A City of Dream in the Fair Land of Erin

In a far away land, where the [turmoil] ~~strife~~ of life ~~the world~~ has not entered, and peace broods serenely, with snowy wings folded, there is hidden a city of dream, it is sheltered from storm by the hills that surround it on all sides save one, where an arm of the sea shuts it off from the world. [and on that side no violent winds are to fear. There an arm of the sea shits it off from the world, and the waves sing a ripple of rest as they break on the shore. No storm-song or passionate wail of the ocean it hears, only a lulling croon from the gentle waves, a sweet sad song in a minor key.] Far in the distance across the sea, stretch the hills of another land. Sometimes they rise distinct and ear, with a view of white dwellings, and green fields agleam in the sunlight, sometimes they stand afar off, chilling and vague in the azure distance, or wrap themselves sadly in the mist and cloud.

Through beautiful at all times perhaps in early summer my dreamland city wears its crowning grace. It is good to live when the chestnut blossoms scent the air and the lime trees deck themselves with drooping flwers [flowers] and from out the wealth of foliage comes the hum of happy bees.

Then the orchards are white with apple blooms, and the pathways are covered with snow of their dainty petals. The air is sweet with the scent of flowers, and a quiver with rapturous bird-songs. The drooping gold of laburnums gleams in the sun, and farther off the hills are aflame with the ~~golden [yellow] [shining]~~ [golden] gorse. In quiet nooks the shy sweet violets grow, and the glens and woodlands are ~~azure [lined]~~ thick sown with bluebells. The hedges are decked with a glory of blossoming hawthorn a white mist of perfume, the ~~costliest~~ [queenliest] incense of summer. In every garden lilies and rhododendrons ~~bloom,~~ [blow] and roses fill the air with a breath of heaven. On everything rests the fresh young joy of the dawning summer, an intoxicating gladness that seeks relief in song. Birds an insects carol their praise to ~~song,~~ [God] the streamlets ripple and sing over shining pebbles, the winds chant a tender son to the rustling leaves.

The summer days grow longer, hotter, but there is ever a cooling breeze where the green corn grows and the fairy fields of flax, all gay with red and azure flowers. An infinite peace descends with the evening dews, when the busy life of the day is hushed, and the west, in sunset glory, seems an open door of heaven. It is natures [hour] time of prayer and peace when the last gold rays, day’s parting benediction, ~~shine serenely down~~ [rest tenderly] on hill and meadow, ~~flicker gently~~ [steal softly] throughout the foliage and die at last amongst the solemn shadows.

 Sumer glides into the ~~peaceful [fruitful]~~ [mellow] autumn, with wealth of golden harvest days, and splendid gleam of burnished leaves. Even when the icy breath of winter has killed the bloom and chilled the heart of nature my dreamland city ~~keeps~~ holds a ~~sweet~~ [wondrous,] ~~and solemn~~ charm. The leafless boughs reveal their lines of beauty, and the absence of the foliage makes the wide sky seem more near. The sunset and the dawnlight show their loveliness unhidden and the ~~golden~~ [tender] moon and their trembling stars shine with a deeper light.

Yet beautiful and peaceful as it is, this gentle land can be a ~~hurtful [perilous]~~ hurtful home. To the child, the dreamer, and the old it is Paradise restored, but to the young, aspiring soul its peace is but the stillness of stagnation. In its simple and confined existence is no scope for ~~great abilities~~ [mighty effort], for wide and lofty aims. In to calm sheltered loveliness are no inspiring elements, on sublimity of mountain peak or grandeur of unfettered storm. The monotonous days succeed one another and glide into years without one stirring event to ripple the water of Time. And exile may wander afar for years and returning find no alteration save perhaps a grass-grown pathway, or another grave in the green churchyard by the sea. A youthful and ardent nature must chafe against such a lifeless existence. Such a one must escape to the wider world ere ~~the wings of his soul are expanded on~~ his powers find sufficient field. To remain is to let his faculties rust, and his life’s best years be squandered in slumberous inaction.

When those who have lived in its bosom go forth to the world this beautiful homeland of youth becomes to the heart and the fancy a haven of peace and a fount of refreshment. When the din of the world thunders loud in their ears, and the maelstrom of life surges fiercely around them, lo, memory opens her shining chambers and the y dwell once more in the heart of the woodland peace. The weary brain and clouded brow feel about the men again the play of the moorland breezes, and the breath of the sea with its constant whisper of hope. The wind in the trees sings the old sad tender song, and the scent of the ~~blossoms~~ [roses] is sweet as in the days gone by.

The loving spell this dreamland city weaves about its children draws them back ~~to its~~ as by a magnet ~~when~~ [should] sickness or disaster ~~overwhelms~~ overtake them. In its quiet ~~peaceful shelter~~ [shade] their ~~weary~~ [troubled] hearts can find new strength and healing. To this ~~quiet~~ [gentle] home to they would fain return when life’s battle has been fought and strife is done and the spirit longs to spend its closing ~~mortal~~ [earthly] years in some serene retreat. The Paradise of childhood and the Paradise of age alike are here, those two points of existence that touch the eternal shores. A hope and haven through the stormy years of life, so, ever sweet and fair, appears my blossom-land of peace, as it shines from out the distance through a silver mist of dream.

Winnifred Patton