

**A LITTLE PILGRIM IN  
THE SEEN  
AND THE UNSEEN**

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A Little Pilgrim in the Seen and the Unseen by Mrs. Oliphant

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**MRS. OLIPHANT**

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*Olyphant, Margaret Olyphant (Wilson)*

# A Little Pilgrim

IN THE SEEN  
*and*  
THE UNSEEN



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## INTRODUCTION

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2-2-54 MFP  
We take pleasure in presenting to our readers as a premium book, one from the gifted pen of Mrs. Oliphant. The story of "A Little Pilgrim" is one which takes us beyond the confines of mortal life and tells of the experiences of one who found herself in a new country far different from anything she had ever dreamed.

There she awakens to the reality of a life filled with experiences so varied that as they are read fill one with wonder and astonishment, as it gives experiences in the world of soul so fascinating that it is no wonder the reader is entranced with the revelation.

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# The Little Pilgrim in Spirit Life.

## CHAPTER I.—In the Unseen.

She had been talking of dying only the evening before, with a friend, and had described her own sensations after a long illness when she had been at the point of death. "I suppose," she said, "that I was as nearly gone as any one ever was to come back again. There was no pain in it, only a sense of sinking down, down—through the bed as if nothing could hold me or give me support enough—but no pain."

And then they had spoken of another friend in the same circumstances, who also had come back from the very verge, and who described her sensations as those of one floating upon a summer sea without pain or suffering, in a lovely nook of the Mediterranean, blue as the sky. These soft and soothing images of the passage which all men dread had been talked over with low voices, yet with smiles and a grateful sense that "the warm precincts of the cheerful day" were once more familiar to both. And very cheerfully she went to rest that night, talking of what was to be done on the morrow, and fell asleep sweetly in her little room, with its shaded light and

curtained window, and little pictures on the dim walls. All was quiet in the house; soft breathing of the sleepers, soft murmuring of the spring wind outside, a wintry moon very clear and full in the skies, a little town all hushed and quiet, everything lying defenseless, unconscious, in the safe keeping of God.

How soon she woke no one can tell. She woke and lay quite still, half roused, half hushed, in that soft languor that attends a happy waking. She was happy always, in the peace of a heart that was humble and faithful and pure, but yet had been used to wake to a consciousness of little pains and troubles, such as even to her meekness were sometimes hard to bear. But on this morning there were none of these. She lay in a kind of hush of happiness and ease, not caring to make any further movement, lingering over the sweet sensation of that waking. She had no desire to move nor to break the spell of the silence and peace. It was still very early, she supposed, and probably it might be hours before any one came to call her. It might even be that she

should sleep again. She had no wish to move, she lay at such luxurious ease and calm.

But by and by, as she came to full possession of her waking senses, it appeared to her that there was some change in the atmosphere, in the scene. There began to steal into the air about her, the soft dawn as of a summer morning, the lovely blueness of the first opening of daylight before the sun. It could not be the light of the moon, which she had seen before she went to bed; and all was so still, that it could not be the bustling, wintry day which comes at that time of the year late to find the world awake before it. This was different; it was like the summer dawn, a soft effusion of light growing every moment. And by and by it occurred to her that she was not in the little room where she had lain down. There were no dim walls or roof, her little pictures were all gone, the curtains at her window.

The discovery gave her no uneasiness in that delightful calm. She lay still to think of it all, to wonder, yet undisturbed. It half amused her that these things should be changed, but did not rouse her yet with any shock of alteration. The light grew fuller and fuller round, growing into day, clearing her eyes from the sweet mist of the first waking. Then she raised herself upon her arm. She was not in her room, she was in no scene she knew. Indeed it was scarcely a scene at all, nothing but light, so soft and lovely, that it soothed and caressed her eyes.

She thought all at once of a summer morning when she was a child, when she had woken in the deep night

which yet was day, early, so early that the birds were scarcely astir, and had risen up with a delicious sense of dawning and of being all alone in the mystery of the sunrise, in the unawakened world which lay at her feet to be explored, as if she were Eve just entering upon Eden. It was curious how all those childish sensations, long forgotten, came back to her as she found herself so unexpectedly out of her sleep in the open air and light. In the recollection of that lovely hour, with a smile at herself, so different as she now knew herself to be, she moved to rise and look a little more closely about her, and see where she was.

When I call her a little Pilgrim, I do not mean that she was a child; on the contrary, she was not even young. She was little by nature, with as little flesh and blood as was consistent with mortal life; and she was one of those who are always little for love. The tongue found diminutives for her, the heart kept her in a perpetual youth. She was so modest and so gentle, that she always came last, so long as there was anyone whom she could put before her. But this little body, and the soul which was not little, and the heart which was big and great, had known all the round of sorrows that fill a woman's life, without knowing any of its warmer blessings. She had nursed the sick, she had entertained the weary, she had consoled the dying. She had gone about the world, which had no prize to recompense her, with a smile. Her little presence had been always bright. She was not clever; you might have said she had no mind at all; but so wise and right and tender at heart, that it was as good as

genius. This is to let you know what this little Pilgrim had been.

She rose up and it was strange how like she felt to the child she remembered in that still summer morning so many years ago. Her little body, which had been worn and racked with pain, felt as light and unconscious of itself as then. She took her first step forward with the same sense of pleasure, yet of awe, suppressed delight and daring and wild adventure, yet perfect safety. But then the recollection of the little room in which she had fallen asleep came quickly, strangely over her, confusing her mind. "I must be dreaming, I suppose," she said to herself, regretfully; for it was all so sweet that she wished it to be true.

Her movement called her attention to herself, and she found that she was dressed, not in her night-dress, as she had lain down, but in a dress she did not know. She paused for a moment to look at it and wonder. She had never seen it before; she did not make out how it was made, or what stuff it was, but it fell so pleasantly about her, it was so soft and light, that in her confused state she abandoned that subject with only an additional sense of pleasure. And now the atmosphere became more distinct to her. She saw that under her feet was a greenness as of close velvet turf, both cool and warm, cool and soft to touch, but with no damp in it, as might have been at that early hour, and with flowers showing here and there.

She stood looking around her, not able to identify the landscape, because she was still confused a little, and then walked softly on, all the time afraid lest she should awake and lose

the sweetness of it all, and the sense of rest and happiness. She felt so light, so airy, as if she could skim across the field like any child, it was bliss enough to breathe and move, with every organ free. After more than fifty years of hard service in the world, to feel like this, even in a dream! She smiled to herself at her own pleasure; and then once more, yet more potently, there came back upon her the appearance of her room in which she had fallen asleep.

How had she got from there here? Had she been carried away in her sleep, or was it only a dream, and would she by and by find herself between the four dim walls again? Then this shadow of recollection faded away once more, and she moved forward, walking in a soft rapture over the delicious turf. Presently she came to a little mound, upon which she paused to look about her. Every moment she saw a little farther; blue hills far away, extending in long, sweet distance, an indefinable landscape, but fair and vast, so that there could be seen no end to it, not even the line of the horizon—save at one side, where there seemed to be a great shadowy gateway, and something dim beyond.

She turned from the brightness to look at this, and when she had looked for some time she saw, what pleased her still more, though she had been so happy before, people coming in. They were too far off for her to see clearly, but many came, each apart, one figure only at a time. To watch them amused her in the delightful leisure of her mind. Who were they? she wondered; but no doubt soon some of them would come this way, and she would see. Then suddenly she seemed