

SEE THE GLORY

by

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CHAPTER ONE

GODS UMBRELLA

It was Sunday morning. As Adelaide Locher pulled on her bright colored gloves and picked up her Bible, the black eyes of a little Cherokee Indian girl followed her movements with much admiration. They were to walk to Sunday school together that day. The child was a pupil, and at that time Adelaide Locher was a beloved teacher on the faculty of an Indian school and college.

As they stepped out into the clear sunshine, the little girl spoke. "Oh! Miss Locher, I wish it was raining today!"

"But, Wanda, why could you possibly wish for rain on such a beautiful day?"

"Well, you see," came the unexpected answer, "if it rained, then I could walk with you under your umbrella!"

So that was it! Adelaide remembered sharing her collapsible umbrella with the child one rainy day. This had given Wanda much prestige with her playmates, who heartily envied her the double treat that featured a favorite teacher and a tricky umbrella.

Starting with this incident, a happy train of thought began, although that Sunday morning heavy clouds were casting their foreboding shadows on Adelaide's path.

Only shortly before, when she had consulted her physician, he had given her a grim verdict: "Cancer."

This word was the more ominous because, only four years earlier, during her student days, surgery had been performed that had revealed a malignant nasal tumor. For this again to show its ugly presence instantly set up storm signals in her consciousness. Imagination took up malpredictions like swords of lightning to strike at her. Would the dread disease follow its reported pattern? Would it drag her along a path of misery? How could she finance an indefinitely long illness? What if it were already too late? . . . These thoughts, as penetrating as the sound of thunder, raised questions of awful solemnity.

The innocent remark of the Indian child walking at Adelaide's side kept repeating itself in her mind: "If it rained, then I could walk with you under your umbrella!"

Suddenly the words called a rainbow out to play on the dark thought-clouds. The whole aspect of the future was lightened as it was borne in upon the teacher that she herself might really enjoy walking with the Lord Jesus through the approaching storm, sharing His protection.

“That I may know Him—and the fellowship of His sufferings . . .” had long been her definite prayer. “And now,” her spirit exulted, “it is all right. Let the blasts come; I will be in the Lords good company.”

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew” upon her, but the Lord’s love was her umbrella until the deluge was displaced by God’s own heavenly sunshine. **“Thou hast been . . . a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm”** (Isaiah 25:4).

This, then, is the story of their walk together in sunny days of service and in pain-drenched days of storm—the Master Teacher and His happy, trusting pupil.

How does God prepare a life victoriously to withstand fearful trials? Surely fortitude and self-discipline cannot wait until the years of maturity for their beginnings. For this brilliant young teacher, the overshadowing protection of the Lord began in early childhood, as He started shaping a life of rare power and influence.

Adelaide Wilma Locher started life a few miles from Auburn, California, November 25, 1913. Her mother, Ruby Cain Locher, after a brief illness died, leaving three children: Calvin, a baby; Adelaide, aged two; and Marian, fifteen months older than Adelaide.

The young father did his utmost to keep his family together by hiring a housekeeper and a girl to help with the children. About a year of this, however, convinced Albert Locher that it would be better for his children if he made other arrangements, especially since he was frequently called away from Auburn by his building trade. For many years following, the three children were cared for in the home of their mother’s father and his wife, “Dee” and “Gran,” as they were affectionately called by their grandchildren.

Those first years of Adelaide’s life the family lived in Auburn, a pleasant little city of the Sierra Nevada foothills. There the romance of the gold rush days still clings to the red soil. Old mining holes, shafts, and tunnels hide their secrets beneath the underbrush of beautifully wooded slopes. Not twenty miles away, crowning a hill, stands the statue of John Marshall. His bronze finger points to a spot on the south fork of the American River where his discovery was made in 1848, starting the stampede of gold seekers in 1849. Gold, not God, was their quest.

Adelaide’s paternal grandfather had been a merchant in Auburn not long after that glamorous time. Her mother’s father, William Calvin Cain, was brought to the Mother Lode country as a small boy, immediately after the war between the states, and spent much of his early life mining.

The descendants of the forty-niners today comprise an important part of the population. Many still expect great things from the ribbon-like quartz ledges threaded through the Mother Lode counties of California. Even yet some “strike it rich,” but most pan or pick their way to poverty.

Their rugged forefathers seem to have left a certain stamp upon them, distinctive as that on the coin minted from the gold dust of those river beds. This background may account for the fact that, for the most part, the people are rugged, dauntless, wary of strangers and money conscious. In that area fraternal organizations abound while churches languish.

It was in Auburn, however, when Adelaide was only a tiny girl that she first started to attend Sunday school in the Congregational Church.

“At about the age of four or five,” wrote Adelaide many years later, “I was taken to my Uncle Jim’s funeral. I was much disturbed and afterward asked my grandmother, Where has Uncle Jim gone?’ When told he had gone to heaven, which is a place where all good people go, I asked, very much hurt and disappointed, ‘Well, why didn’t someone tell me? It’s too late for me now.’ This was my first definite conviction of sin.”

At that early age God was stirring the child’s sensitive nature to reveal to her the discrepancy between her relative purity and His absolute holiness.

As the prospector follows a quartz “lead” hoping that it may end in some rich pocket of gold, so Adelaide’s first childish concern about spiritual things led her to discover great hidden riches in Christ. Yet the processing of Adelaide Locher’s faith was more fiery than that required to refine the “gold that perisheth” (I Peter 1:7).

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