

JOHN RUSKIN

Though I am no poet, I have dreams sometimes:—I dreamed I was at a child's May-day party, in which every means of entertainment had been provided by a wise and kind host. It was in a stately house, with beautiful gardens attached to it; and the children had been set free in the rooms and gardens, with no care whatever but how to pass their afternoon rejoicingly. They did not, indeed, know much about what was to happen next day; and some of them, I thought, were a little frightened, because there was a chance of their being sent to a new school where there were examinations; but they kept the thoughts of that out of their heads as well as they could, and resolved to en-

joy themselves. The house, I said, was in a beautiful garden, and in the garden were all kinds of flowers; sweet grassy banks for rest; and smooth lawns for play; and pleasant streams and woods; and rocky places for climbing. And the children were happy for a little while, but presently they separated themselves into parties; and then each party declared, it would have a piece of the garden for its own, and that none of the others should have anything to do with that piece. Next, they quarreled violently, which pieces they would have; and at last the boys took up the thing, as boys should do, "practically," and fought in the flower beds till there was hardly a flower left standing; then they trampled down each other's bits of the garden out of spite; and the girls cried till they could cry no more; and so they all lay down at last breathless in the ruin, and waited for the time when they were to be taken home in the evening.

Meanwhile, the children in the house had been making themselves happy also in their manner. For them, there had been provided every kind of in-doors pleasure: there was music for them to dance to; and the library was open, with all manner of amusing books; and there was a museum, full of the most curious shells and animals and birds, and there was a workshop,

with lathes and carpenter's tools, for the ingenious boys; and there were pretty fantastic dresses, for the girls to dress in; and there were microscopes, and kaleidoscopes; and whatever toys a child could fancy; and a table, in the dining-room, loaded with everything nice to eat.

But in the midst of all this, it struck two or three of the more "practical" children, that they would like some of the brass-headed nails that studded the chairs; and so they set to work to pull them out. Presently, the others, who were reading, or looking at shells, took a fancy to do the like; and, in a little while, all the children, nearly, were spraining their fingers in pulling out brass-headed nails. With all that they could pull out, they were not satisfied; and then, everybody wanted some of somebody else's. And at last the really practical and sensible ones declared, that nothing was of any real consequence, that afternoon, except to get plenty of brass-headed nails; and that the books, and the cakes, and the microscopes were of no use at all in themselves, but only if they could be exchanged for nail-heads. And at last they began to fight for nail-heads, as the others fought for the bits of garden. Only here and there, a despised one shrank away into a corner, and tried to get a little quiet with a book, in the midst of the noise; but all the practical

ones thought of nothing else but counting nail-heads all the afternoon—even though they knew they would not be allowed to carry so much as one brass knob away with them. But no—it was—"Who has most nails? I have a hundred, and you have fifty; or, I have a thousand and you have two. I must have as many as you before I leave the house; or I cannot possibly go home in peace." At last, they made so much noise that I awoke, and thought to myself, "What a false dream that is, of *children*." The child is the father of the man; and wiser. Children never do such foolish things. Only men do.

John Ruskin.

NOTE.—This selection is a sort of fable, though the author calls it a dream. It teaches the folly of striving after mere earthly power and wealth without any thought of a Hereafter. The "stately house" is the world. The "children" are the men and women of the world. The quarreling over the "flower gardens" represents the wars going on among the nations for portions of the world. The struggle for the worthless "brass-headed nails" stands for the strife for riches.

Memory Gem:

"Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also. For what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul." *From "The Sermon on the Mount."*

A PSALM OF LIFE

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, how'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

A PSALM OF LIFE

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;—

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

From "Children's Hour and Other Poems."
Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Publishers.

Longfellow.

bivouac (biv' wăk or biv' öö äk), the watch of an
army by night, when in danger of attack.
main, the ocean.

Psalm, a poetical composition for use in the praise
or worship of God; especially one of the hymns of King
David.

In the fourth stanza, to what does the poet liken "our
hearts"?

Of what was "Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
spoken? On what day of the year are these words
spoken to Catholics?

In the line, "We can make our lives sublime," which
word, *our* or *lives*, should receive emphasis? Why?

Memorize "A Psalm of Life."

THE SOLDIER'S REPRIEVE

pal' sy	re li' a ble	glo' ri ous ly
re priev'e	sen' ti nel	en' vel ope
blanched	cul' pa ble	help' less ness
tel' e gram	sooth' ing ly	un com plain' ing ly

"I thought, Father, when I gave my Bennie to his country, that not a father in all this broad land made so precious a gift,—no, not one. The dear boy slept only a minute, just one little minute, at his post. I know that was all, for Bennie never dozed over a duty. How prompt and reliable he was! I know he fell asleep only one little second;—he was so young, and not strong, that boy of mine! Why, he was as tall as I, and only eighteen! And now they shoot him, because he was found asleep when on sentinel duty. Twenty-four hours, the telegram said. Only twenty-four hours! Where is Bennie now?"

"We will hope, with his heavenly Father," said the priest soothingly.

"Yes, yes; let us hope. God is merciful! 'I should be ashamed, father,' Bennie said, 'when I am a man, to think I never used this great right arm' (and he held it out so proudly before me) 'for my country when it needed it. Palsy it, rather than keep it at the plow.' 'Go, then—go, my boy,' I said, 'and God keep you!' God has kept him, I think, Father."

THE SOLDIER'S REPRIEVE

"Like the apple of his eye, Mr. Owen; doubt it not."

Little Blossom sat near them, listening, with blanched cheek. She had not shed a tear. Her anxiety had been so concealed that no one noticed it. Now she answered a gentle tap at the kitchen door, opening it to receive a letter from a neighbor's hand. "It is from him," was all she said.

It was like a message from the dead! Mr. Owen took the letter, but could not break the envelope on account of his trembling fingers, and held it towards the priest with the helplessness of a child.

It read as follows:

"DEAR FATHER:—When this reaches you I shall be in eternity. At first it seemed awful to me; but I have thought about it so much now that it has no terror. They say they will not bind nor blindfold me, but that I may meet my death like a man. I thought, father, it might have been on the battlefield, for my country, and that, when I fell, it would be fighting gloriously; but to be shot down like a dog for nearly betraying it—to die for neglect of duty!—oh, father, I wonder the very thought does not kill me! But I shall not disgrace you. I am going to write you all about it; and, when I am gone, you may tell my comrades. I cannot now. You

know I promised Jimmie Carr's mother I would look after her boy; and, when he fell sick, I did all I could for him. He was not strong when ordered back into the ranks, and the day before that night I carried all his luggage, besides my own, on our march. Toward night we went on double-quick, and though the luggage began to feel very heavy, everybody else was tired too. And as for Jimmie, had I not lent him an arm now and then, he would have dropped by the way. I was all tired out when we went into camp, and then it was Jimmie's turn to be sentry, and I would take his place; but I was too tired, father. I could not have kept awake if a gun had been pointed at my head; but I did not know it until—well—until it was too late."

"God be thanked!" said Mr. Owen reverently. "I knew Bennie was not the boy to sleep carelessly at his post."

"They tell me to-day that I have a short reprieve—'time to write to you,' our good Colonel says. Forgive him, father, he only does his duty; he would gladly save me if he could. And do not lay my death up against Jimmie. The poor boy is broken-hearted, and does nothing but beg and entreat them to let him die in my stead.

"I cannot bear to think of mother and Blossom. Comfort them, father! Tell them I die

as a brave boy should, and that, when the war is over, they will not be ashamed of me, as they must be now. God help me; it is very hard to bear! Good-by, father! God seems near and dear to me, as if He felt sorry for His poor, broken-hearted child, and would take me to be with Him in a better, better life.

"To-night, in the early twilight, I shall see the cows all coming home from pasture, and precious little Blossom standing on the back stoop, waiting for me; but—I—shall never—never—come! God bless you all! Forgive your poor Bennie."

Late that night a little girl glided down the footpath toward the railroad station at the Mill, and awaited the coming of the night train. The conductor, as he reached down to lift her into the car, wondered at the tear-stained face that was upturned toward the dim lantern he held in his hand. A few questions and ready answers told him all; and no father could have cared more tenderly for his only child than he for our little Blossom. She was on her way to Washington to ask President Lincoln for her brother's life. She had stolen away from home, leaving only a note to tell her father where and why she had gone. She had brought Bennie's letter with her; no good, kind heart, like the President's, could refuse to be melted by it.

The next morning they reached New York, and the conductor hurried her on to Washington. Every minute now might be the means of saving her brother's life. When she reached the capital, she hastened immediately to the White House. The President had but just seated himself to his evening's task, when the door softly opened, and Blossom, with downcast eyes and folded hands, stood before him.

"Well, my child," he said, in his pleasant, cheerful tones, "what do you want?"

"Bennie's life, please, sir," faltered Blossom.

"Bennie! Who is Bennie?"

"My brother, sir. They are going to shoot him for sleeping at his post!"

"Oh, yes; I remember. It was a fatal sleep. You see, child, it was a time of special danger! Thousands of lives might have been lost by his culpable negligence!"

"So my father said," replied Blossom, gravely.

"But poor Bennie was so tired, sir, and Jimmie so weak! He did the work of two, sir, and it was Jimmie's night, not his; but Jimmie was too tired, and Bennie never thought about himself, that he was tired, too."

"What is this you say, child? Come here; I do not understand!" And the kind man caught eagerly, as ever, at what seemed to be an excuse for the offense.

Blossom went to him. He put his hand tenderly on her shoulder, and turned up the pale, anxious face toward his. How tall he seemed! And he was President of the United States, too! A dim thought of this kind passed through Blossom's mind; but she told her simple, straightforward story, and handed Bennie's letter to Mr. Lincoln to read.

He read it carefully; then, taking up his pen, wrote a few hasty lines, and rang his bell. Blossom heard this order given: "*Send this dispatch at once!*"

The President then turned to the girl, and said: "Go home, my child, and tell that father of yours, who could approve his country's sentence, even when it took the life of a child like that, that Abraham Lincoln thinks the life far too precious to be lost. Go back, or—wait until to-morrow; Bennie will need a change after he has so bravely faced death; he shall go with you."

"God bless you, sir!" said Blossom. And who shall doubt that God heard and registered the prayer?

Two days after this interview the young soldier came to the White House with his sister. He was called into the President's private room, and a strap fastened upon his shoulder. Mr. Lincoln then said: "The soldier that could carry

THE SOLDIER'S REPRIEVE

a sick comrade's baggage, and die so uncomplainingly, deserves well of his country."

Then Bennie and Blossom took their way to their Green Mountain home. A crowd gathered at the Mill Station to welcome them back; and, as Farmer Owen's hand grasped that of his boy, tears flowed down his cheeks, and he was heard to say, fervently, "The Lord be praised!"

colonel (kûr' nel), the chief officer of a regiment.
helplessness = *help* + *less* + *ness*; *-ness* is a suffix expressing *state* or *quality*. Define *help*, *helpless*, *helplessness*.

What two suffixes are found in the word *gloriously*? What does each suffix mean? What change is made in the primitive word? Name other words in which *y* is changed to *i* on the addition of a suffix.

How many syllables in the word *uncomplainingly*? Give the sound of each syllable. What is the *primitive* word from which this long word is formed?

What does "blanched cheek" mean?

What did the President make Bennie by fastening a strap on his shoulder? Did Bennie deserve this honor?

What do you think of Blossom? Of Bennie? Of the President? Of Bennie's father?

Describe the home-coming of Bennie and Blossom.

Memory Gem:

A veteran of the War is dearer and nearer even than the flag. He is a living flag, starred and scarred.

John Boyle O'Reilly.

DRIVING HOME THE COWS

pal' sîed crisp' ing res' o lute
trem' u lous stealth' i ly

For Recitation:

Out of the clover and blue-eyed grass
He turned them into the river lane;
One after another he let them pass,
Then fastened the meadow bars again.

Under the willows and over the hill,
He patiently followed their sober pace;
The merry whistle for once was still,
And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy! and his father had said
He never could let his youngest go:
Two already were lying dead,
Under the feet of the trampling foe.

But after the evening work was done,
And the frogs were loud in the meadow
swamp,
Over his shoulder he slung his gun,
And stealthily followed the footpath damp

Across the clover, and through the wheat,
With resolute heart and purpose grim;
Though cold was the dew to his hurrying feet,
And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

DRIVING HOME THE COWS

Thrice since then had the lane been white,
And the orchards sweet with apple bloom;
And now, when the cows came back at night,
The feeble father drove them home.

For news had come to the lonely farm
That three were lying where two had lain;
And the old man's tremulous, palsied arm
Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer days grew cool and late:
He went for the cows when the work was
done;

But down the lane, as he opened the gate,
He saw them coming, one by one,—

Brindle, Ebony, Speckle, and Bess,
Shaking their horns in the evening wind;
Cropping the buttercups out of the grass—
But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air
The empty sleeve of army blue;
And worn and pale, from the crisping hair
Looked out a face that the father knew.

For close-barred prisons will sometimes yawn,
And yield their dead unto life again;
And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn,
In golden glory at last may wane.

DRIVING HOME THE COWS

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes;
For the heart must speak when the lips are
dumb;

And under the silent evening skies
Together they followed the cattle home.

By permission of the author.

Kate Putnam Osgood.

Authors make pictures by means of words, as artists do by means of lines and colors. This poem is full of pictures. Examine a few: The boy, who for once was still.—The boy, his gun slung over his shoulder.—Two already were lying dead.—The bloody battlefield.—The frogs and the swamp.—Thrice since then had the lane been white.—The feeble father driving home the cows.—Three now lying where two had lain.—The empty sleeve of army blue.—The face, worn and pale, set in a frame of thick, curling hair.

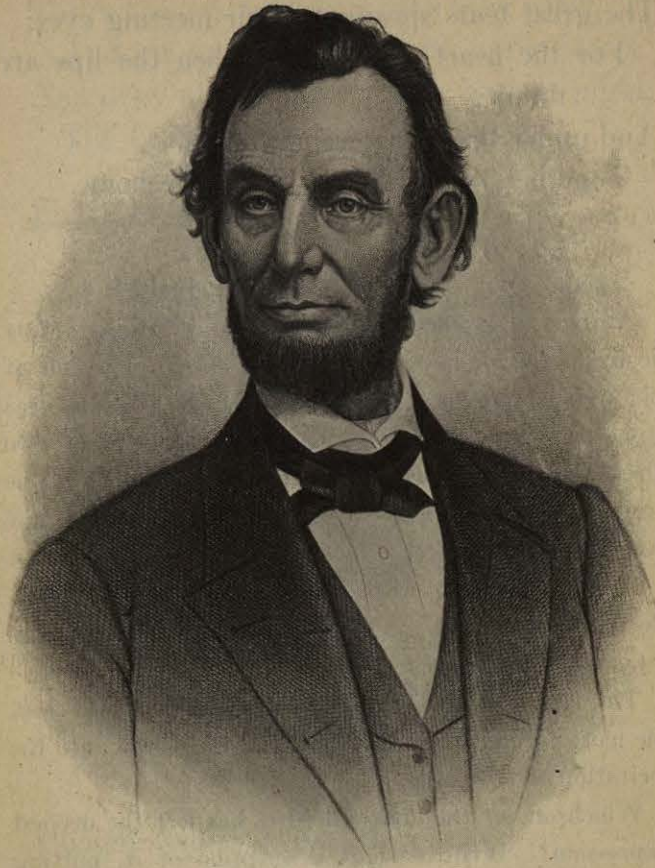
The clearer and brighter these pictures are to you, the more feeling and expression you will throw into the recitation of the poem.

Which one of the above pictures has left the deepest impression? Write a short description of it, putting into your description what an artist would were he to paint it.

Memory Gem:

But whether on the scaffold high,
Or in the battle's van,
The fittest place where man can die
Is where he dies for man.

Michael J. Barry.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Thy task is done. The bond are free.
We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.

Bryant.

LINCOLN'S LETTER TO MRS. BIXBY

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, Nov. 21, 1864.

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass.:

DEAR MADAM,

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle.

I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save.

I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours, very sincerely and respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

NOTE.—This letter of President Lincoln's is considered an ideal composition. It is deemed so beautiful in diction, so delicate in sentiment, and such an example of the consummate in expression, that it hangs in honor on the wall of a college at Oxford, England.

“GOOD-BY, OLD ARM!”

sa' ber fierce sur' geon
com' rade shat' tered

For Recitation:

The knife was still, the surgeon bore
The shattered arm away;
Upon his bed, in painless sleep,
The noble hero lay.
He woke and saw the vacant place
Where limb of his had lain,
Then faintly spoke, “Oh, let me see
My strong right arm again!”

“Good-by, old arm!” the soldier said
As he clasped the fingers cold,
And down his pale but manly cheeks
The tear-drops gently rolled;
“My strong right arm, no deed of yours
Now gives me cause to sigh,
But it's hard to part such trusty friends:
Good-by, old arm! good-by!

“You've served me well these many years,
In sunlight and in shade;
But, comrade, we have done with war—
Let dreams of glory fade.
You'll nevermore my saber swing
In battle fierce and hot;
You'll never bear another flag
Or fire another shot.

THE PENAL DAYS IN IRELAND

“I do not mourn to lose you now
For home and native land;
Oh, proud am I to give my mite
To freedom pure and grand!
Thank God! no selfish thought is mine
While here I bleeding lie;
Bear, bear it tenderly away—
Good-by, old arm! good-by!”

By permission of the author.

George Cooper.

THE PENAL DAYS IN IRELAND

pe' nal trea' ty wool' ens re pealed'
ret' i nue vol un teers' gov' ern ment
a pos' tate Prot' es tant em i gra' tion
reg' is tered Par' lia ment am bas' sa dors

This chapter of Ireland's history is a story of wrong, cruelty and persecution. I told you how Sarsfield had made a treaty and how King William himself confirmed it, promising freedom and justice to all Catholics. But the English Parliament had no mind to let the king have his way in this, and the Irish Parliament was no better. All the articles of the treaty were broken. Laws were made against the Catholics. No Catholic could sit in Parliament, nor be a lawyer, a doctor, or a soldier. No Catholic might teach in a school, nor even send his children to school abroad. Either they should be educated as Protestants or they should grow up

ignorant. All bishops and monks were banished, and Mass could not be said except by a very few priests who had been registered by the government, and when they died the government hoped that there would be no more priests at all, as no bishops would be allowed to ordain them. But in spite of danger, the priests continued to risk their lives among their people, ministering the Sacraments on hillsides and in secret glens; for there was a price on the head of every priest, and the reward was paid by money taken from the Catholics.

Unhappy Ireland lay in weakness and despair. In foreign countries there were Irish generals and ambassadors, Irish counts, barons, and knights; an Irishman was marshal of France, an Irishman was prime minister of Spain. But at home there were no chiefs to head a rising any more, and for more than fifty years after the broken treaty of Limerick, the cruel laws pressed the people down.

It is a little comfort to remember that, bad as the laws were, the rulers themselves were not so bad. Often a Protestant gentleman would help his Catholic neighbor. A Catholic might not be a guardian to a child, but a Protestant friend would sometimes promise to be a guardian, and then secretly allow a Catholic to educate the children who were supposed to be

under his charge. If a Catholic were in danger of losing his land, a Protestant friend would pretend to buy it from him, but really leave it in his possession. But you can see what a bad thing it was for the country to have such laws that people could do just actions only in secret.

The Irish Parliament had been content to do as England wished, but it saw its folly in the end. Irish Catholics had been crushed, and Irish Protestants were not to escape. The English merchants were jealous of the Irish trade. They thought that if Irish woollens were not made, English ones would sell better, that Irish cattle, butter, and cheese ought not to be sold in English markets; that Irishmen should not be allowed to go fishing in English waters; and all these things were forbidden by law—even Irish ships were not allowed to carry goods to any country except England. The merchants of Ireland were, many of them, Protestants. They were furiously discontented, but all the laws of the Irish Parliament were sent over to England for the English Parliament to agree to, and they could do nothing to help themselves.

It was then that emigration began. Every year crowds of Irish men and women leave their country, and go to other lands seeking the work they cannot get at home. Year by year there are fewer people in our country, and all good

THE PENAL DAYS IN IRELAND

Irishmen and Irishwomen should do their utmost to make it possible for Irish folk to find work and happiness in their own land.

When George III. was king of England a large portion of America belonged to him, but it was badly governed, and the people there rebelled against him. A long war began, and at last the rebels, a great many of whom were Irish emigrants, won their freedom, and formed the United States of America. England needed all her soldiers then, and sent the troops from Ireland to the war. France joined against England, and there was a great chance of a French army landing in Ireland again.

This the Irish Protestants offered to prevent, and they formed themselves in companies of volunteers, a real army in fact, to defend Ireland from attack. The chief leader in Ireland was a great man called Henry Grattan. He saw that now was the time for Ireland to gain what she could, for England dared not risk a war so near home. He was a true patriot, and he wanted justice for all Irishmen, not for Protestants alone. His first step was to have the trade laws repealed; next to lighten the heavy laws which pressed upon the Catholics. That Ireland might be well governed, he saw that the Parliament must be free, and unwilling as England was to grant this, the king dared

THE PENAL DAYS IN IRELAND

not refuse it when Dublin was full of armed men, between whose ranks Grattan and his friends marched down to the Parliament House in College Green. So to Grattan's eternal honor, an Act was passed declaring the Irish Parliament free to make laws for the good of its own country, without any interference in any way from the Parliament of England. So ended the Penal Days.

"Stories from Irish History."

Mrs. Stephen Gwynn.

They bribed the flock, they bribed the son,
To sell the priest and rob the sire;
Their dogs were taught alike to run
Upon the scent of wolf or friar.
Among the poor, or on the moor,
Were hid the pious and the true,
While traitor, knave, apostate, slave,
Had riches, rank, and retinue:
And exiled in those penal days,
Our banners over Europe blazed.

Thomas Davis.

Patrick Sarsfield, a great Irish commander, who, with a large part of his army, entered the service of France after the disasters of 1690-91. He was killed in the battle of Landen in 1693.

Define the words *emigrant* and *immigrant*, and use them in sentences.

Write out a list of ten questions suggested by the selection; and by supplementary reading or by inquiry, find answers to them.