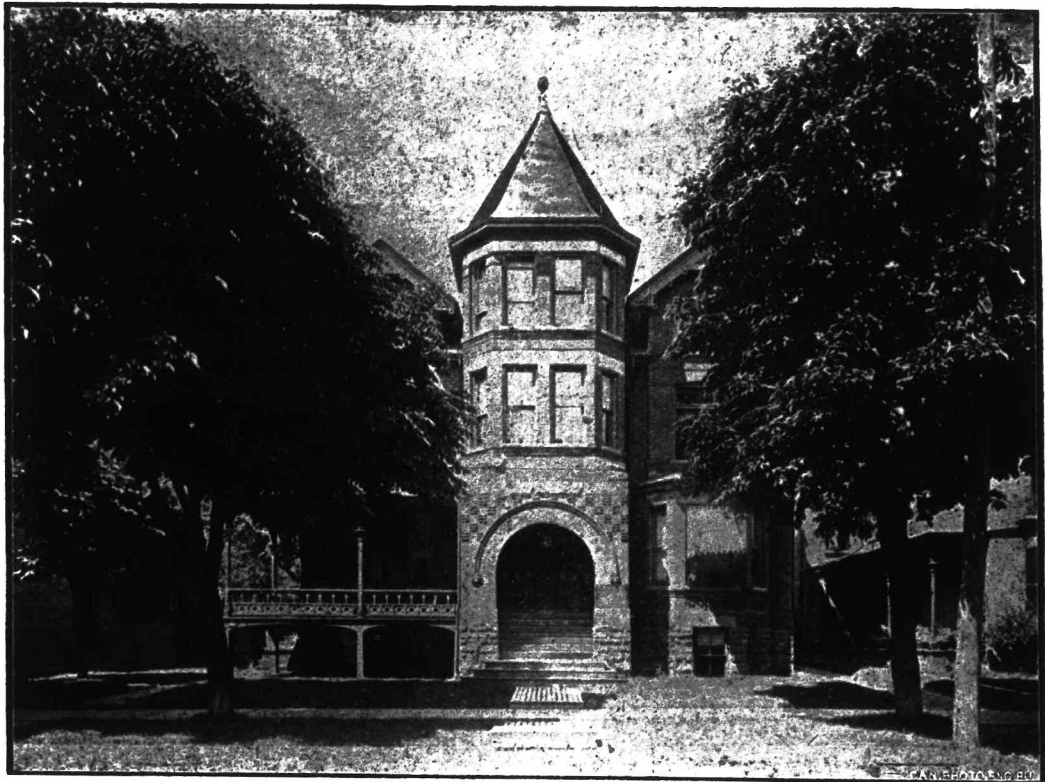
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