## DREAMLAND.

BY ISABELLA M. MORTIMER.

Dreaming of kindlier, warmer suns,
Dreaming of happier hours,
We dwell in a future that never sheds
Over our heads its living flowers;
In fancy we gather with eager glee
What fate dooms to perish in infancy.

The youth is dreaming of laurels won
On the battle-field of life,
He sees the hour of triumph near,
Nor recks of the years of strife;
Yet his flashing eyes shall be sunk and dim
Ere the victor's wreath may be worse for him.

The maiden dreams the dearest dream
The human heart may treasure,
Of a sun-lit home where faith and love
Flow forth in ceaseless measure;
Let her dream—nor whisper the future brings
Nor rainbow hues nor its darkening wings.

Let them dream—they will rouse a duty's call,
Eager for nobler doing,
Will catch the light on her steel-crowned helm,
And turn from fancy's wooing,
And visions of love and fame will die
As the sunset gleam from the wintry sky.

And yet—though the dreams of earth be fair,
God grant that a dreamless sleep
May seal the eyes that have learned too well
O'er waking thoughts to weep,
Till a morn shall break in their dazzled sight,
Crowning earth's dreams with a truer light.

—Golden Hours.

## OLD DINAH'S STORY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Yes Marsa, I was a slave in my time I'se free now, like de rest of 'em; but once I longed to Marsa Cardigan. Real fine man, Marsa Cardigan. Real first-class folks. High-up folks. So was missus—Miss Sara we called her. I was treated first rate, and they thought a heap of me; and for years and years I'd just been as happy as a bird; and I was happiest of all when I married Jeff.

Jeff was de likeliest colored man on de place. Marsa's own man—took care of him ever since he was a baby, toted him round and taught him how to ride, and he was thought heaps of. So, when missus found out dat I liked Jeff, and dat Jeff liked me, she said she wouldn't like nuffin better dan dat we should step off, and off we stepped.

Missus give us a big weddin'. We was jes' as happy! Don't have no sich fine times now, I tell you—Jeff goin' out to whitewash and me to clean house. Well, dere was one fing, I do say, Jeff was wrong in. He had a mighty bad temper. He'd be all right as long as he wus pleasant; but de minit he wus mad he'd flare up and say jest what wus in his mind. And when we'd been married about a year, marsa found some fault wid him 'bout sullin' dat wusn't his doin', and wouldn't listen to no excuse, and says to him;

"Hold your tongue, you black liar."

Now what Jeff ought to have done wus to say nuffin' and wait till marsa wus reasonable; but 'stead of doin dat he ups and says:

"One of us is a liar, Marsa, dat's sartin, but it ain't me."

I heared dat, and I 'spected to see Jeff horsewhipped. But marsa rose up kinder quiet like and looked at Jeff.

"I've treated you too well, I see," says he. "Here, Pompey, Pedro, you two take Jeff off to the strong room and lock him in. There'll be a dealer here to-morrow buying for the New Orleans trade, and I'll sell you cheap. Now, get."

Poor Jeff! How ashy he looked.

"Marsa!" says he. "Oh, Marsa! I've been wid you all your life! I'll neber say nuffin' sassy ag'in."

But marsa didn't pay no attention. No more he didn't to me. I begged, I prayed, I cried; and at last, after marsa had threatened to flog me, I jest went down on my knees and vowed that he shouldn't live to sell Jeff next day.

We darkies know somethings that white folks don't. Mothers tell their darters, and fathers their sons—so it's handed down without writin'. We know one sort of poison that we make out of a weed, and it's white as water, and has no taste; but put four drops in a glass of anything, and whoever drinks it one hour will neber see de next. Now I had an old aunt on de place, and arter work was ober, I went to her. Aunt Parmy we called her, and she could cure or kill with what she had in little bottles hid under her cabin floor. I went along de garden and down into de place, kind o' a holler where her cabin stood. She wus settin' on de step at de door, and dere wus no light in de room; but de moon wus shinin' awful bright and big, and I could see her black face a shinin' and her eyes rollin' by it. She had a white han'kercher on her head, and a white short gown on, and looked kinder skeery like a ghost.

"Well, chile," says she, as I comes up. "I see you's in trouble, and I've heard what wus. I ollers knowed what Jeff's temper would bring him to."

"Poor Jeff," says I. "Oh, what is I gwine to do, Aunt Parmy?"

"Rely on de Lord, chile," says she.

"I might if we wus white," says I. "But we dat's bought and sold, what's de use? He's forgot us. Aunt Parmy, I've come to ax you a favor. I know youv'e got some white drops, and I want some."

"I keeps de white drops, sartin sure," says Aunt Parmy. "Put 'em in an oil I make, and dey cure rheumatics wonderful; but to swaller, dey's deadly poison."

"I knows it, Aunt Parmy," says I. "But you jes' gib 'em to me. Here's a bottle I fetched along. Jes' be my fren' dis once, Aunt Parmy."

"Does you want to go afore your Maker unprepared?" says Aunt Parmy, "or does you want to send seme oder poor soul dere?"

"I wants 'em," says I, "and for good—for no harm. Lemme have 'em, Aunt Parmy."

She looked at me kinder curious. Den she got up and hobbled on her cane into her cabin, and I heard her rummage and rattle. Den out she came with the tiniest little bottle in her hand.

"Dar," says she. "But, Dinah, chile, you'll be sorry you've got it 'fore to-morrow night. I can see dat far, and I tells you so."

I shivered all over. I felt so skeered [illegible] said dat, but I took de bottle. [illegible] keep marsa from sellin' [illegible] I could.

Every night before he went to bed marsa ordered a bowl of hot stuff, and he and missus drank it after dey wus in dere rooms.

Black Sam mixed it, and Libby took it up. When I got back to the house she wus goin' up stairs with it.

Libby wus a lazy creature, so I knew how to come over her.

"I'll save you dose steps," says I. "Gib me de tray," and she handed it ober, and up I went. De stuff was in a pitcher, and dere were two glasses. I set de tray down on a little table, and I felt mighty bad.

"Mebbe I'll be haunted. Mebbe I'll go to de bad place when I die," says I; "but any way, whatever happens, Jeff won't be sold to-morrow." Then I says, "I hope missus won't taste it; but I must risk it," and in I emptied the white drops. Jest in time, for I heard marsa's step, and it was all I could do to get out of the window and hide myself on the verarda roof before they come in. I crouched down low and peeped through de slats ob de blinds, and I saw missus sit down, and saw marsa pour out a glass for her, and den fill one for himself. I felt hard-hearted den. What did dey care for me and my poor husband. Jes' a word from dem wus to make us wretched for life. As I saw dem swallow it I said to myself, "Ah' you won't look like dat to-morrow," and groaned. Den she she began to let down her hair, and he to play with it. And Jeff and I never to see each other ag'in, I thought, feelin' like a tiger, and den she turned around and put up her lips and kissed him, and says she:

"My dear, of course you're not going to sell Jeff to the trader to-morrow?"

"Of course not," said he. "I could not sell Jeff any more than I could a brother, and I never sold married folks apart, and I never will. There's no trader coming. I can't afford to give my people up, but I won't sell them so as to part families. I meant to frighten Jeff."

"Let me tell Dinah," said Miss Sara. "She won't sleep all night."

"No, no," said he; "she'll go over to the strong room and tell Jeff, and the boys need a lesson, all of them. I'll forgive him formally to-morrow."

I gave a groan, and clasped my hands, and wrung dem togeder. Marsa had never meant to sell Jeff, and what had I done? Marsa and missus had swallered de poison; dey'd be dead afore mornin'. I'd killed dem; and den I saw jes' how wicked I was—jes' what deend of it all would be.

I rolled off the shed next minit in a kind of fit.

Next thing I knew I wus in bed, Jeff wus standin' by me, and Aunt Parmy wus stirrin' up a cup of some stuff, and some one was sayin', "I reckon she'll do now." I looked up and saw marsa—yes, and missus, too. And missus smiled at me.

"It's all right, Dinah," said she; "Jeff isn't sold."

Den I caught hold of Aunt Parmy's apron, and whispered:

"Aunt Parmy, is dem ghosts?"

She says: "Shet up, chile, and go to sleep."

But when marsa and missus had gone out, she jes' puts her head down and whispers;

"You needn't be skeered about de white drops. I knowed you'd be up to some mischief, and all I gib you wus rain water. Reckon you feel glad I did now."

Glad! Oh, I was jes' as glad as angels am, dat minit!

It's all ober now. De place is gone. Marsa shot dead in de war, and missus dead ob sorrow. But me and Jeff talks it all ober sometimes, though it's years ago now.

### The Trick on Robbins.

James Robbins, of National avenue, has been missing for three days, but there is no anxiety around his house to learn his fate. His wife knows what caused him to disappear, and she is willing to let him get a good ready to come back. Robbins married a lone widow about four months ago, and they had not been wedded two weeks when he gave her a beating. She overlooked it then, thinking he would soon tone down, but in a week more he blacked her eyes. In brief, Robbins turned out to be a brute of a husband, and the ex-widow had the sympathy of all the neighbors. She is said to be meek and humble in spirit, and Robbins has no excuse for his brutality. Four or five days ago he knocked her down and started off up town, and the wife crawled over to a butcher's to see about having Robbins arrested. The butcher, who weighs 190 pounds and has a fist like a maul, knew a better way than going to the police, and he unfolded a plan.

When Robbins reached home that evening the house was dark and the butcher, dressed in women's clothes and with his jaws tied up, sat in the rocking chair.

"Why in blazes isn't supper ready?" howled Robbins as he stood in the door.

The butcher groaned.

"Grunting around again, are you!" shouted Robbins. "What's the matter now?"

The butcher groaned again.

"You feel too high-toned to answer me, do you!" growled the wife-beater. "Well, we'll see about that. Just take this, will you!"

He struck out, but the disgusted butcher caught his wrist, sprang up, and there was fun in that cottage. He choked Robbins almost to death, tied him up in hard knots and untied him, drew him around by the hair, and finally picked him up and tossed him over the fence into the mud. The wife-beater had kept up a steady yelling from the first attack, and as he rose from the mud and sped down the street he seemed to think that Sitting Bull's whole fighting force were after him. At 11 o'clock that night he entered a Michigan avenue saloon and told a story about six men robbing him, and half an hour later, as he was prowling around a shed to find a place to sleep a policeman heard him saying:

"Nose smashed, eyes bunged up, sore throat, bruised all over and awful sleepy! What a deceiving person a widow woman is!"—*Detroit Free Press.*

### Young People's Amusements in the Boyhood of the Poet Bryant.

One of the entertainments of the boys of my time was what were called the "raisings," meaning the erection of the timber frames of houses or barns, to which the boards were to be afterward nailed. Here the minister made a point of being present, and hither the able-bodied men of the neighborhood, the young men especially, were summoned, and took part in the work with great alacrity. It was a spectacle for us next to that of a performer on the tight-rope, to see the young men walk steadily on the narrow footing of the beams at a great height from the ground, or as they stood to catch in their hands the wooden pins and the braces flung to them from below. They vied with each other in the dexterity and daring with which they went through with the work, and when the skeleton of the building was put together, some one among them generally capped the climax of fearless activity by standing on the ridge-pole with his head downward and his heels in the air.

Another of the entertainments of rustic life in the region of which I am speaking was the making of maple sugar. This was a favorite frolic of the boys. The apparatus for the sugar camp was of a much ruder kind than is now used. The sap was brought in buckets from the wounded trees and poured into a great caldron which hung over a hot fire from a stout horizontal pole supported at each end by an upright stake planted in the ground. Since that time they have built in every maple grove a sugar-house—a little building in which the process of making sugar is carried on with several ingenious contrivances unknown at that time, when everything was done in the open air.

In autumn, the task of stripping the husks from the ears of Indian corn was made the occasion of social meetings, in which the boys took a special part. A farmer would appoint what was called "a husking," to which he invited his neighbors. The ears of maize in the husk, sometimes along with part of the stalk, were heaped on the barn floor. In the evening, lanters were brought, and, seated on piles of dry husks, the men and boys stripped the ears of their coverings, and breaking them from the stem with a sudden jerk, threw them into baskets placed for the purpose. It was often a merry time; the gossip of the neighborhood was talked over, stories were told, jests went round, and at the proper hour the assembly adjourned to the dwelling-house and were treated to pumpkin-pie and cider, which in that season had not been so long from the press as to have parted with its sweetness.

The cider-making season in autumn was, at the time of which I am speaking, somewhat correspondent to the vintage in the wine countries of Europe. Large tracts of land in New England were overshadowed by rows of apple-trees, and in the month of May a journey through that region was a journey through a wilderness of bloom. In the month of October the whole population was busy gathering apples under the trees, from which they fell in heavy showers as the branches were shaken by the strong arms of the farmers. The creak of the cider-mill, turned by a horse moving in a circle, was heard in every neighborhood as one of the most common of rural sounds.

From time to time, the winter evenings, and occasionally a winter afternoon, brought the young people of the parish together in attendance upon a singing-school. Some person who possessed more than common power of voice and skill in modulating it, was employed to teach psalmody, and the boys were naturally attracted to his school as a recreation. It often happened that the teacher was an enthusiast in his vocation, and thundered forth the airs set down in the music-books with a fervor that was contagious. A few of those who attempted to learn psalmody were told that they had no aptitude for the art and were set aside, but that did not prevent their attendance as hearers of the others. In those days a set of tunes were in fashion mostly of New England origin, which have since been laid aside in obedience to a more fastidious taste.

The streams which bickered through the narrow glens of the region in which I lived were much better stocked with trout in those days than now, for the country had been newly opened to settlement. The boys all were anglers. I confess to having felt a strong interest in that "sport," as I no longer call it. I have long since been weaned from the propensity of which I speak; but I have no doubt that the instinct which inclines so many to it, and some of them our grave divines, is a remnant of the original wild nature of man. Another "sport," to which the young men of the neighborhood sometimes admitted the elder boys, was the autumnal squirrel-hunt. The young men formed themselves into two parties equal in number, and fixed a day for the shooting. The party which on that day brought down the greatest number of squirrels was declared the victor, and the contest ended with some sort of festivity in the evening.

I have not mentioned other sports and games of the boys of that day—that is to say, of seventy or eighty years since—such as wrestling, running, leaping, base-ball, and the like, for in these there was nothing to distinguish them from the same pastimes at the present day.—William Cullen Bryant, *St. Nicholas* for December.

Cream would be too hearty to be used as a food to any great extent.

### The True Story of a Doll.

A year ago, a young girl, one of the teachers in a school in a great city, bade good-bye to the children and went home. The children laughed a great deal, and the story went about how that Miss Nelly was going to be married soon, and was going home to learn to keep house.

Nelly was one of the merriest girls in the world. In school of all hours, everybody tried to sit next to her, to hear her laugh. Nobody was ever so friendly or so full of life, they said. But she was not strong; and when she went home, instead of learning to keep house, she grew thinner and weaker day by day, while the doctors stood helpless in looking on. The marriage was put off again and again. At last she could not leave her room. Yet still people tried to come close to her; the laugh was always ready on her lips, and the [illegible] eyes grew more friendly with each failing day.

It began to be noticed, however, that she was anxious to sew or knit all the time, to make something for little children—soft, white little shirts, or baby's socks. In the city where she lived there is a hospital for sick children, in which there are many "memorial beds" given as legacies by dying women, or in remembrance of them by their friends. Nelly had no money to endow a memorial bed, but her thoughts were busy with the sick babies.

"I will dress a box of dolls," said she, "so that each can have one on Christmas morning."

They gave her the doll, and scraps of silk and lace, and she worked faithfully at it with her trembling fingers.

"I will have them ready," she would say.

But it seemed as if she might not have even one ready, she was so weak so often to lay it down. One September night she was awake all night, and in dawn made them wish and dress for and gave her her work's x and scissors.

By noon the doll was dressed, and she laid it down, smiling.

An hour or two later, they told her that the end was near. She kissed them all good-bye. Her face was that of one who goes upon a pleasant journey; and, holding her mother's hand, she closed her eyes and went away.

There is the little doll, alone in its box. I thought if each little girl who reads this story would dress a doll and send it to a poor child in some asylum or hospital on Christmas morning, that Nelly would smile know of it, and be glad that she and her loving fancy had not been forgotten.—Rebecca Harding Davis, *St. Nicholas* for December.

### The Season and the Zone of Homes.

One stronger reason than all others for being glad that we live in the temperate zone, is that it is the zone of homes.

Greenlanders and Laplanders, it is said, each consider their own country the fairest the sun shines upon, and charming stories of domestic life have come to us from those icy latitudes. But the Esquimaux and Kamtchatkans, and those inhabitants of extreme Arctic regions who must live in snow-huts, or burrow underground for warmth, cannot know the rich and tender meanings the word "home" has for us.

How much comfort there is in our cosey houses alone—in the clean, warm room, perhaps with a glowing fire; the white table spread with wholesome and delicate food; the cheerful circle around the lamp at evening; the books, the sewing, the games; the sound sleep of the long, snowy night, in beds as white as the drifts outside; and the many other nameless blessings of a civilized home! These the children of the eternal snows must do without.

There is more poetry in a really beautiful home-life than in the finest natural scenery; but it lies too deep is the heart for words to express. It is poetry that is felt rather than spoken. A happy home is a poem which every one of the family is helping to write, each for the enjoyment of the rest, by little deeds of kindness and self-sacrifice, which mean so much more than words. This home-poem is all the more delightful because it does not ask or need admiration from anybody outside. The poetry that people live in, of which they are a part, and which is a part of them, is always the most satisfactory, because it is the most real.

Think, little folks, of all the poems and fragments of poems you know, that never could have been written except in a country where tempest and sleet and long hours of darkness drove men and women and children within-doors and kept them there to find out how dear and sweet a thing it is for a family to live together in love—Lucy Larcom, *St. Nicholas for December.*

### How a Polar Bear Was Captured.

The skin of an immense Polar bear was received by a gentleman in New London per bark Nile, from a friend on the bark Isabella, at Cumberland Inlet, with the following account of its exciting capture: "A party of men from the Isabella, including a number of Esquimaux and myself, were walking on the ice a short distance from the ship, when, rounding a hummock, we unexpectedly discovered a short distance from us a large bear, quietly feeding. We would have returned to the ship without disturbing it, as we were armed with only one rifle and a few spears carried by the natives, had not one of the several dogs that were with us announced our presence by a loud bark. The bear, as soon as it saw the intruders, began to advance slowly toward us, but was met by the dogs, who attacked the animal vigorously, but with little effect. He shook them off, and after injuring three of them so badly that they had to be killed, he continued to advance. We discharged the rifle and then fled to the ship, where we armed ourselves and came out to look for his bearship, who had disappeared behind one of the numerous hummocks by which we were surrounded. We had searched for some time, when, as crossed the Esquimaux passed the corner of a hummock he came face to face with the unwounded animal. He gave a fearful cry just as the brute struck him with one of his immense paws. The rest of us heard the cry and rushed surrounded the brute, which stood partly still over the body of the Esquimaux. We fired several times, and at which enraged the bear leaving it received its death wound. Two days [illegible]


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