

THE MYSTERY OF DREAMS

SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS THAT FAIL TO SATISFY.

There are pleasant dreams as well as unpleasant, and there are some folks who are real dream-lovers—something about nightmares.

"Never tell your dreams, for that only makes you dream the more," is the advice that often greets the person who tries to enlighten the next morning by telling her adventures in the wondrous land of dreams. But that advice, invented really to ward off the bore of listening, rests in a great and fundamental mistake. Dream the more? Why, that's just what the real dream lover wants, for she knows there is a pleasure in dream-laden sleep of which sound and visionless slumber knows not the first letter. To explain the real charm of the thing would be like trying to explain the real charm of a play in which the spectator merges her own individualism in that of the actors, or of a novel with whose characters she laughs or weeps in delicious if sentimental style. Dream the more? The argument is fruitless and unavailing. It would be a wiser plan to say the contrary, when you wish to hear no lengthy detailed accounts of the happenings of dreams.

There are dreams that are unpleasant, but these must be endured, just as unpleasant things in every-day life must be endured. The person who likes to dream puts up with the poor ones because of the bright ones, and considers that the pleasure outbalances the reverse in the long run. Dreams and nightmare are not to be confused. In fact, your real dreamer considers that they are not made of the same stuff, for while one is delicious and substantial unreality, the other is a hard and physical fact. There are those awful, heart-breaking races with a dreadful something in pursuit, and just as you think you are going to escape, you find yourself in a blind alley with no way out and the dreadful something at your heels. That is a physical fact, and in spite of your anguish you may know that you are just in an uncomfortable position from which your utmost will power seems powerless to move you. Then there are those long cold tramps through the snow that you take in your uncovered feet. You may have a great many interesting dream encounters on that journey, but all the time the physical fact that you are cold verges it over into the realm of nightmare. Nightmare pure and simple is caused by remaining so long in one position that the blood ceases to circulate, and that proves that it is just a physical fact. Dreams are different.

Psychologists may try to explain dreams, but it is doubtful if they ever find a theory that entirely satisfies the dreamer. In fact, she cares little or nothing for theories, for the dreams themselves are enough. They may feel that they have settled the question on the theory of brain cells, but they neglect to explain the chief charm of the whole thing, the unexpected that is always happening. Perhaps during a nocturnal ramble your mind or you may run up against an old friend you haven't seen for years. That is all very well and good. Your brain cell that she once occupied may be reopening after a prolonged state of inactivity. But the old friend you haven't seen for many years begins a long and rambling discourse about something you've never heard of. You or your dream self is mildly surprised at first, but by and by it concludes to ask a very pointed question. The answer when it comes is so totally different from what your dream self has anticipated, and so totally different from what you've ever thought that the next day you reject the brain cell theory. It's good as far as it goes but it doesn't cover the ground.

No one who has become interested in an exciting novel likes to leave it unfinished. When that does happen, other books, equally good, fall somehow to fill the void. There is that one story whose end will never be known. A person has been known to grieve, mildly, to be sure, over a novel whose name, author and publisher she had forgotten, but whose plot in its unfoldings had remained in her mind for years. It's so with dreams. An unfinished dream leaves a vague longing, hopeless in its uncertainty. You may try to fall asleep and begin where you left off, but the chain is broken, and you never have more than the synopsis of preceding chapters. Sometimes you can manage in a state of half-awake and half-asleep to piece out the remainder and finish the thing up, but all the time you know you are only hoodwinking yourself and ending it as you want it to end.

There are seldom difficulties so great that you cannot overcome them. When those that are too great do come in, then you may struggle and struggle, but all the time you have a sneaking undercurrent of thought that tells you it is only a dream. You get the same satisfaction that smooths over the hero's difficulties in the first of a novel. He can't be killed off then, for there is the whole volume through which he must pass before the author is through with him.

A dream that comes inside a dream is a funny thing. You dream that you are dreaming, and it isn't always a dream of long ago. There is a sort of double pleasure about it, like a play in which occurs another play to help on the plot. Dreams, to be enjoyed, should be taken without the faintest idea that they mean anything. There are plenty of folks who still insist upon an interpretation for every light and airy vision of the night. Those who are humble enough to be frankly superstitious still buy dream books, while the more enlightened simply call

to mind what they have heard about a snake for an enemy, a cat for treachery, a dog for a friend and a horse for luck. If they climb upward in dreams—well, it probably doesn't mean anything, but still it is consoling to know that it is said to mean a rise in the world. If they sail over balmy, smooth seas, that means smooth sailing in many ways. But if they are struggling at the oars with the tumultuous waves driving the boat back toward the shore, they hope it doesn't mean that hard times are ahead, they really hope so, but—

Even those persons who pay no attention to the usual dream are likely to be affected by the warning dream that comes three times. A woman who prided herself on her superiority to such things as superstitions dreamed one night that her husband was brought home dead, and that he had been killed while walking along the street. The dream was so realistic that it made an impression on her mind, and she recounted it to her family. A long time afterward the same dream in all the same details came again. Later it still cropped up in a third and absolutely last appearance. Even the man himself was somewhat alarmed by that time, while those who knew of the warning dream looked upon him as doomed and as good as dead. For fifteen long years afterward the woman daily fortified herself to endure the shock. Then she passed away, while the man lived ten years longer, and finally died peacefully and in order in his own bed. Although there are cases in which coming events have cast their shadows in dreams, still the great majority of dreams mean absolutely nothing. It is almost a waste of good dream hours to devote them to solving mathematical problems and such things, although it is undoubtedly a great saving of day-time energy. Condorcet, who finished a train of calculations in his sleep that had puzzled him greatly in his waking hours, and Coleridge, who composed "Kubla Kahn" in his sleep, belong to the list of dream workers.

There are those who never dream. It is such unfortunates who prate of soundless and dreamless slumbers as about the best thing in the line. There are those who never read fiction, and who have never seen a good play. Their argument is "What good does it do?" or "What is the sense?" They miss a great deal, but they never know it, which is perhaps just as well. But to have never overcome time, space and all realities in a dream—that is a real misfortune!—New York Sun.

The Sun Shrinks Every Day.

The usual Christmas course of lectures was begun at the Royal Institution by Sir Robert Ball. The sun, he pointed out, was the source of all the heat received by this earth. Now, it was a well-known fact that most things in cooling became smaller; a poker for instance, was shorter when it was cold than when it was red hot. The sun, too, must obey this fundamental law, and must therefore be getting smaller. If we could measure its diameter on two successive days we should find it had decreased by nine inches—that was to say, it was shrinking at the rate of, roughly, five feet a week, or a mile in every twenty years. In view of this shrinkage, some of the younger members of his audience might feel anxious lest the sun should not last their time. Such anxiety, however, was groundless; he was 860,000 miles in diameter, so it would take 40,000 years for him to be reduced by 2000 to 858,000, and the lecturer was sure that if there were two suns in the sky, one 860,000 miles in diameter and the other 858,000, no one would be able to tell by looking at them which of the two was the smaller. But as the sun was shrinking nine inches every day, and had been doing so for ages, it followed that in the past he was very much greater than he was now. But he always had the same amount of material in him and weighed no heavier than at present; hence the inference was that he was once a huge mass of rarefied gas—a great, glowing nebula.—London Times.

The Master's Compliment.

It was before one of the masters of the instrument that a young lady who had for years been studying the piano, secured permission to play a "trial" so as to satisfy herself as to whether she had been as well taught and well grounded in the rudiments of the art as she believed she had been. The piece she selected to play was one of the brilliant bits such as only an artist can perform satisfactorily. She blundered through it, as she thought, in brilliant fashion, and then leaned back with a satisfied air to hear the pronouncement of the master. He drew a long breath, motioned her aside, took his seat at the piano and played the selection as it should have been played in his opinion. She hardly recognized it. Then he turned to her and said politely as possible: "Out of the notes that you dropped when you played that piece, Miss, there could be made another brilliant piece, already."—New York Times.

Burns's Cottage to Be Restored.

Considerable alterations are in course of being carried out at the birthplace of Robert Burns, known as "Burns's Cottage," at Alloway, Scotland. It is intended to remove a hall attached to the back of the cottage, used as a museum and temperance refreshment room, and to transfer the Burns relics from this to a new and larger hall in a range of cottage buildings, which have just been completed within the grounds attached to the cottage. The caretaker and his family, who inhabit part of the cottage, have also been provided with accommodations in the new building. The cottage will thus be restored as far as possible to its original condition.—London Mail.

AMERICAN MULES EXALTED!

Growing International Recognition of Their Merits Reported.

One effect of the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa has been to exalt not only in market value, but also in official consideration, the American mule. There has been a constant demand for American mules for service in the military operation of the English. The distinction of the American mule has become international, and it need be no surprise, therefore, that in recent official publications in Washington the mule, no longer the subject of slighting official reference, should have a position of dignity and prominence.

Thus, recently, there has appeared a bulletin concerning the number of mules in large cities from which it appears that there are now 600 mules in New York City, 569 in Chicago, 213 in Boston and thirty-seven in Detroit, these being the cities in which mules are least esteemed. In Philadelphia the number is 1500, in Baltimore 1000, in Kansas City 2400, in St. Louis 2800, and in New Orleans 3400.

The former distinction of Memphis as the great mule city has been obliterated in the march of progress of the mule to belated distinction, and the total of Memphis is exceeded by Louisville, a city much further north, the industrial interests of which are not such as to make many calls for the purchase of mules.

The distinction of the American mule as recognized officially does not stop short with mere enumeration, for there appears also a statement showing "the number of mules per 100,000 inhabitants in certain cities and groups of cities of the United States." Thus it appears that there are 1195 mules to each 100,000 inhabitants in New Orleans, and ninety-nine mules only to each 100,000 inhabitants in Washington, in which mules are but poorly represented.

In New York City it may be of interest to the future historian to know on official authority, there are seven mules for each 100,000 inhabitants in the borough of Queens, eight in the borough of Brooklyn, twenty-two in the borough of Manhattan, twenty-five in the borough of Richmond, and thirty-one in the borough of The Bronx. Why this disparity exists in the borough of The Bronx there is no accompanying official explanation.—New York Sun.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Selfishness insults love.
Abiding achievement is greater than restless activity.

We do not have to be blind in order to see eye to eye.
Evil fastens on us only because it finds affinity in us.

A good man not only knows how to live; he knows how to die.
The adder on a jeweled tray is as dangerous as its fellow in the dirt.

The approbation of self is seldom born of the approval of conscience.
He that deals fairly with his neighbor does not have to flee from him.

He who will not listen to the teachings of failure shall never hear the voice of success.
It is hopeless consulting the compass of conscience when you lay the loadstone of lust beside it.

The roots of a strong tree do not make much rustle, but they do the hanging on in time of storm.
Charity draws from an exhausted fountain; the more it gives, the more it has to give.—Ram's Horn.

Englishmen and the Queen.

Curiously enough the great mass of Englishmen knew little or nothing of the sovereign as their ruler. They had only the vaguest idea of the part she took in the government of her realm and her people; they knew practically nothing of the controlling and dominant force she exercised in international and domestic politics. But about this they cared nothing. It was sufficient for them to know that she was a good woman, a woman whose heart always went out to her people, who shared with them their joys as well as their sorrows, who was keenly interested in everything that could make them better and happier. And perhaps more than anything else was the knowledge that she was a woman who had suffered much, whose heart had been sorely wrenched, and whose spirit often tried, and yet through it all she had remained serene, hopeful, always an example for right living, always an inspiration to the weary and the afflicted. Perhaps that was the real secret of the devotion which she inspired in Englishmen the world over.—A. Maurice Low, in Harper's Weekly.

Pleasant For the Parents.

A gentleman invited a certain lecturer to his house to take tea.
Immediately on being seated at the table a little daughter of the house said to the guest abruptly: "Where is your wife?"
The lecturer, who had recently separated from his better half, was surprised and annoyed at the question and stammered forth the truth: "I don't know."
"Don't know?" repeated the child, "Why don't you know?"
"Finding that the child persisted in her interrogations, despite the mild reproof of the parents, he decided to make a clean breast of the matter and have it over at once, so he said with calmness: "Well, we don't live together. We think, as we can't agree, we'd better not."

He stifled a groan as the child began again, and darted an exasperated look at her parents.

But the little torment would not be quieted until she exclaimed: "Can't agree? Then why don't you fight it out, the same as father and mother do?"

A Frenchman's Predicament.

A few weeks ago a noted minister went to one of the local railroad stations to meet a friend, says a Cleveland paper. Upon entering the station and looking around he saw an elegant, dressed woman, who apparently was about to board a train.

She was carrying a number of parcels in her arms, and besides had with her three or four children that with great difficulty she was trying to help along. The clergyman approached the lady and offered his assistance, which she accepted, afterward thanking him very graciously for the kindness. The train moved out of sight, and he went on his way thinking of the endless opportunities one has for doing good, when all at once he discovered that he was carrying a beautiful silk umbrella with pearl and gold trimmings. The reverend gentleman is now enduring distress of mind, fearful that the victim of his absent-mindedness may some day discover him in the pulpit.

Public Requests Made Last Year.

During the year recently ended the total amount of public requests in this country was \$62,461,644, against \$79,749,965 in 1899. The amount given to educational institutions in 1900 was \$34,932,644; to charities, \$13,621,722; to churches, \$8,800,605; to museums and art galleries, \$2,145,333, and to libraries, \$2,961,000.

Distribution of Victoria's Wealth.

It is reported in England that Queen Victoria's will bequeathes \$700,000 each to the Duke of Connaught, Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, Princess Louise and Princess Beatrice, and includes liberal legacies for the Duchesses of Albany and a number of the late queen's grandchildren. The bulk of her private fortune, however, goes to King Edward, and both Balmoral and Osborne Houses are given to the king. Two small houses on the Osborne estate are given to Princess Beatrice.

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