

fully. The sky was a perfect blue, and the robins, flying back and forth among the apple trees, sang joyously, for the winter was over and gone.

Mrs. Dunmore turned and shook her hand toward the window, as she had done so many times before. Her husband always expected it, but gave no signal in return.

This Easter Sunday he watched the erratic course of the wagon until the red-ribbon on Luella's hat was out of sight, then he locked the front and back doors. This was a most unusual thing to do, but he had had a sharp thrust that morning, and was determined to investigate its full meaning. Usually he spent his Sabbath in reading the weekly papers, hammering in a sub-due way round the house and barn, driving a nail here and mending a hinge there, and finally falling asleep in his arm-chair; but now he was going to interview Thomas.

His son, his only son, who appeared to be forming opinions of his own, and was surprisingly like his mother in directness of expression, had likened him to one Thomas. No appeal or rebuke had ever affected him as had those few positive words.

He never read the Bible, but after hearing his wife read it so many years he had a misty idea that the person referred to was in the New Testament; so, after drawing the shades of the front windows, as if he were about to commit a forgery, he sat down beside the table and began his researches.

In turning leaves his eyes occasionally caught familiar words. There was that strange text, "Ye must be born again," which he knew was a favorite with his wife. He paused long enough to read the entire story of the wonderful midnight interview. But he did not forget Thomas, and finally reached the very chapter from which Luella had read the short morning lesson on the resurrection. The leaves seemed to open at that place of their own accord, even like Peter's prison doors once upon a time when an angel walked beside him, and John Dunmore's eyes rested upon these words: "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came."

"H'm! 'was not with them,'" he repeated; "so that was what ailed Thomas." He had never before felt the responsibility of remaining at home until that moment, and vaguely wondered if the man he was "just like" stayed away on purpose.

Reading on, he paused again to repeat: "'Except I see . . . I will not believe.' That's what John Henry meant, so I've got the right Thomas. 'Would not believe' what, I wonder?"

He began at the beginning of the chapter, and read it through slowly, feeling the force of the simple recital, and recognizing the tremendous truth which Thomas would not believe. Then he read on with added knowledge. "Well, Thomas was with them next time they held a meetin'. 'Then came Jesus.' Exactly; He came, and Thomas was there, too."

The thought that thus far he had traced a likeness to himself in the unbelieving disciple gave him a strange feeling of companionship which he did not enjoy, and he glanced around the room as if to see the risen Lord. "Well, well!" and he traced the next verse carefully with his forefinger. "'Then saith He to Thomas.' He spoke to him! That's the idea; that's a good deal different from hearin' ministers preach an' tangle things up as they do." The remainder of the verse and the next one he read in solemn silence, then repeated in a puzzled way: "'And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.' Thomas got all he could bear that time and had to give up. That was what Sarah meant by what she said, 'Wishin' I might have his experience.'"

John Dunmore looked at his hands. "I suppose when Thomas saw the places where the nails went through he had to believe. There they was; I guess folks nowadays might believe if they could see."

But there was another verse which drew his eyes back to the page with a strange fascination: "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

From the logic of this wonderful prophecy—covering the yesterday, to-day, and forever of experience—John Dunmore could not escape. The perspiration stood upon his forehead as he faced his personal accountability. "I never saw it that way before, honest!" he ejaculated. Ignorance, indifference, and unbelief vanished before the sudden light which revealed to him his privilege and duty.

Conscious of the presence of a divine Guest he bowed his head upon the open book, whispering over and over again, "My Lord and my God," while his soul shrank from the sudden revelation of his own guilt.

There is one great, glorious secret that God has never shared with humanity—the secret of life-giving. And if He guards the mystery of a flower's growth, will He not keep that of the soul's blossoming into the spiritual kingdom? But that great miracle of His love which delivers from the bondage of death a soul that believes, was wrought on that Easter morning in the quiet room. And while thousands of jubilant voices sang anthems of praise, John Dunmore's cry of anguish became the cry of joy, "My Lord and my God!"

It was a long time before he lifted his head, but at length he arose and walked back and forth, smiling and clasping his hands. He lifted the shades of the front windows and looked out. What a beautiful sky! What a wonderful new world! Passing the mirror, he paused to see if he looked like himself. Yes, it was the same John, but not the same. "She's prayin' fer ye, just as she always does, every Sunday—every Sunday all these years," he assured himself. "What'll she say when she knows?"

It was half-past one when Mrs. Dunmore and the children returned, for they always remained