

I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES

By

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"The Soul's Sincere Desire"



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CHAPTER I

Hind's Feet That Lead to High Places

I WAS sitting alone in a little restaurant waiting for some one to take my order, and looking absent-mindedly out of the window. I felt an inner turmoil, and the whirling wind and the pattering rain outside did not do much to allay my mood. Just then the door opened and in came Dan McArthur.

McArthur was a vigorous young cleric, struggling along in some little out-of-the-way church, a happy-go-lucky, likable chap, the kind one usually expects to go so far and no farther in any field he enters. I had known him in college days. I sprang a little wisecrack about winds bringing breezy guests, but he did not answer me in the old bantering tones. Instead, as he sat down opposite me and reached his hand across, clasping mine with a firm grip, I was aware of a strange new power in his presence. It stirred something in me to the very marrow of my bones. As I looked into his eyes his whole countenance fairly shone.

I asked him what he would have, and after scanning the menu carefully he ordered from it leisurely, and invited me to join him in luncheon for two. I assented, wondering at the indomitable something about him, an atmosphere of dignity and power—well, I guess you would call it self-unconsciousness—that I had never noted before.

"What has happened to you?" I finally blurted out. "Have you inherited a million dollars?"

"Greater than that," he smiled, "I have found the water of life."

"Ponce de Leon or monkey glands?" I inquired.

"I see that I have surprised you," he said, putting his coffee-cup away from his lips. "It is not strange, for I am a surprise to myself. I am a new man, and the alteration has taken place within the last six months. I wouldn't change places with a millionaire."

"You wouldn't!" I exclaimed, incredulously, for I had always

thought that Dan liked money. "No," he said, buttering his roll. "A millionaire has spent his enthusiasm; mine is all at hand."

"You amaze me," I replied, wondering if he had been drinking wine. "Won't you tell me your secret? I should like to hear it."

"It is very simple," he said smiling. "All you have to do is to make your feet like hind's feet and God will do the rest."

"Hind's feet!" I exclaimed, "Hind's feet! I don't get the idea. Will you explain?"

"Gladly. I intend to tell the whole world. A few months ago I was in what I thought was a blind alley. I thought that nothing on sea or land could take me out of it. I was in a rut, inside and out. Then out of the blue sky I heard a story. I was on a train between Boston and Portland when I met a white-haired gentleman who talked with me one hour. Just one hour, mind you, but that one hour changed me inside and outside. It would have changed you, too. You have no idea what it did for me. Nothing is impossible after that story. It makes everything as plain as A-B-C."

"How can a story work such wonders?" I gasped.

"Very simple. Listen. First something happens inside one. Get that? *Inside* one—deep, deep down inside one. Secretly, silently, invisibly inside one. Understand?"

"Yes," I said.

"Then—and here is the strange part of it—here is the miraculous part that you will find hard to believe—after the change happens *inside*, everything begins to change *outside*, too."

"I don't believe I see the logic," I replied. "I don't see the connection."

"Never mind; you will—as soon as you hear the story. That is, as soon as you hear it and practice it. Practicing it is very important."

"What has it done for you?" I asked. "What has it brought you on the outside? I can see by looking into your eyes that it has brought you something on the inside."

His eyes shone like stars at this compliment. "You know what a little job I had before," he replied. "Well, that wasn't what bothered me. What hurt me was the knowledge that I wasn't adequate for

that job, much less something greater. After that hour on the train I began for the first time to render real service to my people. Then out of a clear sky I was called to one of the greatest churches in the United States," and he named a church which I considered, in some ways, the most famous church in America.

"Just to think," I exclaimed, "that you are now an assistant pastor in the greatest church in America!"

"Not assistant pastor," he corrected, "but head pastor."

"What!" I exclaimed, no longer able to hide my amazement. "I can't believe it."

He smiled, not at all provoked by my unabashed incredulity. "You see, it works."

"It must be a remarkable story!" I cried, now my curiosity fully aroused. "Please tell it to me."

"All right, I will tell you, though really you should hear it from the old gentleman himself. However, I will tell you the best I can. It is like this. You see ——"

The waiter interrupted us at that moment, saying that some one on the phone wanted "Reverend Dan McArthur." "Pardon me," he said. "I'll be right back," and he hurried away. Soon he returned, saying, "Sorry, but an unexpected call demands my instant attention," and he rushed out.

Some months later I was in New York City, walking down Broadway. At the corner of Twenty-third I met my friend Joe Benson in the middle of the crowded street. He must have been watching me for some time. His eyes had evidently been smiling at me in the kindest way before I saw him. I had never thought of Joe as an especially "benevolent old gentleman," but he certainly was the picture of it now. Joe, though undoubtedly possessed of real talent, had never gotten his talent across. But there was something very majestic and sweeping and all-conquering about him as he approached me, smiling, that day. As he reached out and shook my hand I felt a thrill clear through me, to the center of my being. He looked squarely into my eyes and his countenance fairly shone.

There was an air of dignity and power and—yes, unencumbered unself-consciousness—about him that could not be concealed.

"Still playing in the town band?" I asked.

"Come in here," he said, drawing me into a drug store. "I have a lot to tell you."

"Lemonade for two," he ordered, and drew me to a side table. "You used to be a teetotaler." He turned to me in inquiry.

"Righto," I smiled. "And still am."

"What have you heard about me?" he asked as he sipped through a straw. I hate straws. I drank mine down at two gulps. It was a hot day.

"I heard that you had applied for a job with a famous orchestra and had been turned down."

"Right," he exclaimed with a laugh. "But did you hear the sequel?" I shook my head. "Well, it was this way," he continued. "I was riding out of New York, on the New Haven and Hartford, when a white-haired gentleman sat down beside me. He turned to me and without a moment's hesitation said, 'You are discouraged, young man, and you have no right to be.' I replied that I thought I had a right to be, after spending time and toil and money for years and years in the most careful, thorough preparation, only to find that every door was closed against me. He smiled very pleasantly and said, 'Change your feet to hind's feet, young man, and your luck will change.'"

"Hind's feet!" I exclaimed, startled. "Go on. Tell me the rest. What happened?"

"Well, I went on to my destination and didn't pay much attention to what the old man had said. Then a few weeks later in the middle of the night I awoke and suddenly realized what he meant. I took the first train to New York, went straight back to the same company—yes, the same company that had turned me down, and asked them if there was a chance for me to have a small part and show them what I could do. The director asked me point blank if I could play the 'cello in a famous composition which he named. I said, 'Yes.' He replied, 'Our leading 'cellist has just this hour been stricken with a severe illness. He will be out for two

months. You are to take his place.' 'When do I start?' I cried, hardly believing my ears. 'Tomorrow night.' I almost fainted."

"I'll swear that if I hadn't seen you drink lemonade—" I began. His laugh interrupted me. "But the hind's feet!" I exclaimed. "Tell me what they had to do with it."

"It's a long story," he replied, "and as I am expecting a long-distance call in a few minutes, I'll have to ask you to come with me to the company's office right away. It is just across the street. I'll tell you on the way."

The din of traffic in a great New York street drowned our conversation until we entered a high building. Then Joe turned to me, "When you get hind's feet you learn first of all that you must get quiet inside—deep, deep down inside. Do you catch on?"

We had now entered the elevator. "But how does the change happen inside?" I asked. "That is what I want to know."

"That is where the secret lies. But here we are."

As we entered the rooms a secretary rushed in to meet him. "So glad you are here, Mr. Benson. They have been trying for an hour to get you on the long-distance from Detroit. They want you to be the 'cello soloist tomorrow night, and the train leaves right away."

"Sorry, old chap," he said to me, "but I must go. Come in again some other time when I have a lot of leisure, and I'll try to tell you the whole thing from beginning to end."

I returned to Chicago on one of those windy, gusty days when all Lake Michigan seemed blowing down across the streets. As the little college in Illinois where I was going to resume my second year of teaching would not open for a few days, I decided that I would attend some lecture or play or concert that night, and resume my journey on the morrow. Finding by the papers that Miss Marian Graw, author of a best-selling novel, would lecture that evening at a well-known lecture-hall, I made my plans to attend.

It was a very interesting lecture, but it was not till near the very close that the startling thing happened. Suddenly she came to the front of the platform and said, "Now I am going to tell you how

I came to write this book. I had gone to Colorado as a broken-down school-teacher, without any money and without any friends, and threatened with tuberculosis. I tried my hand at writing, but without success. Then one day while riding on the train between Greeley and Denver I met a white-haired man who told me I should cease living in the lowlands of life, and travel on hind's feet to the high places. I took his advice and changed myself from a factory, trying to manufacture ideas, into a channel for letting ideas flow through me. And this book—this best seller—is the result."

She stopped speaking and I pressed my way to the platform, but before I could get there she was gone. She was on the way to the train, I was told, to meet her next lecture engagement.

The following day I resumed my journey to the college town where I was to continue my career as a teacher of creative writing and reading. Three months later, on a cold December day, I was riding between Aledo, Illinois, and Des Moines, Iowa, on my way home for the Christmas holidays. The big event of the holidays was to be my wedding.

I was looking out of the window at the snowflakes whisking down when I noticed an elderly man, with white hair, walking slowly through the car, looking in a benign way into the countenances of the passengers as he went by. When he reached my seat he halted.

"Pardon me," he said, "but would you mind if I sat down in the seat beside you for a while?"

"Certainly not," I replied. As soon as he was seated he turned to me. "You are engaged in religious work of some kind, are you not?" he asked.

"Oh no," I answered, laughing. "I am merely a teacher of literature and a coach of athletics."

He hesitated for just a moment. "But you have a spiritual influence upon the young men you associate with, do you not?"

I hesitated. "Well, perhaps I do."

"I am in a business," he began, "that carries me to all parts of the country. On every journey I find myself led to tell my story to one person. God always directs me to the person to whom I am to tell it, and now I find myself led to tell it to you."

"I shall be glad to hear your story," I replied.

"It happened to me in this wise. I had come to Akron, Ohio, as a young man of energy and promise. I threw myself headlong into my business and it began to thrive beyond all expectations. I was soon head of the firm. Not satisfied with being president of one concern, I organized another, and then became director of others. I was making money hand over fist. All I thought about, morning, noon, and night, was money, money, money. And then something happened. It always happens when you burn the candle at both ends and leave God out of the picture, doesn't it? I had a breakdown.

"Well, the doctor said I was done with, that my working-days were over, my only hope lay in making some drastic changes in my life. He told me to go to a lake and rest—do nothing but rest for months and months. Then he would see if I could do any work again.

"I went to Isle Royal in Lake Superior. As my strength gradually returned I would go out in a rowboat and idle about for hours. Something about the wide expanse of water beneath a summer sky rested me—it was doing something to me inside and outside. A new peace began to enter into me. And then the great experience happened.

"I had gone out in a boat, near sunset. I was rather drowsy and before I knew it I had fallen asleep. When I awoke hours later the boat was out of sight of land, and there was no way for me to determine whether I was north, south, or east of the island. Knowing how quickly a squall can arise on Lake Superior and how easily a boat is overturned, also how drowned bodies never come to the surface in this coldest of all northern waters, I was filled with a panic of fear. I started to pray, and then found that I couldn't. And why? Simply because I wasn't worthy to pray. My whole past came up before me. What would be the value of saving a man like me, a man who did nothing but accumulate money for himself? What would the world lose if I should never return?

"And then I made a promise to God. I promised Him that if He would save me I would devote half of my time henceforth to His

work, to helping mankind, especially young people. And then the answer came."

At this point the old gentleman fumbled in his pocket and brought forth a picture postal card. It looked exactly like a photograph. It was a pictorial arrangement of a man alone in a rowboat on a lake, and above his head were the moon and stars, and among the stars one immense star—about ten times the size of the other stars, and about one-fourth the size of the moon. I wondered if the Star of Bethlehem could have looked like that.

"This star suddenly appeared in the sky," he said, pointing to the large star in the picture. "It was an immense star, such as I had never seen before. I was overwhelmed with the mystery and wonder of it, but taking it as a sign I fixed my eyes upon it and, keeping it at the tail of my boat, I rowed and rowed without looking around for hours and hours. When I finally did look around I was going straight up to the landing-pier whence I had started.

"That is all of my story," he ended abruptly, starting to rise. "Keep it in your mind and plant it in your heart, and some day it may bear fruit in your life. How and when I know not, but this I know: What comes from God is eternal. What God has not planted will be rooted up; but what God has planted will bear fruit one hundred fold."

"Please wait a minute," I said. "What happened to you afterwards?"

"I merely took an elevator and went up to another floor. My life—the regular business and church life I had been living—went on as usual, but in an entirely different world. I found myself living thenceforth in a heavenly world where love and peace and happiness were everywhere about me in my life, with my business associates, and, yes, with the chance acquaintances I meet upon my travels." And he smiled at me.

"But how did you get up to that higher level?" I asked.

"It is a secret," he replied, "a great and wonderful secret. But if you really must know the secret, here it is: HE MAKETH MY FEET LIKE HIND'S FEET AND SETTETH ME UPON MY HIGH PLACES." I started. "Hind's feet!" The words had been ringing in my ears for months. At last

I had found the man—the man of mystery. At last I had caught up with the story that my friends had started to tell me.

"That is all." And again he started to rise.

"But can you explain what you mean by hind's feet?" I begged.

"Does God explain to the deer how they are to use their feet?" he asked enigmatically. "No, they just use them. Go forth, son, and use them."

"But may I ask one more question?" I asked hesitatingly.

"Certainly."

"What trail, what track do the hinds use when they go to the high places?"

He smiled. "The best trail that I have found is the Lord's Prayer." And he rose, handed me his card, and went away.

I looked at the card, expecting to find some mysterious name fresh from fairyland. But there it stood, quite plain and prosaic—Mr. Fiebeger, of Akron, Ohio.

My journey was ended. I went to Grinnell and to Des Moines, and a few days later back to Grinnell, where I was married, and with my bride I returned to my college town.

In the meantime I almost forgot the old white-haired gentleman and his story. Indeed, I might have dismissed the entire episode as a dream and the man as a figment of my imagination, had it not been for one very tangible and startling incident that happened to me as soon as I reached the college town.

I took my wife into a rambling house which I had rented for our first home. I went down to fix the furnace, an immense soft-coal furnace with octopus arms holding up the house. I had thrown one shovelful of coal into its mouth and stood, poised, shovel in hand, ready to toss in the second, when I saw something that made my jaw drop and the coal spill to the floor. There above the door to the furnace was a name-plate bearing the inscription, The Fiebeger-Akron Furnace Company! So Mr. Fiebeger was a real man, after all! I had good reason to know, for the product of his factory warmed our home that first winter of our married lives! Yes, I have a still deeper reason to know, for the words of his heart have been warming my life ever since! If I needed anything more to convince

me that he was not a dream, but a fact, it came a few months later when I received a copy of the *Western Christian Advocate* with a picture of "The Largest Men's Bible Class in the World, the First Methodist Church of Akron, Ohio, Mr. Fieberger, Leader."

But dream or not, the seed he planted was not a dream, but was a reality. Nine years after this it suddenly opened its hard casing and started to bear fruit—fifty, sixty, and one hundred fold.

Nine years had gone by and I had forgotten about the old gentleman and his hind's feet, when circumstances led to my spending a few weeks on a Wyoming ranch. It was not a dude ranch, but the real thing. At my request a horse was turned over to me for my private use, and I was privileged to rough it with the cowboys in any manner I wished. I discovered that my horse was the fastest horse on the range. I wondered why this honor had been bestowed upon me. But I soon learned that while speed may be the most important thing on the plains, there is something much more significant on the mountains.

One day five of us were riding up the steep mountain-side to salt the cattle that roamed the plateau above. Everything went well until we came to a dangerous, slippery, craggy place, where a misstep would send us all to eternity. Then it was that the men advised me to take the less dangerous pathway that led by a slower route to the mountain top. When I asked them why I, alone, was asked to take this safer route, the foreman answered: "It is because your horse is not dependable on the hills. All the rest of our horses are true climbers—their rear feet track exactly where the forefeet are planted. When they place their forefoot upon a safe ridge, their rear foot will follow safely, too. But your horse, unfortunately, spent several years in the cities, and he lost the gift. Like all other animals over-exposed to modern civilization, his rear feet miss the front tracks by about two or three inches, and we are now going up trails where a miss of even an inch might mean death."

"I see," I replied. "Your horses have feet like the deer and the antelope."

"Exactly," he replied. "And a horse has to be as sure-footed as a mountain goat to take this trail to the high places."

And then a great light burst upon me. As I took that winding road that day I was glad to be alone, for the secret of the old white-haired gentleman was at last mine. The mystery of the hind's feet was solved. The deeper I got into the mystery the more marvelous it became. Thick and fast great thoughts came to me—thoughts that were as blinding as revelations. Here are a few of them, as best I can recall them:

No animal has such perfect correlation of its front and rear feet as does the deer. While the male deer, or the hart, is a wonder of surefootedness, still more wonderful is the female, or the hind, which, while leading its young into hidden fastnesses, is the most perfect example of physical correlation that God has ever made.

And this was the blinding revelation: *As the feet of the hind are to the mountains, so is the mind of man to the heights of life; and as the rear feet of the hind are to the front feet, so is the subconscious mind of man to the conscious mind.* And as the creature which has the most perfect correlation between its front and its rear feet is the surest to reach the mountain top in safety, so the person who has the most perfect correlation between his conscious mind and his subconscious mind is the surest to reach the heights of life.

"And he maketh my feet like hind's feet; and setteth me upon my high places." The Secret was revealed at last. I now knew what Jesus meant when He said, "Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt *in his heart*, but shall believe that these things which he saith cometh to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Ye, if ye have faith, though it be even as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall ask what ye will; and *nothing* shall be impossible unto you." Our lips speak the thoughts of our *conscious* mind, but only the *heart* speaks the thoughts of our subconscious mind. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Out of the heart come the issues of life." And when the lips and the heart are in alignment, when they track together with the absolute certainty that the rear feet of the deer track with the front feet, then *nothing* is impossible, whether it be the climbing of mountains or the casting of mountains into the seas. The wonder of this burst upon me

with such force that I could hardly wait until I could get back to my work and put my new discovery to the test.

I now saw that I had been missing the greatest blessings of life—and merely by inches. But in these seemingly trivial inches lay the secret of the supreme power and security of the seers and the saints and the prophets who lived in the mountains. By the mere fraction of an inch by which the rear feet of my city horse missed the security of the front feet, by merely that inch my life and the purposes of my life had been endangered. Only he who goes into the mountains in the morning and prays knows this secret. And so I, with the rest of the blind people of the cities and towns, had been taking the wide gate and the broad way that led to failure and futility, when all we needed to do was to change our feet to hind's feet and climb straight to the heights. "Enter ye in at the strait gate," came ringing into my ears as I rode along, "for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." But he who has made his feet into hind's feet will find that climbing this narrow way is not so hard as many think.

"I have found the way! I have found the way!" my soul was singing. But I knew that I must not get excited. Much hard thinking and still harder work was to be done. Where did my conscious and subconscious mind track together? This was one of the first questions to be answered. How many things had I done with all my strength, with all my mind, and with all my heart, and with all my soul—in other words, with "all four feet"? Pitifully few, I had to confess to myself. Had I spent so many years in the cities of materialism that my feet, like the feet of my horse, had lost their secret of correlation?

I had taught my students the little front-feet laws of writing, called grammar and rhetoric; how many had I taught the laws of the hind's feet and how to climb to the high places of true vision? I had filled hundreds of students' minds with knowledge; how many souls had I filled with faith? Many bachelors of arts had passed through my classes; how many prophets had I inspired? I could count those