

THE ART OF PROCURING PLEASANT DREAMS.

INSCRIBED TO MISS *****

Being written at her request.

By DR. FRANKLIN.

As a great part of our life is spent in sleep, during which we have sometimes pleasing, and sometimes painful dreams, it becomes of some consequence to obtain the one kind, and avoid the other; for whether real or imaginary, pain is pain, and pleasure is pleasure. If we can sleep without dreaming, it is well that painful dreams are avoided. If, while we sleep, we can have any pleasing dreams, it is, as the French say, *tant gagne*, so much added to the pleasure of life.

To this end it is, in the first place, necessary to be careful in preserving health, by due exercise, and great temperance; for, in sickness, the imagination is disturbed; and disagreeable, sometimes terrible, ideas are apt to present themselves. Exercise should precede meals, not immediately follow them: the first promotes, the latter, unless moderate, obstructs digestion. If, after exercise, we feed sparingly, the digestion will be easy and good, the body lightsome, the temper cheerful, and all the animal functions performed agreeably. Sleep, when it follows, will be natural and undisturbed. While indolence, with full feeding, occasion nightmares and horrors inexpressible; we fall from precipices, are assaulted by wild beasts, murderers, and demons, and every variety of distress. Observe, however, that the quantities of food and exercise are relative things: those who move much may, and indeed ought to eat more; those who use little exercise, should eat little. In general mankind, since the improvement of cookery, eat about twice as much as nature requires. Suppers are not bad, if we have not dined; but restless nights naturally follow hearty suppers, after full dinners. Indeed, as there is a difference in constitutions, some rest well after these meals; it costs them only a frightful dream, and an apoplexy, after which they sleep till doomday. Nothing is more common in the newspapers, than instances of people, who, after eating a hearty supper, are found dead a-bed in the morning.

Another means of preserving health, to be attended to, is the having a constant supply of fresh air in your bed-chamber. It has been a great mistake, the sleeping in rooms exactly closed, and in beds surrounded by curtains. No outward air, that may come into you, is so unwholesome as the unchanged air, often breathed, of a close chamber. As boiling water does not grow hotter by longer boiling, if the particles that receive greater heat can escape; so living bodies do not putrify, if the particles, as fast as they become putrid, can be thrown off; but, in a close room, we receive them again and again, though they become more and more corrupt. A number of persons crowded into a small room, thus spoil the air in a few minutes, and even render it mortal, as in the Black Hole at Calcutta. A single person is said to spoil only a gallon of air per minute, and therefore requires a longer time to spoil a chamber-full; but it is done, however, in proportion, and many putrid disorders hence have their origin. It is recorded of Mathusalem, who, being the longest liver, may be supposed to have best preserved his health, that he slept always in open air; for, when he had lived five hundred years, an angel said to him: "Arise, Mathusalem; and build thee an house, for thou shalt live yet five hundred years longer." But Mathusalem answered and said: "If I am to live but five hundred years longer, it is not worth while to build me an house."—"I will sleep in the air as I have been used to do." Physicians, after having for ages contended that the sick should not be indulged with fresh air, have at length discovered that it may do them good. It is therefore to be hoped that they may in time discover likewise that it is not hurtful to those who are in health; and that we may be then cured of the *aerophobia* that at present distresses weak minds, and makes them choose to be stifled and poisoned, rather than leave open the windows of a bed-chamber, or put down the glass of a coach.

Confined air, when saturated with perspirable matter, will not receive more; and that matter must remain in our bodies, and occasion diseases: but it gives some previous notice of its being about to be hurtful, by producing certain uneasinesses, slight indeed at first, such as, with regard to the lungs, is a trifling sensation, and to

the pores of the skin a kind of restlessness, which is difficult to describe, and few that feel it know the cause of it. But we may recollect, that sometimes, on waking in the night, we have if warmly covered, found it difficult to get asleep again. We turn often without finding repose in any position. The fidgetiness, to use a vulgar expression for want of a better, is occasioned wholly by an uneasiness in the skin, owing to the retention of the perspirable matter—the bed clothes having received their quantity, and, being saturated, refusing to take any more. To become sensible of this by an experiment, let a person keep his position in the bed, but throw off the bed-clothes, and suffer fresh air to approach the part uncovered of his body; he will then feel that part suddenly refreshed; for the air will immediately relieve the skin, by receiving, licking up, and carrying off, the load of perspirable matter that incommoded it. For every portion of cool air that approaches the warm skin, in receiving its part of that vapour, receives therewith a degree of heat, that rarifies and renders it lighter, when it will be pushed away, with its burthen by cooler, and therefore heavier fresh air; which, for a moment, supplies its place, and then, being likewise changed, and warmed, gives way to a succeeding quantity. This is the order of nature, to prevent animals being infected by their own perspiration. He will now be sensible of the difference between the part exposed to the air, and that which, remaining sunk in the bed, denies the air access: for this part now manifests its uneasiness more distinctly by the comparison, and the feat of the uneasiness is more plainly perceived, than when the whole surface of the body was affected by it.

Here then, is one great and general cause of unpleasing dreams. For when the body is uneasy, the mind will be disturbed by it, and disagreeable ideas of various kinds, will, in sleep, be the natural consequences. The remedies, preventative, and curative, follow:

1. By eating moderately, (as before advised for health's sake) less perspirable matter is produced in a given time; hence the bed clothes receive it longer before they are saturated; and we may, therefore, sleep longer, before we are made uneasy by their refusing to receive any more.

2. By using thinner and more porous bed-clothes, which will suffer the perspirable matter more easily to pass through them, we are less incommoded, such being longer tolerable.

3. When you are awakened by this uneasiness, and find you cannot easily sleep again, get out of bed, beat up and turn your pillow, shake the bed-clothes well, with at least twenty shakes, then throw the bed open, and leave it to cool; in the meanwhile, continuing undrest, walk about your chamber, till your skin has had time to discharge its load, which it will do sooner as the air may be drier or colder. When you begin to feel the cold air unpleasant, then return to your bed; and you will soon fall asleep, and your sleep will be sweet and pleasant. All the scenes presented to your fancy, will be of the pleasing kind. I am often as agreeably entertained with them, as by the scenery of an opera. If you happen to be too indolent to get out of bed, you may, instead of it, lift up your bed-clothes with one arm and leg, so as to draw in a good deal of fresh air, and, by letting them fall, force it out again. This, repeated twenty times, will so clear them of the perspirable matter they have imbibed, as to permit your sleeping well for some time afterwards. But this latter method is not equal to the former.

Those who do not love trouble, & can afford to have beds, will find great luxury in rising, when they wake in a hot bed, and going into the cool one. Such shifting of beds would also be of great service to persons ill of a fever, as it refreshes and frequently procures sleep. A very large bed, that will admit a removal so distant from the first situation as to be cool and sweet, may in a degree answer the same end.

One or two observations more will conclude this little piece. Care must be taken when you lie down, to dispose your pillow so as to suit your manner of placing your head, and to be perfectly easy; then place your limbs so as not to bear inconveniently hard upon one another, as for instance, the joints of your ankles: for though a bad position may at first give but little pain, and be hardly noticed, yet a continuance will render it less tolerable, and the uneasiness may come on while you are asleep, and disturb your imagination.

These are the rules of the art. But though they will generally prove effectual in producing the end intended, there is a

case in which the most punctual observance of them will be totally fruitless. I need not mention the case to you my dear friend: but my account of the art would be imperfect without it. The case is, when the person who desires to have pleasant dreams has not taken care to preserve what is necessary above all things,
A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

FROM STERNE.

"The Baffle is not an evil to be despised—but strip it of its towers—fill up the foss—unbarricade the doors—call it simply a confinement—and suppose it is some tyrant of a distemper—and not of a man which holds you in it—the evil vanishes, and you bear the other half without complaint."

I was interrupted in the hey day of this soliloquy with a voice which I took to be of a child, which complained—it could not get out. I looked up and down the passage, and seeing neither man, woman, or child, I went out without farther attention.

In my return back through the passage I heard the same words repeated twice over; and looking up, I saw it was a starling hung in a little cage—"I can't get out!" said the starling.

I stood looking at the bird: and to every person who came through the passage it ran fluttering to the side towards which they approached it, with the same lamentation of its captivity—"I can't get out!" said the starling—"God help thee!" said I, "but I will let thee out cost what it will." So I turned about the cage to get at the door—it was twisted and double twisted so fast with wire, there was no getting it open without pulling the cage to pieces—I took both hands to it.

The bird flew to the place where I was attempting his deliverance, and thrusting his head through the trellis, pressed his breast against it, as if impatient—"I fear, poor creature!" said I, "I cannot set thee at liberty."—"No," said the starling—"I can't get out!" said the starling.

I vow I never had my affections more tenderly awakened; nor do I remember any accident of my life where the dissipated spirits, to which my reason had been a bubble, were so suddenly called home. Mechanical as the notes were, yet so true in tune to nature were they chaunted, that in one moment they overthrew all my systematic reasonings upon the baffle; and I heavily walked upstairs, unlaying every word I had said in going down them. Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still slavery! still thou art a bitter draught; and though thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, though art no less bitter on that account. It is thou liberty, thrice sweet and gracious goddess, whom all in public or in private worship, whose taste is grateful, and ever will be so, till nature herself shall change—no tint of words can spot thy snowy mantle, or chymic power turn thy sceptre into iron—with thee to smile upon him as he eats his crust, the swain is happier than his monarch from whose court thou art exiled. Gracious heaven! grant me but health, thou great Bestower of it, and give me but this fair goddess as my companion; and shower thy mitres, if it seems good unto thy wife providence, upon those heads that are aching for them.

The bird in his cage pursued me into my room; I sat down close by my table, and leaning my head upon my hand, I began to figure to myself the miseries of confinement. I was in a right frame for it, and so I gave full scope to my imagination.

I was going to begin with the millions of my fellow creatures born to no inheritance but slavery; but finding, however affecting the picture was, that I could not bring it nearer me, and that the multitude of groupes in it did but distress me.

I took a single captive, and having first shut him up in his dungeon, I then looked through the twilight of his grated door to take his picture.

I beheld his body half wasted away with long expectation and confinement, and felt what kind of sickness of the heart it was which arises from hope deferred. Upon looking nearer I saw him pale and feverish: in thirty years the western breeze had not once fanned his blood—he had no sun, no moon in all that time—nor had the voice of friend or kinsman breathed through his lattice. His children—

But here my heart began to bleed—and I was forced to go on with another part of the portrait.

He was sitting upon the ground upon a little straw, in the farthest corner of

his dungeon, which was alternately his chair and bed: a little calendar of small ticks were laid at his head notched all over with the dismal days and nights he had passed there—he had one of these little sticks in his hand, and with a rusty nail he was etching another day of misery to add to the heap. As I darkened the little light he had, he lifted up a hopeless eye towards the door, then cast it down—Shook his head, and went on with his work of affliction. I heard his chain upon his legs, as he turned his body to lay his little stick upon the bundle—He gave a deep sigh—I saw the iron enter into his soul—I burst into tears—I could not sustain the picture of confinement which my fancy had drawn.

WASHINGTON BOOK-STORE.

RAPINE, CONRAD, & CO.
Corner of South B. Street and New Jersey Avenue, near the Capitol.

HAVE just received, and for sale at the above store Letters from Alexander Hamilton, concerning the public conduct and character of John Adams, Esq. President of the United States.

Also, just opening, a choice assortment of books in History, Law, Medicine, Divinity, Arts and Sciences, Classics, School books, Novels, Romances, Biography, &c. &c.—With a good assortment of super royal, royal, medium, demy, and foolscap writing paper, thick and thin post, blue & common wrapping paper, best Dutch quills, wafers, sealing wax, ink powder, red and black ink, black lead pencils, parchment, playing cards, blank books, &c. &c.—All which they will dispose of at the very lowest prices.

Public officers and others, who will please to favour them with their custom, may rely on having the strictest attention paid to their orders.
Nov. 17th, 1800.

Public Sale of Lots, IN WASHINGTON CITY.

WILL be sold at public Auction, to the highest bidder, on Wednesday the 10th day of December next, at William Tunnick's Hotel, ONE HUNDRI DLOTS, situated eastward of the Capitol and near to the Eastern Branch ferry. The terms will be one half cash and the other half at 60 days on notes negotiable at the bank of Columbia satisfactorily endorsed.

An indisputable title will be given by
GEORGE WALKER.
Washington, }
November 26. }

JUST IMPORTED,

IN the ship Missouri, via Philadelphia, and now opening for sale at the Subscriber's Store on New Jersey Avenue Capital Hill, Square 690.

A General Assortment of Ironmongery, Cutlery, Sadlery, Brass Wares and Building Materials.

Among which are the following Articles.
Iron pots, frying pans, chaffing dishes, Brass, iron and Japan Candlesticks, patent metal tea kettles and sauce pans; japanned tea trays, waiters and Bread baskets, sud irons, wired up Jacks, Sweeping, scrubbing, hearth and shoe brushes; Mathematical instruments, mahogany knife cases, filled with ivory handled knives and forks, Cruet stands, ladies dressing cases; mill, pit and cross butt Saws, 56, 28 and 14lb. Iron weights. Also scale beams to weigh from 5 to 10 cwt. at an end.
HENRY INGLE.

November 24th, 1800.

JOHN BARNES,

FROM PHILADELPHIA,
Has just opened for sale the following articles at his store opposite Mr. Semmes's tavern, in Georgetown, a general assortment of
Fresh Teas of the first quality, viz.

Imperial, Large Hyson,
Young Hyson, Hysonkin,
Souchong and Ooloh.

SPICES.

Nutmegs, Mace,
Cinnamon, Cloves,
Four bags fresh Almonds.

LIQUORS.

Madeira, six years old, Dry Sherry & Port,
Brandy, 4th proof Jamaica spirits, and Holland Gin.

COFFEE,

Pennington's best refined sugars.
With a handsome assortment of gentlemen's fashionable London HATS and trimmings.

He has likewise for sale, ten cases well assorted STATIONARY, consisting of writing paper of different qualities, Quills, Wafers, and Ink powder, in packages from 20 to 180 dollars on the most reasonable terms for cash or approved notes.

English and American playing cards,
Pasteboard per groce,
Wrapping paper per ream,
A case of 7-8 and yard wide Irish Linen per piece.
Nov. 14th, 1800.

BOARDING AND LODGING.

THE Subscriber respectfully informs the members of the ensuing Congress and the Public, that he has taken the two houses in square No. 690, on the New Jersey Avenue opposite the house at present occupied by Thomas Law, Esq. where he can accommodate either single Gentlemen or those who have families. The houses were finished last spring, so that no danger can be apprehended from damp walls. He has Stables for several horses and two good Carriage houses.
ROBERT W. PEACOCK.

City of Washington,
October 31st 1800.