

# *The Cause of Dreams*

Prof T B Homan not so very long ago made a very interesting experiment as to the causes of dreams. Or rather he helped to make it in one of the northern state teachers colleges. When interviewed he said that the experiment was made by a student who was much interested in the work of psychology. She did her work under the direction of the department of psychology.

In describing the process of the experiment Mr Homan says

"The individual upon whom the experiment was tried we will call Miss B, a student of excellent health. The program was mapped out something as follows

"She was to go to sleep six times, each time in different positions and under certain physical conditions. For instance, she was to go to sleep six times with a large hard pillow directly under her stomach as she was lying face downward. Then the pillow was shifted so that it came directly under her lungs and she kept her record until she had fallen asleep six times in this position. She also went to sleep the required number of times on her back, on her right side, on her left side, and upon stomach. Then the program was changed so that she would have the difficulty or suggestion of physical conditions or restrictions. For example, a rubber band was placed rather tightly under her arm until she had fallen asleep six times. Then the rubber band was changed to the knee and again to the neck. The arm was tied up rather tightly and a tight band also placed on the foot, etc., until we had the required total number of experiences to one hundred, this taking about three months time. The following paragraph will give some of the results.

"As the article would be entirely too long and wearisome, I will not go into detail with all the experiences. For instance, with the pillow under her lungs five out of the six experiences related definitely to difficult breathing, asphyxiation, etc. With the rubber band about her neck, four dreams out of six experiences related definitely to strangulation of some sort. With the pillow under her stomach the entire six dreams related to some form of hunger, one dream being that she attended church and ate and drank the emblems of the communion because of her extreme hunger. In three times out of six, with the rubber band about the arm she dreamed such things as amputation and preparation for amputation or carrying a heavy load. The only position in which she had no dream nor any disturbances, mental or physical, was the position upon her stomach with her arms thrown out loosely upon the bed and her head turned sidewise to permit breathing. When she lay upon her back, five dreams out of six, related directly to nervous disorders. This gives a general idea of the experiments of some of the detailed results.

"Now the conclusion, it was found

that 72%, or 72 dreams out of 100 experiences, related definitely to the physical situation. Now if we should follow the psychologist who has made more or less a study of dreams and say that 22% of all dreams are results of previous mental concepts, that would leave the small total of 6% of the dreams unaccounted for. It seems, therefore, that the theory that dreams are sent to us as omens or at least prophecies of future experiences is without any foundation."

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