

**THE  
DREAM OF HELL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649232192

The Dream of Hell by G. Wilson Duley

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**G. WILSON DULEY**

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DREAM OF HELL**



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# THE DREAM OF HELL

BY

G. WILSON DULEY



BOSTON

RICHARD G. BADGER

THE GORHAM PRESS

1906

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## PREFACE

Neither Heaven nor Hell have geographical metes and bounds, but rather have they psychological boundaries which vary as the consciousness of individuals vary in their scope.

Consciousness is the basic principle on which the worlds are builded, since were it not for our own conscious existence, to us, there would be no worlds.

In presenting a poem, of the character of the Dream of Hell, in an age when religion, and science both physical and metaphysical, are claiming so much of the attention of advanced thinkers, I must needs do it at the risk of having the poem variously interpreted.

The thought world is today in the throes of a new birth. Time honored systems and stereotyped beliefs are crumbling to decay, while from the ash-heap of colossal superstition and intellectual pride is springing the primitive ideal of "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

The literalist will read my poem, and, perhaps, be terrified by the horribleness of the pictures with which it abounds, while the more liberal thinker will give it a freer interpretation, and see in the word-pictures only the bodying forth of the idea of retributive justice.

Justice is an infinite principle, which holds undisputed sway in Heaven, in Earth, and in Hell, and while it bids us at all times to shape our course anew, yet were we asked the most stupendous task ever undertaken by man, straightway should we reply, "Picking up the threads of a broken life; the healing of a bruised reed."

The poem is not geographical but psychological, having for its object the teaching of retributive justice, and how utterly nugatory is self justification. Some of the verses are silhouettes sharply outlined in the twilight chambers of my own soul, while others are craven images which I have found floating in the universal conscience, in the calm and quietness of the inner sanctuary, and in the deep, deep recesses of the underworld.

You who read superficially will read my poem and lay it aside as something too terrible for contemplation; but the thinker will wander through its gallery of word-pictures and retrace his steps the second, and, perchance, the third time. If within that gallery of fantastic dreams, you find some of your own soul pictures, remember it was thou, who painted them thus, and not I.

I hold forth my hand in the darkness; I feel the touch of a kindred hand, and I know that my words have not been misinterpreted nor my efforts vain.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Prelude</i> . . . . .	7
<i>Canto One—The Woful Wold</i> . . . .	13
<i>Canto Two—The Dark Morass</i> . . . .	14
<i>Canto Three—The Unholy Bird</i> . . . .	14
<i>Canto Four—The Phantom Star</i> . . . .	15
<i>Canto Five—The Tale-Bearing Gutter</i> . . . .	15
<i>Canto Six—The Vision of Death</i> . . . .	16
<i>Canto Seven—The Resurrection</i> . . . .	18
<i>Canto Eight—The Color Vision</i> . . . .	19
<i>Canto Nine—The Conjunction of Worlds</i> . . . .	20
<i>Canto Ten—The Evil Spirit</i> . . . . .	20
<i>Canto Eleven—The Respite</i> . . . . .	21
<i>Canto Twelve—Re-Creation</i> . . . . .	23
<i>Canto Thirteen—The Deathless Worm</i> . . . .	24
<i>Canto Fourteen—The Chimes</i> . . . . .	25



## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Canto Fifteen—The Incantation</i> . . .	25
<i>Canto Sixteen—The Continent</i> . . .	26
<i>Canto Seventeen—The Nun</i> . . .	27
<i>Canto Eighteen—The Planetary Pro- cessional</i> . . .	28
<i>Canto Nineteen—The Prayer</i> . . .	29
<i>Canto Twenty—Second Sight</i> . . .	32

## THE DREAM OF HELL

### (PRELUDE)

All day had fall'n the silent shroud,  
The earth was snow, the heaven was cloud;  
And through the white subsilent deep  
Coyote chased jack-hare, leap on leap.

When evening came the sun's last rays  
Shot through a sad and glimmering haze;  
Then haunted darkness settled o'er  
A solitary wind swept shore.

From out the lonesome, hollow wind  
Weird fancy fitted to my mind;  
If 'twere not fancy as I think,  
Henceforth my soul in fear shall shrink.

Thus while I sat in grewsome doubt  
Within my chamber, hung about  
By formless ghost and midnight knell  
Bemoaning every soul in hell—

A man there came; may souls ne'er rise  
To stand at judgment in the skies  
If there were e'er such haggard brow  
As this, which holds my vision now.

Like pestilence from the leper's cell  
His ashen hair about him fell;  
Like penitential sack-cloth flung  
His antique garments round him hung.

The pallor that his countenance wore  
Ne'er since I've seen, nor saw before;  
With hand that mocked the grave-yard mold  
He touched my heart and turned it cold.

Forth from his languid eye there shot  
A mournful gleam I've ne'er forgot;  
Remorse swept o'er my heaving breast  
At sight of this gaunt, evening guest.

For speech I tried each subtle art  
But maudlin words died in my heart;  
I shaped my lips, and tried to pray;  
Lewd curses drove the prayers away.