

NIGHT AND MORNING DREAMS.

I wake from dreams of the night,
And the stars aloft are coldly gleaming,
My dream is dark and strange with woe;
Oh foolish heart! dost thou not know
The dreams that are dreamed 'neath the stars'
pale light
Are nought but idle dreaming!

I wake from dreams of the morn,
And the sun on high is shining fairly,
The lark in the blue is singing far,
Seeking in vain for the midnight star,
And buds of the roses newly born
Blush through their dew-drops pearly.

My dream hath fled from the light,
But my heart is warm where its face was shin-
ing;

Oh happy heart! thou knowest well
What the morning dream doth sure foretell,
Thine onward path will be glad and bright,
Arise! and forswear repining!

A BUFFALO FIGHT.

Appearances indicated that this shaggy old fellow had been making a very good fight of it for several days. I dare say that in the maintenance of his social status he had gone back into the herd and stared at his descendants, and pawed and groaned, as much as fifty times. The long hair upon his huge neck was tangled and pulled until tufts of it hung loose and unkempt. The outer fibres of his huge black horns hung in filaments and splinters. His wicked little eyes had a reddish glare, and his beard was limp and froth-wet beneath his chin. Nor was this all. Sundry long, oblique, hairless lines appeared on his flank, and he put his left forefoot down tenderly, very likely remembering, at the same time, a square founce he had got yesterday in the shoulder, from some strong-necked youngster that had taken it upon himself to whip his father.

He stood a little upon the outskirts now, his head towards me, pretending to eat grass. It was as nice herbage as a bull, whose teeth were probably none of the very best, could wish—the first tender growth of the early spring. But still he did not seem to enjoy it. At intervals of a minute or so he would look round quickly over his shoulder and groan, and stand thinking, and then pretend to eat again. To this distressful pantomime the ten thousand shaggy grazers paid not the least attention. They were busy. I could hear them cropping the grass, as I lay there, with a continuous rasping sound. It was only too evident that of all those cows whom he had so often combed into curliness with his long tongue of sunny mornings, and led and herded and fought for; of all the little, stupid, hump-backed, stump-tailed calves, his own offspring, there was not one who did not wish him disposed of according to buffalo destiny, or who cared how soon his last fight with the coyotes was over, and his monument skull left standing upon its jagged base on the bleak hill-top, with scarce so much as a thigh-bone or a tuft of brown hair by way of obituary.

But this old one was still a buffalo and a bull, and he kept surreptitiously getting nearer and nearer to the ragged border of the herd.

Presently a calf came towards him slowly and in an investigatory sort of way, its little black nose wet and wrinkled, its little brown flanks distended with fulness, and the white milk-froth depending in long threads from its mouth. Gradually and slowly he went up to his father, and the two had just touched noses amicably when the mother also took it into her head to be friendly, and came too. Then came another cow, and another, and presently quite a little wing of the herd had gathered there, and the battered old warrior looked around him complacently. This kind of thing had doubtless happened so often that I wonder he did not seem to think of the result, but he did not. He might have known that he had arrived at that age when the young bloods of the herd would not look complacently upon his hoary gallantries. He was simply laying the plans for another fight, and the trouble began in the very midst of his content.

A fellow as big as the old one must have seen this social gathering from some distance, and threw out certain intimations of his approach by little puffs of dust which flew high in the air above the crowd, and by ominous snortings and lugubrious groans. The old one stopped chewing with a green mouthful between his lips, and listened. The cows looked round with the complacent expression which seemed to say that the fight was none of theirs, and crowded off upon either side, and very soon the antagonists stood facing each other. The old boy straightened out his wisp of a tail to a line with his back, gathered his four black hoofs together, arched his spine, and placed his nose close to the sod, shaking his huge head as though he wished to satisfy himself finally of its freedom from any entanglement which would hinder him from just tossing that ambitious youngster over his back and breaking him in two. The other came slowly, twisting his tail from side to side in semicircles which were very deliberate and grand for so small an organ. He took pains to make it distinctly appear that every hair he wore was angry. His eyes rolled in constantly increasing redness. His black, sharp horns were encrusted with earth gathered while he

had been tearing the sod in the ecstasy of valor. His nostrils were distended, and he halted in his slow advance to toss the broken sod high over his shoulders with his pawing. He was, in a natural way, a tactician. He made flank movements, and turned his shaggy sides, first one and then the other, towards his huge antagonist.

But this by-play of battle only hindered the final onset—they by no means intended to take it out in vaporing. The challenger advanced within some four feet, getting angrier and angrier as he came. Suddenly there was a crash which had in it something Homeric. One rattling onset of that kind leaves one in no doubt as to why the short, strong horns of the buffaloes have a splintered appearance at the apices. Then there was a long, steady push, in which every tendon of the huge bodies was strained to the uttermost. Then there was a strategic easing-off, then a sudden, gladiatorial thrust, which pressed the huge heads to the ground in an even balance of strength. Neither beast dared relax a muscle or retreat an inch, for fear of that fatal charge upon the flank, or that dangerous twist of the neck, which means defeat.

And now the cows returned and looked complacently on, and the very calves began to shake their heads in the first vague instinct of combativeness inspired by the battle of the bulls. And the young lordlings of the herd distended their nostrils and elevated their tails, but forbore any interference. It was a duel à outrance. A momentary relaxation of the tremendous strain only resulted in the shaggy heads coming together again with a dull thump, and a renewal of the dogged pushing which might have moved a freight-train. It was a matter of lungs and endurance, and white froth began to drop in long, tenacious strings from their lips, and the red eyes to glare dimly through what seemed clots of blood. I could hear the labored breathing where I lay, and see the tendons stand out across the thighs and along the thick necks.

But this dead set of strength could not last always. Every moment of time was telling disastrously upon the shorter wind and decaying strength of the old crusader, who still fought for the loves of his youth. His foot slipped, and the intelligence of this slight disaster seemed to reach his antagonist quicker than a flash of light. No gladiator ever urged his advantage more suddenly. There was a huge lunge, a sound of horns slipping upon each other, a spring forward, and the horns of the younger bull had made a raking upward stroke through his antagonist's flank. The fight now became brisk. Again and again the old one turned and tried to make the old stand of head to head, and as often his more active antagonist caught him behind the shoulder. With the red agony of defeat in his eye, and the blood trickling from the long wounds in his flanks, he still refused to be conquered. With falling strength and limbs which refused any longer to serve him, he finally stood at bay, with open mouth and hanging tongue, unable to fight and disdaining to retreat. His antagonist pushed him, and he yielded doggedly. He made no attempt to shield his flank, and pitifully endured all that came. The original plan of non-interference was abandoned, and the young lords gathered round him and snorted and shook their heads, and gave him an occasional dig in the ribs by way of expressing their contempt for him. The cows came and snuffed at him, and indulged in spiteful feminine butts and walked away. Their manner implied that they had always regarded him as a disagreeable old muff, and they were glad he finally understood their heartfelt sentiments in regard to him.

Through all this the old fellow stood unresisting, whipped, but still obstinate. Gradually they all left him to himself, and the herd wandered further away. He did not even look around; he was probably forced at last to accept his sentence of banishment, and go and live as long as he could alone, and fight his last fight with the coyotes, and die.

But that calf came out to see him again. I say that calf, because it seemed to me the same that had brought on this last unpleasantness, though for that matter they are all alike. The calf came and arched its back and pawed, and elevated its nine-inch tail in front of him, and gave him to understand by the plainest kind of language that it held itself in readiness to give him a most terrible drubbing, if he had not already had enough. It was comical to see him imitate the actions of his seniors, while the poor old bull did not so much as look at him. But his calfship was inclined to push matters, and finally made a pass which placed his foolish head with a considerable thump against the soft part of the old man's nose. Then he stood a moment with the air of having hurt himself a little, and toddled off to his mother.

The old one did not move an inch, and seemed hardly to notice this babyish persecution. But I suspect it broke his heart. He wandered limping and slowly down towards the sedge, and I lay there forgetful of the long army musket beside me, regretting that there had been no one else there to bet with during the battle, or to stand up like a man and confirm this story afterwards. The sun rose high over the prairie, the wind veered, there was a sudden panic, and the herd vanished beyond the hills, leaving me to plod back to camp.

A VIRGINIA auctioneer pulled out a revolver and announced, "If any man goes frolicking about while this sale is going on, I shall interrupt his career. Put them guns over by the fence, an' leave 'em thar."

THE RAPIDS.

Midnight on board a steamboat, a full moon, and a soft panorama of the shores of St. Lawrence gliding by like a vision. I thus assume the dramatic prerogative of introducing my readers at once to the scene of my story, and with the same time-saving privilege, I introduce my *dramatis personae*, a gentleman and lady promenading the deck, with the slow step so natural on a summer's night, when your company is agreeable.

The lady leaned familiarly on the arm of her companion as they walked to and fro, sometimes looking at the moon and sometimes at her pretty feet, as they stole out, one after the other, into the moonlight. She was a tall, queenly person, somewhat *embonpoint*, but extremely graceful. Her eye was of a dark blue, shaded with lashes of remarkable length, and her features, though irregular, were expressive of great vivacity and more than ordinary talent. She wore her hair, which was of a deep chestnut, in the *Madonna* style, simply parted, and her dress throughout had the chaste elegance of good taste—the *tournure* of fashion without the extravagance.

Her companion was a tall, well-formed young man, very handsome, with a frank and prepossessing expression of countenance, and the fine freedom of step and air which characterize the well-bred gentleman. He was dressed fashionably but plainly, and wore whiskers, in compliance with the prevailing mania. His tone was one of rare depth and melody, and as he bent slightly and gracefully to the lady's ear, its low, rich tenderness had the irresistible fascination for which the human voice is sometimes so remarkable.

Miss Viola Clay and Mr. Frank Gresham, the hero and heroine of this true story, I should have told you before, were cousins. They had met lately after a separation of many years, and as the lady had in the meantime become the proudest woman in the world, and the gentleman had been abroad, and wore whiskers, and had, besides, a cousin's *carte blanche* for his visits, there was reason to believe they would become very well acquainted. Frank had been at home but a very few months when he was invited to join the party with which he was now making the fashionable tour. He had seen Viola every day since his return, and had more to say to her than to all the rest of his relatives together. He would sit for hours with her in the deep recesses of the windows, telling his adventures when abroad. At least it was so presumed, as he talked all the time, and she was profoundly attentive. It was thought, too, he must have seen some affecting sights, for now and then his descriptions made her sigh audibly, and once the color was observed to mount to her very temples—doubtless from strong sympathy with some touching distress.

Frank joined the party for the tour, and had, at the time we speak of, been several weeks in their company. They had spent nearly a month among the lakes, and were now descending by their grand outlet to Montreal. Many a long walk had been taken, and many a romantic scene had been gazed upon during their absence, and the lady had many a time wandered away with her cousin, doubtless for the want of a more agreeable companion. She was indefatigable in seeing the celebrated places from every point, and made excursions which the gouty feet of her father, or the etiquette of a stranger's attendance would have forbidden in these cases. Frank's company was evidently a convenience, and over hill and dale, through glen and cavern, he had borne her delicate arm by the precious privilege of cousinship.

There's nothing like a cousin. It is the sweetest relation in human nature. There is no excitement in loving your sister, and courting a lady in the face of a strange family requires the nerve of a martyr, but your dear familiar cousin, with her provoking maidenly reserve, and her bewitching freedoms, and the romping frolics, and the stolen tenderness over the skein of silk that will get tangled—and then the long rides, which nobody talks about, and the long *tête-à-tête* which are nobody's business, and the long letters of which nobody pays the postage—no, there is nothing like a cousin—a young, gay, beautiful witch of a cousin.

Till within a few days, Frank had enjoyed a monopoly of the lady Viola's condescensions; but their party had been increased lately by a young gentleman who introduced himself to papa as the son of an old friend, and proceeded immediately to a degree of especial attention which relieved our hero exceedingly of his duties.

Mr. Erastus Van Pelt was a tall, thin person, with an aquiline nose, and a forehead that retreated till it was lost in the distance. It was evident at the first glance that he was high *ton*. The authenticity of his style, even on board a steamboat, distanced imitation immeasurably. The angle of his bow had been an insoluble problem from his *début* at the dancing school till the present moment, and his quizzing-glass was thrown up to his eye with a grace that would have put Brummel to the blush. From the square toe of his pump to the loop of his gold chain he was a perfect wonder. Everybody smiled on Mr. Erastus Van Pelt.

This accomplished gentleman looked with an evil eye on our hero. He had the magnanimity not to cut him outright, as he was the lady's cousin, but tolerated him on the first day with a cold civility, which he intended should amount to a cut on the second. Frank thought him, thus far, very amusing; but when he came fre-

quently in the way of his attentions to his cousin, and once or twice raised his glass at his remarks, with the uncomprehending "Sir!" he was observed to stroke his black whiskers with a very ominous impatience. Further acquaintance by no means mended the matter, and Frank's brow grew more and more cloudy. He had already alarmed Mr. Van Pelt with a glance of his eye that could not be mistaken, and anticipated his "cut direct" by at least some hours, when the lady Viola took him aside, and bound over his thumb and finger to keep the peace towards the invisible waist of his adversary.

A morning or two after this precaution, the boat was bending in toward a small village which terminates the safe navigation above the rapids of the Split Rock. Coaches were waiting on shore, to convey passengers to the next still water, and the mixed population of the little village, attracted by the arrival, was gathered in a picturesque group on the landing. There was the Italian-looking Canadian, with his olive complexion and open neck, his hat adjusted carelessly, and the indispensable red sash hanging from his waist; and the still, staccato-like Indian with the incongruous blanket and belt, hat and moccasin costume of the border; and the tall inquisitive-looking Vermontese—all mingled together like the figures in a painter's study.

Miss Clay sat on the deck, surrounded by her party. Frank, at a little distance, stood looking into the water with the intention of a statue, and Mr. Van Pelt leveled his glass at the "horrid creatures" on shore, and expressed his elegant abhorrence of their *sauagerie* in a *spun falsetto*. As its last thin tone melted, he turned and spoke to the lady with an air evidently more familiar than her dignity for the few first days seemed to have warranted. There was an expression of ill-concealed triumph in his look, and an uncompromised turning of his back on our *penseroso*, which indicated an advance in relative importance; and though Miss Clay went on with the destruction of her card of distances, just as if there was nobody in the world but herself, the conversation was well sustained till the last musical superlative was curtailed by the whiz of the escape valve.

As the boat touched the pier, Frank awoke from his reverie, and announced his intention of taking a boat down the rapids. Viola objected to it at first as a dangerous experiment; but when assured by him that it was perfectly safe, and that the boat, during the whole passage, would be visible from the coach, she opposed it no further. Frank then turned to Mr. Van Pelt, and to her astonishment, politely requested his company. The dandy was thunderstruck. As his comprehension it was offering him a private interview with a bear. "No, sir," said he, with a nervous twirl of his glass round his forefinger.

Miss Clay, however, insisted on his acceptance of the invitation. The prospect of his company, without the restraint of Frank's presence, and a wish to foster the good feeling from which she thought the offer proceeded, were sufficient motives for perseverance, and on the ground that his beautiful cap was indispensable to the picturesque effect, she would take no denial. Most reluctantly his consent was at last given, and Frank sprang on shore with an accommodating readiness to find boatmen for the enterprise.

He found his errand was a difficult one. The water was uncommonly low, and at such times the rapids are seldom passed even by the most daring. The old voyageurs received his proposition with shrugs and volumes of *patois*, in which he could only distinguish adjectives of terror. By promises of extravagant remuneration, however, he prevailed on four athletic Canadians to row him to Coteau du Lac. He then took them aside, and by dint of gesture and bad French, made them comprehend that he wished to throw his companion into the river. For "a consideration" they would upset the bateau in a convenient place below the rapids, and insure Mr. Van Pelt's subsequent existence at the forfeiture of the reward. A simultaneous "Gardez-vous!" was to be the signal for action.

The coaches had already started when Frank again stood on the pier, and were pursuing slowly the beautiful road on the bank of the river. He almost repented his rash determination for a moment, but the succeeding thought was one of pride, and he sprang lightly into the bateau at the "Allons!" of the impatient boatmen.

Mr. Van Pelt was already seated, and as they darted rapidly away with the first stroke of the oars, the voyageur at the helm commenced a low recitative. At every alternate line, the others joined in a loud but not inharmonious chorus, and the strokes were light or deep as the leader indicated, by his tone, the necessity of rapidity or deliberation. In a few minutes they reached the tide, and as the boat swept violently on, the oars were shipped, and the boatmen crossing themselves and mumbling a prayer to the saint, sat still, and looked anxiously forward. It was evidently much worse than Mr. Van Pelt had anticipated. Frank remarked upon the natural beauties of the river, but he had no eye for scenery. He sat on a low seat grasping the sides of the boat with a tenacity as unphilosophical as it was out of character for his delicate fingers. The bateau glided like a bird round the island which divides the river, and, steering for the middle of the stream, was in a moment hurrying with its whole velocity onward. The Split Rock, was, as yet, far below, but the intermediate distance was a succession of rapids, and though not much dreaded by those accustomed to the navigation, they were to a stranger sufficiently appalling. The river was tossed like a stormy sea, and the large waves,