

THE SLAVE'S DREAM.

Beside the ungather'd rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his native land.
Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flow'd;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plains
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain road.
He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kiss'd his cheeks,
They held him by the hand.—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.
And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And with a martial clank,
At each bound he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.
Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of the Caffre huts,
And the ocean rise in view.
At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crush'd the reeds
Beside some hidden stream:
And it pass'd like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.
The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of Liberty;
And the blast of the desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep, and smiled
At their tempestous glee.
He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day,
For death had illumined the land of sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

LONGFELLOW.

SERVUS MORIENS

Debilis intonsam servus iacet inter oryzam;
sordet humi lassa falx male nixa manu;
pectora nuda patent; concretus pulvere crinis
squalet harenosa semisepultus humo.
En, coram in somnis sublustri tenuior umbra
astare ante oculos visa paterna domus,
agnoscique licet campos sine fine patentes,
tu, pater, effuso quos, Niger, amne rigas.
Rex iterum, ut quondam, per agros incedit avitos,
qua tegit umbrosam plurima palma viam,
linnitusque cient montano vertice carri,
agmine dum lento devia saxa legunt.
Regia caeruleis coniunx surridet ocellis
inter progeniem conspicienda suam;
oscula nunc libant, cingunt modo colla lacertis,
nunc certant manibus conseruisse manus.
Somniat: en, cilia rupto pia lacrima tecto
irrorat bibulum lapsa repente solum.
Inde sibi immissis contendere visus habenis
margine flumineo praecipitante rota;
aurea pro frenis, pro loris aurea vincla;
castrensi sonitu Martia tela crepant,
dumque abit exsultans, pendentis acinacis ictu
sentit ut ardentis vapulet armus equi.
Qualia purpureos pandunt vexilla colores,
ante oculos ibes, picta caterva, micant:
pone legens campos, platanis loca consita, cursu
aerios gyros nocte dieque premit,
donec Maurarum se attollere tecta casarum
et procul Hesperii caerulea visa sali.
Noctu praedantes circum fremere ore leones
audit et argutos exululare lupos;
dat crepitum stagnis evadens si qua repostis
litoreos iuncos belua calce terit:
clara magis magis in somnis increbruit echo,
quale sonant pompa praetereunte tubae.
LIBER ERIS circum silvae mugire videntur;
undique vox eadem reddita, LIBER ERIS;
avia idem reboant, reboant et inhospita tesqua,
stridet idem bacchans, liber et ipse, Notus:
vir salit in somnis; ludibria laeta procellae
percipit, et risus conscius ora notat.
Frustra tu, custos, scuticae iam flagra minaris;
frustra, Phoebe, tuo calfacis arva face:
illuxit medias inter Mors alma sopores;
nunc iacet ingrata truncus inanis humo:
corporis effeti rupta compagine tandem
spiritus aetheriam carpit ad astra viam.

Translated by A.F. DAWSON.