

## DAWN.

See ' on the mountain-tops the morn is  
spread,  
And twilight steals away with noiseless  
tread,  
Fainter and fainter in the flush of day  
The shy stars twinkle, and their pale, pure  
ray  
Fades in the splendor of the rising sun,  
As conscious that their nightly work is  
done;  
While at his kiss, sweet Nature lifts her  
eyes  
And smiles into his face. The blushing  
skies  
Scatter their roses on the clouds, until  
The sunny island weathers from hill to  
hill,  
And Morning sits enthroned amid her  
flowers,  
Fresh with the rainbow-tints of angel-  
bowers.  
And down below, the Earth reflects Hea-  
ven's grace  
Bright diamonds sparkle on the lake's calm  
face,  
Pearl-drops are glistening on the forest  
trees,  
Flowers toss their dewy petals in the breeze,  
And corn-fields in the valley laugh and  
sing,  
For joy that life should be so glad a thing.

Thou, Who dost bid the Morning light to  
shine,  
And thrill all Nature with a warmth Divine,  
Let not the shades of sin our souls enshroud,  
But with Thy brightness scatter every  
cloud;  
The fairest dawn without Thee is as night;  
Say to our waking hearts, "Let there be  
Light!"

*Sunday Magazine.*

## BLUEBEARD'S CLOSET.

What sort of a house was Blue-  
beard's, I wonder? Was it anything  
like mine? Had it a stone porch, bay  
windows, and Venetian blinds? Were  
the rooms snugly lined with Brussels  
carpets, and furnished with mahogany  
and oak and walnut, sofas and couch-  
es, and sideboards and easy chairs,  
with engravings and pictures upon the  
walls, in gilt frames, and mirrors over  
the chimney pieces, reflecting the sky  
and the garden from the opposite win-  
dow, and this hazy, pale blue sky,  
just now cloudless, and those beds of  
geraniums and calceolarias, standing  
like islands of beauty amid an ocean of  
green lawn? Was Bluebeard's wife  
anything like myself, and was the key  
of the mysterious closet anything like  
the keys I carry on my ring, or was it  
larger, like the key of our dining room  
closet, I will say?

To my childish imagination, that  
abode of Bluebeard's was a very dif-  
ferent-looking place to this of mine.  
Always it rose before me as a great  
marble palace, containing an almost  
endless series of rooms, full of ivory  
and marble, silver and gold, gauze and  
glitter, with richest treasures of art  
and nature embedded in their vast in-  
teriors, rooms of luxury and pride,  
while in the store-chambers were cas-  
kets of precious stones, boxes of  
rarest perfumes, chests of glossiest  
silks and softest wools woven into the  
loveliest patterns for the adornment of  
Fatima and sister Annie (by the way,  
how came Fatima's sister to have so  
English a name) and their numerous  
handmaidens; a huge chest of rings  
alone, for the ornamentation of Blue-  
beard's fingers; ditto for his wife, only  
smaller; ditto, but still smaller, for  
sister Annie:—a room for embroidered  
slippers, another for amber-mouthed  
pipes, another for scarfs, another for  
turbans, another for Cashmere shawls,  
one for heaps on heaps of gold and  
silver coins; one terrible room full of  
Damascus blades, and scimitars, and  
daggers, arranged in pyramids and  
towers on the floor, and in stars and  
diamonds and crosses upon the walls,  
Bluebeard's own especial store-room  
of destructives; and, behind all these  
and hundreds more, in the darkest

most solitary corner of the whole  
palace, the door of the little closet!

Poor Fatima! How often in my  
childhood have I pitied her, how often  
have I acted over in imagination the  
memorable scene between her and her  
infuriated husband, when the key of  
the unlucky closet was not forthcom-  
ing, and, when after many tears and  
prayers on her part, he stormed it  
forth from the feeble fortress of her  
trembling hand, with that awful tell-tale  
stain upon its polished wards? And  
not only in imagination have I enacted  
this scene, for a favorite game in my  
childhood's home was this tragedy of  
Bluebeard. On many a winter's even-  
ing, when our parents were away, how  
quickly have we five children, two sis-  
ters and three brothers, transformed  
our usual living room, the old-fash-  
ioned, unpoetical back parlor, into a  
region of enchantment. With the  
round oak-table of the kitchen dragged  
in to represent the celebrated tower  
from whose height sister Annie was  
to look out for the much-desired  
advent of the two delivering brothers;  
with a low chair for the steps to the  
same, two walking-sticks for the  
brothers' horses, the large kitchen  
carving knife for Bluebeard's sword,  
a few cloaks and hats, and two or three  
white handkerchiefs to serve as veils  
and turbans, we were all but comple-  
tely fitted out, and could play our play  
with due splendor, and with thrilling  
effect. We had no audience, unless  
at rare times, when we might have  
coaxed the one servant of the house-  
hold into the parlor to act as such, and  
to stare and admire. But the lack of  
patronage did not distress us. Gener-  
ally we were both actors and audience,  
most deeply interested and delighted  
and horrified; seers and hearers, speak-  
ers and doers at once; and I am not  
sure but that our satisfaction was not  
the greater on this account. But the  
closet? Where was that? Ah, I re-  
member! We had only fully to open  
the parlor door that was sufficiently  
near the wail to form in this way a  
square recess, quite suggestive and  
mysterious enough, and a tablecloth  
pinned across was a door at once, only  
capable of being opened with the  
strange, awful key that Bluebeard (my  
elder brother) carried so prominently  
at his waist till the eventful period  
when he delivered it to me, his faith-  
less, too curious Fatima. How well I  
remember the delightful savagery with  
which he clutched my hair, when I re-  
fused to give up the fatal key, and the  
joyful riding in of the two brothers on  
their bamboo horses, the fleetest of the  
fleet, to my rescue! We children en-  
joyed this touch of terror, beneath  
which lay the smile of conscious safety,  
this make-believe of horror, and were  
at once ready to laugh at our imagined  
frights and miseries the moment they  
were over.

And this tale of Bluebeard was de-  
cidedly one formed to take our sym-  
pathies, to give to us that slight sense  
of fear, that so deliciously flavors the  
uneventful, insipid lives of children  
who are confined most of the day be-  
tween four walls, those thick, ugly  
walls that hide from us so much of  
the stirring, delightful outer world.  
That wooden table, that carving knife,  
those cloaks and hats, our every-day  
gear, put on fantastically as became  
the play,—those headless, legless  
horses, that usually most uninteresting  
parlor corner, became to us, when  
united to this wonderful legend, things  
both beautiful and heroic and grand;  
and with them we were changed, also,  
into fierce Turks, accomplished prin-  
cesses, and valiant death-dealing  
horsemen.

But what years ago was that! And  
what changes have fallen upon us and  
our stage properties! Cloaks and

hats and veils and swords are all gone  
away into that vast dusthole of nature  
that must surely exist somewhere, or  
are changed into other forms, unre-  
cognizable forever by us. In extreme  
old age, the oak table may, perhaps,  
be doing duty in some humble home  
or other, or be helping in a feeble,  
octogenarian way other children to do  
something more than dream out their  
childish legends and fairy tales. The  
closet, however, is really gone, for the  
house in which we were born, and  
where we so often played our play, is  
pulled down, rooted up, and carted  
away as rubbish, who knows where!  
And for the actors, what rooting up and  
carting away have they not had!

To Bluebeard, my elder brother, has  
befallen the longest journey. On the  
far south-eastern coast of Africa he  
finds lions, serpents, and scorpions,  
calling more loudly for extinction than  
disobedient wives. Sister Annie, with  
six children, has other cares and anx-  
ieties than to know if the two brothers  
are coming; the two deliverers, have  
had many flittings to and fro, and one  
since those early days has ridden many  
a mile through the unploughed lands  
of ignorance and sin to save captive  
women from foe worse than the old  
wife-killer—the foe of intemperance.  
And Fatima, too, has had her experi-  
ences. What woman of forty has not?  
But, thank God, the husband she has  
at length found is no Bluebeard, and  
has not one closet in his whole house  
with whose mysteries she is not ac-  
quainted.

So far I had written yesterday. To-  
day, if my uncle is to be believed, I  
must rewrite the last sentence. With  
him has come a shadow over my plea-  
sant home. I am unhappy and not a  
little bewildered. Is it, or is it not  
true that in these well-lighted, beau-  
tifully furnished rooms, a sad tragedy  
has gone on for years? that beside this  
hearth, to which I so lately came as a  
bride, a suicide has sat? that from the  
closet in the next room, whose every  
cranny and corner I know, have pro-  
ceeded shame and misery and death  
to one who formerly called my hus-  
band hers?

Let me tell how it was my uncle  
came to speak thus. Yesterday a cari-  
age drove leisurely up the gravel  
path towards the front of the house.  
I was at my favorite seat near the  
drawing-room window; so, holding  
back the lace curtain that I might see  
more clearly, I beheld a well-known  
figure, habited in a brown coat and  
broad-brimmed white hat, step out of  
the carriage, and mount the steps of  
the portico. It was my uncle's figure,  
thin and compact and alert, and at  
once I knew it and went to meet it. I  
did not run or smile or feel glad in any  
way, for there is a something about  
my uncle that represses any outburst  
of enthusiasm, and in the sharp glance  
of his bright eyes is at times a sarcastic  
gleam, anything but encouraging to  
female impetuosity. When we meet  
we shake hands quietly; smile sedately,  
if we smile at all; and though we may  
not have seen each other for months,  
express no more pleasure or solicitude  
at the meeting than if we had but  
parted for a few hours. I had not seen  
him since my marriage, as he was  
abroad when that event took place, and  
for some reason or other he had given  
me to understand that it had been es-  
pecially displeasing to him. But old  
bachelor uncles must not expect to be  
listened to always, when they prognos-  
ticate woe and trouble from a state of  
life they have never experienced, and  
therefore are quite unable to judge  
about. My uncle had ever an absurd  
dislike and dread of first marriages;  
second ones are to him still more  
terrible, and it was, of course, no sur-  
prise to me to receive from him in a

letter, when I married Archibald Grant,  
Esquire, some rather hard words about  
foolish women of forty who are ready  
to marry anybody. Have I made it  
plain why I did not walk very quickly  
over the Minton tiles of the hall to  
greet him? and why I glanced a little  
nervously at the great hall clock, won-  
dering how long it would be before  
Archibald returned from the works,  
hoping most fervently that I might get  
over the first encounter by myself, lest  
my husband should be too shocked at  
his new wife's strange relation? I ex-  
pected a rough north-easter; I ob-  
tained a gentle westerly gale, that just  
lifted my sails, and carried me into the  
current of calm conversation. My  
uncle was at first bland and quiet,  
kissed my cheek, talked a little, rather  
seriously, but quietly, on my new dig-  
nity as wife and mistress, looked round  
observantly but good-naturedly upon  
the furniture and appointments of my  
new home, praised the appearance of  
the garden, seated himself in one of  
the most comfortable of the drawing-  
room chairs, and, till the lunch that I  
had ordered for him was ready in the  
dining-room, listened to my tale about  
Archibald and my father, my courtship  
and my wedding-tour, with anything  
but a severe face. Once or twice I  
thought him looking melancholy, and  
asked if he were well, but, finding that  
he was so, thought no more about it.  
Lunch ready, we repaired to the dining-  
room, and, true to his old habits, he  
was silent during the meal. After-  
wards he amused himself with looking  
round at the pictures upon the walls.  
Several of them were family portraits,  
and were not particularly beautiful  
either as pictures or likenesses. These,  
after I had told him the names belong-  
ing to each, he passed by quickly; but  
one—of a young lady in a white mus-  
lin dress, with long fair hair, lovely  
and most delicate complexion—attract-  
ed a more lengthened attention. "And  
who was that?" he asked.

"My predecessor, the first Mrs.  
Grant," was my ready reply, "and," in  
a joke, "don't you think me very  
like her?"

My uncle did not answer my ques-  
tion, so I went on. "She was very  
beautiful, I have been told, and indeed  
she must have been so, if she was at  
all like that picture. I asked Archi-  
bald the other day how he could choose  
so plain a face as mine after having  
called one like that his own? But he  
did not make much reply, and indeed  
he never does when I speak of Ade-  
line. Hadn't she a romantic name?  
It is very provoking, too, for as I knew  
absolutely nothing of her before I  
was married, I am naturally curious  
about her. Archibald's mother is just  
as mysterious, and all the information  
I could get from her was, that the  
white muslin was poor Adeline's wed-  
ding dress, and that the picture was  
taken directly after she was married.  
And now, my dear uncle, you know all  
I know about Mrs. Grant the first."

A strange expression flitted across  
my uncle's dark eyes as I spoke thus  
lightly. He turned upon me one of  
his reproving looks. "And you ven-  
tured to marry a man about whose an-  
tecedents you knew so little? You  
knew he had had a former wife, but  
what she was, or how she lived and  
died, you knew nothing. O, the strange  
foolhardiness of women! They will  
leap into marriage without a serious  
thought,—into marriage, that most  
solemn and binding engagement of  
life, that places them, in the eyes of  
this nineteenth century marriage law,  
almost in the position of slaves to the  
husbands of their choice. Their choice,  
forsooth! They will let their friends  
choose for them, nay, they will marry  
without any choice in the matter. I  
have known such. And you a woman