

DREAMS

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Dreams are intangible things and do not lend themselves easily to classification. I shall attempt, however, to divide them into two categories, day dreams and night dreams; realizing, of course, the many restrictions and sub-divisions to which such a classification must be subjected.

Day dreams are the result of an active imagination, suppression, unrequited love, or a sensitive nature. I like to think that poetry is created in such dreams, and is either nurtured and developed into masterpieces of thought, or buried and hidden beneath morbid reflections; depending upon the character and talent of the dreamer. A day dreamer is hampered neither by time nor space. At one moment he may be scaling the Alps with Hamilton, and the next, led by a beckoning, indefinable wraith of thought, he may be transported to Poland, and the horrors of modern warfare. The dreamer is the king of the universe; the controller of destiny; the very god of Fate. The moon and stars obey his command; centuries become as fleeting seconds; the whole course of events is changed by his least design. The conscious mind is the supreme authority and guides the thoughts into pleasant channels or not, as it desires.

But when the dreamer surrenders himself to the mysterious, unexplored regions of sleep, the subconscious mind becomes the master. No longer can the content of the dreams be designated. Now they become mere wisps of fancy loosely woven together by a common subject, or concrete and complete events. It is not for the dreamer to decide, but rather for some strange, unknown power that bewilders him with its

intensity and excites him with its inexhaustable scope. It sends elusive visions through the curtain of night to inspire him, or nightmares to terrify him. It is a creature of moods.

This then, is the land of dreams—exotic, interesting land where the laws of man are not applicable and the laws of nature are often transgressed. A weird, uncanny land where a king may become a pauper in an instant; where even the magic lamp of Alladin and the travels of Sinbad are as nothing to the wonders that confront the dreamer.

Since the day when Egypt suffered under torturous famine, dreams have been considered as omens of evil, forerunners of disaster and portent glimpses of the future. In Homer's "Iliad", Oneiros, the dream-god is sent to Troy to visit Agamemnon and advises him how to proceed in the war against the Trojans. The fact that this advice is immediately acted upon shows in what great regard dreams were held. Now science has undertaken the task of interpreting dreams, not as prophecies but as indicators of some mental or spiritual uneasiness. But the fascination of these magical trains of thought lie in their impenetrable quality. To elucidate fancy is to strip it of its charm. Once I wrote a poem about dreams that seems to express my idea as completely as I shall ever be able to express it. Part of it went like this:

"Phantom shadows in the night
With touches of ethereal light,
Expressing the inexpressible,
Penetrating the impenetrable,
Haunting Fantastic"