

**OUR
FUTURE HOME**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649432035

Our Future Home by Martha Dalby

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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MARTHA DALBY

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PREFACE.

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SOME good people, derive but small comfort, or even none, from contemplating eternity. To them, it is a vague misty sort of thing, that is enveloped in doubts and gloom. Heaven, is a complete enigma to them, and life there, utterly incomprehensible.—This book is written, rather to assist people in thinking of the future, than to state positive facts with regard to it; for this can scarcely be done, in respect of a country we have never explored. Nevertheless, there is every reason to believe the following, to be an exact copy of what life there will be.

M. D.



OUR FUTURE HOME.

CHAPTER I.

ONE lovely morning in June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy three, I put on a simple straw hat trimmed with a white feather, a blue muslin dress, and pale kid gloves.

Thus equipped, I went forth, and pursued my way to an aristocratic part of the town where two of my dearest friends, Miss Egremont and her sister, reside.

I hoped to find them alone, and enjoy an uninterrupted hour with them: we girls are fond of having long talks together.

When I arrived, I found Maude, the elder of the two, standing in an elegant drawing-room, evidently, contemplating a pretty flower garden that lay beneath the windows.

No one could behold the fair being who turned

to greet me as I entered, without being struck with her lovely appearance. The oval face, the colour of whose expressive eyes emulates the blue-bell, and sweet summer roses alone can compete with the bloom on her cheek.

Her light golden brown hair, fell in a cascade of curls over her well-formed neck and shoulders. She is of middle stature, and as easy and dignified as a Queen.

The white dress and jet ornaments she wore, contrasted pleasantly with the dark rosewood furniture and its rich draperies of crimson and gold. As I joined her in the window recess, after the few words of welcome were spoken, she said,—

“I was admiring my garden, when you came in.”

“So I perceived.”

“I have a little trouble with it, the house was new when we came here, and the garden has been inclined to be anything but productive, but it is doing nicely now.”

I remarked when I went in, how clean and smooth the well-stocked beds looked, with their pretty borders of soft green moss.

Ash Villa, the residence of Maude and Rosa Egremont, is charmingly situate on a gentle eminence, on the south side of the fine old town of Myddleton.

On the right, is a vast tract of green and purple moorland, which is interspersed with rocks and streams, and studded with stately mansions, and noble villas, whose well-kept picturesque grounds, form one of the most pleasing of the landscape. To the left, is a pile of well-wooded hills, at whose feet a broad river winds its course, and sweeps gracefully along a luxuriant valley that stretches eastward for many miles like a beautiful panorama, beyond which, lies an ancient manufacturing town, that boasts an immense population, prodigious wealth, and countless tall chimneys.

Through the midst thereof, a brook pursues its way, from whose deep-dyed waters the town derives its name, Blackford.

But to return to Myddleton, sweet Myddleton on the Rhyne; that rejoices in the possession of an ivy-covered church, half hid by tall elms that surround it, whose interior is ornamented with several interesting monuments. One of these attracts special attention, it is an effigy of Sir Adam de Myddleton, in chain mail, who died in one thousand three hundred and fifteen. The arched roof, is supported by massive pillars, and the windows to the east are finely stained with scripture history.

The Vicar, Dr. Dryden, has a venerable countenance and silvery hair. His preaching is clear, earnest, and practical; and is listened to by crowds

of attentive hearers, who, hungry and athirst for the bread and water of life, flock to the holy place Sabbath after Sabbath,—“Like doves to their windows.”





CHAPTER II.

MISS Egremont asked me to spend the day with her, an invitation I gladly accepted, especially as some friends I wished to see were coming to spend the evening with them.

Just as I was finishing the last chapter, Maude, who had been busy preparing for her guests, entered the dining-room where I was sitting, with a basket of flowers in her hand.

I immediately put away my writing materials, and helped her to decorate the room with them.

This done, we, with Miss Rosa, repaired to the dressing-room, to make ready for the visitors.

I found a few articles of dress waiting for me, for which Miss Egremont had previously despatched one of the maids.

I put on a pearl-grey silk dress, and a small gold brooch; and went down leaving all the mirrors to the other two.

Presently they joined me.