

'Paradise Lost,' her attention was seized and held.

'If ye shall have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove.'

During all the rest of the reading, during the long prayer (sad confession!) and during the sermon, Nancy heard nothing at all. She was busy thinking, where she would have it placed. It should be West Mountain rather than Green Peak she decided at once, because the quarries on Green Peak were needed at home, and besides, Nancy did not want to be partial, yet she did love West Mountain. At first she thought of course she would have it with her, right in her own street; but she could not find room for it. There had once been a vacant lot next door, but that was being built up now. Down at the end of the street, visible by putting one's head out of the window, was an open square. Well, yes; but the trolley ran through it. Nancy would not like to have West Mountain tunnelled.

Even when the service was over, and she went musingly down the aisle, out into the November sunshine, she had come to no certain conclusion. Only her main purpose was firm. It strengthened her to endure with some show of composure the awful, annual ordeal of saying good-by. She escaped from the caressing hand of Miss Amanda, and buried herself, sobbing, in a corner of the carriage. Her people! Her mountains! How could she leave them? Ah, not at all her mountains. She remembered and was still.

Immediately after dinner she took Susan (Susan, being gifted with a great reserve, never desecrated the serious moments of life), and climbed far up the hill behind the house approaching towards West Mountain. It was going to happen now. Little did the tranquil valley lying beneath her, all moving light and shadow, dream of the coming change. Little did the far-off city dream of it either, soon to be startled so. Ah, there would be surprise in many places to-day. Erect on a broad, flat stone in the midst of the high, open pasture, with West Mountain looming above her, Nancy stood and solemnly stretched forth her hand. Her face was grave and earnest. In another moment the great deed would be done.

A moment! Even on so small a hinge the destiny of mountains and valleys may turn. Did no one feel the thrill, first of apprehension, then of relief, run through West Mountain as it remembered the pain of its ancient upheaval in the days of the heavenly war, and reached down with mighty fingers to clutch the under-earth? Nancy sat down on the rock and clasped her hands about her knees. She had not realized it was so big, West Mountain. Her play of having it transported to the express office to await her coming seemed suddenly inadequate. The express office was in a very narrow street. Moreover, who could calculate how much of the surrounding country might be transported too? The pasture in which she sat with Susan of a surety. That was part of the mountain. Nancy caught her breath in dizzy rapture at the thought of such progress through space. Wonderful—glorious! She half sprang to her feet to give the word of command. But the thought of her mother's dismay stopped her. Poor mother, running from the door and holding up impotent hands towards West Mountain sailing mightily down the wind with a little girl and a doll looking calmly over the edge.

Moreover again, the valley. Nancy tried to picture it with West Mountain gone, a great yawning gap in its side, the wind and the snow rushing in. She shrank from the very idea. Then a realization of her utter selfishness came over her, and she buried her face in her hands. She could not do it; O, no, she could not do it! The valley needed West Mountain more than she needed it. To take it would be wrong. The disappointment pierced.

Nancy had never heard of renunciation; or if she had, in listening to sermons, she had not understood. But the solemn feeling was as strong within her that afternoon on the hillside as ever in the breast of devoted acolyte of old. She rose to her feet slowly after a time and stood looking out over the valley, with her back turned to West Mountain. Green Peak towered before her across the way. Other mountains loomed blue. Be-

neath her lay the autumn fields, gray and very still.

'I will not take it,' she said, gravely, reassuringly, with a long-drawn sigh.

And when she turned to go down the hill, with Susan under her arm, there was a vastness within her like West Mountain itself.

What Impressed John Vinton

A Story of two Funeral Sermons.

(Leander S. Keyser, in the 'Ram's Horn.')

'Have you heard the sad news?'

'No! What is it?'

'Charles Powell is dead—dropped dead at his work this morning. Another case of heart failure—so the doctors say.'

'Can it be? Only a young man, too. He can't be more than thirty-five. Let me see; how much of a family had he?'

'He leaves a wife and three children.'

'Very sad, very sad indeed! I can scarcely believe that Charley, as we called him, is gone.'

'But the saddest part of the incident is still to be told, Mr. Vinton,' said the first speaker.

'Indeed? What else happened?' John Vinton asked, with not a little concern.

'The saddest part of it is, Charley Powell was not a Christian,' was the solemn reply. 'He leaves no hope in the hearts of his loved ones who mourn for him. They must sorrow as those who have no hope.'

'Ah! Well, well, it is a sad case, doubly sad. When is the funeral to take place?'

'Wednesday afternoon at two o'clock, from the house.'

'I want to attend. Charley and I were good friends.'

John Vinton walked away in a deep study. On Wednesday afternoon he went to the house of sorrow to pay his respects to the dead and show his sympathy for the living. One thing in the service impressed him deeply, especially in view of his own careless life, for he was a worldling like so many of his fellow-citizens.

He could not help noticing how difficult it was for the minister to speak at the service. As a rule, the pastor, Mr. Denison, was a fluent speaker; now he faltered and hesitated a good deal, and chose his words with great care. As a rule, too, he was a pithy speaker, with not a little originality of thought; now he was uttering mere platitudes that meant nothing in particular.

John Vinton saw plainly the predicament in which the minister was placed. He did not tell the whole truth, for that would have harrowed the feelings of those who were already sufficiently stricken. So what could the minister say? He could simply utter a few commonplace, a few non-committal remarks, and hurry on to the end.

Never before had John Vinton seen the matter in the clear light of the facts. Never before had he seen so plainly that the Gospel gives no comfort or hope to the impenitent. On his way home his reflections ran in this wise:

'Why do people who do not care for religion in life and health want a minister at the burial of their dead? Why do they put him in a situation in which he can neither give comfort nor tell the truth? Ah! I see! They feel that it would be heathenish to bury their dead without a Christian service. It is the unbelieving and careless world's tribute to religion. But, my! what an embarrassing position for a minister—to try to give comfort when there is no comfort to give!'

John Vinton walked on a block farther, wrapped in deep thought. Then something forced this reflection into his consciousness:

'If I should pass away like that in my present condition, wouldn't I put the minister in the same position?'

His frame trembled as the thought took possession of him, and he was almost constrained to listen to the voice of the Spirit. But men are ever prone to delay. Several weeks passed without any perceptible change in John Vinton's life.

Then another fatality occurred in the town. One of the best Christian citizens of the place dropped dead on the street without a moment's warning. A faithful member of the church, noted for his sturdy faith in Christ and the Bible, well-known for his manly pie-

ty, his sudden death was a great shock to the community.

Being so well-known and highly respected far and wide, the funeral services were held in the church of which he was a member. John Vinton also attended this service. The Rev. Mr. Denison was in the pulpit, and presently arose to announce his text: 'And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.'

And now John Vinton heard the minister at his best on a funeral occasion. How readily he spoke to-day! He never lacked for words. All the resources of the Bible were at his command when he tried to comfort those who had been bereft. No faltering now, no stammering, no long and painful pauses between sentences, save as now and then his voice was choked with emotion. Without fear of criticism he could speak of the upright and useful life of the departed, commend his unquestioning faith and fervent devotion to the living, and assure his loved ones of the reunion by and by. As John Vinton sat looking with dimmed eyes into the speaker's face, he could not help drawing a contrast.

'How much more readily Mr. Denison speaks to-day than he did at the funeral a few days ago!' he reflected. 'The reason is evident. It is easy to speak when one has a good subject. And how easy to comfort when there is real comfort to give!'

The service was over, the solemn 'earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes,' was spoken at the grave, and John Vinton was again walking thoughtfully homeward. At length he said to himself:

'By the grace of God, I shall never compel a minister to try to give comfort over my casket and grave when there is no comfort to give! I shall settle this question once for all, and settle it now.'

And he did. When he reached home, he dropped on his knees and asked God to pardon and save him, and the next Sunday morning he stood at the altar of the Church and took the solemn vow of discipleship.

The Victorian India Orphan Society.

[For the 'Messenger.']

The summary of last year's work at the Society's Orphanage, Dhar, Central India, is most encouraging. During the year the Society sent \$1,300.00 for the work among these famine orphans, which, with several additional subscriptions given, were sufficient to meet all expenses, including the building of a good schoolroom. The latest improvement is the opening of a carpenter's shop for the boys, where doubtless good work will soon be turned out, as a skilled carpenter is in charge, and the boys are very eager and learn quickly. We have heard accounts of the great revival which is taking place in different parts of India, and now the good news has come that the children in our Orphanage are sharing in the blessing; to meet the evident need and longing special daily services are being held in which there is strong evidence of a great work going on; already a decided change has taken place in the lives of many of the orphans, thus manifesting a very real work of grace in their hearts. The missionaries say 'We have never seen such a spirit of prayer and earnestness, and expectation of blessing as now prevails; it is a great cause of joy and thankfulness to all of us; we believe this is only the beginning, and that not only the girls and boys, but through them all the community will receive a blessing. Three of the older girls are very anxious to engage directly in Christian work, and they are being given an opportunity of doing so as assistants to Miss O'Hara in the hospital work, two of them learning to be nurses, and the third going among the patients singing the Bible and telling the Gospel story to them; as this is entirely at their own desire we feel sure it is a practical result of the spiritual awakening which is taking place.' We greatly rejoice to hear this good news, and pray that the results may be wide-spread.

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