A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Extracted from a 1917 issue of *The Practitioner*

Dreams 4: related states

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WE END THIS SERIES on dreams with the briefest of notes on some states related to dreaming.

Somnambulism

Dreams are closely related to the condition described as "somnambulism," which is one of intense abstraction and nearer to wakefulness than is the dream state.

The sleep-walker is guided by the motive which actuated his waking moments, and he sometimes executes performances with a degree of perfection which is not even possible to one in perfect possession of his senses.

"I have known a nurse get up in the middle of the night, collect all the patients' day attire, and arrange the clothing for about 40 patients at the foot of each bed, after which she proceeded to collect all plants and flowers from an adjoining bathroom and place them in the ward, as in the daytime. She then retired to rest, but, upon awakening, she had forgotten all the details of the sleep-walking incident"

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Abstraction

The state described as "abstraction" or "reverie" is also related to the dream state. In this, the attention is so fixed and concentrated upon a train of ideas that, although the eyes are open and sounds are heard, yet no impression is made upon them by external objects. In the condition described as "ecstasy," figures and landscapes may be seen as real; the former are most often seen by religious devotees and sojourners in the cloister.

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Castle-building in Spain

Another state of mental abstraction is the pleasant and extravagant kind called "castle-building in Spain", a condition in which imaginary scenes of an agreeable form are constructed and indulged in for the enjoyment or satisfaction anticipated. "Day-dreaming" is another state which is an entertainment that has probably been practised on occasion by each of my readers.

Other states related to dreams

Trance, lethargy, catalepsy – when the mind is concentrated upon an absorbing but narrow range of ideas are also related to dreams. So also are the hypnotic and other states of partial consciousness.

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