

THE RIDDLE OF SLEEP

A Mystery That the Mind of Man Is Unable to Penetrate.

THE CAVERN OF MORPHEUS.

It is Pitch Black as Far as Human Understanding Goes, For We Know No More About It Than We Do About Its Twin Mystery, Death.

When all is written, how little we know of sleep! It is a closing of the eyes, a disappearance, a wondering return. In uneasy slumber, in dreamless dead rest, in horrid nightmare or in ecstasies of somnolent fancies the eyes are blinded, the body is abandoned, while the inner essence is we know not where. We have no other knowledge of sleep than we have of death. In delirium or coma or trance, no less than in normal sleep and in dissolution, the soul is gone. In these it returns, in that it does not come again, or so we ignorantly think.

Yet when I reflect on my death I forget that I have encountered it many times already and find myself none the worse. I forget that I sleep. The fly has no shorter existence than man's. We bustle about for a few years with ludicrous importance, as butterflies buzz at the window panes. They, too, may imagine themselves of infinite moment in this universe we share with them. But this is to take no account of the prognostics of sleep. There is something hidden, something secret, some unfathomed mystery whose presence we feel, but cannot verify; some permeative thought insistently moving in our hearts, some phosphorescence that glows we know not whence through our shadowy atoms.

Neither sleep itself nor half its promises nor mysteries have been plumbed. It is the mother of superstitions and of miracles. In dreams we may search the surface powers of the freed soul. Visions in the night are not all hallucinations; voices in the night are not all mocking. There is a prophet dwells within the mind—not of the mind, but deeper throned in obscurity.

The brain cannot know of this holy presence nor of its life in sleep. The brain is mortal and untrustworthy, a phonograph and a camera for audible and palpable existence. Strike it a blow in childhood so that it ceases its labors and awake it by surgery after forty years and it will repeat the infantile action or word it last recorded and will take up its task on the instant, making no account of the intermediate years. They are nonexistent to it. Yet to that hidden memory those diseased years are not blank. It knows, it has recorded, though the brain has slept. And in hypnotic or psychic trance, when that wonderful ruler is released from the prison of the body, it can speak through the atom bell machinery of the flesh and tell of things man himself could not know because of his paralyzed brain. This ruler is not asleep in sleep, nor in delirium it is delirious, and in death is it dead? Through all the ages it has been our sphinx, which we have interrogated in vain. It joins not in our laughter nor our tears. We have fancied it with immobile, brooding features of utmost knowledge and wisdom and sorrow. It has asked us but one question, nor from the day of Oedipus unto today have we answered rightly, so that we die of our ignorance. It is Osiris living in us. It is the unknown God to whom we erect our altars, the fire in the tabernacle, the presence behind the veil. Not in normal wakefulness at least will it answer our queries, but in sleep sometimes it will speak. And it may possibly be that at last, after all these centuries, we are learning how to question it and in hypnotic trance and in the fearful law of suggestion are discovering somewhat of its mystery and how to employ it for our worldly good. Yet to its essential secret we are no closer than our forefathers were.

We may define dreams and nightmare, coma and swoon and trance with what terms we will, search their physical reasons and learn to guide and guard, yet we know no more of them than of electricity. We may begin to suspect that telepathy and clairvoyance and occult forces of the soul are not superstitious fancies, and we may even empirically classify and study and direct them. Yet the soul itself is no nearer our inquisition.

Though we should know of its reality, though our finite minds should fathom the infinite, of what benefit would it be? Would it modify our beliefs or our hopes or our faiths? Would it dictate one action to our passionate lives? There would be no change in human nature and no reforms of the world. We are the children of our fathers, and our children will tread the prehistoric paths. Dreams are our life, whether we wake or sleep. We drowse through existence, awaking and dying and being reborn daily, ever tormented and unamazed, and our thousand slumberous deaths we call restorative sleep—sleep that restores our physical being, building up where we have torn down, recreating what we destroy.

Black—pitch black, indeed—is the cavern of Morpheus. Faith peoples it with varied legions and builds its chaos into myriad forms. Nightly we enter it and drain the Lethæan air and forget, and daily we return with rejoicings, babbling of dreams that were not dreamed, and finally we enter for the last time and drain somewhat more deeply the essence of ecstasy and awake no more and no more return to the autumn dyed skies of the dawn. And yet we shall dream.—Atlantic Monthly.

AN EARTHLY INFERNO.

Vulcanizing Factory Where Men Stand 212 Degrees.

The hottest place in New York is in Desbrosses street in a vulcanizing factory, where telephone wires are insulated by being coated with a preparation of rubber. In the room where this process takes place the temperature rises to 212 degrees, 100 degrees hotter than the hottest it may be outside in the sun. Man can endure no more. Actually there are some who can stand this, however—only a few, mind you, but still some. They are only the strongest and hardiest of workmen, and they can be in the room but a few brief minutes at a time. Several times daily it is their duty to enter the room to see that all goes well.

To keep from losing their skin and to protect themselves from the terrible heat these men wear heavy woolen shirts buttoned high above their necks and woolen masks and gloves. Four or five minutes at the most in the vulcanizing room is all they can stand without collapsing, and some can't even stay that long. Outside these men nobody is ever allowed to endure such a frightful heat. In fact, it is hard to convey the idea of 212 degrees. You can get the same degree of temperature by thrusting your finger into boiling water. Water boils at 212 degrees F.—New York World.

HE LOVED HER.

The Depth of His Feeling Was Revealed in His Answer.

"Do you love me?" he asked. In reply the modern young girl looked at the modern young man with eyes pervaded with emotion.

"Do I love you?" she repeated. "I do. I love you psychologically, sociologically, economically. From the psychological standpoint I feel that our different organisms are so nicely differentiated as to form a properly articulated area of combined consciousness. Sociologically our individual environment has been enough in contrast to form a proper basis for a right union. Economically I feel sure that when we come to combine we shall be able to introduce into the management of our affairs the right financial balance to produce the scientific result which every well ordered and conducted business produces. And, now, how do you love me?"

The young man reached forward. He clasped her swiftly, but surely, in his arms. He hugged her long and plenty. He kissed her alabaster cheek and her ruby lips.

"How do I love you?" he replied. "My dear girl, I love you just as much as if you really knew what you were talking about."—Life.

Study Under Difficulties.

It was my love for my children that gave me the energy, the will power, to reach great heights in my profession. I practiced, I studied my great roles and arias seated at the piano, the baby at my breast, the others playing around me none too softly. I memorized my parts while standing at the oil stove cooking our simple meal or while busy at the washtub, with my little ones always around me. Singing, learning, studying, I was supremely happy because they were with me. I brought up my children, and they were my comfort and my support. They made a brave, courageous "fellow" of me. And it was no difficult task. If I had to hurry to the theater for rehearsals I would give the children their supper at 5 o'clock and put them to bed. When I returned at 10 or 11 o'clock I would be greeted by merry birds' twitter from the different little nests, and I would divide my sandwiches with them. Then we would sleep as only the happy and healthy may.—Mme. Schumann-Heink in Delineator.

Collier and a Collier.

A single misprinted letter may produce astonishing results, and even the misreading of a capital letter as a small one may be disastrous. When John Payne Collier died the London Press correctly gave a paragraph stating that he had been buried in Bray churchyard, near Maidenhead, a large number of friends being present at the funeral. But a provincial paper which presumably knew nothing of the notorious Shakespearean critic gave the same paragraph concerning "John Payne, a collier," and to complete the thing headed it "The Bray Colliery Disaster."—London Chronicle.

Practical Superstition.

"Are you superstitious?" "In a practical way." "How is that?" "Well, I never walk under a ladder unless I feel sure it won't fall on me, and I always expect bad luck when pursued by a mad bull across a lot in which there are just thirteen acres."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Survival of Fittest.

Miss Helen Mathers thinks that the decline of the novel is due to a large extent to motorcars. There is no doubt that a large class of readers have been almost entirely eliminated by these vehicles. We refer to those persons who used to read as they walked along the roadway.—London Punch.

Envy.

Madge (proudly)—Did you see that handsome man I just danced with? Kate—Yes; he has a jealous wife, who will allow him to dance only with the plainest girl in the room.—Boston Transcript.

Many a young man starts in to work fired with a noble ambition. Then the ambition evaporates, and he gets fired.—Chicago News.

A PET MONKEY.

Its Pranks With an Author's Manuscripts and Decorations.

A Paris contemporary dealing with the love of great men for animals gives an amusing account of Chateaubriand and his monkey. When he was engaged in preparing Fontanes' works for the press, on returning one day he was met by his monkey.

"Ah, you rogue," said Chateaubriand, "your shamefaced look tells of mischief." The monkey was chained up, but as things did not appear much disturbed Chateaubriand thought no more of the matter until it was time to resume work. Fontanes' manuscripts were not to be found.

At last Chateaubriand looked into the waste paper basket, and there were the manuscripts. The monkey had watched his master, and as he had seen him fold a sheet of paper and tear it into four, so he had dealt with Fontanes' writings. With much labor they were pieced together and afterward published.

Chateaubriand thought it advisable to see what else the monkey had done. His orders had disappeared from a drawer which was always kept closed. The servants searched everywhere for them, but they were not to be found. Nearly a week elapsed before they were traced, and then a domestic noticed that the monkey had suspended them to the cornice in a quasi-symmetrical way.

The monkey was given his conge, and Chateaubriand replaced him by a cat, which was allowed a place on his master's writing table, and great was the pleasure which he derived in playing with puss.

DIVING FOR COINS.

The Natives of Madeira Are Experts at the Business.

As we drew in and came to anchor we saw descending upon us a fleet of small, curious boats filled with half naked men. We suspected now that Madeira was a cannibal island and prepared for the worst. It was not quite as bad as that. They merely wanted us to throw coins over into the liquid azure which they call water in this country, whereupon their divers would try to intercept the said coins somewhere between the top and bottom of the sea. We didn't believe they could do it, but we tried, and, as usual, found that the other fellow knew his own game better than we did.

If those amphibians did not always get the coins they generally did. They could see them perfectly in that amazing water, and they could dive like seals. Some of the divers were mere children—poor, lean creatures who stood up in their boats and shouted and implored and swung their arms in a wild invitation to us to fling our money overboard. But they did not want small money—at least not very small money. They declined to dive for pennies. Perhaps they could only distinguish the gleam of the white metal. Let a nickel or a dime be tossed over and two or three were after it in a flash, while a vehement outbreak of Portuguese from all the rest entreated still further largess. It was really a good show, and, being the first of its kind, we enjoyed it.—Albert Bigelow Paine in Outing Magazine.

Meaning of the Green Bough.

The custom of placing a green bough on the roof of a newly built house is not confined to Germany, but was adopted by the French Canadians, who brought it with them from Brittany. The custom originated from the superstition prevalent centuries ago that every tree is inhabited by a spirit; consequently it was believed that every time a tree was felled another spirit was dispossessed, and this was supposed to cause some bitterness on his part against society. Rather than risk having these homeless and disgruntled spirits vent their ill feeling upon the houses under construction or upon the builders a branch was planted on the highest part of the house for their occupancy. They were then supposed to be mollified, and if they remained so until the roof was put on any evil design contemplated would prove harmless, for the spell would be broken.—Van Norden's Magazine.

Savona.

The history of Savona is that of a long struggle with the Genoese, ended in the sixteenth century, when they seized the town and rendered its harbor useless by sinking vessels filled with stones at the entrance. In 1746 it was captured by Sardinia, but was soon back again under the control of Genoa. The ancient Savo where Mag's stored his booty in the second Punic war, Savona was the birthplace of the popes Sixtus IV. and Julius II. and the home of the ancestors of Columbus, who bestowed its name on one of the first islands he discovered in the West Indies.—London Standard.

His Preference.

Five-year-old Bobbie went visiting with his mother and, unexpectedly remaining overnight, was obliged to wear his cousin Kate's nightgown. The next morning he said tearfully, "Mamma, before I'll wear a girl's nightgown again I'll sleep raw."—Harper's Weekly.

Youth and Old Age.

"Before a man is thirty he falls in love with every pretty girl he looks at." "Yes, and after he is thirty he falls in love with every pretty girl who looks at him."—Stray Stories.

Rivals.

Knicker—You have a boy in college and a girl cultivating her voice? Bocker—Yes, and I don't know which has the better yell.—Brooklyn Life.

ABOARD A SUBMARINE.

The Crew, the Work and the Kind of Life the Men Lead.

Life aboard a submarine is not so unpleasant or dangerous as one might imagine, but it is entirely different from that led on other types of ships.

The crew, usually consisting of two officers and fourteen men, is selected from volunteers after a most rigid medical examination. Service rarely extends beyond a period of two years, and real work on a submarine is limited to about three weeks in the summer and one in the winter. During the remainder of the time the men live on a "parent" ship or on shore. The boat is, however, put through the various evolutions once every week.

The first impression on entering a submarine is one of heat, the air being rather close and heavy, but the men soon become accustomed to it. Standing room space is about six and one-half feet, and toward both ends the boat tapers away almost to a point. There are no portholes. The hatchway in the conning tower is the only aperture. Under water electric light is used. There are ventilators, but when the boat dives they are shut off with a cap.

Life on board a submarine is essentially "in common." The way men and many objects are crammed together in a narrow space is almost miraculous.

Cooking is done in an electric oven, and no foods which have a strong or disagreeable smell are used. Of course smoking is allowed only when on the surface and then on the bridge. Owing to the character of the men selected discipline is perfect.

There is scarcely any noise in a submarine when submerged. The greatest depth the boat descends does not exceed thirty feet. At that depth her speed is about 8 knots. The air is quite "breathable" for four hours, but in case of emergency the crew can remain closed in for seventy hours without danger.

The men love the life. With the officers they are as one family, sharing everything equally, including the dangers, which are not much to speak of, provided every one does his duty. When the weather is fair there is very little rolling. In rough weather the men escape knocking about by holding on to "steadying lines."—New York Press.

JURIES IN ENGLAND.

They Get Through Their Work Quickly and With Little Fuss.

The working of the British jury system exhibits a marked contrast with that of our own. It is possible that my experience in British courts was exceptional, but in not a single instance did I see a juror challenged or rejected. In all of the courts requiring juries the necessary number of men were present, and they were sworn in without question. In the sheriff's deputy court in Scotland the presiding judge gave notice to the jury that he expected to adjourn the court at 2 o'clock and stated that if they could all remain until that hour he would at once dismiss the men who had been called for a second panel. The jurors conferred together and decided to remain till 1 o'clock, whereupon the judge notified the other men to appear at 12.30. The one jury impeached for the morning session rendered six verdicts in cases involving prosecutions for thefts, fraud and burglary.

In the court of quarter sessions at Taunton, England, I saw a single jury in one day render eleven verdicts. I found that it was customary in the several sorts of court that I attended for the same jury to act in successive cases. In no instance did I see a jury leave their seats to make up their verdict. Usually the issue before them was made so plain that all who gave attention knew in advance what the decision would be. I made note of an exceptional instance of delay when the court was forced to wait nine minutes for the report of the jury. In this case the judge who gave the instructions was himself in doubt as to what the verdict ought to be.

A Scottish jury consists of fifteen persons, and a majority may render a verdict. In England the number is twelve, and unanimity is required. But I noted no difference as to practical results in the two countries. The twelve men in the English jury were as prompt and certain in their action as were the eight out of fifteen in the Scottish jury.—McClure's Magazine.

A Hot Spot.

"I believe that Monterey, Mexico, is the hottest spot in the world in the daytime," said an Arizona man. "I have seen the thermometer register as high as 120 degrees in the late afternoon. It was so hot that the natives who ventured on the streets would build the foot wide shade of the low buildings like lichen clings to tree bark. But here's the funny part of it: When the sun sets it begins to cool off, and at night it is positively necessary to sleep under blankets. The nights are delightfully cool, and I presume it is because one is able to get a good sleep that it is possible to live in that climate."—Washington Post.

The Complete Bookkeeper.

Mrs. Knicker—How do you make your books balance? Mrs. Booker—That's easy. I always spend the exact sum I receive right away.—New York Sun.

For Him to Say.

"Do you think I can stand an operation, doctor?" "You know your financial condition better than I do."—Exchange.

Anger is a stone cast into a wasp's nest.—Malabar Proverb.

INHERIT THE JOB.

The Postmasters of a Little Town in Kent, England.

Forty years before, as quite a boy, Jones had left a little town in Kent, England. Now, on the first long vacation he ever had since, he was visiting his childhood scenes. He had remembered that the postmaster's name was Pengelley, and he had remembered, too, that he was a kindly old man. There wasn't the slightest probability, he thought, that the postmaster was still alive, but his acquaintance with the former incumbent might smooth things a little with the new one, so that the whereabouts of people to whom he had been directed would be made known.

"What's become of Mr. Pengelley?" he asked, interrupting for a moment his majesty's letter assorter.

"I am Mr. Pengelley."

"Perhaps you're his son."

"Yes; my father's name was Pengelley, too," drawled the Englishman.

"I mean the postmaster."

"So do I."

"Was your father postmaster forty years ago?" "My word, no! That was my grandfather. You see, our names are all alike, and the postoffice department doesn't know but that the first one is alive. We inherit this job, don't you know. And my wife's just presented me with a son. There was no haggling over his name."—New York Press.

TWO MEN AND A TIP.

An Incident in a Broadway Lunch Room in New York.

A business man who in his university days had been a devoted student of ethics sat down in a lower Broadway lunch room a few days ago and saw something that awakened a particular train of thought in channels unused since his student days.

Directly opposite him two men were finishing their midday meal. One, a sprucely dressed chap, sipped his last drop of coffee, placed a dime on the table in front of his empty cup and walked out. The other, equally well dressed, took a little longer time over his coffee before preparing to go. Then just as he was about to rise he furtively passed his hand over to the dime in front of his former neighbor's plate and moved it to a position in front of his own. He then walked hastily out. The waiter a moment later picked up the dime, noting before whose plate it was, and cleaned away the dishes, mumbling the while.

Now the former college man is wondering whether this is not a case where he can aptly apply those words of Shakespeare, "Who steals my purse steals trash. * * * but he that filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed."—New York Tribune.

"Nisi Prius."

People often ask the meaning of the legal expression "nisi prius." Literally interpreted, it means "unless before," a name given to the sittings of a court for the trial of civil causes. Judges on circuit, besides trying prisoners, have the power to give decisions in cases of complaints between private parties and when so acting are called judges of "nisi prius." Formerly, when the circuits were less frequent, the sheriff was commanded "by writ" to bring the jury and witnesses from the county where the action arose to Westminster, Gloucester or Winchester on a certain day, but when the assizes became frequent a "nisi prius" clause was inserted in the writ containing these words: "Unless before that day our justices shall come to your county and take the assizes there." As it happened that the assizes always did take place before the date named in the writ, the clause was practically useless and now remains only as a name for those civil causes to which until recently it referred.—Dundee Advertiser.

The Fascination of Corn Cutting.

Corn cutting always has a fascination for me. I like to see the farmer grip the tall stalks with a stout hand and, deftly holding them, clip them with a quick stroke of a knife. Around the bundle when it is gathered he twists a slimmer stalk and tucks the ends tightly under. It is a tidy art, for a twist may lack just the inch that holds the bundle. The farmer's work develops quick judgment as well as deftness of hands, and so it is a good school, for it makes the brains and the hands work together. The boy who follows with a fork should be able to lift the bundle and build a stook that will resist the wind. When the huskers come every ear should have been kept well up from the ground and the stalks so well ventilated that there is no smell of mildew.—E. P. Powell in Outing Magazine.

Famous Cedars.

The famous cedars of Lebanon also grow in India and Algeria, but their home is the Lebanon of northern Syria. In ancient times the sides of the whole mountain were covered with them, but now they are found in only one small hollow on the northwestern slope. These are securely fenced in, but in spite of the great care of the gardener the 200 that now survive will soon die, and the species will become extinct.

The Tripping Tongue.

Friend—I understand, Mrs. Stern, that your daughter has married since we last met. Mrs. Stern—Yes, and been divorced. Friend—Ah! And who is the happy man?—Boston Transcript.

Liberty cannot be established without morality.—Greeley.

THE RIVER SEINE.

Its Contact With Paris on Its Journey to the Sea.

Inevitably in its passage through Paris the blue and silver of the Seine's robe are blurred by contact with the volumes of smoke which occasionally hang upon its surface and stained by the impurities which reach it from the streets. Though it quickly recovers its pristine blueness after the fortifications have been left behind, it is never again quite the unsophisticated river that it was before its Paris experience. Its waters are less limpid, its course more nervous, while at its meeting with the sea at Honneur its color and character have changed completely. There the vast stretches of mud over which it rolls, mud of Paris, mud of Rouen, give to the waters of the wide Seine estuary reaching from Trouville to Le Havre the half dead more tones of oxidized silver. The great Parisian river dies magnificently, and no more gorgeous spectacle can be conceived than when on a fine evening the sun sets upon the Seine at its junction with the sea, where its ultimate cliffs fade away behind the summer haze into a powder of gold, and it burns a light turquoise blue, with weird reflections of brazen yellow, old gold and cadaverous green. How different from its gentler and simpler aspect as it huddles round the heart of Paris, warm purple and burnished gold when the sinking sun strikes it as it softly laps against the stone embankment of the Louvre or sparkling blue, dappled with ink white, beneath the silvery mists of the Paris morning!—Harper's Weekly.

MOLL CUTPURSE.

Bold Highway Robber and the First English Woman Smoker.

Mary Frith, better known as Moll Cutpurse, was a notable figure in old time London life. She had the reputation of being the first woman to smoke tobacco in England.

The length of her days is a disputed point, but it seems certain that she attained the age of over threescore years and ten. It is asserted that constant smoking prolonged her life. A portrait representing her in the act of smoking forms the frontispiece of Middleton's comedy of the "Roaring Girl." She also figures in other plays of the period.

Mary was the daughter of a shoemaker living in the Barbican, and Malone gives 1584 as the date of her birth. She early took to wicked ways and became a noted "highwayman." Among her familiar friends were the notorious Captain Hind and Richard Hannam. She was an expert swordswoman. Single handed she robbed on Honnslow heath General Fairfax of 200 gold Jacobuses, shooting him through the arm and killing two of his horses on which his servants were riding. For the offense she was committed to Newgate, but on paying the general £2,000 she obtained her liberty.

At one time Mary had £3,000 of her own, but by giving money to distressed cavaliers she died comparatively poor. Her death took place in July, 1659, and she was laid to rest in St. Bridget's.—Millgate Monthly.

Metheglin.

Metheglin and hypocras were numbered among the many good things beloved of Pepsys, and the latter drink stood him in good stead at a guildhall banquet which occurred during one of his spells of pledged abstinence from wine. This was on lord mayor's day, 1663, when the diarist notes: "We went into the buttry and there stayed and talked and then into the hall again, and there wine was offered, and they drunk. I only drinking some hypocras, which do not break my vow, it being, to the best of my present judgement, only a mixed compound drink and not any wine. If I am mistaken, God forgive me. But I hope and do think I am not." He was, Hypocras was usually composed of spice, herbs and sugar steeped for many days in Rhenish wine, and it is not reasonable to suppose that the lord mayor's butler had forgotten the wine.

English "Consols."

The young woman who has been explaining in the north London police court that she expected £15 invested in consols to bring her in 10 shillings in the pound interest knew about as much concerning "the funs" as the elder Mr. Weller. You recall Sam Weller's scorn upon discovering that his father supposed "reduced consols" to be alive. But there is one single point about consols which most people, probably including many who possess some, could not answer offhand—of what exactly is the name an abbreviation? There is nothing even to remind us of it. Even the precise persons who would die rather than contract "omnibus," "telephone" or "photograph" never speak of "consolidated annuities."—London Chronicle.

The First Firearms.

The early history of firearms in the sense of tubes from which missiles are thrown by the action of a detonating compound of the nature of gunpowder is wrapped in obscurity, though it may be inferred from the few early records that such weapons were first employed in warfare soon after the beginning of the fourteenth century, if not some time before. The country of their origin remains uncertain, but it was most probably Italy.

The Retort Sympathetic.

Amelia (with a simper)—I have such hard work to keep George from being silly when he is with me. Priscilla (tartly)—You don't expect impossibilities of the poor fellow, do you?—Baltimore American.