

Deacon Abner's Dream.



DRAWN BY FLORENCE SCOVEL SHINN.

“‘HED A FUNNY DREAM LAS’ NIGHT.’”

THE drifts were deep last week, and Deacon Abner Perkins found only two or three of his neighbors in the post-office at mail-time, which is perhaps just as well, because he told a dream, and people affect to hate dreams—except their own.

This was the deacon's own, and he did n't hate it; but as he seated himself in the big arm-chair in front of the air-tight stove, he said:

“‘Hed a funny dream las’ night.” Then he paused as a minister does at a certain point in the marriage service. No one orally objecting, he went on:

“I dreamed that some years back the Chinese sent over a lot of missionaries to this country to make us learn this here Confusionism, an’ we did n’ take kindly to it, because this is a free country,—free to take a thing or let it alone,—an’ we did n’ want a strange an’ confusin’ religion sorter forced on to us.

“But, bein’ civilized in a good many spots, we treated those missionaries polite, an’ they kep’ sendin’ more an’ more, an’ wearin’ aout their welcome. Well, I dreamed that meantime we was tryin’ to git a big openin’ into Chiny, but the narrer-minded an’ selfish yeller-skins put up a sign, ‘The Americans Must Go,’ an’ those thet was in was fired over the Wall, an’ no more was let in, which, considerin’ their

missionaries an’ some of their merchants was doin’ business here, was aggravatin’, to say the least.”

“Kinder puzzles me. You say you dreamed it?” said the postmaster, who had come out in front the better to hear Abner.

“Yes, I dreamed it. Well, purty soon some of us begun to think we could treat a Chinaman the same as some of us treat a black man, an’ ther’ was one or two of these here barber-cues with the yeller fellers fer victims. Now, a Chinaman hates to have anything done to his cue, an’ I dreamed thet they promptly sent an army over here to fight us fer havin’ the barber-cues. Naow, thet was the time fer the dream to go all to pieces, but this one had as logerikle an endin’ as could be.

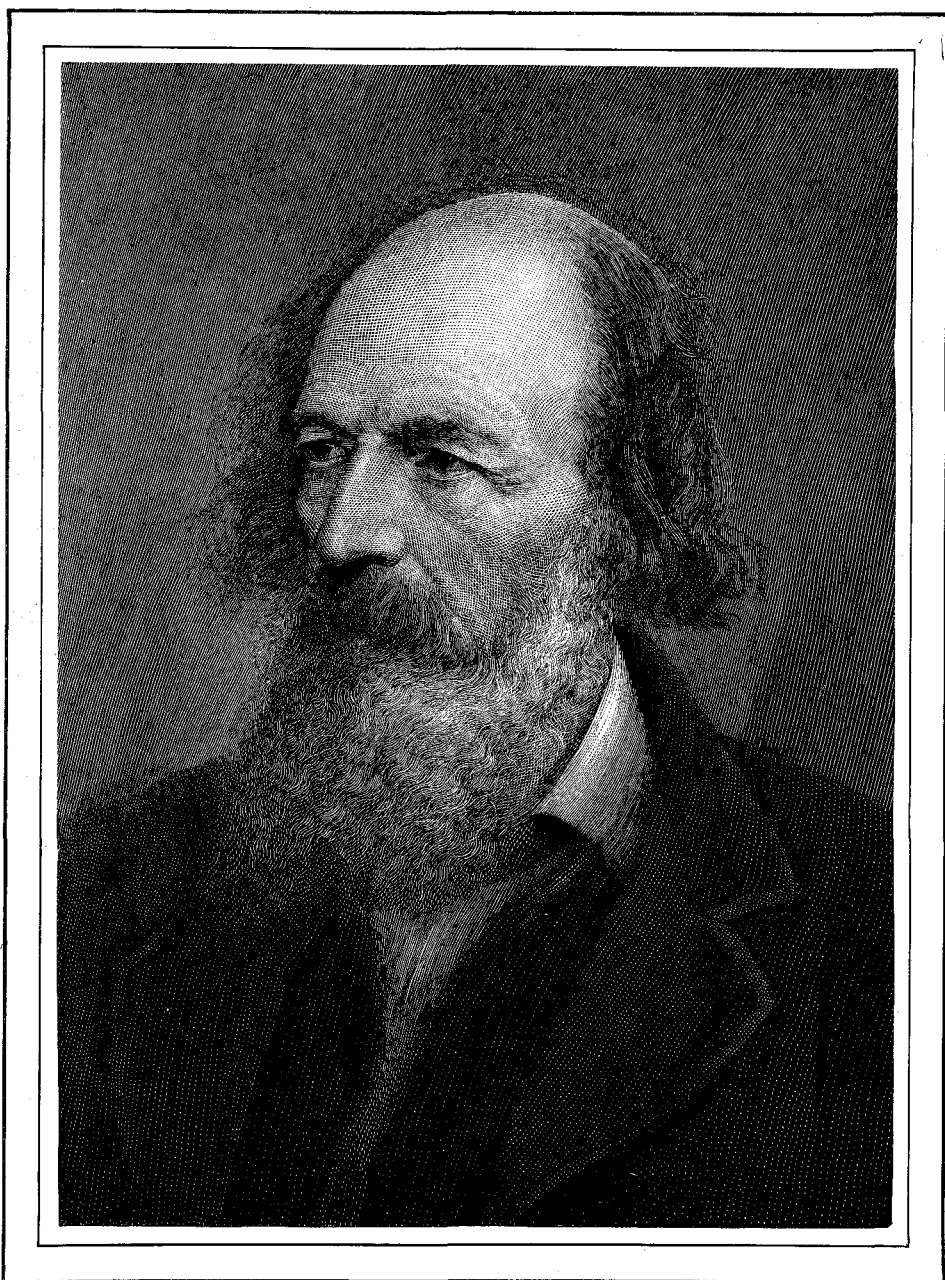
“By jingo! we felt aour rights was trampled upon, an’ we cut thet army to pieces. You see, it seemed to me in the dream thet the Chinese was so unjust. There they was sayin’ we could n’ git into their country on no sort of pretext, an’ yit they was comin’ over here in large numbers, an’ forcin’ us to listen to Confusionism, an’ then declarin’ war on us jes because of a barber-cue or two. It made my blood bile, an’ the bilin’ woke me up, an’ then, by jingo! I done some *thinkin’* until daylight.”

“Yes,” said the postmaster; “them Chinese is a bad lot.”

Charles Battell Loomis.

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ENGRAVED ON WOOD BY THOMAS JOHNSON, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD.

*James C. Fennell*