

MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

No longer, rose embowered and bright,
Pale memory flings her portals free
To fairy scenes of golden light
And sparkles of the summer sea.

IT COULD NOT BE WORSE.

"Your last day? Dear, dear! Must
you go to-day, Harvey?" said Mrs.
Seely, looking across the breakfast
table at her son with affectionate
concern.

And her daughters, Kitty and Margery,
echoed her words.
"Couldn't you have got off with another
week?" said his father, breaking
his hot roll carefully, "now that you're
a partner, though—"

"Now that I'm a partner, it's hard
work getting off," responded Harvey
Seely; "it was all I could do; in fact—"

"What was all you could do?" in-
quired Kitty.
"Will," said Harvey, laying down
his knife and fork, with a beaming
smile, "here goes! Here's the news
I've been saving up for you till the last,
from a natural modesty. It was all I
could do to get things arranged so that
I could go on my wedding trip, a
month hence. I am going to be mar-
ried."

Kitty's spoon fell into her saucer
with a clatter, and Mr. Seely dropped
his roll hastily.
"Married!" said Margery breathless-
ly.
Mrs. Seely alone remained calm.

She rolled up her napkin and put it
in its ring, and looked at her son
through her gold-rimmed glasses com-
posedly.
She felt, however, that this was an
important crisis.

When Harvey—their only son—had,
with commendable independence, left
his pleasant home to "get a start" in
the neighboring city, they had all ex-
pected great things of him.
He would be rapidly successful; he
would distinguish himself in the pro-
fession he had chosen and amass a for-
tune; and he would woo and win some
sweet young girl, with a long row of
ancestors—the Seelys, being themselves
a good old family, were great respect-
ers of blue blood—a host of accomplish-
ments, and a heavy dowry.

Their hopes had seemed likely to be
fulfilled. Harvey had proved himself
possessed of remarkable business qual-
ities; he had risen quickly, and had re-
cently exceeded their wildest ambitions
by being made a junior partner of his
firm.

All that now remained to be desired
was his safe conquest of the beautiful
and aristocratic young person of their
dreams, with her many talents and her
substantial inheritance.
It was not to be wondered at, there-
fore, that the girls were trembling with
eagerness; that Mr. Seely fumbled with
his watch-chain in nervous suspense,
and that Mrs. Seely opened her lips
twice before she found strength to pro-
pound that all important question:
"Who is she?"

"She is Mrs. Dora Berdan, at pres-
ent," said Harvey smilingly.
"Berdan?" Mrs. Seely repeated, and
raised her brows inquiringly. "I don't
think I have heard of the family."

"Not at all likely," Harvey rejoined.
"They are quiet people."

"Berdan?" Mrs. Seely repeated un-
smilingly. "No; I have not heard of them.
Where do they live?"
"In Weyman street," responded Har-
vey.

be called a beauty. And as for genius
—she's very clever at accounts; but she
doesn't sing, or paint, or anything of
money for such things, poor girl!"
But Margery had turned away with
an impatient gesture.

"There is nothing, then," she said,
despairingly; "no; it couldn't be worse."
Harvey rose from his seat, with an
energy which set the bell in the castor
tingling.

"This is absurd!" he said indignantly.
"It is more than absurd; it is unjust
and narrow-minded. How sensible—
presumably sensible people," Harvey
corrected rather bitterly, "can say, in
regard to a person they have never
seen, 'that it could not be worse,' is
past my comprehension."

"We will not talk of it," said Mrs.
Seely, folding up a restraining hand.
"Discussion will not mend matters,
and you are to be married next month!"
"Of course you will all be there?" he
added rather dubiously.

"By no means," said his father short-
ly.
"You could hardly expect it," said
Mrs. Seely reproachfully.

"Very well; if Mohammed won't
come— you've heard the observation.
We shall pay you a visit immediately
on our return from our wedding tour,
with your kind permission. You must
know Dora."

When he left the house an hour
later, he had the required permission.
His mother and the girls had even
kissed him good-bye, in an injured and
reproaching way, and his father had
shaken hands coolly.

But his ears still rang with that
odious assertion, "it could not be
worse!" and he was thoughtful all the
way back to the city.

The Seelys were in a state of subdued
excitement.
Harvey's wedding-tour was completed
and they had received a telegram that
afternoon to the effect that he would be
"on hand" to-night with his wife.

The dining-room table was set for
dinner; and Mrs. Seely wandered from
one end of it to the other nervously.
Her husband sat under the chandelier
with his evening paper, but he was not
reading it; Kitty and Margery flut-
tered about uneasily, watching through
the window for the return of the carriage
from the station.

"I hope," said Margery with a nerv-
ous attempt at cheerfulness, "that she
will be barely decent—presentable.
Think of the people who will call! I
hope she won't be worse than we're
prepared to see her."

"She couldn't be," said Mrs. Seely
dismally.
There was a roll of wheels, and the
twinkle of the carriage-lamp at the
door, and the bell rang sharply.

Kitty and Margery clasped hands in
sympathetic agitation; Mr. Seely drop-
ped his paper and rose; and Mrs. Seely
advanced toward the hall door with
dignity.

It opened wide before she could
reach it, and Harvey entered, his face
suffused with genial blissful smiles.

"This is my wife," he said proudly;
"my mother, Dora; my father, my sis-
ters, Kitty and Margery."

And with a caressing touch, he took
her by the hand, and led her forward
among them—
"Who is she?"

"This is my wife," Harvey repeated;
"have you no welcome for her?"
The bride tilted.

"At Mabel she thinks I ain't good
enough for 'em, dear?" she observed
tartly.

"Impossible, my pet," Harvey re-
sponded, and patted her falsely bloom-
ing cheek affectionately; "besides, if you
were but a shadow—a caricature of your
own beautiful self, they would not have
been surprised. They were prepared for
the worst."

flew to their rooms to cry themselves
to sleep in an agony of dismay and
mortification.
"I shan't think of settin' up," said
the bride, rising from the table with
an apologetic giggle, and with the last
desert held aloft. "I'm too wore out.
If anybody calls—of course, everybody
will call—just tell 'em I'll see 'em to-
morrow. Come on, dear."

And she tripped upstairs, with a
juvenile nod over her shoulder, and
with her beaming young husband fol-
lowing.

Mrs. Seely wrung her hands despair-
ingly.
"We said it could not be worse," she
said faintly. "But this! How shall we
endure it?"

"I shall not endure it," said her hus-
band; his face had grown almost car-
lorn during the last two hours. "I
shall send them packing to-morrow;
and if ever he enters my house again—"

He brought his hand down on the
table threateningly.
"But that will not help matters," said
his wife miserably. "He is ruined; we
are disgraced, and everybody will know
it."

There was a silence.
"I had pictured her to myself," said
Mrs. Seely, beginning to sob, "as a
young girl—a person of suitable age
for my poor misguided boy, decently
educated, and at least a lady. And even
then, when I did not doubt that it was
such a one he had chosen, I thought
myself the most unhappy creature in
the world, because—because she had
no wealth and an odd name. Surely it
is a judgement upon us. Oh, was there
ever so dreadful a thing?"

"Probably not," said her husband
grimly.
It was a solemn group which waited
in the dining-room, next morning, for
the appearance of the newly-wedded
couple.

There were marks of a tossing night
on every face—in troubled brows, swollen
lips and pale cheeks—and a general
gloom prevailed.

Mr. Seely stood in front of the fire-
place, watching the door with a stern
face. He was master in his own house
at least, and he was determined that it
should not be disgraced by his son's
wife for another hour.

"Please get them away before anyone
comes, papa," said Kitty. "It would
be dreadful if anyone were to see her!"
"Dreadful!" Margery echoed with a
groan.

There were footsteps on the stairs,
and Mrs. Seely turned with a shiver, and
the girls caught their breath.

The door opened.
The waiting group looked up slowly.
—Would she not be still more terrible
in the broad daylight—that artificial,
smirking horror?"

But it was not the sight they were
prepared to see, which the open door
disclosed; it was not a painted, pow-
dered semblance of a woman who came
in slowly, with a timid smile and down-
cast eyes.

"It was a slender, sweet-faced young
girl, with shining brown hair crowning
a charming head, peachy cheeks, in
which the color came and went, and
soft dark eyes, which studied the car-
pet in pretty timidity; with dainty-
slipped feet, and a lace-trimmed wrap-
per, fitting snugly to a perfect form."

"Good morning," she said gently.
Harvey followed her closely.
"Will, Dora," he said, looking from
one to another of his speechless rela-
tives quizzically, "they don't seem
inclined to speak to you."

But Margery had come towards her
hastily, and seized both her soft hands
in her own.

"Was it you all the time?" she cried
joyfully. "And the grey hair was false,
and the wrinkles were put on, and all
that dreadful powder? Oh, Harvey,
how could you?"

"I begged him not to," said the
pretty bride, raising her dark eyes
sweetly. "I told him that it had, saying
all those shocking things he had taught
me, and keeping my wig straight, and
trying not to laugh! Will you ever
forgive us?"

"Forgive you! Oh, my dear girl!"
cried Mrs. Seely incoherently.
And she hurried forward with a sob
of joy, and embraced her daughter-in-
law daily.

Saved by a Day.
I had only one hour—only one hour
to be Norah Glennie. At the time the
clock struck 10 I should be Norah Map-
leson—a wife, a true wife to a true
husband. I re-arrange my dress with
feverish haste. I only stop to drink a
cup of milk ere I leave the house, just
in time to catch the train as it passes
our station.

Once more my hands are clasped in
his. We say no word; only hurry
through the sleepy streets till we enter
the dingy office, where, by some strange
method, we are made man and wife.
All is a dream to me. I have only my
uncle, and he is lying bedridden at Nor-
lington farm. How could he be here?
The only thing that seems real to me is
the shining ring on my finger.

"Don't be so distressed, my darling!
Don't look so or I cannot bear it."
I draw a deep breath. I stretch out
my hand a little wildly. I suppose, for
he takes it firmly in his and lays it on
his arm as he hurries me through the
streets back again in the direction of
the railway station. Once more we are
in the train.

"Mine—mine forever! I do not fear
the future now!" is all my husband
says, but there is a world of love in his
eyes.

"Poor William! In a week's time he
will be on the ocean, and we will have
parted for many months—perhaps years.
I get out of the train alone, as he is
going on some business two stations
further on, then he will come back for
the rest of the week to the farm."

"Before you get into his room, wife,
darling, you will take it off," and he
touches my finger, on which the bright
new wedding-ring glitters.

"I cannot!" I cry, shuddering. "It
is unlucky to remove a wedding ring."

"But, my darling, his sharp eyes will
see his face looking at me from the win-
dow alarmed and anxious, but I nod re-
assuringly and he smiles.

It causes no remark that I have been
out so early this morning, for every-
thing lately is so upset by reason of my
uncle's illness and William's near de-
parture.

About my ring. I must hide it; but
I cannot take it off. I hurry up into
my room and hurriedly turn over the
contents of an old musty dressing-case
that had been my father's. Where can
it be? That old garnet ring, with the
queer undergroove in it, that I feel sure
will let this thin wedding ring into it,
and so keep my secret from prying eyes.
Ah! with hot, trembling fingers I find
it; it does exactly as I thought it would
do. With that broad old ring always
on I need fear no discovery.

During the day my old uncle is taken
much worse, and he will not see me
come near him but he. William comes
in and out of the room, but I am tied
to it all the day, till toward evening
uncle falls into a deep sleep and I can
safely leave him with his nurse. It was
a rambling old house, Norlington Farm,
and it had been my only home for near-
ly seven years, all of which time Wil-
liam Mapleson had lived as my uncle's
steward and helper under the same
roof.

It had been a hard, self-denying life
for him, perhaps; but for me—rather
for his love for me—he would never
have borne it. Till lately the hard
old man had never discovered our love,
and when he had there was no more
peace for us under his roof. He had
raged and stormed, declared that no
piece of his should marry William Map-
leson, on pain of disinheriting.

I had been weak and helpless, alone
in the world, not very strong in health,
when he came to my father's funeral,
and after paying all expenses had sim-
ply said: "Now go and pack up your kit-
ten; you must come with me to Norlington
Farm. Can't say, I'm sure, what old
Betty will say, but there's nothing else,
as I see, to be done. Remember, my
girl, 'tis not a lady's life I am offering
you; but I suppose you are not too fine
a lady to know what work means?"

If I had been then, all was corrected
by now. During these seven years I
have worked hard and lived hard. Yet
there are those who say old Peter Glen-
nie is worth half a million of money.

My golden week of happiness is gone,
but although William is gone I am
strangely content.

I do not regret the step I have taken.
Since the morning after my marriage
my uncle had been better and quieter.
Old Mr. Baines, the lawyer, had been
with him a full hour that morning, and
old Jenkins had been called into his
room to sign his name to some docu-
ments, together with the hired nurse.

"He's a miserable old man," she said
to me that same day. "I suppose it is
his will we signed. What a grudge he
seems to have against marriage. He
grows continually in his sleep about
foots getting married."

He had called her at this moment,
and I was left alone to overhear a con-
versation between old Jenkins and
Betty, who, being both deaf, were talk-
ing over the same matter in the kitchen.

"Ah, well, Betty, it's a hard day for
the farm when William goes away; an'
how'll the old master do w' a new
steward at his toime o' life I wonder?"
"Ye know what he's about, never
you fear. De'e think for a moment as
how he don't know a-letting him go is
the only way o' preventin' a marriage
between he and Miss Norah? Hal hal
hal!"

And now William was gone. The
ship had sailed and I was alone, but
happier far than if I had denied his
prayer.

Since the day after my marriage, when
Mr. Baines had been with my uncle, he
had been more quiet, but strangely anx-
ious not to let me out of his sight.

All through the week I had not been
once out of the house. Of this he seem-
ed to take full care by keeping me near
him by every pretense he could think
of.

The ship had sailed only one week
when my uncle died suddenly, and then
on the day of the lonely funeral came
the coming of the old miser's will.

I came down with my wedding-ring
exposed for the first time. It was no-
ticed at once. Mrs. Baines looked
aghast at me. The doctor, who attend-
ed my poor uncle, looked horrified, as
well he might, knowing that it meant
disinheritance if I married.

Old Betty's eyes had a wicked gleam
in them as she said: "Perhaps you
didn't know, you and William Mapleson,
that you'd lose everything if you
married?"

"We didn't care to think of it," I
said. "I should have sailed with him
had not my duty kept me with your
master."

At that moment I could not say "my
uncle," old Betty looked so malicious.

"And so," she said, "you have gone
and lost a fortune—lost a fortune to get
married?"

I cannot describe the insolent sneer
with which she hissed the words.

"I made his will the 27th of this
month, my dear lady, decreeing it so.
When were you married?"

"On the 26th, Mr. Baines."

The old gentleman stared at me, then
rapidly read the short will.

I was to be disinherited of more than
half a million of money if I married
after that date—so it was worded.

What is the Soudan?
The name bears different meanings,
according as it is used by the Arabs
or by the Egyptians. The former
apply it to designate the interior of
Africa generally, and following them,
the geographers of Europe have given
this name to all the countries along
the southern edge of the great Sa-
hara, from Senegambia and Sierra
Leone on the west, to Darfur on the
east.

Egyptologically, Soudan means
simply "the Black," and is a corrup-
tion of the Arabic name Balad us
Sudan, "the country of the Blacks."

As employed, however, by the Egyp-
tians, "the Soudan" means not the
immense tract of Africa just described,
but a tract to the east of it, which
comprises the countries, except Abyssi-
nia, on both sides of the Nile, south
of the second cataract, which have
formed the last sixty years been
formed into an Egyptian province
bearing that name. The dependent
province or empire—for, be it un-
derstood, the Soudan is not Egypt any
more than Algeria is France—com-
prises much of Nubia, all of Sennaar,
all Kordofan and all Darfur.

A report recently made to the British
foreign office gave its length from
north to south, or from Assouan to
the equator, at about 1650 miles, but
this makes it begin at the first and
not at the second cataract of the Nile;
its width, on the same authority, from
Massowah, on the Red Sea, to the
western limit of the Darfur province,
is from 1200 to 1400 miles. It prob-
ably, therefore, does not fall far short,
if at all, of the dimensions of India.

It is inhabited by two totally distinct
races. The northern half by almost
pure Arabs, most of them nomad
tribes, professing some form of Moham-
medanism, and the southern half by
negroes, who, though officially classed
among Mussulmans, are really pagans,
and are, roughly speaking, all sedentary
and agricultural. Up to 1819 the
Soudan was divided into a number of
 petty kingdoms and chieftaincies; but
in that year Muhammad Ali, the then
Khedive, sent his son Ismail to con-
quer the country. From that time to
the present the Egyptian have gone
on extending the borders of their
nominal sovereignty, but have never
yet managed to obtain an undisturbed
foothold in any part of the vast territory
they claim. The seat of the provincial
government is at Khartoum, at the
confluence of the Blue and White
Nile.

No country is better supplied with
medicinal as well as poisonous herbs than
India. Along waysides and ditches
harmless-looking plants flourish abun-
dantly, yet possessing some strange
and some the most deadly qualities. It
is one of the mysteries of creation how
side by side with plants and cereals the
most valuable and necessary to life, na-
ture has also scattered abundantly
plants so deadly; as if along with an
element of good there must also be one
of evil. One of the most common
plants by ditch side or cactus hedge is
the datoura, with its large white flower
and leaves resembling the holyhock,
and now well known as a valuable
medicine for asthma, for which its leaves
are used in the shape of cigars or "to-
bacco." The seeds, on the other hand
are a subtle and powerful poison, in small
quantities cause temporary insanity, and
in large, either permanent injury to the
brain or death. By an accident I be-
came aware of the peculiar properties
of the datoura. A robbery occurred in
a neighboring village, and an alarm
spread that this had been effected
through the agency of datoura poison-
ing by an organized gang of robber
poisoners. It seems the gang had put up
at the village the night before in the
guise of travelers, and succeeded in
getting on friendly terms with one of
the wealthiest families there, whom
they entertained to a feast of sweet-
meats—the only eatables in which the
different castes may join. As night ad-
vanced, the family allowed them to put
up in their veranda; and when the vil-
lage was sunk in sleep, the effects of
the poisoned sweetmeats gradually
placed the house and all it contained at
the mercy of the robbers. Next morning
when the hue and cry arose in the
village, and native inspectors, thannah-
dars and constables had arrived from
far and near to investigate the case—
and turn to what profit they could the
opportunity—they found the family of
eight lying helpless and dangerously ill
semi-idiotic and unconscious of what
had occurred or was going on around
them. The house had been ransacked
and money dug out of the ground—the
native's purse—amounting to about
30,000 rupees; and the suspicion of da-
toora poisoning was confirmed. No
trace of the gang could be found, in
spite of the official raids made by the
police, and the levy of blackmail on
those who could afford to "pay" to
escape suspicion. The family gradu-
ally recovered to find themselves almost
penitent, the time they had been un-
der the poisoning being a blank to
them.

The percentage of inhabitants of
foreign birth in 1850 was 9.68; in 1860,
13.16; in 1870, 14.44 in 1880, 13.32.
The foreign population reaches its max-
imum where the general population is
densest, along latitude 40 and 41 and
longitude 73 and 74. Since 1850 the
proportion of Irish in every 10,000 for-
eigners has fallen from 4,288 to 2,776.
The Germans have gained proportion-
ately. New York stands first in
aggregate foreign population, and also
first in Irish, German and English
population. Pennsylvania stands second
in aggregate foreign population, Illinois
third, and Massachusetts fourth. The
increase in Chinese population has not
been what might have been expected.
In 1850 the Chinese population was 758;
in 1860, 38,000; in 1870, 63,000; in 1880,
105,000.

The division of foreign-born inhabi-
tants as regards occupation is interest-
ing. In agriculture 293 Germans en-
gage for every 140 Irish; in personal
and professional services, as servants,
the proportion stands 218 Germans to
415 Irish. There are few Germans who
are textile operatives, but many Irish
and more British-Americans. Three
times as many Irish as Germans engage
in domestic service, although there are
more Germans than Irish in the coun-
try. The total population stands 6 na-
tive to 1 foreign.

The criminal proportion stands: For-
eign, 13,000; colored, 17,000; native,
30,000. The numerical relation of
those born abroad and their children
here is as follows: Born abroad, 6,559,-
679; having one or both parents foreign,
14,922,744. In 1870 there were born
abroad, 5,567,229; having one or both
parents foreign, 10,892,005. In each
nationality there are more children
having a foreign father than a foreign
mother, due to the larger number of
male immigrants.

Clear Reading.
The Count de Montgas, long attach-
ed to the Austrian Legation in London,
says that the Duke of Edinburgh is a
clear-headed, sagacious and careful
man of business. His fortune is not
proportionate to his place, and his de-
mands on it are great. Hence the nec-
essity for thrift. This has laid him
open to the charge of parsimony; but he
is simply wise. There is no real nig-
gardliness about him, as those can at-
test who have visited him at his house
or cruised in his ship.

The Marlin (Tex.) Index reports a
newly discovered food for bees in
Falls County. In the Brazos bottom
grows a weed, in height fifteen or twenty
feet, that is said to be almost as nutri-
tious as corn. It is called the "blood-
weed," from the fact that when broken
there escapes a juice that is almost as
red as blood. Many farmers feed their
work stock but once a day with corn.
The other two meals are made by
"staking" on blood-weed. There are
many instances where crops are raised
by feeding the work stock exclusively
on this weed.

The art of making glass is of high
antiquity, but it belonged to modern
ingenuity to develop the value of the
invention, and to apply it to a multitude
of important and in some cases indis-
pensable uses. Not many centuries
ago window-glass was only found in the
houses of the very rich. Its use began
in palaces. For a long time it was so
scarce that Alnwick Castle in 1567 the
glass was ordered to be taken out of the
windows and laid up in safety when the
lord was absent.