Psychopathology.

PSYCHOLOGY.


Great significance is given by primitive races to words, and especially to names, and children treat words as objects in their various games. Illustrations are cited where the act of thought or speech is psychologically the full equivalent of the actual deed.

Words originally possessed motor and perceptual qualities which they gradually lose more or less completely in the course of mental development. Obscene words, probably because of their being excluded from the usual amount of development, still retain these qualities. Ferenczi remarks that a word of this kind "has a peculiar power of compelling the hearer to imagine the object it denotes in substantial actuality". He calls attention to the fact that delicate allusions to the same ideas, and scientific and foreign designations for them, do not have this effect, or at least not to the same extent as the words taken from the erotic vocabulary of one's mother tongue. The embarrassing feelings aroused by vulgar, familiar words can be avoided by the use of foreign, unfamiliar, or abstract words. In purely abstract thought the motor and perceptual elements disappear altogether. This process of abstraction effects a great economy in thought and, because of the inhibition of feeling, of emotional energy. When there is need to express unusually strong feeling, resource is commonly had to the use of just those words which have retained their motor and perceptual elements, as in oaths and obscene language. Where it is necessary to inhibit feeling, abstract or less familiar words are used.

The writer thinks that the English characteristics of propriety, prudishness, reserve, the horror of self-display and of betraying emotions, etc., must be favoured by the forces which make for repression and inhibition. He suggests that one of these is the case by which the English can give vocal expression to forbidden ideas in a way that inhibits the development of feeling. The Saxon and Norman languages gradually coalesced to form English, but even to this day there is a difference in the 'feel' of the words belonging to each, and still more between words of Saxon origin and those more recently introduced; e.g., the Saxon swine-flesh and the Norman pork; belly and abdomen. We are thus able to indulge in fastidiousness to a degree not open to any other nation.

C. W. Forsyth.


The author in this article brings to a close a series of speculations as to the genesis of dreams. He conceives that there is a fallacy in the methods of Freud and Jung. He thinks that there is a desire to make something out of a dream at all costs, and calls this desire a 'will to interpret'. Those who are determined to find a sexual content in the dream will find it, but it is just as easy to give a gastronomical interpretation. The successes of
Freud and Jung are successes of personal skill in spite of, rather than because of, their theories. The author's standard of interpretative rectitude is the reconstitution of the train of thought in terms of 'situation and response'. His view is that dreams are mental reflections of physiological changes, which may be initiated within the organism, or in response to sensory stimuli. For instance, in the dream of "the angry sheik", the coldness and haughty demeanour of the lady is related to a chilliness of the skin of the dreamer, and the general attitude of anger of the sheik is related to the diffused sensations typical of adrenin stimulation. The several images of the dream panorama are conceived as being produced only under the influence of such stimuli acting on a pre-existing state of mental preparation. A further example may be given: "Steps really signify heart-beats, and are only sure annunciators of sex experience provided 'one's heart going pit-a-pat' happens to have been exclusively related to love—which is impossible." Flying phantasies are also explained in terms of non-sexual physiological processes set up in sleep. Thus the crude sensation animates, as it were, the handiest mental content which might be said to embody 'the idea' of the crude sensation. According to this view the determining factor is the physiological process. The mental accompaniment is therefore psychologically fortuitous and nugatory. The psycho-analytic offering is inadequate from the standpoint of pure science. It can from the practical standpoint be useful in clinical work in so far as 'talking points' can be extracted from dreams. The author therefore looks upon it as a method of suggestion. In effect, he denies that unconscious phenomena in themselves have any significance for human conduct.

JAMES YOUNG.

[83] An outline of the idea of rebirth in dreams.—MAURICE NICOLL.


NICOLL believes that the rebirth theme is the basis of our psychic life. There are certain periods of life—puberty, for example—when biological transformations, which entail a new attitude to life, are acting as forces from within. At these times especially, though at all others when a re-adjustment of values is requisite, dreams of rebirth are common. The symbol is energy in the unconscious, and the repression is not of the past but of the future. Whenever we begin to see rebirth symbolism in dreams, we must suspect the existence of a crisis in the patient's history.

The movement towards the mother is but the first act; to consider it concretely as the expression of an incest wish would be horizonless and blot out its ultimate significance, which is an attempt at regeneration. The second act is a lying in the womb. Here associations are very important for determining whether that which lies in the womb—the baby—represents the new function or merely infantility: psychological bondage. The treatment by the unconscious of the third act—emergence from the womb—is extremely complicated, but invariably shows that something is to be gained after rebirth. To remain in the mother would be disastrous, as disastrous as it was to ÒEdipus, who blinded himself. The old authority
(psychological father) has to be overcome before the new, more individual way of thinking (psychological mother) can be reached. This entails sacrifice of that part of the libido which is fixed to old ways of thinking and feeling.

Rebirth is expressed in as many ways in dreams as in mythology, and Nicoll interestingly makes some comparisons. The paper treats its subject matter entirely from the standpoint of the Zurich school.

ALFRED CARVER.


The article makes an exhaustive attempt to solve the riddle of the being of the Sphinx itself. Reik recognizes that no explanation can be complete which fails to take into account the origin and evolution of the sphinx, and at the same time to render comprehensible all its striking and essential features. Pursuing this method of investigation, Reik shows how the sphinx comes in the process of its evolution to represent, by its composite features, animal, man, and God. Originally a forbidding totem animal, it develops, in the anthropomorphic period, into a representation of the deity. Following the patriarchal period—when it had exclusively male characters—it assumes during the matriarchal period some of the gentler features of the mother. It continues to retain its animal body as a token of its dangerous character, though now its wings bear witness to its celestial significance, and its bisexual nature to contributions from both patriarchal and matriarchal periods of religion. Thus finally the symbol stands not only for the original totemistic deity, but also represents both homosexual and incest tendencies.

The sphinx episode is the kernel of the Œdipus myth. Were it stripped from the story, there would remain only the crude life and deeds of one who committed patricide and incest; his fate would arouse no deep feeling of sympathy. But when crudely sexual themes are freely treated in myth, it implies that other motives are hidden, and the one sexual theme serves to hide another part of the content, which has some sexual or more sinister motive.

The sphinx episode as we now have it is a wonderful piece of condensation, accomplished by many generations, which has compressed the slaying of the totem god and of the father and the rape of the mother into a single deed wrought upon the sphinx. Religious, homosexual and heterosexual, sadistic and masochistic impulses pass into one another undistinguished and indistinguishable; for Œdipus in killing his father committed rape upon his mother, and assaulting his mother had for love object his father, and in both acts violated human and divine law.

The germ of the Œdipus myth is the same as that of the Biblical Fall of Man. In the latter tradition of the Tree of Life precisely the same condensation has taken place, and the tree plays a similar apparently non-essential rôle.
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

[85] The infantile psyche: with special reference to visual projection.

The author reports some conclusions to which observations on children have led him. He considers that the visual type of thinking alone obtains in early life. This is in keeping with the fact that recall of infantile memories is pictorial in form, and that the dream also regresses to this method of representation. Visual memory, with its associated emotional component, can be activated either by a repetition of an external stimulus or from within. This activation of a memory by inner excitement explains several psychic phenomena grouped together under the term 'imagination'. The image is associated with an affect, and in the case of internally excited images the hallucination owes its revival to the prevalent feeling-tone of the moment. As the feeling is genuine, the hallucination, which is called up by it and projected, is accepted as equally real, and by rationalization comes to be regarded as the cause of the feeling. The mind then endows the projected image itself with feeling. The sequence of events may be illustrated as follows: (1) Fear begins to stir in a child; (2) This activates memories already associated with fear; (3) These impressions are projected; (4) The hallucination is now regarded as the cause of the fear; (5) The whole is capped by a false explanation, namely that the hallucinated figure is animated by hostile intentions; i.e., the projected feeling must account for the internal feeling.

The infantile psyche is totally unable to distinguish between psychic and external reality, and is given over to the pleasure principle. This probably is at the root of the belief in magic, spirits, and the all-mightiness of thought as illustrated by the work of Freud, Ferenzi, and Fraser. It is only by familiarity (repeated experiences) that the individual comes to differentiate psychic from objective reality. Darkness is the most favourable condition for the projection of visual imagery, and this probably accounts for the fact that adults generally see apparitions at night, or in gloomy places, and that children so frequently are afraid in the dark.

ALFRED CARVER.


To understand the adult, the main facts of infantile psychology must be established and the earliest manifestations of nervous children studied. In childhood the emotions are uncontrolled, and the experiences of early years must fundamentally influence the adult character. In fact there is nothing in adult psychology which is not derived from some childhood element. Birth is regarded as a psychic trauma, so that the infant wishes to return to its intra-uterine nirvana, but establishes its earliest contact with the external world by means of the nutri-excretal zones. By their agency it gains its primal notions of the world. They are: (1) Oral zone; (2) Urethral zone; (3) Anal zone; (4) Respiratory zone. This last the author specially adds, and wonders it has been overlooked, as it shares the same features as the others, i.e., a communication with the exterior by means of a sensitive mucous passage, feelings of emptiness or distention,
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an object stimulus giving pleasurable sensations, and no adequate stimulus causing anxiety. Attention is drawn to several points which render this zone of importance.

Forsyth recognizes three distinct stages in the early development of the infant mind: (1) A vegetive stage of intra-uterine life when the organism receives all bodily needs without effort; (2) A nutri-excretal stage when the sensitive zones become the seat of peripheral excitations which activate the psyche; (3) Where a less important source of excitation, the skin, is added, and also sight and hearing, which are responsive to 'external stimulation' and permit of 'external projection'. It is the increasing dependence on the external which develops the personality. The vegetive or nirvana principle functions only as a regressive tendency through life, as realized in psychogenic epilepsy. Short of this, dreams and other wish-fulfilling structures may be sought for relief.

Love and hate, which are the two emotions first to find special expression, are then discussed. Love is the feeling bestowed on an object which can satisfy a bodily want and relieves tension. Love of the mother is a transference of the love of the nipple and milk stimulating the oral zone. The original objects between which an infant's love is distributed are milk, urine, faeces, breath, and according as one or other of these objects happens to receive more than its usual share of affection, the future psychical development will be modified even profoundly. Milk is an external object and tends towards 'extroversion of love', while in the case of faeces and urine the direction is towards 'introversion'. This may tend towards a failure in the development of a proper sense of the relation to the outer world as seen in dementia praecox, the earliest symptoms of which may be seen in children two years old. If epilepsy indicates a faulty transition from the vegetive to the nutri-excretal stage, dementia praecox represents a failure in passing from the nutri-excretal stage to the stage of external projection. Hate indicates disappointed love, and goes to that object which does not relieve tension. The primal hate-objects are the primal love-objects, and we may have adult characteristics according to which were in the foreground. We have therefore oral love, with its impulses to eat, bite, embrace, which finds outlet in active expressions of feeling which seek to master the love object. Anal love, in which the voluntary sphincter relaxes at the pressure of involuntary peristalsis, and which develops into the more submissive characters gratified by yielding to the love object. Oral hate impels the removal (death) of the object, and vomiting and disgust have intimate relationship thereto. Anal hate, which carries with it the wish to retain (holding back faeces) makes its contribution to character in the form of obstinacy. Volition is thus recognized as a form of nutri-excretal excitation, more particularly relating to the anal zone. In adult life, anal hate and anal love remain as obstinacy and suggestibility. The conjunction of the two in one personality is seen in the association of the states of catatonia and catalepsy which are characteristic of dementia praecox. The anal pleasure derived from the passage of constipated motions is the beginning of the 'masochistic tendency', and, later, this may be projected externally as 'sadism'.

C. STANFORD READ.