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A Song Composed in a Dream.

In our dreams =

We have all made what seemed at the time to be ~~very~~ surprisingly good jokes, & upon waking have remembered them long enough to examine them & be disappointed. It is in fact of them were without point or humor, & the truth was not up to our daylight best. Our dream-tales have seldom been ~~worth~~

as good at breakfast as they were in the dream; the same has been the case with our dream-orations & banquet impromptus & our dream-poems. They have almost always had one very prominent defect: the

disposition to wander from the subject.

In the case of a tale, the wanderings were

likely to begin as early as the middle of it
+ go on wandering round + missing trains

~~and~~ from that point to the end;

and in the case of a poem, it might start with a definite thought but all the chances were against its sticking to it through six lines.

Prof to Samuel L. Clemens
Reminds me of the
New York

I have dreamed in verse with a strange frequency, considering that I am a person who does not ~~at all~~ ~~deeply~~ meddle with verse at all in the daytime. With exactly the same frequency I have found upon waking up and examining, ^{in disregard of custom} that if the dream-verses began with a definite thought they always lost their grip upon it early & wandered off into a wide nowhere & fell over the edge. But at last the rule is broken; I have dreamed in verse which began with a definite idea & ^{stuck} ~~clung~~ to it. The prose part of the dream ^{too} was ~~also~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~order~~ ~~as~~ ~~you~~ ~~will~~ ~~see~~.

In my dream, I was in a great and sumptuous opera house; the floor & all the galleries & boxes were filled with finely dressed people. A stately man in evening dress ^{came out} on the vast & otherwise unoccupied stage & stood there a while apparently nursing. The faces ^{& eyes} of the audience gave him ^{an} almost adoring

Invocation to the Holy

- by which sign I ³ knew that he was of high renown & acceptance -
we came, but not a sound ~~was heard~~
broke the pervading stillness;

There was not a movement, not ~~the~~
a whisper, not the rustle of a gown; the
people sat in the profound hush and

gazed in a rapt expectancy at the man.
Then followed a surprise for me; for he
presently burst out in a sudden &

mighty & uplifting enthusiasm of song
that seemed to fill the house with an almost
invisible splendor & glory, & my breath
stood still & my heart stopped beating, so

moving it was, so magnificent, & so
astonishing in ~~the surprise of it~~, the un-
expectedness of it. He carried this rich

& wonderful baritone ~~to~~ storm through
in a grand triumphal progress to a

thunderous close, then stopped & stood
~~before~~ silent before the panting and

excited audience with a hand uplifted
& his head tilted sidewise & upward -

stood so as much as a minute, per-

haps two, with the look of one who has
lost himself in a reverie & is not

conscious of what he is doing; & again

4 ^{tranced, with devouring and}
The house sat ~~the~~ expectant
eyes riveted upon him. And now he
began to sing again - this time in a
Tenor voice, + in a minor key. It was
soft + low, + infinitely sweet, exquisitely
~~sweet,~~ ^{sweet,} + heart-breakingly plaintive + pa-
thetic. One could see by the faces that the
people knew this song; that they loved it;
+ one's instinct said that it was what they
had come to hear, + that the glorious
tempest which had preceded it had its
thought-out purpose; that it was a
preparation, ~~for that~~
a lurid + gorgeous + rock-rivving vol-
canic background for this tender +
opaline twilight. The song was an
imploving + pleading + beseeching sup-
plication - that was apparent enough
before I had noticed the words. ~~It~~
I knew the tune, it was familiar to me,
~~but for the moment~~
I recognized it as a favorite, ^{for} ~~but~~ the
moment I could not place it. And no

wonder: it was Die Wacht am Rhein! It was that martial & tremendous musical cyclone doing duty in this sweet & moving & entrancing way as an invocation. It stirred the house to the depths, & me with it; & it seemed to me that the right & loveliest expression & employment of that great tune had never been found till now. When I began to notice the words I found that they framed an Invocation to Liberty. When I woke I was still in possession of the words, & they were rational, but they soon began to fade. But not so with the substance; that remained with me. It was clearly defined, & easily rememberable. By the time I was done wondering over the ~~the~~ matter & ready to go to sleep again, the wording had suffered more or less damage & only the last two lines remained unimpaired in my memory. When I got up an hour later I still had those lines, & was able to patch the

others together in a phrasing which was not far away from the original. Here is the result. You will perceive that there is an idea & a purpose in the simple verses, & that it is adhered to & not lost sight of:

O Liberty we worship thee
 And prostrate lift our hands
 Fast bound with cruel chains
 And pray "O make us free!"

O dawn for us! O beams on us!

O pity us! O rescue us!

Thou friend of breaking hearts,

O Liberty!

Shine on us in thy grace

O sweet Liberty!"

When a chorus of robust Germans, properly inspired with patriotism & beer, sing Die Waacht am Rhein, they deliver the last two lines of that mighty song with a thunder-crash. But when the man in the dream sang ~~the melody~~ ~~his~~ his Invocation his voice began to recede into the distance, as it

were, with the first of his last four lines, & to ^{gradually} diminish in volume & augment in imploring eloquence & unearthly sweetness & pathos to the end. By that time the vast concourse of people ~~had~~ had reverently risen & were standing; standing motionless, with heads bent forward, tensely listening; they still stood in that impressive attitude one or two minutes after the last faint sound had expired - then vanished, like a light blown out!