

Mars' Hill And Mars Hill



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he starts talking you forget his looks. His words, coming as from the depths of another world, arrest you and stir your soul to thoughts that are new and beautiful. Plato sits by him, and all around you stand the mortals who have left something immortal. For a few, unique moments you live in the glory and magnificence of a past golden age.

"But suddenly, there is a lump in your throat, as you realize painfully that all this is ruined. Wishing to hide the tears that are blinding your eyes, you bend your head trying to read an inscription on the broken surface of some marble. This is the ancient world.

"Crossing the road, leaving the age of Socrates, you pass over to the age of Paul. Mars' Hill rises gently there, by the street. No green grass, no trees cover its surface. Only the bare rock appears, dear and precious relic of an olden time.

"Approach those few steps, but before climbing them, stop. There is a metal plate on the wall that you must read. It is Paul's famous speech to the Athenians. "Ye, Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious . . ."

"Look, Paul is standing on top of the hill. Is he tall or short, with dark or grey hair? You have his picture in your heart; it does not really make much difference how he looks. Some steps below him the Athenians are gathered listening. Some have crossed their arms and are listening patiently. Others lift their eyebrows in mockery and amusement. All are listening because Paul is saying something new, and they love to hear anything that is new. Paul knows it. He stands there, his arms outstretched, his eyes filled with heavenly inspiration. And around him glisten the beautiful statues, carved from Parnassus'

white marble. He does not say much, but what he says is enough to change a whole world, and to make Mars' Hill immortal.

"Sit on the rock, and look around. You see a new world spreading as far as your eye can see. Cars, trains, and the noise of an airplane flying in the air surprise you. And there you sit on the old, weather-beaten rock, where Paul stood to preach centuries ago. The Acropolis is just across the street, and you remember that the gods of Olympus loved to visit there and to play hide and seek behind the columns. For a minute you wonder which age you are living in. Feelings and pictures and impressions are all mixed in your heart—"

I stopped there I think. The picture of a young girl was dancing in my eyes. I remembered the skirt I wore that first day I saw Mars' Hill. It was red with pretty white flowers on it. I was carrying a straw hat on my arm because the wind was blowing that day, that unforgettable day, when excited and happy I touched the rock that Paul had touched along with my ancestors.

Someone spoke. It was a new friend, an American girl. "Katy, do you like Mars Hill?"

I looked around at the lovely campus of my new school—open, green space that rested my eyes, curved roads leading to the dormitory hills, the old and new buildings, every spot and place that was going to capture a part of my heart and mind.

A warm feeling of security covered me at the last glimpse of the setting sun that was painting the hilltops red and purple.

Dear, familiar pictures of blue waters and bare mountains filled my mind for a minute.

"Forget it, Katy, I thought. You will see them again someday."

Then I looked at my friends, the young friendly faces that I was going to love. It was easy to smile at them and I felt calm inside.

"Yes," I said, "I love Mars Hill."

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ust arrived at Mars Hill. Hands were near me. We g under a large tree that ecting branches and cool- over the young heads.

ad been talking about Everyone and Greece, comparing occupied places. Suddenly, some- e was frumbered a story he had ed. He t the Mars' Hill of ancient ill her to e she wa active lit look like this Mars Hill e, and e asked.

ed around at the lovely my first American school. green hillsides, the brick the trees that crowded y mountains.

answered; no, it doesn't. k Mars' Hill is in the cen- of the large capitals of Athens is beautiful, for the modern buildings or its ancient ruins.

you visit Athens you the royal gardens, or ride paved roads, and it is like any other big city. You ble on the side-walk eating cream, watching the pass- and it reminds you of other anean cities.

as you walk or talk, you'll lift your eyes. And then he ruined, magnificent col- the Acropolis, glistening e bright sun of the clear sky. You are instantly cap- the desire to go and stand ose columns, to touch the ble with reverence.

le walking in the Parthen- admiring the daughters of theon, you have to day- fancy that Pericles is stand- ere before you, lecturing emocracy to the Athenians. is talking to you through diwork, all of which bears ster's touch. You look at His old face is homely, u try to see where people und his beauty. But when