

# **STUDIES IN DREAMS**

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Studies in dreams by Mary Arnold-Forster & Morton Prince

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**MARY ARNOLD-FORSTER & MORTON PRINCE**

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BY

MARY ARNOLD-FORSTER

(MRS. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER)

WITH A FOREWORD BY

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## FOREWORD

I HAVE been asked by the dreamer of these dreams to add a foreword of my own. I do not know that I can add anything that will contribute to their interest, whether in the way of discussion, criticism or interpretation. The author of the book modestly makes no claim to be a scientific explorer but only to be a recorder of her own dream experiences, who has been impelled "to stray a little beyond the province" assigned and "to attempt some partial explanation of the riddles that are met with." But the reader, I am sure, will find that she has scarcely done herself justice in this diffident attitude, for the accurate recording of observations accurately made is the basis of science and requires the development and possession of no common talent. Such observations are of much more scientific value than a number of inadequate theories—inadequate because based upon only a selected or limited group of facts. Moreover, these pages are rich in sound comments and discussions of the recorded phenomena, which are suggestive of new problems and points of view, and the author offers us particularly a well-considered new theory of the mechanism of dreams. A considerable number of the observations recorded must be regarded as additions to our knowledge and as new data for an adequate interpretation of the mechanism of dreams. Besides the recording of her own experiences, Mrs. Arnold-Forster sets before herself as her main task that of finding out "by experiment and careful observation

all that we can learn about the working of the various mental faculties in the dream state"—reason, memory, will, imagination. As the parts played by these mental processes obviously bear upon the various theories which have been proposed for the explanation of dreams, the results of the author's study of her own dreams must be regarded as an original contribution to the subject. The interesting theory which she proposes (Chapter IX) is one that deserves careful consideration. The unprejudiced reader who has not already accepted one of the current theories of dreams will be attracted by the diffidence and freedom from dogmatism of the author, and will study these pages with greater open-mindedness from knowing that she is thoroughly versed in the mass of literature on dreams which has accumulated in recent years, and has tested the theories in the light of her own observations. Mrs. Arnold-Forster, therefore, is no amateur. I venture to think, however, that most professional psychologists will not share the "respect and natural awe" which, with charming modesty, she avows for the "vast library of books" in which are embodied the results of the so-called scientific investigations which have been stimulated by the present-day medical interest in dreams. More likely they look upon such "scientific" results as—pipe dreams or cigarette dreams.

The quality of the interest of the reader in this book will undoubtedly be largely determined by his previous attitude of mind towards dreams and their interpretation. If he has a closed mind, has already committed himself towards some theory of dream mechanism—and I fear many students of present-day psychology already have—if he thinks he already knows it all, his interest may be hypercritically modified by the limitation of the task which the author has set before