

parade them anew" for this especial occasion. This faithful servant of former years slowly threads her way among the mazy cerebral aisles, and is obliged to return with the unwelcome tidings,—“Lo, they have arisen.”

Calling on Imagination, he entreats her to scale the heights of the mind and penetrate the “Ether of Lighs.” The only available returns brought in by this weary-winged explorer are some gaudy out-growths from the Hill of Fancy. Desperation seizes upon our aspiring friend. Fearing that the product of Memory’s zero by Imagination’s infinitesimal quantity will itself be zero, he wilts under the appalling surmise. Aqueous globules begin to stand out on his frowning brow. His lips protrude and recoil automatically, and his frame generally partakes of that nervous tremor indicative of an existing crisis. Suddenly, as if by electric light, his darkened visage brightens, heralding the approach of an idea; but, ah! that very glow carried a return ticket to despondency.—His fair vision was a trickster, and has vanished. “The thought that most thrills our existence is one which, before we can frame it in language, is gone.” An inherent sympathy for the afflicted vetoes autocratically, any disposition on our part to paint in full colors the *bizarre* commixture of dread, phrensy, and hopelessness now, alas! but too plainly legible on that once interesting face. He has reached the *ne plus ultra* of human aggregation, and a further description of his appearance would possibly savor of cruelty. He struggles, now in this direction, now in that for the pellucid gem that he faintly saw billowed to the surface, and as quickly submerged. Possessed of the desperation not infrequently born of temporary disaster, he resolves with zest to grasp the idea he would enbalm. The brain-sea surges again, and now a “flood of thoughts come o’er him,” unhappily as much mixed as the “*Cano Carmen* sumpence a *cibus plena* rye of mater anser. “It never rains but it pours.” He invokes the spirit of Eclecticism that, with her assistance, he may elicit from the confused mass a paragraph passably intelligible. Said spirit deigns to render aid. Increased heart-throbs salute her entrance upon the plains of thought, and the other powers yield obeisance. Rejecting the maimed, the halt, the blind, and marshalling in rank the stalwart, the keen, the heroic, she finally succeeds in presenting to the disconsolate soul such an array as can, in his estimation, go forth with surety of success to do deeds of valor in his behalf, and support the honor he has previously won. Nothing to do but write. Try it, I entreat of you, ye who who do it not, but who stand aloof with probe and scalpel anxious to dissect the

off-spring of those who *do*. Try it for two or three years on some of the intricate topics of our current age, and if, at the close of that period, you find that I have not herein written out a portion of your experience, send me a recipe for your methods of prose manufacture, and you will thereby assuredly “incur” the perpetual esteem of your pale and emaciated brother in letters.

SOLITUDO.

### DREAMING.

DURING the still hours of night when sweet sleep seals the heavy eye, the thoughts free from the power of reason and led on by the subtle law of association, bring scenes up before the mind, and frame pictures in some way connected with the doings of the waking hours. These are often so strongly impressed that they remain fresh and vivid for many days. How swiftly these elfin thoughts glide through space, now we are carried back to the scenes of youth amongst the gladsome days of yore, and we see again the cheering faces of friends, long since past away. Then again we are carried through distant countries and varied climes, all in a few moments.

Things transpiring around us are taken up and wove into this weird play, and all is wondrous strange. Thus the active brain is at work never tiring in its unceasing toil.

But there are times when, though slumber does not close the eye, yet dreaminess falls on the mind, and visions float through the imagination. Then fitting fancy roams wild through varied regions of thought, sketching bright pictures and whispering speeches of witchery such as fairies tell in their woodland dance. Some incident gives the ground-work, the central figure is self, and all through it runs the golden thread of love. Thoughts fill the mind till gradually they shape themselves into a panorama of exceeding beauty and fascination, the pulse beats quick and strong, the countenance is lit up, and a thrill of pleasure passes through the heart as this grand scene is spread before the imagination.

In these pictures of more than earthly beauty all is happiness, all is joy, not one shadow of ill crosses the fair sketch. And thus they succeed each other till the dreamer is transported far away to the country of dreamland, encircled by its golden mist.

This state of the mind is of great benefit to the poet who owes most of his power to strong imagination and fine fancy by which he stirs the passion and this wily habit which draws on the idle dreamer deeper into its snares, is made by the poet to produce a work of delight.

The dreamer’s visits to dreamland makes life’s real noble work a drudgery. His

appetite is so pampered that he refuses to be satisfied with good wholesome food.

This dreaming is a species of intoxication. Mark how buoyant the spirits are, how light the step is, as there flits in the chambers of thought, glowing imagery of future glory and greatness; but mirage like this vanishes away ere he can reach it. So long has he dwelt beneath the enervating sway of this fair mistress, that he has not strength to contend in the race of life, or wrestle with the mighty realities about him. The truant thoughts roam abroad from the rule of will, passing from object to object like the gaudy butterfly flits from flower to flower. There is no concentration; all thought is so scattered that nothing is accomplished. See the river, confined within its banks, rushing along impetuously, carrying on its bosom great burdens and sweeping all obstacles from its way! But look at it now, diffused over a level plain, here and there a little sluggish stream wandering along, turned aside by every pebble.

So it is with the mind—gather all the energies together; call in the wandering thoughts,—put up the barriers of the will to hinder their rambling, and bring all to bear on any subject and it will be an irresistible power. How many go dreaming all the time, and only wake at last to find that life with all its treasure of golden opportunities for doing great and noble actions is gone forever!

### A LEAP-YEAR POP.

MOON-LIGHT, everywhere. Silence, almost everywhere, except when a fair maiden, who instructs the youthful imagination how to shout, in a village not a hundred miles from Acadia, and a gallant youth, stand by the moony side of a sequestered hedge, and murmur soft zeros on the listening ear of night. They also fall upon the listening ear of a small boy, with cats-marked hands, who crouches on the shady side of the hedge.

It was the hour of sentiment, the stars sing again the old song of Eden, then hearts beat as half-a-dozen, and the small boy squeezed his sorest hand, and chuckled.

“Mr. F—” murmured the fair teacheress, as her delicate shoe tapped nervously on the top of a frozen edge of mud “when you were at Miss —’s school was there any one there, whom you—hem—entertained—hem—an affection for?” Mr. F—replied in the negative. “Well, is there—hem—any one in my school whom you, whom you love?” “Well, yes.” “Would you—hem—mind telling me who it—who it is?” Mr. F—Well, no, it’s, it’s,—hem—it’s you.” And all the lights of the empyrean sang again, and the small boy picked up his sinful feet and ran home to tell his maiden-sister, and his oldest cousin, and his aunt-in-law.