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A STRANGE DREAM.

As illustrating the manner in which impressions of the past may emerge from the brain, I shall here furnish an instance bordering closely on the supernatural, and fairly representing the most marvelous of these psychologic phenomena. It occurred to a physician, who related it, in my hearing, to a circle whose conversation had turned on the subject of personal fear. "What you are saying," he remarked, "is very true; but I can assure you that the sentiment of fear, in its utmost degree, is much less common than you suppose; and though you may be surprised to hear me say it, I know from personal experience that this is certainly so. When I was five or six years old, I dreamed that I was passing by a large pond of water in a very solitary place. On the opposite side of it there stood a great tree that looked as if it had been struck by lightning, and in the pond at another part an old fallen trunk, on one of the prone limbs of which there was a turtle sunning himself. On a sudden a wind arose, which forced me into the pond, and in my dying struggles to extricate myself from its green and slimy waters I awoke, trembling with terror. About eight years subsequently, while recovering from a nearly fatal attack of scarlet fever, this dream presented itself to me, identical in all respects, again. Even up to this time I think I had never seen a living tortoise or turtle, but I distinctly remember that there was a picture of one in the first spelling-book that had been given me. Perhaps on account of my critical condition, this second impression impressed me more dreadfully than the first.

A dozen years more elapsed. I had become a physician, and was now actively pursuing my professional duties in one of the Southern States. It so fell out that one July afternoon I had to take a long and wearisome ride on horseback. It was Sunday, and extremely hot; the path was solitary, there was not a house for miles. The forest had that intense silence so characteristic of this time of the day; all the wild animals and birds had gone to their retreats to be rid of the heat of the sun. Suddenly at one point of the road I came upon a great stagnant water pool, and casting my eyes across it, there stood a pine-tree blasted by lightning, and on a log that was nearly even with the surface a turtle was basking in the sun. The dream of my infancy was upon me; the bridge fell from my hands, an unutterable fear overshadowed me, and I slunk away from the accursed place.

Though business occasionally afterward would have drawn me that way, I could not summon resolution to go, and actually have taken roundabout paths. It seemed to me profoundly amazing that the dream that I had should after twenty years be realized, without respect to difference of scene, or climate, or age. A good clergyman of my acquaintance took the opportunity of improving the circumstance to my spiritual advantage, and in his kind enthusiasm—for he knew that I had been more than once brought to the point of death by such fevers—interpreted my dream that I should die of marsh miasm.

"Most persons have doubtless observed that they suddenly encounter events of a trivial nature, in their course of life, of which they have an indistinct recollection that they have dreamed before. For a long time it seemed to me that this was a case of that kind, and that it might be set down among the mysterious and unaccountable. How wonderful it is that we so often fail to see the simple explanation of things, when that explanation is actually intruding itself before us! And so it is this case; it was long before the truth gleamed in upon me, before my reasoning powers shook off the delusive impressions of my senses. But it occurred at last; for I said to myself, is it more probable that such a mystery is true, or that I have dreamed for the third time that which I had already dreamed of twice before? Have I really seen the blasted tree and the sunning turtle? Are a weary ride of fifty miles, the noontide heat, the silence that could almost be felt, no provocation to a dream? I have ridden under such circumstances many a mile fast sleep, and have awoke and known it; and so I resolved that if ever circumstances carried me to those parts again, I would satisfy myself as to the matter.

"Accordingly, after a few years, when an incident led me to travel there, I revisited the well-remembered scene. There was still the stagnant pool, but the blasted pine-tree was gone; and after I had pushed my horse through the marshy thicket as far as I could force him, and then dismounted and pursued a close investigation on foot in every direction around the spot, I was clearly convinced that no pine-tree had ever grown there; not a stump nor any token of its remains could be seen; and so now I have concluded that at the glimpse of the water, the readiness of those who are falling asleep, I had adopted an external fact into a dream; that it had aroused the trains of thought which in former years had occupied me, and that, in fine, the mystery was all a delusion, and that I had been frightened with less than a shadow.

The instructive story of this physician teaches us how readily and yet how impressively the remains of old ideas may be recalled; how they may, as it were, be projected into the space beyond us, and

take a position among existing realities. For this all that is necessary is that there should be an equalization of old impressions with new sensations, and that may be accomplished either by diminishing the force of present sensations, or by increasing the activity of those parts of the brain in which the old impressions are stored up.

Thus, when we are falling asleep, the organs of sense no longer convey their special impressions with the clearness and force that they did in our waking hours, and this gives to the traces that are stored up in the brain the power of drawing upon themselves the attention of the mind.—Dr. J. W. Draper, in Harper's Magazine for May.

INDISCRIMINATE CHARITY.

It is evident from letters that have been written to the newspapers during this winter that there are those who sincerely think that careful inquiry regarding poverty, and regulations of relief based upon it, must somehow deaden human sympathy and deepen the suffering of the poor. This is so ingeniously incorrect a theory that it would be exceedingly amusing if it were not so sincere and even general. The very first thing that careful investigation accomplishes is to acquaint the comfortable class with the real condition of the sufferer; and to show the latter that they are not forsaken, or turned off with uninquiring alms. They are conscious of an intelligent sympathy which which falsehood will be of no avail. They are taught self-respect by the perception that they are not forsaken, and self-respect is the mainspring of successful exertion. When the street beggar understands that his tale will be tested, that he needs succor he will surely receive it, and that if his plea is but asking for a dram he will not receive the number of sordid beggars will sensibly decrease. And the sturdy tramp and professional pauper, when they know that they must go to the work-house or starve, will often conclude that even work is better than the poor-house, and they too will cease to be a nuisance and a terror.

Nor need it be feared, on the other hand, that irresponsible street giving is stopped, nobody will investigate the actual situation of the poor. What is asked of the street giver is not that he close his pocket and his hand and his heart and his soul, but that, if he will not take the trouble to inquire before giving, he will give his alms to somebody who will take that trouble, that his alms may be true charity, and relieve suffering, instead of relieving nothing whatever, but fostering vice and crime. The street giver must first of all clear his mind of cant. He must cease to be a Pharisee. He must see that he is not a good Christian exercising the heavenly gift of charity, but an indolent and reckless citizen who is promoting poverty and multiplying the public burdens of the honest poor. He is that lazy, absurd boy who wishes to eat his cake and have it. He would satisfy his soul that he is good because he gives, without seeing that to give ignorantly is, socially, to be bad. Nobody is exhorted to surrender inquiry to others. Every one may inquire for him himself. If a beggar stops you and asks for a penny in the name of God, and says that his family is starving, go and see if it is. If you have not the time or—O sophistical Sybarite—inclination, send him to those who, as you know, will inquire. Will his family starve in the mean time? That is something you do not believe yourself. Do not fear that the visitor will not go? Then go yourself. Do your engagements prevent? Then you know that it is a thousand to one the story is but a plea for whiskey. Will you take the chance? Then you become an immediate accomplice in the vast multiplicity of hereditary pauperism and crime. The pretense of your giving is Christian charity and humanity, the real cause is indolent self-indulgence and saying yourself trouble.—Editor's Easy Chair, in Harper's Magazine for May.

SPOTTED TAIL'S DAUGHTER

Spotted Tail has a daughter named Shonkoo, which means the Red Road, who has recently been married to Mr. Lone Elk, a dashing young buck. There is a little bit of romance about Shonkoo. Not long ago two Sisters of Charity visited their agency, and were presented to Spotted Tail during their stay. He was very well pleased to meet them, and had a friendly "talk" with them at Col. Mills' house. In the course of conversation they asked him if he would like to give them Shonkoo to go and live with them in a convent. He said yes, he would like it very much. Then they sent for Shonkoo and asked her if she would like to go, but she remained silent, vouchsafing no answer to their question. Her father urged her to speak, to say yes, but still she remained silent, and the interview thus terminated. That night she cloped with Lone Elk, to whom she managed to convey the intelligence that her father was about to send her away. Shonkoo is considered quite pretty. She has good taste in dress for an Indian woman, and understands English, but dislikes to speak it. She is proud enough to be a princess.—New York Herald.

They praise Essipoff everywhere, but that don't pay for the empty benches.

ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE AT CAERLEON.

If the renowned table of the good King Arthur was really a structure of such high proportions as has been said, I see no more to doubt that here it stood than that Arthur lived and feasted his knights, and joyous brook entitled *Morte d'Arthur*. Once admitting the existence of the good king, in the full plenitude of heroic story which Caxton printed and Tennyson later wrought into verse, and all minor daughts on our credulity are honored easily. Caerleon was the chief residence of Arthur, not only according to the testimony of such history as we have concerning him, but according to Tennyson. He is the Poe. Laureate laid the central scene of his "Idyls of the King," in which we read that Arthur

"Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk." Tennyson lived for some time at an inn here—the Gold Croft, for aught I know—while penning the "Idyls of the King," thus adding one more to the list of interesting individuals who had lived here since the early ages. Arthur and Merlin, according to the Caxtonian volume, seem to have been constantly going back and forth between the two great cities, London and Caerleon. London was the younger city of the two. And, by the way, London was Caerludd in the beginning of its career—after King Ludd. The sixth chapter of the first book of *Morte d'Arthur* being with this sentence: "Then the king removed into Wales, and let cry a great feast, that it should be holden at Pentecost, after the incorporation of him at the city of Caerlud." In the next chapter is the account of a great battle here in which the people had a hand: "And then the commons of Caerlud arose with clubs and staves, and slew many knights." And the prophet Merlin was continually turning up in Caerlud in all sorts of queer shapes.

I approach the edge of the excavation—or rather graceful depression in the center of the green grassy field—full of faith that here the Round Table was set up. It is an oval ring of great size, a little more than 200 feet across and a little less than 200 feet across, and it runs down to a narrow point in the center. Nature did not indulge in this peculiar freak; it is the work of man's hands; but those hands were Roman hands, and Arthur found the place for his table all ready for occupancy when he came to set it up. It was a Roman amphitheatre in the days of Agricola and of Adrian. The grass grows green over the hands of stone seats which are ranged about the arena; from time to time specimens of them have been dug from the ground. An alabaster statue of Diana has also been discovered here.—Wirt Sikes, in Harper's Magazine for May.

THE INVENTION OF PUNCTUATION.

Punctuation is peculiar to the modern languages of Europe. It was wholly unknown to the Greeks and Romans; and the languages of the East, although they have certain marks or signs to indicate tones, have no regular system of punctuation. The Romans and the Greeks also, it is true, had certain points, which, like those of the languages of the East, were confined to the delivery and pronunciation of words; but the pauses were indicated by breaking up the written matter into lines or paragraphs, not by marks resembling these in the modern system of punctuation. Hence, in the responses of the ancient oracles, which were generally written down by the priests and delivered to the inquirers, the ambiguity doubtless intentional, which the want of punctuation involved, saved the credit of the oracle, whether the expected event was favorable or unfavorable. As an instance of this kind, may be cited that remarkable response, which was given on a well-known occasion, when the oracle was consulted with regard to the success of a certain military expedition: "Ibis et redibis nunquam peribis in bello." Written, as it was, without being pointed, it might be translated either, "Thou shalt go, and shalt never return, thou shalt perish in battle;" or, "Thou shalt go and return, thou shalt never perish in battle." The correct translation of it altogether depends on the placing of comma after the words nunquam, or after redibis. The invention of the modern system of punctuation has been attributed to the Alexandrian grammarian Arifphanes, after whom it was improved by succeeding grammarians; but it was so entirely lost in the time of Charlemagne that he found it necessary to have it restored by Warnefried and Aleuin. It consisted, at first, of only one point, used in three ways, and sometimes of a stroke, formed in several ways. But, as no more particular rules were followed in the use of these signs, punctuation was exceedingly uncertain until the end of the fifteenth century, when the learned Venetian printers, the Manutii, increased the number of the signs, and established some fixed rules for their application. These were so generally adopted, that we consider the Manutii as the inventors of the present method of punctuation; and although modern grammarians have introduced some improvements, nothing but a few particular rules have been made since their time.—Freeman's Journal.

Is it at odd that the "Flowery Kingdom" should be so largely composed of Buddhists?

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