

Columbia Democrat.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson

H. WEBB, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Norristown Register and Democrat.

THE DREAM.

BY MRS. LYDIA JANE PEIRSON.

"Certainly you are ill this morning," said Mrs. Miller to her daughter, in a voice of deep concern—"you look ill and languid, and I observed that you ate nothing at all at breakfast. Do tell me what is the matter."

"I am not ill, my kind mother," the young lady replied, while her eyes filled with tears. "I am not ill, but I have had such a terrible dream."

"A dream, my child!—Is it possible that you should suffer a dream to depress you in this manner? I had deemed you a woman of too much strength of mind to be subdued by the nightmare monsters of a dream."

"I do not heed all dreams, mother; but my dream last night was so singular a character, and is so vividly impressed upon my memory, and bears upon my mind with such a semblance of reality, that I am sure that it was not sent to me without a special mission. I know that death or some terrible misfortune is impending over me," and the poor girl covered her face and wept.

"Ella," said Mrs. Miller, "I am sorry to see an exhibition of such superstitious feeling in one whom I have earnestly endeavored to imbue with rational ideas. I am not prepared to say that dreams are never sent as warnings since we read in the scriptures of such means being employed by the Almighty. But in all such cases, the danger was definitely set forth, and a way of escape pointed out by the vision. Even in the case of the heathen Nebuchadnezzar the Almighty sent the dream, and provided the interpreter, for the double purpose of warning the monarch, and making the idolaters see and acknowledge the power of the true God. But your dream—you do not know even what species of evil you imagine yourself warned of, of course you know not what you are to guard against. To imagine that an all-wise being would afflict his creatures with such indefinite forebodings of evil, is unwise, if not insulting to his divine nature. You should consider that you were out late last evening, and soon after having eaten an unusual quantity of confectionary, ice, &c. This is sufficient to account for any strange dreams you may have been visited with."

"These things are doubtless all true, dear mother, but this dream has so impressed itself upon my spirit that I cannot but believe it a foreboding of some fearful calamity, and I cannot but be very unhappy. Indeed I am sure that some evil angel is near me, and I have seen his shadow, menacing the blow, which will inevitably fall upon my devoted head or heart," and the unhappy girl sobbed as if she was already bereft of her dearest friend.

"Listen to me Ella," said the mother, "and I will tell you a dream which visited me in my youth, and recount the sufferings that I endured from a superstitious belief in such augury. But I was educated in a firm faith in the prophetic nature of dreams; an error which I earnestly endeavored to avoid in the education of my children, lest their brightest days should be embittered as mine were, by phantasmic terrors.

"You have often heard me say that my father was a mechanic, a man who labored for his daily bread, he was, however, as is not unusually the case, well educated; that is, he was a man of good mental abilities, and had acquired great knowledge in the arts and sciences. Yet he was a plain domestic man, seldom mingling in the bustle of the world, and careless of its fashions or its idol follies. My mother I do not even remember, but she was a gentleman's child. My father's housekeeper was a widowed aunt of his, who believed firmly in witches apparitions, supernatural warnings, and of course in dreams. My father always laughed at her tales, and her omens, but as he had little time to devote to the minds of the children, for whose bodily comfort he labored day by day, aunt Aechah moulded us all after her own pattern. We were all well learned in housewifery, and in books, but withal the veriest little rustics upon earth.

When I was about sixteen, a gentleman arrived in our little village, and took lodgings just opposite our house. Such a circumstance was an event in our quiet neighborhood, and every body wondered who he could be, and why he had come amongst us.—I contrived to get a peep at him through the window blinds. He appeared to be about forty years of age, was handsome and commanding in his person, and seemed to me at once to be a being altogether of a superior order. You must judge of my surprise when this gentleman, having become acquainted with my father, accompanied him home with the avowed purpose of being introduced to his family, and when he seemed to distinguish me by particular attention, I was utterly astonished. I knew that I was a simple rustic, and I had never once considered whether I was beautiful or not. Indeed, it had never seemed to me a matter of the least consequence. I was not, therefore, divine what such a man as he could discover in my manner or person to attract him to my presence. At first I was uneasy and embarrassed in his company, and always, covered with blushes, and I sometimes perceived a covert smile upon his lips, and a curious expression in his fine eyes. I grew the more fond of him, and did sincerely wish that he would discontinue his visits at our house.

Our aunt was getting quite in years, and the real business of housekeeping had devolved upon me, although she still held the sceptre, and exacted all deference and implicit obedience from us all. She soon discovered that I was the lodgester which attracted the stranger, and set herself to discover who he was, whence he came, who was his family, and standing in the world, why he came to our village, and what he intended to do. But with all her tact she could elicit nothing. The gentleman evaded all her inquiries, and yet his replies were polite and respectful. Finally, she decided that he was an accomplished impostor, and a most dangerous man, and bade my father if he had any regard for the peace or honor of his daughter to break off all intimacy with him. My father, however, thought differently. He admired the gentleman much, and esteemed him more. When aunt discovered that she could not succeed with him, she turned her batteries upon me, and assailed him with every possible argument and prognostic of evil. But I had learned to love the gentleman—to love him with my whole young heart—and with a feeling of adoration. I felt that I should find more honor and felicity in being his slave, than in sitting on the throne of an empire. I had poured all the treasures of my young heart into his bosom, and unless I could dwell there also, I felt that I must be forever poor and desolate.

Aunt suggested that he might be an escaped criminal, or a liberated convict, or a sluder of justice. But I knew, I felt that these things could not be possible. My father had full confidence in him; and when after an acquaintance of several months, he asked my hand, he met a cordial assent. Our poor aunt submitted with a deep groan and a fervent prayer that I might not regret my bridal day. I felt that such a prayer

was wholly unnecessary. The day named for the nuptials was fast approaching, and I was in the prospect of leaving an endear and all its tender associations, and my loved and peaceful home, was ever happier than I was then. But a shadow fell upon every soothing and cheering artifice, to beguile me of my sadness.

Well, we were married, and my husband removed me to a very finely situated country seat in the neighborhood. Our grounds were tastefully laid out and profusely ornamented with all that is most rare and beautiful of tree or flower; our house was spacious, and furnished in a style which excited the astonishment of all the simple hearted villagers, as well as myself. My husband, your dear father, treated me with great tenderness, and indulged my every fancy, but he was not a man of professions. He seldom spoke of the love he bore me, the pure strong affection, which was apparent in every look, word and action. And I, a girlish creature, longed to hear him say how very dear I was to him—how earnestly his noble heart loved me, and how alone. He always received my childish caresses with evident pleasure, and when I prattled of my own worshipping love he would sometimes hold me closer to his bosom, but very seldom make any reply. I ought to have been the happiest of women, and so I should have been but for that hateful dream, which floated like a portentous cloud upon my mental sky, coming very frequently between me and the sun of my felicity, and casting a shadow dark and damp as the atmosphere of death upon my blooming Eden. If my husband took a solitary walk, if he seemed pensive, if he heaved a sigh, immediately the image of her whom I saw in that dream arose before me, and with those dark eyes reproachful of me with having accepted a heart and hand which were solemnly pledged to another. And then I was miserable—oh, so very miserable! One circumstance, too, increased my suspicions almost to conviction. My husband never spoke to me of his parents or relatives in native place. He received large remittances quarterly, but I never knew from whence. I did not quest on him, for in addition to my intense love, I felt a reverence for his superiority in years, in knowledge, in manners, and in stations, which prevented my approaching too familiarly. Oh, but for that fatal folly, I could have relied upon him with that sweet implicit trust and confidence which is woman's true felicity. He received many letters, some of which appeared to affect his mind painfully. At length as I was passing the door of his study which had been left open to admit the air, as the weather was excessively sultry, I saw him press an open letter to his heart, while his blue eyes, full of tears, were raised toward heaven. I ran away and concealed myself and my jealous agony. I did not venture into his presence until tea was ready, then with assumed composure and a forced smile, I met him at the table. He seemed unusually agitated, his face was alternately flushed or very pale, his hand trembled, and his words were low and uttered with rapidity; yet I could not avoid thinking that there was more than his habitual tenderness in all his behavior toward me; and that very circumstances served to increase my distress. At length, with an evident effort, he informed me that it had become imperatively necessary that he should leave me for a few days, perhaps weeks, to attend to some important business. At this announcement I burst into passion of sobs and tears, and it was with difficulty that I forbore to reproach him with his perfidy. He used every endeavor to soothe me, but I wept all night, and was utterly unable to bid him adieu in the morning. He

tributed my excessive grief to love and fear for him, and left me with tears and blessings.

After he was gone, I began to reflect on the absurdity of my feelings, and all his goodness and affection arose before me, & reproved my doubts. I became calm; I prayed earnestly for pardon of my unjust jealousy, and for my dear husband's safety and happiness. I had regained my cheerfulness, when on the second day of his absence, my aunt came to spend a few hours with me. When I told her of his absence, she enquired the business that had taken him away so suddenly. I acknowledged my utter ignorance.

"And so," she said, "the still maintain his mystery? Ah! Lucy, Lucy! that man is burdened with a crying conscience. Depend upon it, he has some dreadful crime to answer for." "This is not only wrong, but cruel of you dear aunt," I answered. "I know it child," she cried eagerly, "forgive me; I had forgotten myself; I should not have spoken to you."

But her words had aroused the demon; and when she was gone, I commenced weeping and tossing as violently as ever. I entered his room as if to seek consolation, and as I sat weeping in his easy chair, I instinctively picked up some pieces of torn paper which he had used to wipe his razor. They were fragments of a letter. I became interested, and finally made out the following lines:

"Fly to me immediately, my ever dear Charles; now that happiness is within our reach, let us not delay the enjoyment unnecessarily. Oh, I long to be clasped to the dear bosom from which I have been so many years separated. Come quickly, and we will supply the links which absence has broken from the chain of our early love, and bless the God who has broken down the barrier between us. I have never ceased to love you, and to pray daily for our reunion, my dear—"

Oh! for one word more! I cried, would that word have been husband? My dear husband! and then I was absolutely distracted. I hardly know what passed for two days, and then a dreadful calm came over my soul. I had decided that my husband had a wife before he saw me—that he had gone to meet that wife of his youth; and she was the lovely creature of my dream. Finally I resolved to die. I told you that I was then distracted. I pondered coolly on the surest and speediest methods of self destruction, and I resolved on laudanum, because I thought a death by that drug would be least likely to distort my countenance. I procured two ounces. Then I wrote a long letter to my husband, over which I shed rivers of tears. I sealed and directed it, and laid it in his desk where he could see it. Then I packed up my wardrobe, and divided my ornaments into parcels, labelled for sisters; put my room in the neatest order, bathed myself, and scrupulously arranged my hair. Then I dressed myself in white like a bride, even to the pearl-leaved garland, and stood surveying the finished costume in a large mirror, when a rap at the door startled me, for I had given orders that none should disturb me till morning.

"What is wanting?" I cried.

"Here is a letter for you from master," replied the boy.

I dashed off the garland, sprang to the door, caught the letter, kissed it and pressed it to my heart, laughed, wept, and finally sunk down so exhausted with the violent revulsion of feeling that an hour elapsed before I could break the seal of the precious missive. It was couched in terms of great affection, and

contained a request that I would come to him in Charleston immediately. I destroyed my letter, and my laudanum; and set out wild with happiness.

You are aware that your grandfather, an aristocratic German emigrant, had destined your father for the daughter of a German nobleman; that your father went abroad to avoid the match, and remained many years, in the hope that the lady would marry. That after his marriage with me, the old gentleman espoused the rejected lady, and refused to see his son, embittered no doubt by the disappointed step mother. That she soon died, and then your blessed aunt Ella, effected a reconciliation. You understand at once that the letter of which I found the scrap that set me crazy, was from her. You perceive also the noble generosity which prompted your father to keep his family troubles from me.

I, however, could not wholly divest myself of the superstitious belief that my dream meant something, until I had seen the picture of the lady whom he had refused. She was utterly unlike the lady of my dream; and I assure you that I have never met the substance of that shadow.

So you see it was only a dream—an idle dream; yet it embittered the days that else had been my happiest, it made me guilty of cruel injustice toward the very best of men; and it well nigh drove me to suicide—to eternal perdition. I therefore again entreat you, never yield to a belief in omens and visions, or sit weeping and shuddering in the shadow of a dream.

AN INDIAN LOVE LETTER.

The Cherokee Advocate gives the following as an exact transcript of an epistle addressed by a red man to a damsel whose charms had made his heart uneasy:

Dear Miss—

I take the liberty of addressing you with a few lines for which I hope you will me excuse.

I address you with this Epistle thro' purity of heart and Cincerity of love—I have come to the conclusion to get me a partner thro' life and my Choice is you among the money Ladies of my associates you are uppermost in my mind.

I wish to visit you to have a Virble interview with you—

I wish to Cort you for the Sole purpose of gaining your affections and to call you with more than Joy my one I am Devotedly Cincere in what I Write and hope you will anser these few lines—and if they meet with your aber Bation you will please let me know whisr I may find you

No more At present But Res. in My Deare Women Your True Friend, Cincere Lover to the End

I close with this Vire of Poetry.

Mother said a boy, one Sunday after meeting, I hope some time I shall be rich.—I hope so too, my son, if you would make a good use of wealth; but why did you think of that just now? Because if I was rich, I shouldn't have to go to meeting only once in a while, and then but half a day at a time.

DISTRESS.

A landlord threatened a poor Irishman, the other day, to put a distress in his house, if he did not pay the rent.—"Put a distress in, is it you manel?" said Pat. "Och, by St. Anthony's row, but you had better take a distress out, there's too much in already, by the mithor that bore me!"

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A Dutchman and his wife were travelling, and they sat down by the road—exceedingly fatigued. The wife sighed, "I wish I was in heaven!" The husband replied, "I wish I was at the tavern!" "Oh you old rogue," said she, "you always want to get to the best place."