

# LUCID DREAMS

Celia Green

*Foreword by Professor H. H. Price*

Lucid dreams—dreams in which the subject knows that he is dreaming — raise important questions for philosophers and psychologists. If someone can reflect rationally while he is asleep, are we to say he is 'conscious' or 'unconscious'? If someone can critically examine his environment, asking himself whether he is dreaming, and conclude that he is not (although he is), what criterion can we use at any time to decide whether we are awake or asleep?

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# LUCID DREAMS

by

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# Foreword

A dream is called 'lucid', not because it has unusual visual clarity (as the adjective might suggest) but because the dreamer is aware, at the time, that he is dreaming. The lucidity is of an intellectual rather than a visual kind, though in some of the dreams described in this book the dream-images did have unusual visual properties, for instance 'electrically-lit clarity' (p. 32). Perhaps the most interesting feature of lucid dreams is that the dreamer, once he has noticed that he is dreaming, has some degree of voluntary control over the subsequent course of his dream. Dr. van Eeden, who recorded a large number of lucid dreams in the early years of this century, even went so far as to try experiments on his dream-objects. In one of his lucid dreams he struck a bottle to see if it would break. A short time afterwards, it did, though not immediately.<sup>1</sup>

Most of us forget our dreams very soon after waking. But fortunately this is not true of everyone. There is quite a large literature of lucid dream narratives, and the author has quoted extensively from it in this book. Also quoted are a large number of unpublished narratives collected by the Institute of Psychophysical Research, and there is a detailed description of these in Part II of the book. Perhaps we should all agree nowadays that the study of dreams can throw important light on psychological processes, especially sub-conscious and unconscious ones. But so far as I know, not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 59.

very much attention has hitherto been given to this peculiar property of lucidity which some dreams have.

It is not, however, confined to dreams. Obviously, there is a fairly close relation between dreams and hallucinations. Indeed, a dream could quite well be described as a hallucination which occurs during sleep, and a hallucination occupying a subject's entire perceptual field could quite well be described as a waking dream. So we are not surprised to find that such hallucinations too can be 'lucid'. Sometimes the hallucinated person is fully aware, at the time, that his experience *is* hallucinatory, and is all the more interested in it for that reason. He may even be able to give a detailed description of it while it is happening.

There is a still closer relation between a lucid dream and an 'out of the body' experience. In an out-of-the-body experience, the subject seems to see his own physical organism from outside, just as if it were the body of someone else. He is therefore aware, at the time, that his experience differs from the ordinary experiences of waking life. Usually, though not invariably, it seems to him that he now has 'another body', which is like the physical organism in that it serves for the time being as the centre of his perceptual world, and is in some degree under his voluntary control, but unlike the physical organism in that it has different causal properties (for instance, it can pass through walls and other physical obstacles without hindrance). In a lucid dream, likewise, it seems to the dreamer that he is embodied; and in his 'dream-body' (if we may so describe it) he is able to have experiences which he could not possibly have in waking life. For instance, he may find that he can fly or float through the air just by an act of will.

Lucid dreams, then, are of very considerable interest from the purely psychological point of view. But they are also of interest to the psychical researcher. An ESP impression

received at an unconscious level has to manifest itself in consciousness somehow if we are to know anything about it. It may do so in many different ways, but dream-imagery is one of the most common: the telepathic dream is perhaps the most familiar of all paranormal phenomena. Most telepathic dreams, however, are of the ordinary 'non-lucid' type. Is there any reason to suppose that ESP can also manifest itself in lucid dreams? This question is discussed in Chapter XVI.

H. H. PRICE



# Introduction

**T**his book is based on case-material in the possession of the Institute of Psychophysical Research, and on published accounts of lucid dreams and related phenomena.

The case material collected by the Institute consists of:

- (1) Replies to a questionnaire on lucid dreaming administered to groups of subjects at different times;
- (2) The reports of four subjects who have observed their lucid dreams over prolonged periods of time;
- (3) Accounts of 'out-of-the-body' experiences received by the Institute; and
- (4) Reports on hypnotic experiments carried out by the Institute.

All case material in the Institute's possession is treated anonymously. The four subjects who have been the subject of intensive study will be referred to as Subjects A, B, C, and D. Further, the convention will be observed that in discussing a case masculine pronouns will be used to refer to the subject, unless female sex is unambiguously indicated by some detail which occurs in the quoted report of the experience – e.g. by reference to a husband. Christian and surnames of other persons who are referred to in the subject's statements will be replaced by initial capital letters, not corresponding to the true initial of the name. Place names have been left unchanged, unless they might lead to recognition of the subject's identity, in which case they have also been replaced by an initial capital letter, again not

corresponding to the true initial of the place name in question.

Any case which is quoted in this book without a reference is drawn from material in the possession of the Institute.

The remaining source of material consists of published reports by a number of individuals who have shown an interest in their experiences, both of lucid dreaming and of related phenomena.

The main sources of published material are as follows:

\*ARNOLD-FORSTER, Mrs. H. O., *Studies in Dreams*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1921 – referred to throughout as ‘Arnold-Forster’.

\*DELAGE, Y., *Le Rêve*, Les Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1919 – referred to throughout as ‘Delage’.

\*VAN EEDEN,<sup>1</sup> F., ‘A Study of Dreams’, *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. XXVI, Part 47, July, 1913, pp. 431–61 – referred to throughout as ‘van Eeden’.

FOX, O., *Astral Projection*, University Books Inc., New York, 1962 – referred to throughout as ‘Fox’.

HERVEY de SAINT-DENYS, Marquis, *Les Rêves et les Moyens de les Diriger*, Cercle du Livre Précieux, Paris, 1964<sup>2</sup> – referred to throughout as ‘Hervey de Saint-Denys’.

\*OUSPENSKY, P. D., ‘On the Study of Dreams and on Hypnotism’, Chapter VII, pp. 271–307, in *A New Model of the Universe*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1960 – referred to throughout as ‘Ouspensky’.

\*WHITEMAN, J. H. M., *The Mystical Life*, Faber & Faber, London, 1961 – referred to throughout as ‘Whiteman’.

Acknowledgements are due to the publishers of the asterisked works for permission to quote from copyright material.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced, approximately, ‘von Ayden’.

<sup>2</sup> First published: Paris, 1867.

# PART ONE



# I

## The Philosophical Status of Lucid Dreams

What is a lucid dream? Here is an example:

Without any preliminary ordinary dream experience, I suddenly found myself on a fairly large boat travelling at a normal speed up what appeared to be the mouth of a river, just before it issues into the sea. There was some sort of pleasant scenery on either side, with trees and greenery, and straight in front, the water stretched to infinity. The deck was smooth and clean and warmed by the sun, and I felt the warm breeze on my skin. This startled me, because I knew that in a dream one does not feel actual physical sensations with the same intensity and subtlety as in real life, and I was sufficiently mistress of my own thoughts and movements to pinch my arm in order to assure myself that it was only a dream. I felt the flesh under my fingers and the slight pain in my arm, and this filled me with real alarm, because I knew that I ought not to be on that boat, in the daylight. I did not *see* my own body, but I was sufficiently lucid to imagine it, lying inert in my own bed here in Paris . . .

A lucid dream is a dream in which the subject is aware that he is dreaming.

Plainly a lucid dream constitutes something of a test case. Dreaming is usually defined by reference to its irrationality and discontinuity with waking experience. That is to say, the events of the dream do not obey the usual laws of the physical world and the subject does not relate what is happening to memories of his past life and of the normal world, so that the dream is 'discontinuous' with the rest of his experience.

Certain subjects claim that in lucid dreams they retain the greater part, or even all, of the memories which they possess

in the waking state. If this is so, the 'discontinuity of personal experience' is evidently at a minimum.

Further, some lucid dreams seem to be very accurate imitations of waking life. The case which has been quoted at the beginning of this chapter is an example of this. In this case, we might say that there was no discontinuity with the physical world of ordinary experience other than an apparent displacement of the observer's point of view to a different spatial location.

If the dreamer dreams that he is lying in bed in his own bedroom, as is sometimes reported, even this discontinuity is absent.

A further problem arises about the use of the word 'aware', or its synonym 'conscious'. In our definition, we said that a person having a lucid dream is 'aware that he is dreaming.' But Malcolm observes: '. . . Having some conscious experience or other, no matter what, is not what is meant by being asleep . . .'<sup>1</sup> It certainly seems very odd to say that the subject quoted at the beginning of this chapter was not 'conscious' at the time of the experience described. The problem might be solved by distinguishing between 'physiological unconsciousness' and 'psychological unconsciousness'. 'Physiological unconsciousness' might be defined as a state characterized by unresponsiveness to certain external stimuli, 'Psychological unconsciousness' would be more difficult to define. It is difficult to state any criterion of uncriticalness, amnesia, unawareness and so on, which is not found at times in a 'normal waking' state.

In the next chapter we shall be discussing a type of experience related to lucid dreams, which may also take place while the subject exhibits complete behavioural unconsciousness.

<sup>1</sup> Norman Malcolm, *Dreaming*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1959, p. 12.

## II

# Out-of-the-Body Experiences

It is not possible fully to discuss lucid dreams without considering their relationship to another type of experience, known as an 'out-of-the-body' experience. In this chapter, we shall first give some examples of the latter phenomenon, and then discuss the ways in which it is related to lucid dreaming.

In an 'out-of-the-body' experience, as the name implies, the subject finds himself apparently outside his physical body and perceiving what is going on from a new point of view.

My experience was . . . when my son an only child was 2 yrs. old.

It was evening and I was sat on the bed and leaning over his cot reciting nursery rhymes, which he was repeating after me. Suddenly I was suspended in mid-air a few ft. from the bottom of his cot, looking down at the scene of myself still leaning over the cot.

I felt very puzzled and bewildered but it was all over in a couple of seconds. When I got back in my body my son was still repeating a line from the nursery rhyme.

As in the case just quoted, the subject may find himself observing his physical body, which is sometimes unconscious but in other cases is still going about its affairs in an apparently normal way. The percipient, at his new focus of consciousness, may or may not find himself associated with an apparent duplicate body. The following case is a border-line example of this. The subject implies the presence

of a duplicate body – which is ‘walking along’ – but does not clearly describe it.

I was in the habit of going for long country walks and had set myself to walk a distance of about seven miles, well within my usual limits. However, I was somewhat tired to begin with on this particular occasion and remember wondering, as I started off, whether I was wise in taking this walk, especially as there was no bus service along the route and I would have to keep going however fatigued I might become.

Nevertheless I continued, and was not aware of anything untoward until I had been walking for an hour or more. I was still some distance from my goal, not having made very good progress. I imagine I must have increased my pace, not wishing to be too late in arriving at Ongar, since I had to get back to north west London that night. Looking back to that evening, my impression is of a rather dogged plodding, in a somewhat apprehensive (perhaps even anxious) frame of mind. Then somewhere along that country lane I had the feeling that I – the psychical part of me – was walking along the top of the hedge which bounded the lane, looking down upon myself striding along. I had been sub-consciously aware of the feeling for a few minutes before fully realizing it. The feeling persisted, and I did not get rid of it for several minutes.

Experiences of this kind occur in a very wide variety of situations, the majority of those occurring spontaneously being associated with conditions of stress, accident or illness. We shall give one example of each of these types of situation. The first, during an examination, may be regarded as an example of ‘stress’.

One instance that I remember seeing myself out of the body, or rather the other way around (i.e., I was the ‘spirit’, the intangible, seeing my body) was when I was seventeen, sitting for the Oversea School Certificate examination in Z. ‘I’ was just floating above my desk, looking at myself bent over the desk writing furiously, trying to beat the clock. ‘I’ remember thinking then – ‘Come on, you can just about make it!’

The next case provides an illustration of an out-of-the-body case happening in association with an accident.

. . . I was in a car crash – the bonnet and front seats plunged under a truck.

Dazed and covered with clothing which came from the back seats I tried to move. I knew my legs were somehow wedged.

At THAT MOMENT – I can still see it today – I ‘felt’ myself leave.

THE NEXT SECOND I REMEMBER LOOKING DOWN ON THE CRASH – SEEING THE POSITION I WAS IN AND MY LEGS SOMEHOW LOCKED IN THE STEERING WHEEL.

From my blinded position I uncurled my legs – pushed away the clothing, crawled to the back seat – and climbed out the back door. I had a badly cut head and suffered severe shock for the next three weeks.

Finally, the next case provides an example of an experience associated with illness.

I was in the army, abroad in India, and this happened to me on two occasions within the space of a few months, and on each occasion the event was identical. The boys & I were inside the Barrack hut owing to the extreme heat, I remember lying down on a wooden form with no pillow when suddenly I was gripped with terror and tried to struggle off the form and during my struggle I seemed to rise and could see my body lying on the form and I was trying to draw the attention of my pals to my predicament but none of them seemed to notice me and then after a tremendous struggle I came too.

In a typical experience of this type the percipient seems to be seeing the same ‘world’ as usual. However, in certain cases it has been found that things as seen in the ‘out-of-the-body’ experience differed from things as seen in the world of normal experience. For example, ‘a subject may seem to rise up through the roof of his own house and see a chimney stack, which, on inspection the next day, he finds is not there Or the subject may walk into a certain room in which most

of the furniture is in its familiar position, but afterwards, in a normal state, he may realize that an extra cupboard was incorporated in the front of a piece of furniture.

There are two considerations which lead us to think that lucid dreams cannot be fully discussed without reference to out-of-the-body experiences.

The first is that out-of-the-body experiences must be regarded as philosophically indistinguishable from lucid dreams. In both types of experience the percipient is observing a complete and self-consistent field of perception, and recognizes at the time that he is in a state which differs from that of normal waking life. In the majority of spontaneous out-of-the-body experiences the subject seems to be observing his physical body from some point outside it, but this does not constitute a qualitative difference between out-of-the-body experiences and lucid dreams. It is possible, though less common, for a person to have a lucid dream in which he dreams that he is looking at his own body from outside.

The other consideration which leads us to associate these two types of phenomena is that among those persons who have made deliberate attempts to cultivate such states, and have recorded their experiences, a close relationship between the two types of state is often thought to exist. Of the subjects discussed in this book, Oliver Fox, Dr. Whiteman and Subject A would all distinguish between a 'higher' and 'lower' grade of experience, of which the higher is approximately equivalent to an out-of-the-body experience, and the lower to a lucid dream. The ways in which these subjects define the distinction between their 'higher' and 'lower' states are not the same, and they have different ideas about the ways in which it is possible to pass from one kind of state to the other. Their views on these points will be discussed later. But for the present it is sufficient to observe that they all regard the relationship as a close one, and their attempts

to delimit the one class of experience from the other leave a considerable area of overlap.

How, then, does an out-of-the-body state differ from one of lucid dreaming?

(1) Usually an out-of-the-body state starts when the subject is awake rather than asleep, while a lucid dream usually starts when the subject is asleep and dreaming in the usual way, or alternatively when the subject is just falling asleep, so that the lucid dream is the first kind of dream which he has.

(2) Although in both types of experience the subject realizes that what he is experiencing is different from what he would normally experience in a waking state, in an out-of-the-body experience the apparent congruence of the field of perception with the world of the waking state is often believed by the subject to be complete, and the percipient will typically describe the experience as one of viewing the normal world from a different point of view. There are reports of lucid dreams which accurately reproduce places known to the percipient, but the tendency to regard the dream reproduction as identical with the physical world is much less.

(3) In general, the most precise and vivid representations of the world of normal experience are associated with out-of-the-body experiences, while there is a greater likelihood that a lucid dream will contain symbolic or fantastic elements, or that the visual field will be blurred or indistinct.

(4) Out-of-the-body experiences are generally regarded, by subjects who have experienced both, as superior to lucid dreams in the following respects: the degree to which the subject is in control of the situation, the extent to which he seems able to move freely through space, and the intensity of his emotions of joy, liberation and so on.

(5) In an out-of-the-body state the subject may not seem

to have a body at all, and may be in the position of a 'disembodied observer'. This is very uncommon in lucid dreams, in which the dreamer usually seems to have a physical body in the ordinary way. It is possible that this observation is related to the increased freedom of movement associated with out-of-the-body experiences. The subject is perhaps more emancipated from the idea that he must imitate normal methods of locomotion, and a more rapid and direct displacement of his point of view may therefore seem acceptable.

It has been necessary to introduce the idea of an 'out-of-the-body' experience at this early stage, as continual reference will have to be made to this related phenomenon throughout our discussion of lucid dreams.

We are now in a position to start a systematic examination of the properties and characteristics of lucid dreams. First, we shall discuss a kind of dream which we shall call 'pre-lucid', and which may or may not develop into a lucid dream.

### III

## Pre-Lucid Dreams

Before going on to consider lucid dreams proper, it is interesting to consider the type of dream in which the subject adopts a critical attitude towards what he is experiencing, even to the point of asking himself the question 'Am I dreaming?' but without realizing that he is in fact doing so. Such dreams will be called 'pre-lucid dreams'.

It seems that it is not uncommon for people to have pre-lucid dreams, even habitually, and such people do not necessarily have lucid dreams as well. Thus two subjects report as follows:

There were times when I argued with myself about whether I was dreaming or not – saying it is O.K., it is only a dream – and then saying to myself no it is not . . . this is reality' (ordinary reality that is).

I certainly have had dreams in which I distinctly remember asking myself the question 'Am I dreaming?'. These occur quite often – perhaps as much as once a week. However, as far as I can remember, the vast majority of times the question either was left unanswered in my mind or was answered in the negative, and the dream continued without the thought returning to me.

A more detailed account of an internal argument in a dream is provided by Mrs. Arnold-Forster, who had lucid dreams in only their most rudimentary form, although she took an interest in observing her dream-life over a long period.

This particular dream took place near the point of waking, but similar dreams take place at different periods of sleep. In two successive dreams of rather disordered sleep I was preoccupied by the same absurd but nightmareish worry. I thought that certain household possessions, some fine pieces of brocade, and silk curtains, had been left out of doors, and had been found in the rain and melting snow. The care of getting these things dried and restored became an obsession which distracted my dream imagination. In the second part of the dream, when the trouble had become acute, and when I was presumably near to the point of waking, I not only took part as the dreamer, but was present in a double capacity; for 'I' interrupted the dream, and argued sternly with the dreamer as to the reality of the trouble that was so oppressive. 'I' said, 'This is a dream – I am certain of it; you must wake.' But the dreamer replied, 'It cannot simply be a dream, because it was not only in this dream, but in the dream before this one that I discovered these things in the snow; it must be real, or it would not happen twice, and here are the actual things which you can see and touch for yourself.' 'I' was very puzzled, and said that 'I' could not answer this, or explain it properly; it did indeed seem very real even to me, and very confusing. 'I' examined the soiled materials again; they felt very wet and dripping in my hands and seemed to be convincingly 'real'. 'Perhaps,' I thought, 'some of the seeming facts are really true' – I could not disentangle them from what was false; only 'I' felt sure that a great deal of the worry was 'dream trouble, not day trouble.' 'No,' the dreamer argued again, 'for you can see and feel the wet things – they are too real to be "dream things."' 'Well,' 'I' said at last, 'will you put it to the touch, and test it? Wake,' 'I' said, 'and see just how much of this is a dream!' And I woke.<sup>1</sup>

A subject who had repeated pre-lucid dreams was Yves Delage, whose sight was deteriorating, so that in the waking state he was considerably preoccupied with this fact. He started to have dreams in which he could see perfectly

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 172-3.

clearly, and this led him to wonder each time whether he was really cured.

I find myself dreaming again that, although I should be blind, I am in fact seeing clearly, but I remember that I have had this illusion in dreams before, and that the illusion has been dissipated on awakening. Then, anxiously, I ask myself: am I dreaming? or am I awake? I feel that this is a difficult problem, and that I am in danger of making a mistake, of drawing a false conclusion, and I try to put together all the considerations which might contribute to a solution. I place myself directly in front of an object which I am looking at; I open my eyes – I see it; I close my eyes – I do not see it (of course, in my sleep, all these movements are completely imaginary). I feel myself, shake myself, stamp my feet to assure myself that I am really awake. On each occasion without exception, I conclude that I am awake. On one occasion in these circumstances, I dreamt that my daughter-in-law was near me. I spoke to her: Louise, I said, look, I am seeing clearly, but I am afraid it is only a dream. Am I really awake? pinch my arm so that I can be sure of it. She did not answer, but pinched my arm; I could hardly feel the pressure of her hand. ‘Harder’ I said to her. She obeyed, but no doubt from fear of hurting me, pinched me so gently that I could only just feel it. However, the test seemed to me conclusive; and, to tell the truth, I was so convinced of being awake that I spoke to her less to convince myself than to convince her. Not for a moment did it enter my head to think that if I was dreaming, this verification would prove nothing since it would itself be part of the dream. So I was convinced and very happy.<sup>1</sup>

One point of interest about this description is that, since it was possible for the dreamer to examine the clarity of his vision for some time, it would appear that the dream had, at least to some extent, the accuracy of imitation of the waking world which is a common characteristic of lucid dreams proper. In fact, it often appears to be the case that

<sup>1</sup> Delage, pp. 450–1; my translation. The original of this extract will be found in Appendix D.

by the time it occurs to a subject to question whether he is dreaming, the dream is of such a perceptual quality as to defy the most detailed inspection.

This is particularly true of that type of pre-lucid dream associated with a 'false awakening'. This is a phenomenon which, although otherwise rare, seems to happen frequently to subjects who have completely lucid dreams as well. After a lucid dream, they may have a subsequent dream in which they seem to wake up in bed in the normal way. After some experience of this, it may occur to them to doubt whether they are really awake, and they may then proceed to examine their environment in the hope of obtaining clues. Sometimes they do realize that this is still a dream, and another lucid dream may follow. Or alternatively, the dream may remain pre-lucid. The following two examples illustrate both these possibilities.

I dreamed that my wife and I awoke, got up, and dressed. On pulling up the blind, we made the amazing discovery that the row of houses opposite had vanished and in their place were bare fields. I said to my wife, 'This means I am dreaming, though everything seems so real and I feel perfectly awake. Those houses could not disappear in the night, and look at all that grass!' But though my wife was greatly puzzled, I could not convince her it was a dream. 'Well,' I continued, 'I am prepared to stand by my reason and put it to the test. I will jump out of the window, and I shall take no harm.' Ruthlessly ignoring her pleading and objecting, I opened the window and climbed out on to the sill. I then jumped, and floated gently down into the street. When my feet touched the pavement, I awoke. My wife had no memory of dreaming.

As a matter of fact, I was very nervous about jumping; for the atmosphere *inside* our bedroom seemed so absolutely real that it nearly made me accept the manifest absurdity of things outside.<sup>1</sup>

Seemed to wake; X. entered the room, switched on the

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 69

electric light and drew the curtains to exclude the sunlight. (I had been sleeping late, so it was in fact late morning.) This appeared natural but of course should have seemed illogical. I told X. of the lucid dream I had just been having, and thought of the possibility that this was still a dream. I discussed this with X., but dismissed it because of the naturalness of everything – papers spread out on the carpet under the window, spotted with rain that had come in through it. (In actual fact, I did not at this time have any papers spread out in this way – I don't think I ever did while I lived there. However, it would not have been out of the ordinary for me to have decided to do some work on the floor in order to have more room to arrange different groups of papers.) I thought that it could not be a dream, because it could not so accurately reproduce so much in such detail – looking at the numerous papers, feeling their texture, thickness, etc., as I thought this.<sup>1</sup>

Another type of pre-lucid dream is that in which the subject adopts a somewhat critical attitude to his experiences, but without necessarily reaching the point at which he asks whether the *whole* of the experience which he is having is a dream.

Not long ago I had a vivid dream, in which I was, as it were, present at a magical ceremony, conducted by two adepts of some occult order. After undergoing certain treatment by them, I seemed to myself to be levitated and to be flying round and round the room at a height of about eight feet. In doing so I repeatedly passed a high shelf over a fireplace, and I noted that a pair of heavy glass vases were standing one at each end of this. The experience was interesting and mildly pleasant, but I was in that critical mood which becomes a member of the S.P.R. I said to myself: 'This may well be just a result of hypnotic suggestion, and not genuine levitation.' In order to test this, I decided to catch hold of one of these vases as I passed them in my flight, and to bring it to the floor. I argued that, if it were still there afterwards, the levitation would have been genuine. Soon after I had done this my two adepts decided that I had had as much levitation for one day as was good for a beginner, and

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

they brought me gently to the floor. I was delighted to find that one of the two heavy vases was lying where I had set it down in the course of my flight. So I concluded that I had been genuinely levitated, and not just the victim of an hallucination. My conclusion was, indeed, mistaken; for I had neither been levitated nor hypnotized, but had merely been asleep and dreaming.<sup>1</sup>

Oliver Fox regarded the arousal of the critical faculty in a dream as perhaps the principal causative factor of the realization that one is dreaming, and he gives these examples of degrees of criticalness:

In order to attain to the Dream of Knowledge<sup>2</sup> we must arouse the critical faculty which seems to be to a great extent inoperative in dreams, and here, too, degrees of activity become manifest. Let us suppose, for example, that in my dream I am in a café. At a table near mine is a lady who would be very attractive – only, she has four eyes. Here are some illustrations of these degrees of activity of the critical faculty:

(1) In the dream it is practically dormant, but on waking I have the feeling that there was something peculiar about this lady. Suddenly I get it – ‘Why, of course, she had four eyes!’

(2) In the dream I exhibit mild surprise and say, ‘How curious, that girl has four eyes! It spoils her.’ But only in the same way that I might remark, ‘What a pity she has broken her nose! I wonder how she did it.’

(3) The critical faculty is more awake and the four eyes are regarded as abnormal; but the phenomenon is not fully appreciated. I exclaim, ‘Good Lord!’ and then reassure myself by adding, ‘There must be a freak show or a circus in the town.’ Thus I hover on the brink of realization, but do not quite get there.

(4) My critical faculty is now fully awake and refuses to be satisfied by this explanation. I continue my train of thought,

<sup>1</sup> C. D. Broad, *Lectures on Psychological Research*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962, pp. 156–7.

<sup>2</sup> ‘A Dream of Knowledge’ is Fox’s term for a lucid dream.

‘But there never was such a freak! An adult woman with four eyes – it’s *impossible*. I am dreaming.’<sup>1</sup>

Oliver Fox, as will be seen from this quotation, regarded the arousal of the ‘critical faculty’ as fundamental to the attainment of lucidity. It is not necessary to agree with this view to recognize the examples he gives as typical varieties of dream experience.

In the next chapter we shall proceed to consider the factors which seem to favour the onset of lucidity in dreaming.

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 35–6.

## IV

# The Initiation of Lucidity

What are the psychological causes which initiate the state of awareness that one is dreaming?

This awareness may be initiated in a number of ways. It may be initiated by the stress of a 'nightmare' situation, by a recognition of an incongruous or irrational element in the content of the dream, by a reminder of some habitual technique of introspective observation, or by what can only be categorized as a spontaneous recognition that the quality of the experience is in some indefinable way different from that of waking life.

We shall proceed to illustrate these four processes.

### (1) *Emotional Stress within the Dream*

This is by far the commonest kind of lucid dream to be reported by unsophisticated subjects, that is to say, subjects who have not read any of the literature on lucid dreams, nor taken a prolonged interest in observing their own dreams.

When I was younger, I suffered from a recurring nightmare, of being in a small field or garden, with a few buildings on it, surrounded by a post and rail fence. It was like an island, in a sea of enormous boulders like mountains, which crashed and ground together, tho' silently, all round it, and threatened to grind it up entirely, tho' they never did. Sometimes I was on the island, sometimes above it and the 'sea', but looking down on it, and sometimes on myself still there. I always knew I was dreaming this, and when I was about to. I knew that if I could just wake up before it started, I would be safe: sometimes

I could, and sometimes I couldn't, but if I once opened my eyes, it was all right.

Usually what happens is that I, in my dreams, am in a tough spot e.g. about to be pushed off a cliff or 'shot up' by a gunman, and then something inside me says 'Don't worry - you're only dreaming', - and that is the end of the dream.

Lucidity arising out of nightmares will be more fully discussed in a later chapter. The two examples just given will suffice to illustrate this type of dream for the present.

### (2) *Recognition of Incongruity*

Among those who have made special efforts to cultivate lucid dreams, only Oliver Fox regards the arousal in the dream of one's rational and reflective intellectual processes<sup>1</sup> as the fundamental causative factor in the initiation of lucid dreams. Whether or not this is really causative, it is clear that the onset of the period of lucidity may be associated with a recognition of incongruity, and Fox's examples of degrees of criticalness, already quoted,<sup>1</sup> describe representative dream experiences. The following examples illustrate the initiation of lucidity following a recognition of incongruity.

I dreamed that I woke in the night in our bedroom at Worples Road. I had a great longing for chocolate, but knew there was none in the house. I therefore dressed, without waking my wife, and walked to the Raynes Park railway station, thinking I might get some chocolate from a machine on the platform. No one was about and I made my way there all right, but no chocolate was left in the machines. I then thought I would take a short stroll. Leaving the station, I soon came to a shop - a tea-room and confectioner's - which was open, although it was

<sup>1</sup> Fox speaks of arousing the 'critical faculty' in dreams. It is perhaps relevant to an understanding of this term to observe that he regards it as 'allied with the principle in us which asserts "I am I. I exist."'

the middle of the night. At the back of this shop was a large conservatory, and there I sat down at a round marble-topped table. I then noticed, to my surprise, a dozen or more green parrots perched in the branches of some trees which were planted in tubs. The parrots regarded me inquiringly with their orange-rimmed eyes, but made no sound. At a table near by, three or four children were huddled up together fast asleep. Presently a plump, middle-aged woman came to attend to me. She had no chocolate, but some very nice nougat – if I did not mind waiting a little while as she was not quite sure where she had put it. I assented and she departed. It then occurred to me I must have been out some time and that, if my wife woke, she would wonder what had happened to me. Strangely enough I had not thought of this before.

I hurriedly left the shop and began making for home. Then, quite suddenly, the ridiculous nature of my behaviour – dawned upon me. How came I to behave so foolishly? And that strange shop with all those wakeful silent parrots and the sleeping children – Why, of course! No need to trouble about my wife. I was dreaming; and now I knew it, I was free to experiment.<sup>1</sup>

Last night in a dream in which my wife figured, I got to know that I was dreaming through the unexpected appearance of a large model battleship which was propelled through the streets by men walking inside it.<sup>2</sup>

Dreamed that my wife and I were in bed in a strange room. An electric light hung over the bed, and my wife was brightly illuminated by it. Suddenly she disappeared from my sight; she seemed to dissolve into a cloud and vanish. This told me that I was dreaming. . . .<sup>3</sup>

In a dream I walked into the old room which I had had at D. Road, remembered that I was not living here any more, and so knew I was dreaming. I looked at the room – it had that quality of electrically-lit clarity, and there was darkness outside window.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 113–14.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> Fox, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> Subject B.

### (3) *Lucidity arising from the Initiation of Analytical Thought*

Lucidity may arise when the dream-situation is of such a kind that, if it happened in waking life, it would initiate a train of analytical or critical thought in the subject's mind. The train of analytical thought in question may actually occur in the dream, just before it becomes lucid, or the dream may become lucid with no such preliminary, at the point at which a train of analytical thought would normally have been aroused. The following two examples illustrate this type of initiation of lucidity.

This dream took place on the upper floor of a large, rather atmospheric mansion. First I was in a room with X. We were talking about the possibility that there might be spirits in such a place and I was invoking them – not very seriously. X. said something like: 'Well, you might give them a proper chance. Go and do it in a room of your own.' So I agreed, without much enthusiasm, as when someone suggests something which I ought to find interesting but don't expect to be successful. I went along the corridor to another room and began to talk to the air. After a little, words I had said began to echo back to me from the walls and corners of the room. This began to seem unnatural, as isolated words were picked out of what I said and echoed repeatedly. Also the same word was echoed back from different angles. I became uneasy and left the room before I became more so. As I walked back along the corridor to rejoin X. I wondered how to explain my retreat to him; also whether such an odd sort of echo could be naturally caused. At this point I realized that I was dreaming.<sup>1</sup>

In dream I heard a voice of unpleasant quality asserting of a certain place that it was 'where Tiberius planned one of his murders'. Immediately there was a fairly clear view of an ornamental tower or gateway resembling the 'Gate of Honour' at Caius College, Cambridge. On reflecting that the voice was malicious and untruthful, I became aware of being in a

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

separated state (the habit of detachment from fixed ideas established recollection).<sup>1</sup>

(4) *Recognition of the 'Dreamlike' Quality  
of the Experience*

A very common mode of initiation of lucidity is the apparently spontaneous recognition that the situation possesses the quality of 'dreamlikeness'. It is possible, indeed, that this mode of initiation is very much the most frequent, since there would clearly be a tendency, when a spontaneous onset of lucidity coincided with some incongruity in the dream, for the subject to report this by saying: 'The parrot flew through the wall and this made me aware that I was dreaming', even if the most accurate psychological statement would really have been: 'The parrot flew through the wall and I realized that I was dreaming'.

The following example is a case of a type which might well have been reported as *caused* by the incongruity of the situation, although in fact this subject merely reports that during an incongruous situation lucidity was initiated.

In ordinary dream was trying to get on a bus which I was chasing along the road, dodging in and out of traffic and holding a ribbon which connected me to the bus. This ribbon seemed to be elastic and I noticed with annoyance that it was elongating and I was falling behind. Then I realized I was dreaming and did not need to chase the bus or even to dodge the traffic. So I stopped running and stood still in the road – the traffic vanishing as I did so.<sup>2</sup>

In case the use of the word 'dreamlike', used above, should lead to misconceptions, it should be pointed out that when people become aware that they are dreaming in this way, the dream is not usually 'dreamlike' in any accepted sense. That is to say, it is not vague, blurred or indefinite.

<sup>1</sup> Whiteman, pp. 57–8.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

By the time the dream has reached the point at which the dreamer asks himself the question: 'Is this experience of the texture of dreaming or waking life?' the dream often seems to be an accurate imitation of waking life. That is to say, it may be inspected without revealing any perceptible difference, in detail or definition, from waking life. Further, it is interesting to note that on awakening it still appears to the subject that he was inspecting his environment with the same criteria that he would use in waking life.

However, it is not necessarily the case that the perceptual quality of the lucid dream will be a precise imitation of normal experience. Some subjects report that the visual field is noticeably less distinct or less focussed than that of waking life. There is one report of a subject realizing his state by a consideration of the indistinctness of his perceptual field.

I was, I thought, standing in my study; but I observed that the furniture had not its usual distinctness – that everything was blurred and somehow evaded a direct gaze. It struck me that this must be because I was *dreaming*. This was a great delight to me, as giving the opportunity of experimentation . . . As I walked downstairs I looked carefully at the stair-carpet, to see whether I could visualize better in dream than in waking life I found that this was *not* so; the dream-carpet was not like what I knew it in truth to be; rather, it was a thin, ragged carpet, apparently vaguely generalized from memories of sea-side lodgings.<sup>1</sup>

This report is interesting, since it established that it is possible for lucidity to arise from a recognition that what is being perceived is less clear than normal. However, this experience is outnumbered by the reports of subjects who have examined what they were experiencing with great care, and found it extremely difficult to reach a decision

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing – III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, pp. 241–242.

whether they were dreaming or not, since the quality of their sense-perception seemed to them to be indistinguishable from that of waking life.

Although the subject may appear to examine the texture of the dream just before deciding that it is a dream, we should be cautious in saying that the realization *arises* from this examination of texture. As we have already pointed out in the case of incongruity, there is obviously a temptation for subjects to say: 'I examined the texture of my experience and concluded from it that I was dreaming' rather than: 'I examined the texture of my experience and realized that I was dreaming'. In the example which follows, it will be seen that once the subject becomes aware that he is dreaming, this awareness no longer seems to depend upon an examination of his experience, but is maintained quite independently of it. We may therefore doubt whether the awareness is really caused by an examination of the perceptual field in the first place.

It occurred to me to wonder whether this might be a dream, and I looked carefully round the room, trying to decide whether the texture of it differed in any way from waking life. The room was lit by electric light, which had a slightly artificial quality – perhaps more mellow than real electric light. I looked down at the carpet and suddenly became convinced that this was in fact a dream. I had a feeling of some indefinably curvilinear quality in the pattern of the carpet. It was impossible to define what was really 'wrong' with the carpet, but once I was convinced that it was a dream there could be no further doubt.<sup>1</sup>

We have now discussed the psychological events which may lead up to and accompany the start of a lucid dream when it takes place during sleep and is preceded by other dreams. In the next chapter we shall go on to consider how a lucid dream may start directly from a waking state.

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

## Lucidity Starting from a Waking State

In the last chapter we discussed how lucidity may arise when the subject is already asleep and dreaming in the ordinary way. We have now to consider lucid dreams which start without the subject ever having lost awareness of his situation. Experiences of this kind fall into two classes. In the first class of experience, the subject observes his own mental processes as he falls asleep, and in this way enters a lucid dream. The second type of experience, although philosophically indistinguishable from this, is more closely related to the out-of-the-body type of experience. The two classes of experience may be briefly characterized as follows:

(1) The subject voluntarily enters a lucid dream while falling asleep. This seems only to happen to subjects who deliberately attempt it, and appears to be associated with a physical state of sleep.

(2) The subject suddenly enters a state of 'lucid dreaming' from a waking state. This may happen quite involuntarily, and is associated with various states of the physical body – e.g. the physical body may continue to go about its ordinary activities, or it may fall asleep or faint, or lose consciousness in ways which are variously described by different reporters.

The only subject who is known to have made a practice of voluntarily entering lucid dreams from a waking state is P. D. Ouspensky. He called them 'half-dream' states.

. . . *Attempts to preserve consciousness in sleep*, created, most unexpectedly for me, a new way of observing dreams which I had not before suspected. Namely, they created a particular half-dream state. . . .

'Half-dream states' began to appear probably as a result of my efforts to observe dreams at moments of falling asleep or in half-sleep after awaking. I cannot say exactly when these states began to come in full form. Probably they developed gradually. I think they began to appear for a short time before the moment of falling asleep, but if I allowed my attention to dwell on them I could not sleep afterwards. I came therefore gradually, by experience, to the conclusion that it was much easier to observe 'half-dream states' in the morning, when already awake but still in bed.

Wishing to create these states, after waking I again closed my eyes and began to doze, at the same time keeping my mind on some definite image, or some thought. And sometimes in such cases there began those strange states which I call 'half-dream states'. Without definite efforts such states would not come . . .

If I take the time when these 'half-dream states' were just beginning, i.e., when they came at the moment of going to sleep, then usually the first sign of their approach was the 'hypnagogic hallucinations' many times described in psychological literature. I will not dwell on this. But when 'half-dream states' began to occur chiefly in the morning, they usually started without being preceded by any visual impressions.<sup>1</sup>

The second class of lucid dreams which start from a waking state is more difficult to define. They are closely related to out-of-the-body experiences. It is virtually impossible to define any distinction between out-of-the-body experiences and lucid dreams which does not, on application to the cases already on record, produce at least a few difficult borderline cases. Thus, we might choose to define 'out-of-the-body' cases as those cases which were initiated from a waking state, and lucid dreams as those cases which were initiated from a

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 273.

state of sleep. But this would mean that we had to classify Ouspensky's experiences as 'out-of-the-body' states. Further, the experiences of subjects who seem to wake in the night to find themselves floating above their beds, and looking at themselves lying with their eyes closed, would have to be classified as lucid dreams.

Any attempt to draw a dividing-line on any other criterion, such as emotional or perceptual quality, realistic as opposed to fantastic content, and so on, leads to a similar area of ambiguity, as experiences of this kind sometimes change in character as they proceed.

At this stage of our knowledge we must therefore study either class of experience with continual awareness of its relation to the other, and not allow ourselves to make a hard and fast classification unless and until some unambiguous criterion, whether physiological or psychological, emerges from scientific investigation of the problem.

The ways in which out-of-the-body experiences may start from a waking state have already been illustrated in Chapter II.

We shall now give an illustration of a type of experience which is difficult to classify.

While in bed and apparently awake, I perceived a visual opening with circular boundary, within which there was presented a scene in bright sunlight and vivid colours. It appeared to be a park, with many people walking peacefully about. At the same time I was aware of the physical body lying on its back in bed, but not altogether as if I were in that body. It was as if I were apart and watching the physical body watching. Again appearing to think in the physical body, I conceived a wish to transfer consciousness to a free personal form. Immediately I rose and walked forward towards the opening. The opening appeared to enlarge itself gradually, but before entering wholly within it I had to pass over a patch of sandy-coloured ground, as if bared for excavation. It seemed to represent a gulf between two spheres of existence. Passing through,

however, I reach the park and mix with the people. There is difficulty in distinguishing details, as if the eyes are out of focus and cannot be brought under steady control. . . .<sup>1</sup>

This might be regarded as an account of entering a lucid dream while falling asleep, but the experience more closely resembles an out-of-the-body experience in that a definite process of leaving the physical body is described. Instead of the environment being immediately replaced by an unrelated one (as in a typical lucid dream), a transition occurs in which the subject first appears to be moving away from his physical body, but through his normal environment (as in a typical out-of-the-body experience). However, the lack of visual clarity which is described on reaching the new environment is atypical of out-of-the-body experiences.

The following example of a lucid dream starting from a waking state is less ambiguous. Although it starts from a waking state, it does not resemble the standard 'out-of-the-body' experience. There is no reference to 'leaving the physical body' or to 'seeing it from outside'; and the substitute environment which the subject enters does not resemble that which surrounded him before the experience began.

My very good friend, Mr. G. Murray Nash (Paul Black), was walking home from the office in daylight through the busy street. Suddenly all the houses and people vanished. He was standing in beautiful open country. He walked on for a few yards and came to a flight of old stone steps leading down to the bank of a wide stream or little river. A boat of beautiful, but very ancient, design was moored there. Across the stern a rich purple robe had been carelessly thrown. Not a person was in sight anywhere. Mr. Nash was about to descend the steps, when the vision faded and he found himself walking on through the familiar street, and seemingly he had never stopped walking.

<sup>1</sup> Whiteman, p. 60.

This experience seemed to him to last for two or three minutes; but judging from his position on returning to normal consciousness, he had not walked more than half a dozen paces along the street.<sup>1</sup>

Lucid dreams which start from a waking state are sometimes reported in connection with spontaneous experiences of what appears to be extra-sensory perception. The following two cases illustrate this point.<sup>2</sup>

About two months before the death of my father . . . when I was in bed in a perfectly waking condition, he came to my bedside and led me right through the cemetery at Kensal Green, stopping at the spot where his grave was afterwards made. He was very ill at that time and in a helpless condition . . . I had at that time never been in that cemetery, but when I went there after his interment the scene was perfectly familiar to me. He led me beyond his grave to a large iron gate, but my recollection of this part is confused. . . . It was just like a panorama. I cannot say if my eyes were closed or open.<sup>3</sup>

The thought of Mr. — came into my mind and suddenly with my eyes open, as I believe, for I was not feeling sleepy, I seemed to be in a room in which a man was lying dead in a small bed. I recognized the face at once as that of Mr. —, and felt no doubt that he was dead, and not asleep only. The room appeared to be bare and without carpet or furniture . . .

. . . Mr. — had died [suddenly on the same day] in a small village hospital. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Before concluding this survey of ways in which a lucid dream may start from a waking state, it is interesting to

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Two further cases of this type are given in Appendix A.

<sup>3</sup> Edmund Gurney, 'On Apparitions Occurring Soon after Death', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. V, Part 14, June, 1889, p. 450.

<sup>4</sup> E. Gurney, F. W. H. Myers & F. Podmore, *Phantasms of the Living*, Trübner & Co., London, 1886, Vol. I, p. 266.

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consider to what extent the 'Daylight Impressions' of Mrs. Willett fall into this category. Mrs. Willett would usually be sitting, sometimes with her eyes closed, and would talk to the experimenters who were with her throughout the experience. Here is an example:

It's a picture – a picture that I love and often see.

Marble pillars everywhere – a most heavenly scene. A company of men – small company, discussing everything in heaven and earth, and really reaching the heights of reason – almost unconscious of their visible surroundings. It is a sort of parable of life.

There was such intercourse of the human mind going on in that room, and I know it so well I almost fancy I must have been there, though it happened a long time ago. . . . And suddenly on the quiet of it all there bursts the sound of reveling coming nearer and nearer – flute players! . . . They're getting nearer and nearer, and they're hammering on the door, and then in they come. *My* people are all disturbed, and there's great toasting. They take it all in very good part, and they revel away. There are wreaths of flowers, and cups passing, loud jokes. And then, do you know, by degrees some of the crowd melt away, and some of the people go to sleep. . . .

Do you know that man's as real to me as if I could touch him! He's an ugly man, only I feel he's sublimely great. You know I've not got to be tied up always to myself. I can get up and walk about in other worlds; and I very often like to walk through the room where that scene took place.

. . . Do you know Edmund would have been very happy in that world. It was the sort of world he wanted, and he strayed into such a hideous age.<sup>1</sup>

If our criteria of a lucid dream are (1) that the subject should have a different field of perception substituted for the normal one, and (2) that the subject should be aware of the

<sup>1</sup> Gerald William, Earl of Balfour, 'A Study of the Psychological Aspects of Mrs. Willett's Mediumship, and of the Statements of the Communicators concerning Process', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. XLIII, Part 140, May, 1935, pp. 69-71.

state he is in, and able to reflect rationally on its relationship to the normal world, then the 'Daylight Impressions' of Mrs. Willett would appear, to varying degrees, to qualify as lucid dreams.

The 'Daylight Impressions' differ from standard lucid dreams in the following respects. What Mrs. Willett was perceiving was not always visual, but was sometimes more like a sequence of abstract impressions. This is not the most typical state of affairs, but is not without parallels in lucid dream reports. Dr. Whiteman, for example, sometimes says that he was aware of the personality of another person present in his dream, without having a definite visual impression of him. Further, Mrs. Willett was usually to some extent amnesic for what she had experienced in this state once it was over. This amnesia, of course, distinguishes these states from any other kind of lucid dream, but subsequent non-amnesia has not been incorporated in our definition of a lucid dream, and it is interesting to reflect that it might be possible experimentally to produce a lucid dream with subsequent amnesia by simply suggesting to a hypnotized subject that he should forget any lucid dreams which had spontaneously occurred to him while he was under hypnosis. The determining factor seems to be the rationality of the subject, and his ability to adopt a critical attitude to his experiences, while they are going on. Of this factor in Mrs. Willett's case, Lord Balfour says:

Subtle questions may no doubt be raised concerning the exact relation of the 'I' of the Willett scripts to the normal 'I' of the sensitive; but any distinction between the two 'I's' discernible to the observer leaves them still both identified with the same personality . . . Mrs. Willett . . . retains a sense of personality throughout . . .<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Willett was often able to describe to the experimenters

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

what she was experiencing during her Daylight Impressions. She might say, for example:

Now I seem to be walking about a school, and I meet a *dark boy*, and – it's the name of a Field Marshal I'm trying to get, a German name. And then something says, All this is only memories revived. . . . Oh, what a beautiful lake! I'm standing on a sort of projecting part running out into it, and there are olive trees all round me. . . . How beautiful those mountains are, I like the wild part of them above the tith.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter completes our discussion of the psychological events which may precede or accompany the onset of lucidity, and of the variety of circumstances in which a lucid dream may be initiated.

We shall now proceed to study the characteristics of dreams in which lucidity is present. The next chapter will consider the characteristics of the commonest and simplest form of lucid dream.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

## VI

# Nightmare and Stress

The commonest kind of lucid dream to be reported by unsophisticated subjects is a nightmare, in which the subject becomes aware that he is dreaming, and may then use this knowledge to wake himself up. People who have a recurrent nightmare sometimes report a learning effect. The familiarity of the nightmare reminds them that this is a situation in which they can realize that they are dreaming and wake up. Here are some examples of lucidity in connection with recurring dreams.

From early childhood until I was about 45 I had recurring dreams, and in my sleep I used to find myself saying 'of course I know this one, I've had it many times before' and if it was a nice one I would let it run on, and if nasty I could switch it off and wake up.

Those dreams in which I am aware that I am dreaming are of two kinds. Both are of an unpleasant nature.

The first type is a recurrent nightmare, now not so common as it was when I was about 12, when it was very frequent. In this nightmare, I am searching for something incredibly small that it is vital that I find before someone else, who, though never named, is in some way evil. Having now had this dream some dozens of times, even in my dreaming I realize both that I am dreaming, and that I have dreamt it before. Nevertheless, I am unable either to influence the dream or to wake myself out of it.

. . . My recurring nightmare that I have when I have a temperature of over about 103°F, is of this type [i.e., lucid] . . . It always involves things closing in while I try to reach some

distant point. Originally it was a garden hedge with a wicket gate at the far end, but sometimes it is the room I am in and sometimes a herd of animals, on a completely flat plain.

. . . I once had a horrific dream at the end of which I was shot dead. However, although aware that I ought to be dead, I still remained at the same level of consciousness as before, so played through the last part of the dream-sequence again and was shot again, with the same result. By this time the absurdity of it had quite destroyed the horror; I fully realized it was a dream and decided to chuck it in and wake up.

The realization of the dream situation has a considerable effect in relieving the subject's emotions of fear, horror, and so on.

All I remember of such dreams . . . is being threatened with violence by overwhelming forces, and telling myself not to be afraid, since 'it is only a dream'.

However, the lucid dream arising from a nightmare situation, although the commonest type, is also the shortest. The period of lucidity is usually very brief, as awakening may follow almost immediately upon the realization of the dream condition. Control of the dream is rarely reported, and if so only in stereotyped ways of bringing the nightmare situation to an end.

Mrs. Arnold-Forster gives an interesting description of a method by which she tried to ensure that any unpleasant dream would automatically remind her of the idea that she was dreaming.

On various occasions long ago, when a dream of grief or terror was becoming intolerably acute, the thought flashed into my sleeping mind, 'This is only a dream; if you wake, it will be over, and all will be well again.' If only we could ensure the realization of this fact directly bad dreams appeared, they would cease to have any terrors for us, for a way of escape would always be open. Therefore I tried repeating this formula to myself from time to time, during the day and on going to bed,

always in the same words – ‘Remember this is a dream. You are to dream no longer’ – until, I suppose, the suggestion that I wanted to imprint upon the dream mind became more definite and more powerful than the impression of any dream; so that when a dream of distress begins to trouble me, the oft-repeated formula is automatically suggested, and I say at once: ‘You know this is a dream; you shall dream no longer – you are to wake.’ For a time after this secret had been fully learned, this would always awaken me at once; nowadays, the formula having been said, I do not have to wake, though I may do so, but the original fear dream always ceases. It is simply ‘switched off’, and a continuation of the dream, but without the disturbing element, takes its place and goes forward without a break.<sup>1</sup>

She gives the following example of an unpleasant dream which continued as a pleasant one after she had been reminded of her dreaming condition, though she does not say that the dream continued to be lucid, and, indeed, the degree to which she remained uncritical of the dream situation argues against lucidity.

During the course of a long dream I had succeeded in tracing the existence of a complicated and dangerous plot against our country. The conspirators had turned upon me on discovering how much I knew. I was so closely followed, and my personal danger became so great, that the formula for breaking off a dream flashed into my mind and automatically gave me back confidence; I remembered that I could make myself safe; but with the feeling of safety I also realized that if I were to wake my valuable knowledge of the dangerous conspiracy would be lost, for I realized that this was ‘dream knowledge’. It was a dreadful dilemma – safety called me one way, but the conviction that my duty was to stay and frustrate the traitors was very strong. I feared that I should give way, and I knelt and prayed that I might have courage not to seek safety by awakening, but to go on until I had done what was needed. I therefore did not wake; the dream continued. The arch-conspirator, a white-faced man in a bowler hat, had tracked me

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, p. 56.

down to the building where I was concealed, and which by this time was surrounded; but all fear had departed, the comfortable feeling of great heroism, only fully enjoyed by those who feel themselves to be safe, was mine. It became a delightful dream of adventure, since the element of fear had gone from it!<sup>1</sup>

It may be of some psychological interest to point out the parallel between the kind of lucid dream which is initiated by the unpleasant nature of the dream contents, and the experience which people sometimes have under stress in waking life of feeling that everything is dreamlike, or unreal. Sometimes they describe this as a feeling that they think they will wake up soon. Reports in the possession of the Institute refer particularly often to this experience in connection with air-raids. The following is an example:

In January 1941 we had a 'Blitz' on Cardiff. Our house was hit by fire-bombs & all the houses around were blazing. Heavy bombs were coming down thick & fast & although I had been very frightened, I was running for water when this feeling happened. I said to myself, 'This is the end. We are all going to be killed. There is no escape. We are a sitting target.' I became detached & very calm and my fear vanished. It was all unreal and I wondered when I was going to wake up.

One of the children who survived the Aberfan Disaster, and who was interviewed shortly after the event, is reported to have said:

I thought I was at the dentist's, having a tooth out with gas, and that I would soon wake up.<sup>2</sup>

The experience in question is relatively common in connection with falls resulting from mountaineering or climbing accidents.

The following case is typical.<sup>3</sup>

In my experience, you do *not* have any feeling of emotional

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 57-8.

<sup>2</sup> Rhona Churchill, personal communication.

<sup>3</sup> For a further example, see Appendix B.

detachment if, say, you have to cross a slope which may avalanche; this is simply rather frightening. But, like most climbers, I have occasionally got myself into a position in which it looks as though I shall fall, and on two occasions I have actually fallen . . .

[In] the first of these episodes . . . once it had become certain that I was going to fall, but not until then, I had no feeling of fear, but only a detachment and unreality. It was through lack of finger strength that I fell, and I can remember watching my fingers uncurling from the hold as if they did not belong to me; the sensation of falling was as in a rather pleasant dream, and there was no feeling of pain on the occasions when I hit the rock. I have heard other people say much the same thing, and I think this is the common sensation.

Similar feelings are described in the following two passages published by a mountaineer:

. . . It was up to me to climb back, take the rope off the belay, and come down without its help . . . It was now completely dark, but the moon was rising . . . and it was possible to see a little. I remember every detail of that solitary climb. There was no sensation of excitement or fear, but rather, a curious sense of detachment; everything seemed to be happening in a dream, and I felt that if I were to fall I should wake up and find myself in bed. Nevertheless, I moved with the utmost care, feeling and testing my way from step to step up the cliff.<sup>1</sup>

A great blast of wind was displaced by the falling masses, and this caught up the loose snow and whirled and billowed it along before the avalanche like smoke from a cannon. . . .

Next moment the moving dots disappeared, blotted out like insects beneath a man's foot.

It seemed to happen as though in a dream. I was not conscious of any noise after the first roar I had heard while in my tent. Then, suddenly, came the thought of personal danger.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F. S. Smythe, *The Adventures of a Mountaineer*, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1940, pp. 35-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

As the close relationship between lucid dreams and out-of-the-body experiences has been remarked upon, it may also be of some interest to observe that in circumstances of stress an out-of-the-body experience may result. Possibly this serves the same psychological function in detaching the subject from the situation as do feelings that what he is experiencing is a dream. But as yet these cases have not received sufficient attention for one to be able to say to what extent it is appropriate to regard them as variant forms of the same psychological phenomenon.

The following case is an example of an out-of-the-body experience associated with a mountaineering fall, and may provide an interesting comparison with the cases already quoted of emotions of 'dreamlikeness' in a similar situation.

My experience . . . took place at 'Harrison's Rocks', a small rock-climbing cliff south of London. After sleeping out for the night I rose on a Sunday morning and (before eating anything, as I recollect) began to 'solo' the rock climbs there. About 15 or 20 ft. above the ground, I slipped and fell . . . Objectively, the height wasn't great, but I think that I was very frightened of the coming pain or death, and for a moment abandoned the idea of living. As I fell, I seemed to be about 5 or 10 ft. out from the rock face, looking at my body falling (in contact with the face). I vaguely recollect wondering if I could investigate this odd sensation by moving round to the other side of my body to look at it. Once I hit the ground, I was immediately preoccupied with my pain . . .

Dreams in which lucidity arises out of a nightmare may be regarded as the most rudimentary type of lucid dream. We shall now proceed, in the course of the next ten chapters, to discuss the characteristics of fully developed lucid dreams, which very rarely (if at all) arise out of nightmare situations.

## VII

# Flying Dreams

Flying is a common feature of lucid dreams.

There has been a certain amount of speculation on the physiological or kinaesthetic origins of flying dreams, but in the absence of thorough electrophysiological investigation it seems premature to offer any explanation of this kind.

In lucid dreams, as well as in other kinds of dream in which it is reported to occur, the action of flying is almost universally associated with positive emotions. Both in lucid and in other dreams it is subject to a learning effect, and in non-lucid dreams it is often learned as a means of escape from unpleasant situations. To be able to fly transforms the situation from a nightmarish one to one of liberation and excitement.

Here is Mrs. Arnold-Forster's account of her first flights in non-lucid dreams:

My first recollections of flying dreams go back to when I was a very little child, when we were living in London. The flying dream, when it first came, was connected with the sensation of fear. Half-way up the dimly lighted staircase that led to our nursery a landing opened on to a conservatory. The conservatory by day was a sunny place full of the pleasantest associations, but with the coming of darkness its character changed altogether. In the night-time anything might be imagined to lurk in its unlighted corners; decidedly it was safest always to hurry past that landing, and even past the other landings which, though they did not open on to any such dark spots, were not places where a child cared to linger alone. In some of

the first dreams that I can remember I was on that staircase, fearful of something which I was especially anxious never to have to see. It was then that the blessed discovery was made, and that I found that it was just as easy to fly downstairs as to walk; that directly my feet left the ground the fear ceased – I was quite safe; and this discovery has altered the nature of my dreams ever since. At first I only flew down one particular flight of steps, and always downwards; but very soon I began to fly more actively. If anything began to alarm me in my dreams, I used to try to rise in the air, but for some years I was unable to rise to any great height, or to fly with real ease. It was only gradually that the flying dream ceased to be connected with the sensation of fear and escape. For a long time it was often an effort to fly; every year, however, made it easier and more sure. By degrees ‘bad dreams’ left me. When once I realized that I could always escape by flight, the sense of the something unknown, to be escaped from, became a thing of the past; but the power of flying grew and has steadily improved all my life.<sup>1</sup>

The following is a lucid dream in which incipient flying – in the form of harmless falling – provides a similar escape from the preceding nightmare.

I remember that at the passage in this (recurrent) dream when I was falling . . . I would wake up almost as if to *avoid* hitting the ground.

However, on one occasion it ‘occurred’ to me, during the part of the dream in which I was falling, that it was only a dream and I could not consequently be hurt or injured. I ‘restrained’ from waking out of my dream, and, although I could detect the moment at which I hit the ground, by the sharp cessation of the falling sensation, it was not unpleasant and was followed by a feeling of relief.

The following example is a slightly more developed version of the preceding, and shows how the ‘harmless falling’ may turn into ‘a delightful flight’.

After various happenings, I find myself at the edge of a

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 64–5.

frightful precipice, the mere sight of which makes me tremble: a sheer, or even overhanging, cliff many hundred feet high. At the bottom are sometimes sharp rocks, sometimes houses and trees which look small in the distance. At the moment when I tremble and hold tight, the dream suddenly becomes conscious: I realize that I am dreaming, that all this is illusory and that I am in no real danger. Then, in order to see what will be the result of this decision, I make up my mind to throw myself into the abyss. I do so and I always arrive at the bottom without a shock unless my fall ends in a delightful flight.<sup>1</sup>

The next example also describes harmless jumping from a height in lucid dreams, though not in this case associated with escape from nightmare situations. Evidently the jumps were undertaken purely out of interest in the sensation.

At one time I had lucid dreams very frequently. I found it very interesting to do things which I could not have done in normal life. For example, I used to go into shops and wonder if it was a real shop, and whether anyone would notice if I took something. I used to enjoy jumping from a height in these dreams. I might be in my flat, or in some other building, but it was quite safe and very pleasant to jump from the window. However, eventually I became alarmed and gave up the practice because I was afraid that I would begin to think I was dreaming when I was not, and then I might try to jump from a real window!<sup>2</sup>

The following sequence of dreams, in order of occurrence, shows the increasing facility at flying, of Subject B.

I came out on to a rocky balcony. Then I heard shouting and found that there were some hostile people about. A sort of pirate man came bounding up the stairs from the cave below and emerged on to the balcony, looking fierce and throwing knives at me (I was standing by the parapet). I thought that as this was a dream I was perfectly safe, and anyway dreams could be controlled. But nothing happened as a result of my thinking this, so after trying to focus mentally on changing the

<sup>1</sup> Delage, p. 453; my translation.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A.

situation in some way, without success, I gave this up, feeling vaguely inadequate, but still not worried, because I thought that even if he hit me the knives would only go straight through and couldn't hurt or damage me at all. (Incidentally, on reflection after the event, his aim was being extraordinarily bad at about two yards' range.) Still, I thought I would get away from him, so I stepped over the edge of the balcony and lay down comfortably on the air, intending to float away – but there the dream ended.<sup>1</sup>

I was walking along a corridor in a large mansion, thinking about the peculiar echoes I had heard in a room which I had just left. I suddenly became aware that peculiar echoes *could* occur in dreams and that this *was* a dream. I continued to walk along the corridor, mildly elated by the realization, but some apprehension returned as the shadowy doorways I passed suggested lurking presences. I thought I would try to fly (this being a thing I try to remember to do in lucid dreams), defied the thought of what might leap out at me, and launched myself. I flew adequately, though with unnecessary swimming movements, nearly to the end of the corridor; as I approached the wall at the end I woke into the next phase of the dream.<sup>2</sup>

I came out again into P. Street with a clear determination to fly, and proceeded up it flapping my arms energetically. This raised me a foot or two above the ground, but I wasn't satisfied and flapped more violently until the air began to feel resistant beneath me and to bear me up like an invisible armchair.

I found myself flying over wooded country – patches of pine forest with sandy bare patches – and mentally urged the 'armchair' to go as high as possible. I wanted it to fly over the forested patches, and at first wasn't sure if it would jib at the height, but in fact it did so quite satisfactorily . . .

Then, flying along an avenue of tall lacey trees, I thought this was not bad compensation for the dullness of waking life and wondered what else I needed in addition to landscape. I considered doing maths, but felt that this would be too difficult – not because the intellectual operations would be beyond me,

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

but on account of the difficulty of reading and writing symbols on paper.<sup>1</sup>

Virtually all habitual lucid dreamers refer to flying dreams. They are reported by Ouspensky, Fox, Whiteman, van Eeden, Subject A and Subject B – though in the case of subject B we know that they were deliberately developed and not a spontaneous happening.

Many variants are possible: gliding along in a standing position with the feet above the ground, floating along on one's back, moving forward horizontally by means of some kind of swimming stroke or with no such movements at all, flying with wings, rising vertically upwards – all these have been reported.

Is the occurrence of non-lucid flying dreams to be associated with an increased probability of lucid dreams? There is some indication in subjects' reports that it may be. Van Eeden observes:

Flying or floating may be observed in all forms of dreams . . . yet it is generally an indication that lucid dreams are coming.

When I have been flying in my dreams for two or three nights, then I know that a lucid dream is at hand. And the lucid dream itself is often initiated and accompanied all the time by the sensation of flying. Sometimes I feel myself floating swiftly through wide spaces; once I flew backwards, and once, dreaming that I was inside a cathedral, I flew upwards, with the immense building and all in it, at great speed.<sup>2</sup>

Both Whiteman and Oliver Fox mention occasions on which the realization of the dream state occurred during floating or flying dreams.

Having discussed the question of flying in lucid dreams, we shall proceed in the next chapter to discuss more generally the question of physical realism as opposed to non-realism.

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 449–50.

## VIII

# Physical Realism and Non-Realism in Lucid Dreams

As may be seen from the examples which have already been given, the world of lucid dreams is usually a fairly close imitation of that of waking life. The subject may be brought to an awareness that he is dreaming by some fantastic occurrence, but fantastic occurrences do not usually continue into the lucid dream that follows.

The world of lucid dreams does, of course, differ from that of waking life, but in fairly consistent ways. The subject may be able to fly or to make things happen in his dream which would be described as psychokinetic phenomena if they happened in waking life, but the environment in which he flies and performs 'miracles' remains a matter-of-fact imitation of the waking world.

Perhaps it may help to clarify the situation if we mention some kinds of non-realism which do not happen in lucid dreams, or happen very rarely. Animals and objects do not become personified or start talking. Persons, whether known to the dreamer or invented by him, are clearly characterized. Neither persons nor things change identity as the dream proceeds. Although the body which the dreamer possesses in the lucid dream does not necessarily resemble the body he possesses in waking life, it does not change its characteristics in the course of the dream. The laws of the physical world are not usually broken, and when they are it

is in what one might describe as a 'careful' way. The impression which one receives is not so much that the laws of the physical world have been forgotten or ignored, but that a meticulous imitation of them is offered, which sometimes omits certain details.

The examples which have already been given in the earlier chapters have provided sufficient illustration of the realism of lucid dreams. We shall now give examples of the ways in which realism may break down, though it must be borne in mind that these examples are representative of a smaller class of lucid dream experiences than are illustrations of completely accurate realism.

The place resembled a small opening in a wood, or a corner of a park, not very much cultivated; for the grass was thick underfoot, and the colour a rich green. A few trees and bushes in flower were near at hand. There seemed to be small animals or birds on the grass a few yards in front, and these I understood to be embodiments of affection, from the feeling which entered the heart as I looked. But steadiness at the heart was not sufficiently developed in me, and as I looked, the animals changed to clumps of flowers, one being a small cluster of daffodils, clearly seen in their bright yellow colours. As this change occurred a bird flew up from the ground, rather like a dove, but with a lifeless appearance. Realization of my deficiency gave me a feeling of sorrow, with a touch of shame.<sup>1</sup>

This dream breaks the rule that persons and things should retain their identity unchanged. However, it is possibly relevant to note that even here the change is not entirely 'unlawful' since Dr. Whiteman regarded the change in question as being of psychological significance.

I remember once seeing myself in a large empty room without windows. Besides myself there was in the room only a small black kitten. 'I am dreaming', I say to myself. 'How can I know whether I am really asleep or not? Suppose I try this

<sup>1</sup> Whiteman, p. 73.

way. Let this black kitten be transformed into a large white dog. In a waking state it is impossible and if it comes off it will mean that I am asleep.' I say this to myself and immediately the black kitten becomes transformed into a large white dog. At the same time the opposite wall disappears, disclosing a mountain landscape with a river like a ribbon receding into the distance.

'This is curious,' I say to myself; 'I did not order this landscape. Where did it come from?' Some faint recollection begins to stir in me, a recollection of having seen this landscape somewhere and of its being somehow connected with the white dog. But I feel that if I let myself go into it I shall forget the most important thing that I have to remember, namely, *that I am asleep and am conscious of myself*, i.e. that I am in the state for which I have long wished and which I have been trying to attain. I make an effort not to think about the landscape, but at that moment some power seems to drag me backwards. I fly swiftly through the back wall of the room and go on flying in a straight line, all the time backwards and with a terrible noise in my ears, suddenly come to a stop and awake.<sup>1</sup>

This kind of complete departure from a normal sequence of events in physical reality is very uncommon in lucid dreams. Again, it is possible that some clue to the deviation may be found in the dreamer's attitude. Ouspensky was greatly concerned to have, in a lucid state, exactly the types of dream which he had in a non-lucid state.

The following three examples all illustrate ways in which the experience of a lucid dreamer may differ from his experience in waking life.

I found myself flying over wooded country – patches of pine forest with sandy bare patches – and mentally urged the 'arm-chair' to go as high as possible. I wanted it to fly over the forested patches, and at first wasn't sure if it would jib at the height, but in fact it did so quite satisfactorily. One time it failed to do what I wanted. (And incidentally, though I didn't

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, pp. 279–80.

notice in the dream, there was something very funny about the perspective of this bit. I was already flying over sparsely wooded land, looking small and brushwoody far below – and seemed to come to a range of extremely tall trees reaching to several times my own elevation. This could have been less improbable if the trees in question were on a steep ridge from the valley below, but I didn't give it any thought in the dream.) I tried to get the armchair to rise over these also but it didn't, only skirted them.<sup>1</sup>

On Sept. 9, 1904, I dreamt that I stood at a table before a window. On the table were different objects. I was perfectly well aware that I was dreaming and I considered what sorts of experiments I could make. I began by trying to break glass, by beating it with a stone. I put a small tablet of glass on two stones and struck it with another stone. Yet it would not break. Then I took a fine claret-glass from the table and struck it with my fist, with all my might, at the same time reflecting how dangerous it would be to do this in waking life; yet the glass remained whole. But lo; when I looked at it again after some time, it was broken.

It broke all right, but a little too late, like an actor who misses his cue. This gave me a very curious impression of being in a *fake-world*, cleverly imitated, but with small failures.<sup>2</sup>

Eventually we left the carnival and fire behind us and came to a yellow path, leading across a desolate moor. As we stood at the foot of this path it suddenly rose up before us and became a roadway of golden light stretching from earth to zenith.

Now in this amber-tinted shining haze there appeared countless coloured forms of men and beasts, representing man's upward evolution through different stages of civilization. These forms faded away; the pathway lost its golden tint and became a mass of vibrating circles or globules (like frog's eggs), a purplish-blue in colour. These in their turn changed to 'peacock's eyes'; and then suddenly there came a culminating vision of a gigantic peacock, whose outspread tail filled the heavens. I exclaimed to my wife, 'The Vision of the Universal

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, p. 448.

Peacock!' Moved by the splendour of the sight, I recited in a loud voice a mantra. Then the dream ended.<sup>1</sup>

The types of departure from complete realism which have just been illustrated are all relatively atypical. However, too few subjects have yet developed lucid dreams for a statistical analysis of the reports to have much significance. We cannot predict with confidence that the proportions of realistic dreams, and of those which contain some deviation from realism, would remain the same if a very much larger population of people were to develop lucid dreams. Also, we might have to take into account the *stage* of development at which certain types of dream occurred. In a number of respects lucid dreams seem to be subject to a marked learning process, and it is possible that the degree to which they imitate ordinary reality is also subject to such a process. It is difficult even to predict in which direction we should expect the learning process to proceed. It might be that the subject would provide himself with progressively more precise imitations of the waking world. Or he might progressively become emancipated from the need to imitate physical reality at all, and the development might be in the direction of an increased freedom of psychological symbolism.

In addition to flying and to 'miraculous' manipulation of the environment by the dreamer's volition, there is one other departure from realism which appears fairly constantly in lucid dreams (and also, be it noted, in out-of-the-body experiences). This is the use of falling, or travelling along a tunnel, to represent long displacements in space, possibly including a displacement in time as well.

I then decided that I would try to reach a certain ruined temple in Tibet, of which my Master, Azelda, had spoken. With this end, I concentrated all my will in one big effort, expecting to rush off in some horizontal direction.

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 90-1.

The result was absolutely unexpected. The ground collapsed beneath my feet and I was falling, with seemingly tremendous velocity, down a dark, narrow tunnel or shaft. This downward descent continued until I lost my time-sense and it seemed that I might have been falling for hours. Something in me was getting frightened, but I managed to keep calm by telling myself that I was really in bed at Wimbledon and that my Master would protect me. At last I came gently to rest. Blackness and silence; then, as one awakening from a heavy sleep, I became progressively aware of my surroundings.<sup>1</sup>

I then willed to travel to a certain temple which I have been told once existed in Allahabad. I moved off at a great speed and came to rest in a modern brilliantly lighted room. Here a man and a woman were seated at a table, having a meal. They did not seem to see me. Again I repeated my desire: 'Temple – Allahabad – India – in the Past.' And now it seemed to me there was a sort of hole or break formed in the continuity of the astral matter; and through this, in the distance – as though viewed through a very long tunnel – I could see something indistinct which might have been an entrance to a temple, with a statue still further away showing through it. I then moved forward again, but to my disappointment came to rest almost immediately in another room, where three women were seated at a table which also bore the remains of a meal. A fourth woman – pretty, with fair hair and blue eyes – was standing up in the act of leaving the table. Apparently, none of them could see me.

Sticking to my objective, I once more repeated: 'Temple – Allahabad – India – in the Past.' The tunnel arrangement was coming into view again, then something must have occurred which broke my trance – though what, I do not know. Instantly I rushed back to my body and awoke.<sup>2</sup>

I had decided to attempt an out-of-the-body experience, so I had partially fasted all day. I lay down on the bed and concentrated. After a time I felt myself falling, as usual at the start of these experiences. One seems to fall and then checks oneself and returns. After a short time I succeeded in 'letting myself

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, p. 98.

fall' but on this occasion I went on falling for much longer than is usual. I seemed to be going down through miles and miles of cotton-wool, and I had the feeling that it was closing me in and that I should never be able to get back. Also, I had the idea that I was going back in the past. Finally the fall came to an end and I found myself standing in the corridor of a monastery. It was not anywhere I knew, but I had this feeling it was some time in the past. Then a monk came along the corridor, and seemed to see me. He stopped and spoke to me, and asked what I wanted. I could not make any reply, and then he made the sign of the cross in my direction, and I felt as if he had told me to go away. At that, I returned to my body on the bed.<sup>1</sup>

The above examples of the tunnel-*motif* include two experiences which were classed as 'out-of-the-body' experiences by the percipients in question. The tunnel features in the same way in lucid dreams and in out-of-the-body experiences, but is more commonly associated with the latter because it occurs most naturally in connection with the more ambitious types of journey, which are usually classified as 'out-of-the-body' experiences. Its function is therefore most interestingly brought out by long-distance examples, rather than by examples of lucid dreams in which it features in a relatively incidental or subsidiary manner.

Having discussed the extent to which lucid dreams adhere to the physical laws of the waking world, we shall proceed in the next chapter to consider their degree of adherence to psychological realism – i.e. the verisimilitude with which they portray human personalities and their interactions with one another.

<sup>1</sup> Subject A.

## Psychological Realism and Non-Realism in Lucid Dreams

Persons who appear in lucid dreams are clearly characterized and retain their identity throughout the dream. They may be persons who are known to the dreamer in waking life, or they may be unknown to him. In the latter case they are often compounds made up from fairly identifiable past memories. But whether they are known or unknown, they retain a distinct individuality and do not act out of character. Lucid dreamers seldom or never encounter grotesque or deformed persons, demons, goblins or dwarfs. They may however meet persons who, although clearly identified as a certain personality, do not physically resemble the person with whom they are identified.

They may also encounter 'ghosts' or 'presences', but these are invisible entities in the only examples of such cases which have come to our attention.

When they include known persons, lucid dreams often seem able to present them as behaving and talking in a particularly characteristic way.

Ouspensky remarks on this feature of lucid dreams in this way:

If I saw in my dream one of my friends whom perhaps I had not seen for several years, he spoke to me in his own language, in his own voice, with his own intonations and inflections, with his own characteristic gestures; and he said precisely what only he could say.

Every man has his own manner of expressing himself, his own manner of thinking, his own manner of reacting to outward phenomena. No man can speak or act for another. And what first attracted my attention in these dreams was their wonderful artistic exactitude. The style of each man was kept throughout to the smallest detail. It happened that certain features were exaggerated or expressed symbolically. But there was never anything incorrect, anything inconsistent with the type.

In dreams of such a kind it happened that I saw more than once ten or twenty people simultaneously whom I had known at different periods of my life, and in not one of them was there ever the slightest mistake or the slightest inexactitude.<sup>1</sup>

In the following two examples the dreamer encounters a new composite personality:

I wanted most of all to see and speak to somebody, to see whether they were like the real persons, and how they behaved. I remembered that my wife and children were away at the time (which was true), and I did not reason to the effect that they might be present in a dream, though absent from home in reality. I therefore wished to see one of the servants; but I was afraid to ring the bell, lest the shock should wake me. I very cautiously walked downstairs – after calculating that I should be more sure to find someone in pantry or kitchen than in a workroom, where I first thought of going . . . I reached the pantry door, and here again I had to stop and calm myself. The door opened and a servant appeared, – quite unlike any of my own. This is all I can say, for the excitement of perceiving that I had created a new personage woke me with a shock.<sup>2</sup>

Had been to a cinema with my parents but in the course of the performance they mislaid me (my mother not having kept a close enough eye on me while I was following them down aisle in abstracted meditation). I couldn't find them again, and the dream developed into a spy story. A plan had been formed that a

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing – III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, p. 242.

Saturday fishing expedition should be used as a cover for an attack on the enemy's favourite submarine. I met an enemy agent (one of these intelligent, interesting enemies one does double talk with) – a small and balding man with a knowing but almost sympathetic eye. He was a sort of bar-tender in a lounge of the cinema and we conversed. 'Now tell me,' he said, 'without giving away any clues on either side, of course, what are you doing on Saturday?' I wondered how much to risk giving away, but my sense of need for stringent caution was relaxed by the half-recognition that this was a dream and it didn't, in any case, matter. So I replied 'fishing' with a feeling that this would in fact tell him all, but that he would be decent enough not to take advantage.

Subsequently I found myself reporting this conversation to Q. (a cross between telling him of a lucid dream and reporting an actual conversation). I said I hoped he wouldn't think I'd been too incautious, but I *had* known it was a dream. He seemed to think that even so I should not have relaxed my standards.<sup>1</sup>

Lucid and pre-lucid dreams both appear to take a certain delight in humorously exploiting the situation, by providing the dreamer with situations in which he can discuss whether or not he is dreaming with persons that he knows well in real life. We shall give three examples of this, and others will be found elsewhere in the book.

Now I was in a corridor inside the house with my mother and we were setting out on a walk together. I was explaining to her about lucid dreams and she was being tolerant but not really listening. 'Yes, I suppose it's possible,' she said, much as if I'd said, 'The molecule of lysergic acid is related to that of adrenaline,' or 'Perhaps it's a matter of interchanging the time and space axes.' 'We are in a dream *now*, Mother,' I said informatively, as we walked down a winding lane. 'Oh yes,' she said, humouringly. (This situation is rather reminiscent of one I was in with her in waking life when I was about 5, going along a country lane with her and arguing that life might be a dream.) I explained that people might be able to give one another

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

messages in dreams, and she took that all right, but then I said, 'If I tell you something now, will you try to remember it when you wake up?' She jibbed at that. 'Oh, I don't know about *that*,' she said. 'I really don't think I *could*.' 'But you could *try*, couldn't you, Mother?' I said, and with some exhortation she did agree to try (though plainly not very hard). 'Concertina,' I said, loudly and clearly. 'Try to ring me up tomorrow and say that. Concertina, Mother, don't forget.' (This word had just occurred to me as sufficiently unlikely.)<sup>1</sup>

I now found myself with X. in a room at the other end of the corridor. I was telling him about the lucid dreams I had just had, and said suddenly as it occurred to me, 'And of course, *this* is a dream now.' X. said with an unhelpful smile, 'Well, it *might* be. How do you know?' 'Of course it is,' I said, and crossed to the window. This was heavily barred; outside were castle-turrets and a long drop below to village roofs. 'I'm going to fly,' I said, and started to break off the bars. They broke as if made of a cross between chocolate and sealing-wax, and I threw the pieces down on to the roofs below. 'Be awkward if it isn't a dream, won't it?' said X., who continued to stand by passively, looking humorous. 'It *is* a dream,' I said firmly, though at the back of my mind I thought cautiously, 'At the worst it couldn't be more than £50 for tiles.'<sup>2</sup>

In the course of a dream walking up a fairly wide staircase with a slightly ornamental balustrade in a rambling mansion-type house, it occurred to me that this was a dream; the thought was elusive and hard to hold. It occurred to me also that I could now do several significant things I had been wanting to, though it didn't become clear to me what they were. Also, misleadingly, it seemed to me that I couldn't use this opportunity *now* because there wasn't in some way *time* to do so, as if I were convinced that I must inevitably wake very soon, though this wasn't explicit. I held however to the lucidity and proceeded up the stairs to enter a bedroom at their head. There I found X. and Y. in bed and tried to stir them to join me, asserting that this *was* a dream we were in. They showed little interest (though

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

a head was raised and peered joylessly before returning to the pillow with all speed and some embitterment at disturbance). The room slowly darkened to blackness . . .<sup>1</sup>

Dr. van Eeden frequently summoned deceased persons to come and converse with him when he was having lucid dreams, and sometimes such meetings occurred spontaneously. The degree to which he was impressed by the representation of the person concerned seems to have been very variable. However, in view of our generalization that lucid dreamers do not usually seem to encounter demons, grotesque persons, etc., it is of interest that Dr. van Eeden was prone to such encounters in dreams other than lucid dreams, but does not report them in any dream that had become lucid.

The following two examples illustrate the meeting of 'ghosts' or 'presences' by lucid dreamers.

A little later, again walking along the corridors, the surroundings seemed in some way familiar to me and I remembered I had been lucid in this castle before and so became so again. I came to the top of a staircase that descended rather darkly at right angles at the end of a corridor, and it seemed to me that there was an undesirable sort of Presence somewhere at the bottom of it. So then I thought, 'But if this is a dream – which it is – there's nothing any Presence can do to me and I'm going anyway.' But as I started to walk down I began to forget it was a dream and to be afraid again, so I turned away. Then I remembered it was a dream and turned down the stairs again. This happened two or three times!<sup>2</sup>

More or less throughout my life I have had a recurrent dream from time to time, in which I am aware that I am dreaming. I seem to go down into the cellars of a large house overseas which I used to know very well in my childhood. These cellars were extensive and extended, below ground, over the whole of

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

the area contained by the building. In the dream I always feel there is an evil presence in the cellars, but I never encounter anything tangible. This was a very old house and had undoubtedly been the scene of much bloodshed and cruelty in past centuries. It is very probable that as a small child I was told stories about the history of the place by native servants who looked after me, although I have consciously forgotten these.

It seems that out-of-the-body experiences are more likely than are lucid dreams to contain experiences of a highly charged emotional kind – perhaps appearing to the subject of religious significance.

The fact that out-of-the-body experiences are associated with this type of experience more than lucid dreams may partly arise from the fact that crisis experiences usually start from a waking rather than a sleeping state, and hence the most obvious classification of them is as ‘out-of-the-body’ cases.

However, I shall give one example of a type of encounter associated with out-of-the-body experiences, so as to demonstrate the contrast with the conversations already quoted as occurring in lucid dreams.

At the . . . age of 7 years, my first ‘out of the body experience’ (although I was not aware at the time) was induced by . . . chloroform . . . At the moment anaesthesia took over I was aware that the doctor and nurses were about to set my fractured shin and thigh . . . Sounds of music of a tone I had never heard before came to my ears, the music was so enchanting that I left the bed and commenced to walk in the direction of the sound. It led me to a winding path and through a beautiful valley decked with magnificent flowers of radiant colours, the perfume of which seemed to exhilarate me and urge me on to the not far distant mountain.

Eventually I arrived at the foot of the mountain and there I saw a white robed figure, beckoning me onwards. With hurried steps I tried to reach him, but the glorious light surrounding

him seemed to fade, and in the space of seconds the scene vanished from my sight.

The next thing I knew I awakened to find myself gazing at the ward ceiling. . . .

Seven years later, I was again to have a more serious illness, which necessitated a long period under anaesthetic. Exactly the same thing happened, only this time I reached the robed figure, since he came fast towards me. I knew him! He became serious and commenced explaining to me in detail a message he wished I assured him emphatically since I was so astounded at the context of the message and in my delight I would not fail to keep my promise.

My excitement was great and I struggled to regain consciousness. I awakened believing I was repeating the message, (so not to forget) only to find a nurse bending over me asking me what I was saying, I felt dejected, my mind was blank, not one word could I recall of the message!

Yet again six years later, and another experience, anaesthetic having been administered, precisely the incidents were the same! This time the robed figure whilst not angry was sorely disappointed that yet once more I had failed him. He insisted that I must try even harder although he said he knew of the difficulties I would encounter.

It is a must this time, I thought, so time and time again I tried to discipline myself by repeating the message in the hope that when I left the sub-conscious I should find no difficulty in remembering what I had been told.

My eyes opened to find a doctor bending over me with his ear close to my mouth, asking the same question, what was I saying; again, try as I would, I found it impossible to recall even one word of the message.

In the next chapter we shall discuss the differences between the sensory modalities of waking life and those that the subject appears to possess in lucid dreams.

## X

# Perceptual Texture

Lucid dreams may appear to be a completely accurate reproduction of the waking world, or they may be described as 'like ordinary dreams in being neither particularly clear nor particularly coloured' and certain persons and objects may even figure as a kind of abstract impression rather than as a clearly visualized image.

Fairly complete realism appears to be the rule with habitual lucid dreamers.

The commonest form of sense-perception to be mentioned explicitly is the visual. This may be described as 'differing little if at all from waking life' or, on the other hand, as 'no more distinct than ordinary dreams'. Subject D describes his dreams as being coloured in about a third or a quarter of his experiences, and the rest 'a sepia colour'. These proportions of coloured and uncoloured dreams are not constant from one subject to another.

The following two examples illustrate the less clear kind of visual perception in lucid dreams.

I thought: shouldn't this be liberating, and more vivid than ordinary dreams? Thereupon (or so it seemed) light 'sprang up' all around.

I was not sure even at the time whether or not the increase in illumination was purely imaginary – the effect of suggestion, so to speak; though in retrospect this sounds a curious distinction!

The idea suggested itself to me afterwards that the difference in vividness between dreams and lucid dreams was only one of degree, not one of kind; at least in my case. It seemed somewhat

as if the images were the same, only the 'illumination' of them was increased in lucid dreams.<sup>1</sup>

I was, I thought, standing in my study; but I observed that the furniture had not its usual distinctness – that everything was blurred and somehow evaded a direct gaze. It struck me that this must be because I was *dreaming*. This was a great delight to me, as giving the opportunity of experimentation.<sup>2</sup>

Subject B comments on the question of visual definition as follows:

In my first lucid dream I was walking along a road when I realized that I was dreaming. I thought that I should be able to make something happen, and thought that I would try to make an apple appear. I then saw one lying on the road in front of me and walked towards it. I found an apple in my hand, and I looked at it carefully, thinking, 'This is not a bad imitation of an apple.' I should say that this dream was like ordinary dreams in being rather twilight and not particularly coloured. The only thing that I can be sure was coloured was the apple. This was distinctly red and green. This suggests that the colour and visual definition in general may be a function of the attention that is paid to it. Since this first dream my lucid dreams have been uniformly coloured and, so far as I could see, virtually indistinguishable from waking life.<sup>3</sup>

The complete visual clarity which may be reported in lucid dreams is also reported in connection with out-of-the-body experiences. Reports of unclearness of any kind are less common in out-of-the-body cases than they are in connection with lucid dreams.

Even in lucid dreams reports of complete visual clarity and full colour are common, and possibly this kind of lucid dream should be regarded as typical.

<sup>1</sup> Subject C.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing – III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, pp. 241–242.

<sup>3</sup> Subject B.

Descriptions of reading in lucid dreams are consistent in describing an effort being made by the dreamer to bring into focus a certain area of writing at a time. Oliver Fox says of this:

. . . In a Dream of Knowledge reading is a very difficult matter. The print seems clear enough until one tries to read it; then the letters become blurred, or run together, or fade away, or change to others.

Each line, or in some cases each word, must be held by an effort of the will until its meaning has been grasped; then it is released – on which it becomes blotted out or changed – and the next held in its turn and so on. Other people have told me that they find the same difficulty in reading dream-literature . . .<sup>1</sup>

The present state of our information does not enable us to say what is the average, or maximum, quantity of print which can be made to seem clear to a lucid dreamer at any time. In any case, the problem seems more probably to be one of the inventiveness of the dreaming mind rather than of any limitation on the visual area which can be brought into full definition. When visual objects other than writing are in question, there seems to be no difficulty in maintaining full definition of the whole field of view.

All this dream took place in a Gothic castle. It was quite a long dream with periods of lucidity. In the first lucid portion of dream I just went on wandering about the castle. I found a page of writing in a sort of communal room. I wondered if I would be able to read it. The whole page became quite clear and I read it carefully to see if my subconscious was clever enough to invent something coherent. It seemed to me at the time that it was quite reasonable, being a kind of proclamation or set of instructions about arrangements for a sort of ceremony or pageant. About two or three lines of writing were clearly in focus at any one time.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

There are two types of experience in which complete visual clarity is always encountered. One of these is the typical out-of-the-body experience, in which the subject seems to leave his body and observe it from outside for a short time, without going far away from it. If the subject does go away from his body the character of the experience is more variable. But so long as he is simply in the position of observing the normal world from a slightly different point of view, within measurable distance of his physical body, he seems always to see the physical world as he would do in a waking state. The other class of experience in which perceptual clarity is constantly found is the False Awakening, in which the subject may examine his environment at length without being able to see that what he is looking at is any different from the physical world.

In such cases, when the subject does come to the conclusion that he is dreaming, it is interesting to consider what enables him to draw this conclusion. It seems clear that whatever it may be that enables the subject to be sure that he is dreaming, it is not a gross perceptual distortion. In fact, it seems more probable that the cues which are recognized as belonging to dream experience are purely psychological, although the subject may appear to examine the 'physical' texture of the dream experience with care. This possibility receives some support from the fact that once a subject has become aware that he is dreaming, the awareness is maintained without further reference to the perceptual texture of the experience.

It occurred to me to wonder whether this might be a dream, and I looked carefully round the room, trying to decide whether the texture of it differed in any way from waking life. The room was lit by electric light, which had a slightly artificial quality – perhaps more mellow than real electric light. I looked down at the carpet and suddenly became convinced that this was in fact a dream. I had a feeling of some indefinably curvilinear quality

in the pattern of the carpet. It was impossible to define what was really 'wrong' with the carpet, but once I was convinced that it was a dream there could be no further doubt.<sup>1</sup>

Assessments of the convincingness of perceptions in sensory modalities other than the visual appear less often in reports. However, mention may be found of all modalities, and when such mention is made, subjects do not remark on any difference between the dream experience and waking experience. Subject D, who reports both lucid dreams and out-of-the-body experiences, observes:

Visual, tactile, auditory, thermal and very occasionally olfactory and gustatory sensations are experienced. The visual sensations, are, I think, in about a third or a quarter of my dreams coloured. The rest a sepia colour. In astral projection I have visual sensations *only*. These have the usual colouring of waking life.

This is an interesting observation, and one which merits attention. If a consistent difference between the sensory modalities represented in lucid dreams and out-of-the-body experiences could be discovered, we might have the basis of a satisfactory classification. However, it is possible to find out-of-the-body cases in which nearly all sensory modalities are represented, though it may be the case that it is *only* in out-of-the-body experiences that the percipient is sometimes surprised by the lack of an expected tactile or proprioceptive sensation.

The examples to be given shortly will illustrate the occurrence in lucid dreams of all the following sensory modalities: auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, nociceptive, proprioceptive and thermal. Since few cases include mention of olfactory impressions, one out-of-the-body case (the experience of a habitual observer, starting from a waking state) has been included. The closeness of the relationship between

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

lucid dreams and out-of-the-body cases justified us in accepting this as confirmatory evidence that olfactory impressions may be included in lucid dreams.

The following example illustrates the occurrence of gustatory sensation:

I would enter a restaurant and order a meal, only to wake after savouring the first few mouthfuls. Indeed, to see how much one could eat, without paying attention to the taste, would form a very good exercise in mental control . . .<sup>1</sup>

The next example shows that pain sensations may be experienced in a lucid dream:

Saw a scorpion on the bank and was afraid of being stung. Then I thought that even if I was, sensation was only sensation, and one could be detached from sense-data. This led both to my realizing it was a dream and to my hand starting to burn as though it had been stung, though it hadn't been near the scorpion. Then, without quite waking up, I was aware of being in bed and of my hand hanging out and of being detached from its burning. Then I was back in the dream, but it went on being lucid, and quite a long lucid dream developed from this.<sup>2</sup>

The next example, although classified by the subject as an out-of-the-body experience, illustrates the occurrence of visual and olfactory sensations.

Seeing a door ajar on the first landing, I entered and found myself in a comfortably furnished bedroom. A young lady, dressed in claret-coloured velvet, was standing with her back to me, tidying her hair before a mirror. I could see that radiant amber sky through the window by the dressing-table, and the girl's rich auburn tresses were gleaming redly in this glamorous light. I noticed that the coverlet of the bed had a crumpled appearance and that there was water in a basin on the washstand. 'Ah, my lady,' thought I, 'you too have been lying down, and now you are making yourself presentable for tea – or is it dinner?'

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

I did not mind intruding upon her privacy; for she might have no existence outside of my brain, and I knew, from previous experiences, that there was small likelihood of my being visible to her. It occurred to me that I would stand just behind her and look over her shoulder into the mirror. I wanted to see whether it would reflect my face. I stood so close to her that I was conscious of a pleasant fragrance emanating from her hair, or perhaps from the soap she had recently used. In the mirror I could see her face – a good-looking one, I think her eyes were grey – but not the faintest indication of mine was visible.<sup>1</sup>

The next example, a true lucid dream, also includes olfactory sensation, as well as tactile and thermal sensations.

I hear their measured tread and watch them from the window of a high house in Galata, in Constantinople, in a narrow lane, one end of which leads to the old wharf and the Golden Horn with its ships and steamers and the minarets of Stamboul behind them. The Roman soldiers march on and on in close ranks along the lane. I hear their heavy measured tread, and see the sun shining on their helmets. Then suddenly I detach myself from the window-sill on which I am lying, and in the same reclining position fly slowly over the lane, over the houses, and then over the Golden Horn in the direction of Stamboul. I smell the sea, feel the wind, the warm sun.<sup>2</sup>

The next example illustrates the occurrence of auditory and gustatory sensation.

I took the broken glass and threw it out of the window, in order to observe whether I could hear the *tinkling*. I heard the noise all right and I even saw two dogs run away from it quite naturally. I thought what a good imitation this comedy-world was. Then I saw a decanter with claret and tasted it, and noted with perfect clearness of mind: ‘Well, we can also have voluntary impressions of taste in this dream-world; this has quite the taste of wine.’<sup>3</sup>

The next example illustrates the occurrence of tactile,

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 77–8.

<sup>2</sup> Ouspensky, p. 282.

<sup>3</sup> Van Eeden, p. 448.

and probably also proprioceptive perceptions. If these were not present, it is difficult to see how such a clear idea of the texture of the breaking bars was obtained.

I . . . started to break off the bars. They broke as if made of a cross between chocolate and sealing-wax, and I threw the pieces down on to the roofs below.<sup>1</sup>

Several of the preceding examples have implicitly provided evidence of proprioceptive sensation. Several times the subjects seem to have been aware of the positions and movements of their bodies in a way which clearly suggests this. The following example, however, describes in a very explicit way the experience of proprioceptive sensation in a lucid dream. In this experience Dr. Whiteman found himself dreaming that he was a girl, and compares the feeling of movement in this dream body with his feelings in his normal, waking body.

Awareness in separation began with the sight of a tree, about twenty feet away, in a pleasant natural scene. I moved a little nearer, so that the tree was on my left. The freshness of the air and the joy of being in a smaller and acceptable form again made me start dancing, with movements exhilarating in their freedom . . . Still affected with the joy in nature, I lay down on the ground, vividly feeling the cool grass with my fingers and the firmness of the earth beneath. I began to be afraid of the mounting excitement, that it would pass beyond my control, and decided to stand up again. As I did so, I noticed vividly how different it was, getting up off the ground in my proper form, from what it would have been in my physical body, on account of the great differences in bodily form, the smaller height, and the proportionately wider hips. In spite of this being, as it were, a strange discovery, the movement was completely natural to me, and wonderfully satisfying in its ease and grace. The memory-impression of what the contrasting movements of my physical body would have been, on the other hand, seemed only

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

an outer illusory and provisional covering to the reality I was experiencing.<sup>1</sup>

Having discussed the 'perceptual texture' of observations made in lucid dreams, we shall proceed in the next chapter to consider the registration as memories of lucid dream experiences.

<sup>1</sup> Whiteman, p. 186.

# XI

## Memory of Lucid Dreams

As regards the memory of lucid dreams, all habitual subjects who have commented on the point regard their memory of the lucid dream as 'clear', to quote Dr. van Eeden's expression. Subject C comments on this point:

I find it very hard to imagine having a lucid dream and not remembering the fact on waking. Certainly when I had my lucid dreams, the first thing I thought of on waking – and thought of with great excitement – was the fact that I had had a lucid dream.

The lucid dream is so completely discontinuous with the rest of the dreaming state that the memory of a lucid dream is more like a memory of one's past waking life, and to the subject it feels as though it has the same authenticity as any waking memory.

Of course it is possible that a very short lucid dream, or one that never becomes fully lucid, might not be remembered. But I have had 'bad' lucid dreams that never became properly stabilized as lucid that I nevertheless remembered with interest immediately on waking up.

My memory of ordinary dreams is in striking contrast to my memory of lucid dreams.

I very seldom remember any of my ordinary dreams by the time I have got up. I feel that to remember them I would have to make a deliberate decision to write them down as soon as I awoke.

This is of particular interest in view of the fact that the 'stuff' of the lucid dreams appeared to me indistinguishable from that of ordinary dreams; in other words my lucid dreams were ju

like ordinary dreams except that I was aware that I was dreaming.<sup>1</sup>

Subject B is in agreement with this position, saying:

My memories of lucid dreams seemed to be indistinguishable in clarity and reliability from my memories of a waking experience in which I was equally interested, or to which I was paying equal attention.

Sometimes one's attentiveness does not seem to be fully in focus during a poor quality lucid dream, and memories which result from this are comparable with memories of a rather uninteresting waking experience.

My attempt to read in a lucid dream was perhaps a special case. I retained only a general impression of what the page of writing was about. While I was reading I felt rather as if my mental energy was being occupied in forcing a vague impression to define itself in words, so that I did not have much spare capacity for registering what I was reading, though I scrutinized it sentence by sentence at the time to see whether it made sense. But possibly one should also bear in mind that this was not the best quality of lucidity; I drifted into a non-lucid state two or three times in the course of this dream.

My memory of ordinary dreams is a different matter altogether. I remember very little of my ordinary dreams, perhaps partly because such vague impressions as I do get of them seem very uninteresting, and not worth making any effort to record. My ordinary dreams appear to be unclear, unformulated, and only dimly visualized, and my memories of them fade very quickly. On occasion, even, I have noticed that a memory which I had thought was fairly clear on awakening has become inaccessible a short time later. Nothing of this kind ever happens to my memories of my lucid dreams.<sup>2</sup>

Myers describes his memory on waking of a lucid dream as follows:

The dream was very clear in my mind; I was thoroughly

<sup>1</sup> Subject C.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

awake; I perceived its great interest to me, and I stamped it on my mind – I venture to say – almost exactly as I tell it here.<sup>1</sup>

If a prolonged lucid dream has happened during sleep, it is usually remembered immediately on waking. Very brief or poor quality lucid dreams are sometimes recalled at a later stage in the day, or even a few days later. The memory of a lucid dream deteriorates with time, but appears to do so in a similar way to memories of waking experience. If anything, the memory of a lucid dream appears to deteriorate less than the memory of most waking experiences. It is, of course, impossible to prove whether this is due to the precise registration of details during the dream, or to the stabilizing of the subject's first account of his dream in the morning by reason of the interest he takes in it. However, it is the impression of subjects that they do deliberately examine details with a view to remembering them during their dreams, and that it is the critical attentiveness within the dream that is responsible for the quality of the memories which result.

This critical attentiveness to what one is experiencing is, of course, absent from dreams other than lucid dreams, and dreams of the normal kind are characteristically subject to partial amnesia. Everyone is acquainted with the difficulty of recalling ordinary dreams, and the necessity of recording them immediately upon awakening before the memory vanishes. This appears to be true of even very vivid dreams including those which contain elaborate narratives. To establish the contrast with lucid dreams, we shall quote the remarks of Mrs. Arnold-Forster, whose dreams might have been regarded as extremely 'memorable', but which were not lucid.

To be able to remember and to write down correctly the sequence of a dream should be an essential qualification for a

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing – III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, p. 242.

student of dreams. As a matter of fact, it seems to be a very rare one, and one of the difficulties that faces every one who tries to write seriously about dreams is that of obtaining faithful dream records on which observations can be safely based. . . .

The difficulties are not insuperable, and in this matter of dream recording, as in that of dream control, it is possible, by means of certain easily acquired methods and some concentration of mind, to make accurate notes of dreams if we require to do so. The initial difficulty that meets us is their evanescence; we have all probably experienced the sharp disappointment when we have vainly tried to hold fast the elusive memory of a dream from which we have just awakened, and have realized that the more feverishly we strive to remember it the more intangible it becomes and the more rapidly it fades away. Do what we will, we cannot recall more than floating detached fragments, and glimpses of its scenes. A thick mist of oblivion seems to come between us and the memory that we want to recall and literally blots it out. A sea-fog rolling in over sea and land, and obliterating every outline, is the best image of the mist of forgetfulness that nature often interposes between our dreams and our waking consciousness . . .

To begin with, the first thought and immediate occupation of the mind on awaking must be the recollection of the dream; the only thing further that is needed is a certain habit of mind that is better expressed in the French word *recueillement* than in any word of our own. An attitude of quiet attentiveness should be ours; the mind must be unhurried, it must be watchful, as one who looks long and steadfastly into a still pool to see what is mirrored there. As it thus gazes there will come back to it one by one the scenes of the late dream.<sup>1</sup>

Having discussed the memory of lucid dreams in waking life, we shall now consider the extent to which memories of waking life are accessible within the lucid dream.

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 78-9.

## XII

# Memory in Lucid Dreams

To what extent is the subject's normal range of memories accessible to him in a lucid dream? This is a difficult question to answer completely, since certain types of memory could be tested only by seeing whether one could produce the appropriate response to a certain stimulus. Thus, one might decide that one would like to test whether one's memory of French was as good in a lucid dream as it was in a waking state. One could ask oneself the names of objects, and see whether one could make up sentences. But there would be no one present to ask one independent questions in French, nor to ask one the names of objects other than those which spontaneously occurred to oneself as suitable objects for this test.

It follows that the only areas of memory about which we can form any impression of their accessibility in a lucid dream state are those directly related to the recognition and control of the lucid dream by the subject. In relation to these kinds of memory, it seems fairly clear that a definite process of development takes place. A subject may at first find it difficult to remember a given thing, or a given kind of thing, in his lucid dreams, but if he once succeeds in remembering this thing it is probable that he will continue to do so in all his lucid dreams, or a high proportion of them, from then on.

Subject B gives the following account of the progressive development of memory in lucid dreams:

I found it difficult at first to remember in a lucid dream my

intention of attempting various things – i.e., it was not until I had had a few lucid dreams that I remembered that I should like to try to do telepathy; and I had wanted to be able to fly for some time before I remembered this. But it seemed that once I had remembered something in a lucid dream, it was easy to do so from then on. I found that my memory of things I had read and thought about the psychological control of lucid dreams was always good. It seemed to be much easier to remember general principles than specific intentions about what to do.

Specific concrete facts were less easily remembered, and were often remembered inaccurately. (It is true that I had not made any attempt to impress upon my mind that I wanted to remember facts of this kind in a lucid dream.) A mistake which I made several times was to think that I was sleeping in a place which, although well-known to me and a place where I had been in the habit of sleeping at some time, was not in fact the place where I had gone to bed on the night in question. When I moved from one house to another, my lucid dreams were sometimes out of step with the change (although on one occasion I achieved lucidity by realizing that the room in which I was standing was a room in a house from which I had just moved away).

Similarly, I think that I should have found it difficult to remember my plans for the next day; in fact at one stage I proposed this to myself as a test of a false awakening. If I seemed to wake, I thought that I should ask myself what my plans for the day were, and what I had done on the preceding day. It seemed to me that if I experienced any difficulty in formulating my ideas about these questions, this would be a sign of a false awakening. I had a false awakening and tried to apply this test, but I did not succeed in becoming lucid, as I seemed to have quite an adequate idea of my plans for the next day. On awakening properly, I realized that this 'plan' had been inaccurate, although very plausible and in accordance with my prevailing habits. I was sorry that I had not carried the test further, and examined the relation of these plans to my intentions for the next week, the next month and the next year. However, before I could try to carry out a longer term test of my plans and intentions, I began spontaneously to recognize false awakenings as such.

The fact that general psychological principles and reflections about lucid dreams are easily remembered is borne out by the experience of Subject C, who, in his first completely lucid dream, had the following train of thought:

After a series of somewhat traumatic dreams of escape, I came to what was a sort of drive or brake, at the end of which was a suggestion of a country house behind some trees.

The initiating thought or thoughts were as follows: 'This (i.e., this type of dream) has been going on for ages; it's about time I had a respite!' (This and the next thought were definitely humorous, as it were, though wry or ironic.) Then I thought: Perhaps this qualifies as one of Ouspensky's 'dreams of ways'.<sup>1</sup>

Then the following thoughts definitely took place during the period of lucidity: Shouldn't this be liberating, and more vivid than ordinary dreams? . . .

Also, while still in the dream, I was surprised (and delighted) at having at last achieved a lucid dream. I remembered how it had seemed so difficult in the waking state.

Another experiment I tried was the following: I thought of Ouspensky's criterion of repeating one's own name.<sup>2</sup> I achieved a sort of gap-in-consciousness of two words: but it seemed to have some effect; made me 'giddy', perhaps; at any rate I stopped. (Perhaps at that point I was already losing the lucidity.)

The accessibility of memories of general philosophical and psychological arguments is further demonstrated by these reflections, reported by the Marquis de Saint-Denys:

As I walk along, knowing perfectly clearly that I am dreaming, I think about M. Maury's ideas. I wonder what part of my brain he would say was awake at this time. He should certainly consider, I say to myself, that my entire cerebrum is in a waking state, for it is my definite opinion that at this moment I am in full possession of my intellectual faculties; I feel that I am able to think rationally and to remember. What I have read about materialistic theories and what I wish to observe in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 157.

connection with this dream presents itself very clearly to my mind!<sup>1</sup>

Let us now consider what information we can gather about the accessibility of different kinds of memory from the reports of Fox, Whiteman, van Eeden, and Ouspensky.

Oliver Fox makes numerous statements to the effect that he was completely aware of his waking life, and of his past history. On one occasion he remembered the imminence of an examination sufficiently to make an attempt to read the papers in his dream (however, this did not arise from a spontaneous memory in the dream, but was something which he had deliberately willed to dream about). The following example shows that he was able to remember the normal view from his window.

On pulling up the blind, we made the amazing discovery that the row of houses opposite had vanished and in their place were bare fields. I said to my wife, 'This means I am dreaming, though everything seems so real and I feel perfectly awake. Those houses could not disappear in the night, and look at all that grass!'<sup>2</sup>

It seems that he was able to remember his name, and in his account of one of his dreams he says:

I noticed that I was dressed in the uniform of an Army officer; so when I passed a very fine War Memorial, I played my part by giving it 'eyes left' and saluting. I also returned the salute of a soldier who happened to pass me. The uniform was brown, but I am not sure whether it was British. Nevertheless, I had perfect consciousness of my real physical condition. I knew I was a Clerical Officer at the ——— Dept. and that my body was sleeping in my home in Worple Road. I knew also that in my Army days I was only a private.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hervey de Saint-Denys, pp. 358–9; my translation. The original appears in Appendix E.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> Fox, p. 112.

Oliver Fox frequently remarks that he was fully conscious that his physical body was asleep at a certain place. However, on at least one occasion it is recorded that he made a mistake about this, similar to the mistakes of Subject B.

Oliver Fox seemed to be quite successful in remembering his intentions concerning experiments which he wanted to make, and places which he wanted to visit.

However, although Fox gives more evidence of remembering the details of his waking life than any other subject, it may be noticed that the details given are of a fairly generalized kind – that is, they were true of his life over a fairly long period.

He never refers to memories of specific events which had happened the day before, or would happen the day after, the dream in question. (His dream of the examination paper may seem to be an exception to this, but it is probable that the thought of the examination had occupied his mind for some time, and, further, he had made a deliberate effort to dream of the papers on the night before the examination.)

Dr. Whiteman appears to have remembered his psychological principles and techniques in great detail, but his dreams are of such a kind that it is not possible to tell whether he could remember in detail the circumstances of his life. In one dream he saw a woman whom he took to be his mother, without realizing that the physical resemblance was not close enough to justify the identification.

Dr. van Eeden describes his 'recollection of day-life in dreams' as 'nearly complete'. The following examples show that he appeared to have a good memory of the *general* characteristics of physical reality, and could compare his dream perceptions with his memories of the general properties of waking life. (This point could also be illustrated by examples from other observers, particularly Subject B.)

I dreamt that I was floating through a landscape with bare trees, knowing that it was April, and I remarked that the perspective of the branches and twigs changed quite naturally. Then I made the reflection, during sleep, that my fancy would never be able to invent or to make an image as intricate as the perspective movement of little twigs seen in floating by.<sup>1</sup>

Then I took a fine claret-glass from the table and struck it with my fist, with all my might, at the same time reflecting how dangerous it would be to do this in waking life . . . I took the broken glass and threw it out of the window, in order to observe whether I could hear the *tinkling*. I heard the noise all right. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The following examples from van Eeden show some imperfection in his memories of circumstances of his life.

Then I saw my brother sitting – the same who died in 1906 – and I went up to him saying: ‘Now we are dreaming, both of us.’ He answered: ‘No, I am not!’ And then I remembered that he was dead.<sup>3</sup>

Then a second period of lucidity followed in which I saw Prof. van’t Hoff, the famous Dutch chemist, whom I had known as a student, standing in a sort of college-room, surrounded by a number of learned people. I went up to him, knowing very well that he was dead. . . . But I took myself then for younger than I was.<sup>4</sup>

Ouspensky’s approach to dreams led him to try to see the associations of ideas which led up to a given dream. Memory associations of this kind seemed to be as accessible as usual, and probably more accessible than in waking life.

In ‘half-dream states’ the sequence of associations in the whole dream was quite clear. First appeared the sensation of

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, p. 446.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, p. 448.

<sup>3</sup> Van Eeden, p. 450.

<sup>4</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 450–1.

bound legs, then the signal: bog, mire, window, *peculiar* soft mud. Then fear, desire to tear oneself away. . . .<sup>1</sup>

As I understood in 'half-dream states', these dreams are a combination of two motives or recollections. The first motive is created by motor memory, the memory of direction. These dreams of stairs are in no way different from dreams of long corridors, with endless court-yards through which you pass, with streets, alleys, gardens, parks, fields, woods; in a word these are dreams of *roads* or *ways*.<sup>2</sup>

. . . immediately the black kitten becomes transformed into a large white dog. At the same time the opposite wall disappears, disclosing a mountain landscape with a river like a ribbon receding into the distance.

'This is curious,' I say to myself; 'I did not order this landscape. Where did it come from?' Some faint recollection begins to stir in me, a recollection of having seen this landscape somewhere and of its being somehow connected with the white dog. But I feel that if I let myself go into it I shall forget the most important thing that I have to remember, namely, *that I am asleep and am conscious of myself*, i.e., that I am in the state for which I have long wished and which I have been trying to attain. I make an effort not to think about the landscape . . .<sup>3</sup>

I remember one dream, in which for some reason a very great part was played by a large number of geese. Then somebody asks: 'Would you like to see a *gosling*? you have certainly never seen a *gosling*.' And at this moment I agree that I have never seen *goslings*. Next moment they bring me on an orange silk cushion a very strange-looking grey kitten, twice as long and thin as an ordinary kitten. And with great interest I examine the *gosling* and say that I never thought they were so strange.<sup>4</sup>

Ouspensky does not state that this was a lucid dream. He does not always make the distinction between lucid and non-lucid dreams very clear because he thinks that in his 'half-

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> Ouspensky, pp. 279-80.

<sup>2</sup> Ouspensky, p. 277.

<sup>4</sup> Ouspensky, p. 283.

dream state' he is merely observing his dreams as they would be in any case, whether or not he was aware that he was dreaming. But in fact this failure of memory about the gossling is a good example of something which, although typical of other dreams, is not usually found in lucid dreams.

The general conclusions which are to be drawn from this discussion seem to be that the accessibility of memories in a lucid dream varies from subject to subject, and increases as a given subject develops lucid dreaming. But it seems that general psychological reflections and intentions are most easily remembered, together with generalized information concerning the properties of the physical world; the next things to occur to the dreamer are specific intentions relating to the lucid dream, and circumstances of fairly long standing concerning his life and circumstances; while there appears to be a positive resistance to accurate memories of the most immediate and specific concrete details of the subject's life. Concrete details of the latter kind are the only thing to be remembered *inaccurately* in lucid dreams. It is possible that this observation is to be related to the psychological resistance to the idea that the dream is *quite independent* of the physical world, which, as we shall see in the next chapter, is perhaps the greatest hindrance to rational inference in lucid dreams.

## XIII

# Analytical Thought in Lucid Dreams

Faulty reasoning is not characteristic of lucid dreams, with one exception. There appears to be some psychological resistance to reasoning correctly about the relationship between the dream world and the world of waking life, where specific concrete details are concerned. Apart from weaknesses in this area, which we shall illustrate later in the chapter, the dreamer cannot usually see, on awakening, any flaws in his trains of thought during the dream.

Reflections about points of general philosophical and psychological interest, in particular, seem to come easily to lucid dreamers. Thus, for example, the Marquis de Saint-Denys, after the reflections on the state of his cerebral activity which have been already quoted,<sup>1</sup> continued his sequence of thoughts in this way:

I even reason as follows: the images which appear to me in this dream are no more imposed upon me than the images which present themselves to my eyes when I am awake. I retain as well as usual my freedom of choice to turn right or left, to direct my eyes in one direction or in another, and so on. Indeed, I can summon up certain scenes or produce certain images accordingly as I wish or do not wish to act mentally as a result of what I see. For example: if I want to break a branch of one of these trees which I seem to see, the branch will seem to be broken. If I do not want this to happen the branch will continue to look unbroken to me. How does the dream differ for me from reality? I remember, I reason, I will, I do not will: I am not the

<sup>1</sup> p. 85.

helpless victim of the hallucination in which I am involved. If my acts of volition are not followed by real efforts, this is only because, instead of my physical organs obeying my thought, only an image of this process takes place; but the psychological phenomenon is exactly the same.<sup>1</sup>

Many subjects report applying psychological criteria to mental events occurring during their lucid dreams. The further ability to perform acts of psychological analysis – that is, to observe introspectively and to formulate discriminative criteria *at the time* – is demonstrated by Subject C:

I realized that my aim was to prolong this lucidity, but at the same time the continuation of the search for the relevant book was clearly leading back to non-lucidity. I realized the two aims were incompatible and decided to sacrifice the book and focus on maintaining lucidity. This did not seem too difficult so long as I did not give my attention to anything else, but it did seem to require the *whole* of one's attention to be occupied in this way.<sup>2</sup>

Another piece of perfectly good thinking about a point of psychological interest is reported by Myers:

As I walked downstairs I looked carefully at the stair-carpet, to see whether I could visualize better in dream than in waking life. I found that this was *not* so; the dream-carpet was not like what I knew it in truth to be; rather, it was a thin, ragged carpet, apparently vaguely generalized from memories of seaside lodgings.<sup>3</sup>

The general philosophical and psychological reflections of lucid dreamers are not subsequently found to be at fault. The same cannot be said of their analyses of concrete situations. This is not because they reason inaccurately from the

<sup>1</sup> Hervey de Saint-Denys, p. 359; my translation. The original appears in Appendix E.

<sup>2</sup> Subject C.

<sup>3</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing – III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, p. 242.

facts which are presented to them in the dream, but because they fail to remember specific facts about the state of affairs in the waking world.

I move away and, a short distance away on the Boulevard, between the street corner and the Medici fountain, I join a group of loiterers who are gathered round a contortionist. At this moment I become analytical. I remember coming to Paris the day before, which was a Saturday, and it occurs to me that the next day, Monday, I shall come again to Paris, as usual, for the sitting of the Academy. And from this I conclude (which is not very meritorious) that today is Sunday. All at once, I say to myself: 'How is it that I am here on a Sunday? This is hardly ever the case.' And at once it dawns on me: 'If it is Sunday and I think I am in Paris, I must be dreaming.' The dream immediately becomes completely lucid, without losing any of its hallucinatory character nor any part of its vividness.

Thus, the consideration which brought me to the conviction that I was dreaming was not the weighty argument that the corner of the rue Soufflot seems to be occupied by a shop which (in reality, but not in my dream, for the memory does not occur to me) I know very well is not there, but it was this very feeble argument that I find myself in Paris on a day when I am not usually there.<sup>1</sup>

In the following illustration from Subject B, it will be observed that it fails to occur to him as a conclusive argument, that, as a matter of fact, in the physical world windows are not barred with bars of an easily broken substance.

'I'm going to fly,' I said, and started to break off the bars. They broke as if made of a cross between chocolate and sealing-wax, and I threw the pieces down on to the roof below. 'Be awkward if it isn't a dream, won't it?' said X., who continued to stand by passively, looking humorous. 'It *is* a dream,' I said firmly, though at the back of my mind a cautious voice said, 'At the worst it couldn't be more than £50 for tiles.' I did *not* reflect that the way the bars broke proved it to be a dream.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Delage, pp. 455-6; my translation.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

The next example illustrates the difficulty which lucid dreamers often seem to experience in realizing the complete independence of the dream and of the waking world in relation to matters of *specific detail*. F. W. H. Myers, although correctly remembering that members of his family were away from home, did not succeed in recognizing that 'they are absent from home in waking life' and 'they are absent from home in the dream' were independent propositions.

I remembered that my wife and children were away at the time (which was true) and I did not reason to the effect that they might be present in a dream, though absent from home in reality.<sup>1</sup>

If the lucid dreamer does realize the independence of the dream world and the world of waking life, this may nevertheless cost him a certain effort. Thus, Yves Delage observes:

Although I am sure enough of the illusory character of the situation to adopt a course of action which would be unwise in real life, I have to overcome an instinctive feeling of fear. Several times, I have in this way thrown myself on purpose, into some danger in order to see what would come of it.<sup>2</sup>

However, subjects do report realizing the independence of the dream world and the world of waking life in the generalized sense that they are aware that they do not need to consider the consequences of their actions, and not all of them experience Delage's residual emotional conflict. But to realize this generalized principle, and to apply it to actions within the dream, would seem to be a much easier matter than to formulate the thought: 'The movements of *specific* persons and objects within the dream is completely independent of the movements of their counterparts in the waking world.' We have seen how Myers failed to formulate

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing - III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> Delage, p. 453; my translation.

this thought in relation to his family's absence from home. Subject B describes the difficulty of this kind of analysis as follows:

I wanted to fly but I had my briefcase with me, and thought I ought to take it home first. I crouched down on the pavement looking at the briefcase hard and thought: 'But this is a dream. It is only this dream briefcase that is out here in the street with me. There is no reason why the physical briefcase should be out in the street. In fact, it is most likely at home anyway.' This sequence of thought required a great effort of concentration, comparable with the effort required to convince oneself that each step of a difficult mathematical proof was really watertight. At the end, I felt a distinct sense of achievement – not to say triumph.<sup>1</sup>

It appears from subjects' reports that they are never in doubt of the general proposition 'events in the waking world and in the dream world are quite independent', but that at first they fail to remember that this proposition must be explicitly related to each particular inference which they make in the dream. There is a definite learning effect in this regard and the realization by the subject of a lacuna in his reasoning on one occasion may lead to improvement when he later dreams of similar situations. As Subject B puts it:

I do not have the impression that there is an absolute limitation on one's ability to reason correctly about the relationship of the dream to the ordinary world. There seems to be some learning effect, at least in my experience. On a certain occasion one fails to have the appropriate thought, and in waking life one thinks about this and realizes the point at which one should have had it. Then one seems to be reminded of this in the dream state, and one thinks, 'I must be careful at this point. This is something I must think hard about.' Incidentally, it is not so much that one reasons incorrectly from the premisses one has, as that one fails to remember that one must add to these

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

premisses 'events in the waking world and in the dream world are quite independent'.<sup>1</sup>

There seems to be a further class of rational inference which frequently fails to occur to lucid dreamers. This is the class of reflections based upon considerations of practical expediency, even of a very familiar kind. When, for example Subject B dreamt of breaking the bars of a window he described his reactions as follows:

Although I thought in a general way 'This is a dream and I wonder if and how these bars will break', when I found that they did break I did not think 'What would be the practical use of barring a window with brittle stuff like this? There cannot be any doubt *at all* that this is a dream.' Instead, I continued to focus on an abstract 'feeling' that this was 'obviously' a dream.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the subject's lack of awareness of even the most familiar practical considerations, it is rare for the general laws of physics to be violated in a lucid dream without the subject realizing it at the time. This is illustrated by Subject B's false awakening, in which he saw a friend enter the room, draw the curtains to exclude the morning sun, and switch on the electric light. Subject B did not realize that this was a false awakening, and proceeded to talk to his friend about the lucid dream which he had just had. Yet the lack of practical realism in this dream was combined with great physical realism. Subject B reports:

The effects of lighting produced by the drawing of the curtains and the switching on of the electric light seemed realistic at the time, and when I awoke no failure in realism was apparent to me retrospectively.<sup>3</sup>

In a later chapter we shall have occasion to discuss the difficulty which subjects sometimes encounter in trying to

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

<sup>3</sup> Subject B.

‘travel’ in lucid dreams. This, however, is not to be ascribed to a failure intellectually to appreciate the true nature of the situation. Subjects B and C, in particular, state definitely that they regard the problem, during their lucid dreams, as a psychological one. Subject C says on this point:

I should like also to make the point that when I was trying to ‘travel’ in my dreams I was never under a misapprehension about the status of my actions. I knew that any travelling on buses etc. which I might do was symbolic, and that I was attempting to find a psychologically satisfactory way of seeming to traverse the physical space between two places.<sup>1</sup>

Having discussed the intellectual processes which occur in lucid dreams, we shall proceed to consider their emotional quality.

<sup>1</sup> Subject C.

## XIV

### Emotional Quality

The emotional quality of lucid dreams ranges from a fairly neutral acceptance of the experience to varying degrees of excitement, liberation, expansiveness, experimental zeal, surprise at the various features of the dream, and possibly appreciation of its beauty. The following example illustrates one extreme of this range of possibilities:

I dreamed that I was standing on the pavement outside my home. The sun was rising behind the Roman wall, and the waters of Bletchingden Bay were sparkling in the morning light. I could see the tall trees at the corner of the road and the top of the old grey tower beyond the Forty Steps. In the magic of the early sunshine the scene was beautiful enough even then. Now the pavement was not of the ordinary type, but consisted of small, bluish-grey rectangular stones, with their long sides at right-angles to the white kerb. I was about to enter the house when, on glancing casually at these stones, my attention became riveted by a passing strange phenomenon, so extraordinary that I could not believe my eyes – they had seemingly all changed their position in the night, and the long sides were now parallel to the kerb! Then the solution flashed upon me: though this glorious summer morning seemed as real as real could be, I was *dreaming!*

With the realization of this fact, the quality of the dream changed in a manner very difficult to convey to one who has not had this experience. Instantly the vividness of life increased a hundredfold. Never had sea and sky and trees shone with such glamorous beauty; even the commonplace houses seemed alive and mystically beautiful. Never had I felt so absolutely well, so clear-brained, so divinely powerful, so

inexpressibly *free*! The sensation was exquisite beyond words; but it lasted only a few moments, and I awoke. As I was to learn later, my mental control had been overwhelmed by my emotions . . .<sup>1</sup>

Habitual lucid dreamers almost unanimously stress the importance of emotional detachment in prolonging the experience and retaining a high degree of lucidity.

I made a strong effort to keep calm, knowing the risk of waking . . . I . . . wished to see one of the servants; but I was afraid to ring the bell, lest the shock should wake me. I very cautiously walked downstairs . . . I reached the pantry door, and here again I had to stop and calm myself. The door opened and a servant appeared, – quite unlike any of my own. This is all I can say, for the excitement of perceiving that I had created a new personage woke me with a shock.<sup>2</sup>

Both in out-of-the-body experiences and in lucid dreams it is held that emotional conflict of any kind will lead to the termination of the experience. Naturally, this opinion, in the case of out-of-the-body experiences, is only held by those who have induced the experiences voluntarily. But it is interesting to note that persons who have experienced involuntary out-of-the-body states often mention the extraordinary emotional detachment which they found themselves to have during the experience. The following account is typical:

I was in hospital. I had had a not very serious operation, but something had gone wrong. I was up near the ceiling watching two doctors and nurses by my bedside.

I seemed completely detached and said to myself 'I wonder if they will save me', not really seeming to mind – which was absurd, for I was young with a husband and two small children.

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 32–3.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. H. Myers, 'Automatic Writing – III', *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. IV, Part 11, May, 1887, pp. 241–242.

Of the impersonality of observation required to maintain lucid dreams, Oliver Fox says:

It was so difficult to maintain the role of an impersonal observer in this strange Dream World, to realize that if I allowed my emotions to get the better of my mental control the dream would come to an abrupt end. I would enter a restaurant and order a meal, only to wake after savouring the first few mouthfuls. Indeed, to see how much one could eat, without paying attention to the taste, would form a very good exercise in mental control if only these Dreams of Knowledge were more easily come by; but, as things are, there are better ways of spending one's time in the dream, and I do not recommend it. Similarly I would visit a theatre, but could never stay in the dream more than a few minutes after the curtain had risen, because my growing interest in the play broke down my mental control of the experience. I would encounter a fascinating lady and even talk to her for a little while, but the mere thought of a possible embrace was fatal.<sup>1</sup>

Subject A remarks:

Emotional detachment is of paramount importance. If one realizes it *must be a dream* and attempts to prove that one can do something one wishes to do and could not do in waking life, the emotional conflict wakes one up.<sup>2</sup>

It would seem that there are two classes of activity, in particular, which tend to lead to a loss of lucidity in dreaming.

(1) Activities which arouse emotional conflict because, if undertaken in waking life, they would be physically dangerous, contrary to the subject's code of morality, or contrary to social convention. Subject A's statement about the causes of his losses of lucidity seems to refer to activities of this type.

(2) Activities which the subject might undertake in waking life with the more or less explicit intention of 'losing himself', or adopting an uncritical attitude to what he is

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 43-4.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A.

experiencing. Examples of this type are provided by Oliver Fox's statement already quoted.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously the content of both classes (1) and (2) varies from one subject to another. The determining factor seems to be the subject's emotional attitude to any given activity, rather than the nature of the activity *per se*, since some subjects report actions in their dreams which would lead to loss of lucidity when attempted by others.

A lucid dreamer may also lose lucidity by adopting an uncritical attitude to the events of the dream, and to his own seeming intentions within it. In the following report by Subject C, it will be seen that he had a distinct impression of a choice between continuing to be lucid, or continuing to act on motivation which was impelling him to carry out certain activities within the dream.

I realized that my aim was to prolong this lucidity, but at the same time the continuation of the search for the relevant book was clearly leading back to non-lucidity. I realized the two aims were incompatible and decided to sacrifice the book and focus on maintaining lucidity. This did not seem too difficult so long as I did not give my attention to anything else, but it did seem to require the *whole* of one's attention to be occupied in this way.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the emotions already mentioned as occurring within lucid dreams, there are occasional reports of claustrophobic feelings, which arise from the subject's realization that he does not know how to wake up, or, possibly, that if he tries to wake up he may only find himself in another, non-lucid, dream. One unsophisticated subject writes:

I sometimes have dreams in which I know I am dreaming but cannot at once find the means to wake up, and this is rather frightening at the time.

<sup>1</sup> p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Subject C.

Having discussed the emotional quality of lucid dreams, we shall proceed in the next chapter to consider what degree of control the subject may exercise over the events of the dream.

## Control of Lucid Dreams

By now, many examples have been given which illustrate the degree to which the lucid dreamer can affect the course of his dream by direct volition.

Few, if any, cases are on record of a subject consciously selecting the environment in which he would like to find himself and simply willing his present dream environment to change into it. Subjects may decide that they wish to travel to a certain place and, after some kind of simulated spatial displacement, find themselves where they wish to be. But this appears to be a somewhat unreliable process, with a high probability that the subject will lose his state of lucidity or wake up before the termination of the journey is reached. Subject D on one occasion attempted the direct method, of willing himself to be in a certain place, with the following partial success:

At a time when I was deeply interested in the study of dreams I occasionally realized that I was dreaming and made attempts at dream control. The most successful experiment which I can recall was in connection with a dream in which I was a traveller on the Underground.

I decided that a glass-house at Kew Gardens would look better than my surroundings, for that reason I concentrated on the idea of this. Gradually the roof of the carriage began to assume a dome-like appearance and become semi-transparent. The hands of the unfortunate passengers began to sprout twigs and leaves and the legs of some of them to resemble stems. However, I woke up before the dream could develop further.

It may be seen from accounts of flying in lucid dreams that although the dream does respond to direct volition to a considerable extent, the subject is not always sure exactly what the effect of his acts of volition will be.

As I greatly wished to reach the summit of this beautiful building, I decided to levitate and made the slight paddling motions, which I have hitherto found necessary, at the same time leaning backwards as though about to float on water. At first I rose slowly, then I seemed to be caught in some strong current and was borne up with great velocity in a slanting direction.<sup>1</sup>

My usual method of aerial progression in lucid dreams was a bounding motion from the earth upwards, over the tops of houses and trees and then back to earth and another bound and so on. After a time I lost height and began to descend (which I resisted) but the bounds or jumps became lower and lower until a point was reached when I could no longer get off the ground at all. I then awoke.<sup>2</sup>

One should, however, be cautious in concluding that the degree of conscious control which has already been reported by lucid dreamers represents the highest point which control can reach.

We have already, in other contexts, remarked upon the learning effect which is shown by lucid dreamers. To illustrate this point, we shall discuss a specific kind of control, which has been developed only by those subjects who realized that development in this direction was possible. This form of control is that concerned in producing phenomena of a kind which would be called psycho-kinetic in waking life. Ouspensky showed some signs of starting to develop this type of control spontaneously, but rejected it in favour of observing his dreams as they 'naturally' occurred. Dr.

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A.

Whiteman has concentrated only on developing control in the form of emotional equilibrium, rather than on making any attempt consciously to select the events of his dream. And other subjects have, for the most part, either directed their attention to other aspects of lucid dreaming or never known that this particular type of control was a possibility. The fact that it is a possibility is shown by the observations of Oliver Fox and Subject B.

It is regrettable that Oliver Fox does not give illustrations of his experiences of this type of control. He merely records in general terms:

I could also do some intriguing little tricks at will, such as moving objects without visible contact, and moulding the plastic matter into new forms . . .<sup>1</sup>

We shall proceed to illustrate the development of this type of control in the case of Subject B by quoting a sequence of dreams in order of occurrence.

Dreaming that I was walking along a road – straight and I think walled on one side – and realized I was dreaming. I knew this was a thing I had been trying to do and thought, ‘Now I can make something happen.’ I thought I would like to have an apple. I saw a patch on the road ahead and thought, ‘By the time I reach that it will be an apple.’ Before reaching it, I found I had another apple in my hand. I examined it, thinking, ‘Quite a creditable imitation of an apple.’<sup>2</sup>

I considered what I was wearing and thought I would like a doublet and hose so made them appear beside me and put them on. Saw someone watching the materialization of the clothes with some surprise and thought they had no idea how easy it really was in a dream.<sup>3</sup>

Do not remember a specific moment of becoming lucid, but did so while dreaming of being in R. Street. I started to pick up

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

<sup>3</sup> Subject B.

some plastic model atoms which had fallen in the road and stuck them together. They were a bit larger than the ones I own in waking life and I realized this in the dream. As I picked them up I was thinking that I must carefully remember doing this when I woke up. I came to an atom which had a small bead stuck into the hole in it where I wanted to insert a connection, so I said to the little bead, 'I command you to get out' – which it did.

Then I went to the corner of K. Street and thought about flying. I wasn't sure how to do this and wondered if I might get wings and what they'd feel like. Then I thought that as I had my briefcase with me I shouldn't leave it there, and ought to do something about it before I flew. I thought that it was all right because it was a dream and so the briefcase was probably at home really anyway. But as a sort of concession to my wish to be completely free from worry for flying I thought that I would get the dream briefcase home as well. (Home was identified as J. Road – of course by now I was at L. Road in reality.) So I picked up the case and gave it instructions to go off and get in by any open window it could. I watched it flying off down the road about four feet above the ground and watched it out of sight, but of course I couldn't see what happened when it reached the house, so I followed it to make sure it had got in all right. (I was a bit uncertain whether it would be bright enough about the instructions.)<sup>1</sup>

This was not the best quality of lucid dream. It started in a slightly indeterminate way, with a lot of wandering about buildings something like colleges, and being aware some of the time that this was a dream. Eventually, I found myself arriving at a coffee-party in a certain room where three or four other people were present. I realized that this was a dream and looked at the texture of things, but the memory of this, at any rate, does not have the brilliant clarity which there can be in these dreams.

I walked about the room and looked out of the window. It gave an impression of great height, and there was something like part of a crane outside. I thought about flying out of the

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

window but was put off by the height. I realized that this was irrational and went on walking round the room wondering why my awareness of this being a dream was not strong enough to overcome feelings about height.

Eventually I went into a corner of the room and tried to fly straight upwards. I felt I was beating at the air in a rather ineffectual way at the start, but then I flew up quite effortlessly and somehow the ceiling of the room melted away so that I found myself looking down at the room from some height.

I came down and sat down again. I accepted a cup of coffee from one of the people. Next I began to wonder whether I could do any physical phenomena and I started to point at various items of crockery, e.g., a plate. They disappeared and reappeared simultaneously a yard or so away. After the first attempt or so I noticed a small spray of golden flashes coming from my finger-tip as I tried to do this. However, my success was not a hundred per cent, and finally I pointed at a bag of sugar. Instead of vanishing, a sort of hole began to be formed through it, as if made by a rough kind of invisible drill, and the sugar began to run out of the ragged paper-hole. This was not what I wanted and I went on pointing at it hoping it would still move or vanish, but all that happened was that the hole went on becoming deeper.<sup>1</sup>

One way in which subjects may exercise control of their lucid dreams is in attempting to obtain information by means of ESP. In the next chapter we shall discuss in detail the question of ESP in lucid dreams.

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

## XVI

### ESP in Lucid Dreams

It has been pointed out in discussing lucid dreams which start from a waking state, that this category includes a number of examples of apparent extra-sensory perception.

Further, out-of-the-body states are also associated with apparent extra-sensory perception, most typically of the 'travelling clairvoyance' type.

If there is evidence of extra-sensory perception in lucid dreams which start from a waking state, may we not expect to find evidence of extra-sensory perception in lucid dreams which start from a sleeping state also?

Among those who have been habitual lucid dreamers, few have been interested in attempting ESP at all. Ouspensky was interested only in observing the causes of his normal dreams; Dr. Whiteman, for religious reasons, feels it inappropriate to attempt any form of ESP; Oliver Fox and Subject A, though adopting an exploratory attitude, seem to have aimed more directly at having exciting experiences than at obtaining convincing evidence for ESP. For example, when Oliver Fox tried to visit 'a certain ruined temple in Tibet' he does not mention that he had any intention of attempting to observe some detail which could be subsequently verified.

Only Dr. van Eeden and Subjects B and C have deliberately and consistently attempted to achieve evidential results.

The first example we shall give – reported by Oliver Fox – is one which, on the information available, it is difficult to

classify definitely either as a lucid dream or as an out-of-the-body experience. In any case, however, it provides a good illustration of a case of 'travelling clairvoyance' in which information is obtained of a sufficiently detailed kind to be noteworthy.

The subject, 'Elsie', had objected to Fox's experiments on religious grounds. Fox had replied that she was an ignoramus in such matters, whereupon 'Elsie' was sufficiently nettled to overcome her religious scruples and declared that she would appear to Fox that night in his room.

That night Fox saw an apparition of 'Elsie' during a Type (2) False Awakening.<sup>1</sup> Fox describes their subsequent meeting as follows:

The following evening we met and I found Elsie very excited and triumphant.

'I did come to you!' she greeted me. 'I *really* did. I went to sleep, willing that I would, and all at once I was *there*! This morning I knew just how everything was in your room, but I've been forgetting all day – it's been slipping away.'

. . . despite her impatience, I would not say a word about what I had seen until she had told me all she could remember . . .

She described in detail the following:

(1) Relative positions of door, bed, window, fire-place, wash-stand, chest of drawers and dressing-table.

(2) That the window had a number of small panes instead of the more usual large ones.

(3) That I was lying, eyes open, on the left side of a double-bed (I had never told her it was double) and seemed dazed.

(4) An old-fashioned pin-cushion, an unusual object in a man's room.

(5) A black Japanese box covered with red raised figures.

(6) A leather-covered desk lined with gilt, sunk plate on top for handle to fall back into, standing on the chest of drawers. She described how she was running her fingers along a projecting ridge on the front of this desk.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, p. 58.

It is of interest that Fox initially thought that the last of these details was incorrect, and that what the subject had taken for a projecting ridge was merely a gilt line on the leather. However, having asserted that there was no projecting ridge anywhere on his desk, he later discovered that 'Elsie' was correct:

The desk was placed to front the wall, and the hinges (which I had quite forgotten) made a continuous projecting gilt ridge just as she had described. Owing to its position, she had naturally mistaken the back of the desk for the front.<sup>1</sup>

The next example of apparent ESP in a lucid dream is of a 'telepathic' rather than 'clairvoyant' type, but illustrates another way in which evidentiality may be obtained – i.e. by the conveying of a precise verbal message.

I became aware that I was dreaming and decided to try to communicate with my son. I had an impression that contact had been achieved and attempted to convey to him the words, 'I can't stay long; I am feeling muzzy.' When I met my son the next day for lunch he repeated these words to me before I had mentioned the matter to him and said that he had received the impression in a dream in which he also was aware that he was dreaming.<sup>2</sup>

We have already quoted a report by Subject B in which he attempted to convey a message to his mother.<sup>3</sup> She did not, however, communicate the required message, and had no recollection of the matter when asked. The following case, given by Oliver Fox, provides another example of a dream 'meeting', but in this case no precise message was conveyed.

I had been spending the evening with two friends, Slade and Elkington, and our conversation had turned to the subject of dreams. Before parting, we agreed to meet, if possible, on

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A. Subject A's son confirmed the report.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 65.

Southampton Common in our dreams that night. I dreamed I met Elkington on the Common as arranged, but Slade was not present. We both knew we were dreaming and commented on Slade's absence. After which the dream ended, being of very short duration. The next day when I saw Elkington I said nothing at first of my experience, but asked him if he had dreamed. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I met you on the Common all right and knew I was dreaming, but old Slade didn't turn up. We had just time to greet each other and comment on his absence, then the dream ended.' On interviewing Slade we learned that he had not dreamed at all, which perhaps accounted for his inability to keep the appointment.

Some people have raised the objection, 'Oh well, you expected to meet your friend and so you dreamed you did. That's all.' But if expectation is to explain the experience, then I expected to meet Elkington and *Slade*, while Elkington expected to meet *Slade* and me. How is it, then, expectation failed us both with regard to Slade? Why was he absent? How is it expectation failed to make him dream of meeting us? Elkington and I were unable to repeat this small success.<sup>1</sup>

Fox gives a further example of apparent ESP in a lucid dream:

On the eve of sitting for an examination in machine construction, I willed to dream of seeing the paper that would be set. I dreamed that I was taking the examination, and, knowing that I was dreaming, attempted to memorize the questions upon the paper. On awakening, I remembered two: (1) Sketch and describe some form of steam-separator. (2) Sketch a grease-box suitable for a goods-truck. The next day, when I actually took the examination, I found both these questions upon the paper. They did not appear as complete questions by themselves, but were sections of others. The first was a likely question; but a perusal of past papers (made *after* the dream) showed that the second question had not been asked for many years.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. van Eeden gives a case of apparent precognition in a lucid dream:

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, pp. 45-6.

In May, 1903, I dreamed that I was in a little provincial Dutch town and at once encountered my brother-in-law, who had died some time before. I was absolutely sure that it was he, and I knew that he was dead. . . . He told me that a financial catastrophe was impending for me. Somebody was going to rob me of a sum of 10,000 guilders. I said that I understood him, though after waking up I was utterly puzzled by it and could make nothing of it. . . .

I wish to point out that this was the *only* prediction I ever received in a lucid dream in such an impressive way. And it came only too true, with this difference, that the sum I lost was twenty times greater. At the time of the dream there seemed not to be the slightest probability of such a catastrophe. I was not even in possession of the money I lost afterwards. Yet it was just the time when the first events took place – the railway strikes of 1903 – that led up to my financial ruin.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. van Eeden made a number of attempts to achieve evidential results in his lucid dreams. One of his methods was to ‘call’, in his lucid dreams, deceased personalities who were supposed to be communicating through a certain medium at that time, he having asked an observer who was investigating the medium to note whenever she mentioned the name of van Eeden. Van Eeden considered that the results showed that some form of communication had taken place, and that there was evidence that the medium was aware of his ‘calls’, but he does not describe these experiments in sufficient detail for one to form an opinion of their convincingness.

Van Eeden gives a further instance of his attempts to achieve evidentiality, again connected with a deceased personality, in this case a young English boy.

Of course I was constantly seeking for what psychical researchers call ‘evidence’, objective evidence. Therefore I asked the boy in my dream on August 13, 1901, for a password. He

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, p. 451.

complied with my wish and pronounced a word that I understood as 'Sin-ga-poor.' I supposed he meant the Asiatic town.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, the boy's mother, who received 'communications' from him by automatic writing, was informed that he had given the word 'Pick-a-boo' to van Eeden. The boy had been accustomed to use this word when hiding. Van Eeden comments: 'This word and its use were utterly unknown to me, and I think the correspondence of the two words is remarkable.'<sup>2</sup>

We shall now consider what information concerning the most effective approach to ESP in lucid dreams can be derived from the attempts of Subjects B and C.

The first difficulty which may be encountered by subjects who wish to do ESP in a lucid dream is simply the difficulty of remembering in the dream that this is what they intend. Neither Subject B or C found that this was much of an obstacle; Subject C, indeed, remembered that he would like to attempt ESP in his second lucid dream. This is in accordance with our observation that general psychological principles and intentions are easily recollected in a lucid dream.

Once subjects have succeeded in remembering their intention, then they often encounter difficulties which arise from their inability to recognize that spatial location is no longer relevant. This difficulty seems to be a good deal more persistent than the one we have just discussed. Dr. van Eeden had a relatively simple approach for avoiding the difficulty, that of 'calling' to him people with whom he wanted to converse. Subject B found his attempt to achieve telepathic communication taking van Eeden's form spontaneously on one occasion:

I was in a rather nondescript sort of common-room; perhaps a railway waiting-room – anyway, with that sort of openness to

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, p. 452.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 452-3.

coming and going. I thought that I should communicate with X.; meaning going to visit him myself, but then I saw him through a hatchway in the wall. He was some way away, among other people, but was coming towards me. He came right up to the hatch, but before any talking could be done I lost the lucidity.<sup>1</sup>

However, this technique would only provide one with a possible means of communicating with specific persons, and would not be a solution if one wished to achieve a 'travelling clairvoyance' type of result. Subject B remarks:

Although I have not yet succeeded in visiting a distant place, the highest point reached by my thoughts on the subject in lucid dreams was when I said to myself: 'If I decide that behind that door there is so-and-so's room it will be there when I go through the door, although the room is really fifty miles away.' I still did not manage to do this in the dream in question, but as the thought that this would be a way of overcoming the difficulty occurred to me for the first time in a lucid dream, I feel that it is probably in accordance with the way lucid dreams work and I shall certainly concentrate on trying to 'travel' this way in future.<sup>2</sup>

There follow some examples of the difficulties which subjects encounter, arising from the prejudice that they must traverse the intervening space in the ordinary way:

At the end of the lane was a main road and I left T. at one bus-stop, going myself to another on the other side of the road. I was trying to visit Z. in London and in the grip of the prejudice that it was a *long way*. I was really not clear where I would get off the bus and on to a train, but I thought it would be something to get any stage of the journey done before thinking about the next. The bus came, and I got on, waving goodbye to T. but that was the end of the dream, or at least of the lucid part.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Subject B.

<sup>3</sup> Subject B.

I stood by the door, but did not switch the light on because I thought that if I did so I might see my body lying on the bed and be wakened by the strangeness of it. I thought I should try to travel to see T. and floated up into a horizontal position about six feet above the floor. I thought I would fly to London, but the idea that it was a very long way became increasingly discouraging, and I felt bleakly resigned at the prospect. I was still determined to do so, though a feeling as of floating in a cavernous void gained upon me, but the determination seemed only to result in waking me.<sup>1</sup>

I thought first of trying to reach X., but it seemed out of the question – impossible – just as it would have done if I had *in waking life* tried to be in R—— at that point. The surroundings seemed immutable – just as they do in life.<sup>2</sup>

These results suggest that if anyone is interested in developing lucid dreams along these lines, it would be as well to impress on their minds in the waking state that the dream state is completely independent of events in the waking world, and also to decide upon pre-arranged techniques for attempting ESP or clairvoyance – e.g. following Subject B, they might decide that they were going to attempt travelling clairvoyance by finding a door in their dream and walking through the door into the room which they wanted to visit. If they had thought of this idea with sufficient persistence in the waking state, they would probably not find themselves confronted in the dream by the difficult problem of working out how to traverse the intervening space. They would only have to exercise the control necessary to think: ‘I want there to be a door.’

These remarks, needless to say, should not be taken to imply that any results achieved by calling upon people or by visiting distant places will necessarily contain any elements of veridical ESP. All that can be said is that there is no

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Subject C.

reason to suppose that the attempts that have already been made in this direction have exhausted the possibilities.

This chapter concludes our discussion of the various features of lucid dreams. In the next chapter we shall discuss a phenomenon associated with the termination of lucid dreams, the 'false awakening'.

## XVII

### False Awakenings

A phenomenon associated with the development of lucid dreams is the 'false awakening'. This is a state, which is not a true waking state, but in which the subject seems to be looking back on the dream experiences he has just had, and in which he at first believes himself to be awake. A false awakening may follow a lucid or non-lucid dream, or may not be preceded by any remembered dream experience at all.

Experiences of this type are fairly common, but they seem to occur with greatly increased frequency in connection with lucid dreams.

The following are examples of individual false awakenings preceded by non-lucid dreams occurring to unsophisticated subjects.

. . . I dreamt I saw a collection of weapons in the wardrobe of my mother's room (across the corridor from mine), and remember thinking they were Viking. Then I 'woke up', as it were, and, still in my dream, went out of my room and into my mother's and opened the wardrobe. To my disappointment I recall seeing nothing but clothes; while I was looking in at the wardrobe my mother opened the door of the room and asked what I was doing. As far as I remember the dream ended there, with my mother standing in the doorway holding the door-handle.

I dreamt I was dreaming, and then woke up and sat up in bed and saw the room around me. However after a time – a matter of half a minute or so – I realized I was dreaming that I was awake, and this resulted in me actually waking up.

It appears to be possible for unsophisticated subjects to have this experience relatively frequently.

I have often had the experience of believing to have woken up and been mistaken. For a short while after, I carry on dreaming that I'm where I thought I had woken up – usually in bed.

I am sure I have dreamt I have woken or been called and when I actually do awake am puzzled why I am not late for oversleeping.

Twice or more during childhood I remember apparently waking up from a dream and then discovering that I had not done so because I could not turn on the light . . . I recognized in the dream that I was still asleep (because of being unable to turn on a light) and made a great effort to shout to wake myself up properly. This was effective through muscular movement though without actually making any noise.

The subject may even experience a series of false awakenings before finally waking up.

. . . Several times I thought I had woken up, but then suddenly realized that I had only changed dreams – once I changed dreams a number of times before finally waking up.

The following striking example of a repeated false awakening is reported by Delage:

This happened when I was in the Roscoff laboratory. One night, I was woken by urgent knocking at the door of my room. I got up and asked: 'Who is there?' 'Monsieur,' came the answer in the voice of Marty (the laboratory caretaker), 'it is Madame H——' (someone who was really living in the town at that time and was among my acquaintances), 'who is asking for you to come immediately to her house to see Mademoiselle P——' (someone who was really part of Madame H's household and who was also known to me), 'who has suddenly fallen ill.'

'Just give me time to dress,' I said, 'and I will run.' I dressed hurriedly, but before going out I went into my dressing-room to wipe my face with a damp sponge. The sensation of cold water woke me and I realized that I had dreamt all the foregoing events and that no one had come to ask for me. So I went back and to sleep. But a little later, the same knocking came again at my door. 'What, Monsieur, aren't you coming then?'

'Good heavens! So it is really true, I thought I had dreamt it.'

'Not at all. Hurry up. They are all waiting for you.'

'All right, I will run.' Again I dressed myself, again in my dressing-room I wiped my face with cold water, and again the sensation of the cold water woke me and made me understand that I had been deceived by a repetition of my dream. I went back to bed and went to sleep again.

The same scene re-enacted itself almost identically twice more. In the morning, when I really awoke, I could see from the full water jug, the empty bowl, and the dry sponge, that all this had been really a dream; not only the knockings at my door and the conversations with the caretaker, but having dressed, having been in my dressing-room, having washed my face, having believed that I woke up after the dream and having gone back to bed. This whole series of actions, reasonings and thoughts had been nothing but a dream repeated four times in succession with no break in my sleep and without my having stirred from my bed.<sup>1</sup>

It will be convenient to classify the false awakenings connected with lucid dreams into two types.

*Type 1:* The subject has a further dream in which he seems to be thinking or talking about some previous dream experience, lucid or otherwise. This dream may or may not start with a fairly realistic representation of the experience of waking up in bed. It may or may not occur to the subject to wonder whether he is still dreaming, and he may or may not examine his environment critically in an attempt to find

<sup>1</sup> Delage, pp. 384-5; my translation.

out. Finally, he may or may not realize that he is still dreaming. If he does, this may be the starting point of a further lucid dream.

Experiences of Type 1 are fairly common, and are reported spontaneously by persons who have made no special study of lucid dreams, though probably it is only those with some knowledge of lucid dreams to whom it occurs to examine their environment for clues to the state they are in.

The 'simplest' type of false awakening is that in which the subject 'wakes up' without any change in his position or seeming environment.

Eventually someone loomed up above me (I was still on my hands and my knees, as it were, looking at the floor) and asked me, 'What is your name?' I thought: 'That will wake me up', but nevertheless for some reason I decided to answer and called out my name, throwing back my head and laughing, as if the decision not to worry any more about maintaining the lucidity and to wake up was somewhat reckless or abandoned.

With that thought I woke up, and I thought: 'I must go and make notes of the lucid dream.' However, I seemed rather vague as to where I should go to do this (I was still in the same place, in the hall) and there followed a short non-lucid dream from which I woke properly a short time after.

When I properly awoke I thought: '*Quelle surprise!* I thought I had already woken up.'<sup>1</sup>

Examples of more elaborate false awakenings have already been given.<sup>2</sup> The following two cases provide further illustrations:

I woke in one of the beds in the room in which I had been talking to V. in the course of the preceding dream. There were two single beds side by side, but the other was empty. I do not remember getting up or dressing but found myself out of bed. I think I recalled the earlier dream, for I then found myself thinking, 'How can I be sure I am awake now? Might this be a

<sup>1</sup> Subject C.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 26-27.

dream too?' I looked carefully at my surroundings. They were bright and detailed as under electric light.<sup>1</sup>

In February, 1899, I had a lucid dream, in which I made the following experiment. I drew with my finger, moistened by saliva, a wet cross on the palm of my left hand, with the intention of seeing whether it would be still there after waking up. Then I *dreamt* that I woke up and felt the wet cross on my left hand by applying the palm to my cheek. And then a long time afterwards I woke up *really* and knew at once that the hand of my physical body had been lying in a closed position undisturbed on my chest all the while.<sup>2</sup>

*Type 2:* The second type of false awakening is less common. Not all lucid dreamers report it, and very few unsophisticated subjects. The descriptions of it which are given by Oliver Fox, Dr. van Eeden, Subject A and Subject B are, however, strikingly similar.

In this type of false awakening the subject appears to wake up in a realistic manner, but to an atmosphere of suspense. These experiences vary in respect of the length of time which elapses before the subject becomes aware that something is unusual. His surroundings may at first appear normal, and he may gradually become aware of something uncanny in the atmosphere, and perhaps of unwonted sounds and movements. Or he may 'awake' immediately to a 'stressed' and 'stormy' atmosphere. In either case, the end result would appear to be characterized by feelings of suspense, excitement or apprehension.

Oliver Fox describes a typical Type 2 false awakening in this way:

I passed from unremembered dreams and thought I was awake. It was still night, and my room very dark. Although it seemed to me that I was awake, I felt curiously disinclined to

<sup>1</sup> Subject B.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, p. 447.

move. The atmosphere seemed changed, to be in a 'strained' condition. I had a sense of invisible, intangible powers at work, which caused this feeling as of aerial stress. I became expectant. Certainly something was about to happen.<sup>1</sup>

Subject A describes his Type 2 false awakenings as follows:

When I wake in this condition the whole room seems to be under tension. There is an atmosphere like an electric storm. Everything looks, somehow, as if it might fly apart. There is a feeling of apprehension; one feels that something is going to happen.<sup>2</sup>

At this point the subject becomes aware that this is not a normal waking state. He may then spontaneously revert to a normal waking condition, as Subject B reports doing on the occasions when he has experienced this type of false awakening. If the state persists, however, he may see apparitions, possibly frightening ones. Subject A believes that psychokinetic phenomena have also taken place in his bedroom while he was in such a state. We have already mentioned that when 'Elsie' appeared to Fox, the latter had had a Type 2 false awakening. This is how he describes the experience:

Some time in the night, while it was still dark, I woke – but it was the False Awakening. I could hear the clock ticking and dimly see the objects in the room. I lay on the left side of my double-bed, with tingling nerves, waiting. Something was going to happen. But what? Even then I did not think of Elsie.

Suddenly there appeared a large egg-shaped cloud of intensely brilliant bluish-white light. In the middle was Elsie, hair loose, and in her nightdress. She seemed perfectly solid as she stood by a chest of drawers near the right side of my bed. Thus she remained, regarding me with calm but sorrowful eyes, and running her fingers along the top and front side of a desk which stood on the drawers. She did not speak.

For what seemed to be some seconds I could not move or utter a word. Again I felt the strange paralysis which I have

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A.

previously noted. Wonder and admiration filled me, but I was not afraid of her. At last I broke the spell. Rising on one elbow I called her name, and she vanished as suddenly as she had come. It certainly seemed I was awake now.

‘I must note the time,’ I thought, but an irresistible drowsiness overwhelmed me. I fell back and slept dreamlessly till morning.<sup>1</sup>

Fox states that once he had realized his condition, in a Type 2 false awakening, it was possible for him to ‘leave his body’, and enter an out-of-the-body state. Apparently, it did not occur to Dr. van Eeden to make a similar attempt to exploit this type of false awakening. However, in view of Fox’s assertion, the following report is of interest. It is made by an unsophisticated subject with no knowledge of the literature on this topic.

The happening occurs during sleep and has been recurring for the past 20 years with no distinct time period between – the last about some 2 months ago. During sleep I became aware of my surroundings as if just awakening – but not awake. After what seems a short lapse of time in this condition I appear to float round the space above my bed, and can see myself lying there. A further pause and my thinking self is now upon the bed and the atmosphere seems alive (electrified – charged with suspense). In trying to make comparison I am constantly thinking of black velvet – the air seems to have in fact substance as if you could take hold of it. The atmosphere is one of fear, and could almost be said to feel evil – during this phase I awake myself from sleep by an audible shout . . .

After the shout I am lying motionless and my hair has risen on the back of my neck. I also have felt drops of cold sweat drip from my arms on to the side of my body – I usually wake upon my back. For a time I do not want to go to sleep again, and usually there is a re-occurrence if I do. While I recall the sensation as one of fear, when awake it does not bother me or make me scared to fall asleep the following night. I can talk about it

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 57–8.

quite freely, and hardly give it a second thought during daytime.

In a Type 2 false awakening the subject seems to remain lying in bed throughout, whereas in a Type 1 false awakening, even if the subject seems to wake in bed, he usually gets up and moves about. This is of interest in view of Fox's belief that deliberately to leave one's bed during a Type 2 false awakening constitutes the start of an 'out-of-the-body' experience.

We have now concluded our discussion of naturally occurring lucid dreams, and of phenomena related to them. In the next chapter we shall go on to discuss an experimental situation in which lucid dreams may also occur.

## XVIII

# Lucid Dreams under Hypnosis

In work carried out at the Institute, it has been observed that lucid dreams occur spontaneously under light hypnosis, without any direct suggestion being given to initiate them.

I shall give two examples of such dreams. The first is quoted from a statement by the subject.

The hypnotist made some suggestions to the effect that I could go away to a world where I was at peace. I was aware that this form of suggestion was not in accordance with my own wishes, and I wished that he would say I could go somewhere exciting . . .

The dream started with a non-visual impression – a sort of clear and exciting idea about fire on a mountain. Then I was riding on an eagle. There was no discontinuity in consciousness, although apparently I failed to remember some of what the hypnotist said while I was having these dreams.

They were tantalizing because although obviously close to what I should have liked to dream about, they had a slightly restricted feeling, as if they would go wrong if they let themselves go. I wanted things to develop more. Of course it may be that a certain lack of agreement between my aims and the hypnotist's had something to do with this.

The second case is quoted from the hypnotist's report.

The subject reported a dream of swimming in a warm, blue sea. I had not made any suggestion that could be construed as a suggestion that he should dream. The subject was aware that he was dreaming, and described the quality of the experience as being completely lifelike. After swimming in the warm sea

for some time he found himself surrounded by sharks, which swam up and circled him.

On other occasions the subject reported rather indistinctly visualized dreams (also lucid) corresponding to suggestions which I made that he should dream of a stated sequence of events, but these were said to be quite different from this spontaneously occurring dream, which was described as a precise reproduction of waking experience.

While there is scope for further work in this field, our present information enables us to say that such dreams occur spontaneously in light hypnosis, and also at the amnesic stage (i.e. the subject is amnesic for the hypnotist's suggestions, but not for the events of the dream).

It will be observed from the first of these cases that some degree of control can be exercised by the subject. It would be interesting if more work were done on the direction of the dream both by the subject's own volition and by suggestions made by the hypnotist.

As regards the two dreams quoted here: it would appear that they were chiefly determined by psychological motivation of a kind which was accessible to introspective observation. The first subject, for example, comments: 'I have had lucid dreams, and this was very like them. But it was more interesting emotionally than my lucid dreams usually are; it was closer to what I would consciously choose to dream about.'

It is impossible to draw more distinct conclusions on this subject from the literature of hypnosis. The class of lucid dreams has hitherto received little recognition, and experimenters have made no effort explicitly to report on the presence or absence of those features most characteristic of them. Most notably, of course, the question of whether or not the subject was *conscious* of having an abnormal or dream experience, at the time of a certain sequence of

imagery, is not reported. Similarly, although hypnotic subjects are sometimes quoted as saying that a certain experience under hypnosis was very 'vivid', they are seldom asked to make statements comparing the perceptual texture of the experience with that of waking life.

Hypnotists have also shown little interest in spontaneously occurring dreams.

Gill and Brenman (1959) have speculated that there are never spontaneous hypnotic dreams because of the strong effect of the experimenter-subject relationship. On the other hand, Solovey and Milechnin (1960) report that hypnotized subjects who were resting quietly in the hypnotic state dreamt spontaneously, something the experimenters had not expected, but provide little information beyond that bare fact.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter we have considered one way in which the experimental study of lucid dreams could be carried further. In the next chapter we shall consider the general prospects for experimental work in this field.

<sup>1</sup> Charles T. Tart, 'The Hypnotic Dream: Methodological Problems and a Review of the Literature', *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. LXIII, No. 2, February, 1965, p. 96.

## XIX

# Experimental Prospects

The first task facing experimental studies of lucid dreaming is to determine how the EEG of a lucid dream is related to that of an ordinary dream. There is a consensus of agreement among subjects that the morning or, at any rate, the latter half of the night, is the most favourable time for the occurrence of lucid dreams. Some subjects definitely relate lucid dreams to periods when they have already had a considerable amount of sleep, and are subject to a certain amount of external disturbance. This certainly suggests that lucid dreams are not to be associated with the deepest stages of sleep. In view of the fact that subjects very frequently report that the lucid dream arose out of a previous non-lucid dream, we may tentatively expect to find lucid dreams occurring, as do other dreams, during the 'paradoxical' phase of sleep characterized by fast low-voltage EEG waves, rapid eye movements and muscular relaxation.

There is one exception to the rule that lucid dreams do not occur during the early part of the night. Dr. van Eeden, who associated his normal lucid dreams with 'deep', refreshing sleep and with times between 5 and 8 a.m., distinguished a separate class of lucid dreams, which he calls 'initial dreams'. Of these dreams he says:

This kind of dream is very rare; I know of only half-a-dozen instances occurring to myself, and have found no clear indication of them in other authors. Yet it is very characteristic and easily distinguishable. It occurs only in the very beginning of

sleep, when the body is in a normal healthy condition, but very tired. Then the transition from waking to sleep takes place with hardly a moment of what is generally called unconsciousness, but what I would prefer to call discontinuity of memory. It is *not* what Maury calls a hypnagogic hallucination, which phenomenon I know well from my own experience, but which I do not consider to belong to the world of dreams. In hypnagogic hallucinations we have visions, but we have full bodily perception. In the initial dream type . . . I see and feel as in any other dream. I have a nearly complete recollection of day-life, I know that I am asleep and where I am sleeping, but all perceptions of the physical body, inner and outer, visceral or peripheral, are entirely absent. Usually I have the sensation of floating or flying, and I observe with perfect clearness that the feeling of fatigue, the discomfort of bodily over-strain, has vanished. I feel fresh and vigorous; I can move and float in all directions; yet I know that my body is at the same time dead tired and fast asleep!<sup>1</sup>

Lucid dreams, although in the main coherent, do have occasional discontinuities, which are usually marked by a 'false awakening'. If the subject succeeds in realizing what has happened, another lucid dream may ensue. This may bear some relationship to the preceding lucid dream – for example, it may take place within the same building or environment, but the theme and characters of the dream may change completely. In the case of ordinary dreams, evidence has been presented that changes of topic may be accompanied by gross bodily movements on the part of the subject.<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to know whether this finding is reproduced in the case of lucid dreams.

Whatever the EEG of lucid dreams may be shown to be, it must be borne in mind that out-of-the-body experiences,

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 435–8.

<sup>2</sup> W. Dement & E. Wolpert, 'The Relation of Eye Movements, Body Motility, and External Stimuli to Dream Content', *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, Vol. LV, 1958, pp. 543–53.

to which they are so closely related, occur in association with a very wide range of physiological states. The subject may appear to be injured and deeply unconscious, or may be proceeding about his ordinary affairs in an apparently waking state. Whatever the EEG associated with out-of-the-body experiences may be found to be, it is certain to present us with certain difficulties. If the EEG shows the Delta waves characteristic of unconsciousness, we have to reconcile this with the fact that the subject is apparently having a conscious experience at the time. If, on the other hand, a waking EEG is found, compatible with the subject's state of mental awareness, we have to consider how this can be found in association with a complete lack of physiological responsiveness to afferent stimuli.

Tart<sup>1</sup> observes:

... To what extent could a 'two-way communication system' be developed, whereby the experimenter could instruct the subject to do such and such while he is dreaming, and the subject could report on the events of the dream while they are occurring?

Tart goes on to consider what method or methods might be used to achieve these objectives. Although not mentioned by him, the training of subjects in lucid dreaming might be one such method. In Chapter 5 we have referred to a subject who, during lucid dreams starting from a waking state, was able to report her experiences to investigators. This suggests the possibility that it might be possible to train subjects, lucidly dreaming during sleep, to exercise sufficient control over some, at least, of their motor functions to signal to the experimenter. In this connection the reports of two subjects who had lucid dreams as children are of interest. In both

<sup>1</sup> Charles T. Tart, 'Towards the Experimental Control of Dreaming: A Review of the Literature', *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. LXIV, No. 2, August, 1965, p. 88.

cases their reaction to the realization that they were dreaming was to try to wake up. Attempts to open their eyes were almost always unsuccessful, but one subject, unable to wake himself, found that he could call out to his parents, who then came and woke him.

A further matter for experimental investigation is whether or not a lucidly dreaming subject is more accessible to external sensory stimuli than a non-lucidly dreaming one.

A particularly favourable approach to laboratory experimentation would seem to be to train subjects to fall asleep, as Ouspensky did, without loss of conscious awareness. As there would be an experimenter available to wake them after a short time, they would have many opportunities of attempting a direct entry into a lucid dream from the waking state, and their EEGs on the occasions when they reported that they had been successful in retaining lucidity could be compared with their EEGs on the occasions when they did not succeed in doing so, but passed into ordinary sleep or dream.

Such a technique might provide a way of establishing a satisfactory comparison between the EEGs of lucid and non-lucid dreaming. If the technique were adopted of awakening subjects during or just after eye-movement periods and asking them if they remembered dreaming, the difficulty would arise that if they reported a lucid dream one would still be unable to identify with certainty the point at which lucidity had arisen. In the case of starts from the waking state, it would be possible to identify the starting point of lucidity as coincident with falling asleep.

An experimental situation could also be arranged in which it was possible for subjects to attempt ESP during their lucid dreams, in such a way that their successes would have a definite evidential value. It would then be possible to compare the electro-physiological records of lucid dreams during

which ESP was successfully attempted with those of periods during which there were no attempts at ESP, or unsuccessful ones.

## PART TWO

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## Mrs. Arnold-Forster

Mrs. Arnold-Forster, although she observed her dreams over a long period, developed only the simplest kind of lucid dream. We have already discussed her account of the method by which she trained herself to become aware that she was dreaming at any point when a dream became particularly unpleasant.<sup>1</sup> Although she sometimes continued to dream after this realization, she did not dream lucidly.

It is interesting to consider the points of contrast between her accounts of ordinary dreams, and reports of lucid dreams. For example, the changes of identity which characteristically happen to ordinary dreamers, do not occur in lucid dreams.

In ordinary dreams it is common for the subject to start by identifying himself with one character in the dream, and subsequently change this identification to another character. This is Mrs. Arnold-Forster's account of a dream in which such variations of identity occurred:

I was sitting in an arm-chair turning over the leaves of a largish book. Its pages were square in shape and showed a wide margin, especially at the top of each page where title headings were printed; the book was printed in very clear black type. I turned over the pages and saw that it contained three stories – ‘All rather morbid subjects,’ I thought – and as I read on my dream changed and I became one of the characters in the first story. It was about a husband and a wife and was rather a prosy narrative, but I remember little of the events of it or of the part

<sup>1</sup> p. 46.

I played in it, for I thought it dull, and in my capacity as reader I turned over the pages to read the second story.

This was concerned with a murder – a murder that had taken place before the story opened. The man who had committed it was convinced, for reasons that seemed to him wholly adequate, that he was guiltless, and merited no blame for what he had done. I slipped then and there into the person of this man. I remember passionately justifying to myself and to God the righteousness of the act I had committed. I never felt more certain of anything in my life than I felt then, that my conscience was clear of guilt, and that the dreadful deed that I had done had been right. It was all intensely real to me. I remembered the murderer's haunted journey described in *Oliver Twist*. 'People who write about a murderer's mind can know very little about it,' I thought. Again I turned over a page – 'Oh, but these stories are very morbid,' I was saying when I woke.<sup>1</sup>

Here is a further example of a similar kind:

. . . I wandered away and mingled with the other guests who filled the rooms. I was now wearing a rose-coloured dress of silk that fell in full folds to my feet; it seemed to me beautiful and stately, but very unlike the sheath-like fashionable dresses that other women were wearing. 'I haven't worn a rose-coloured dress for years and years,' I thought; 'no wonder this is old-fashioned, it must have been lying by so long!' 'You must come back with us at once,' said the schoolmaster, coming up from behind me; and instantly I had turned into the child again in its short, shabby brown frock, hating going back with the other children, hating the long tiresome walk back to school. The Temple Gardens had changed into a wide common, and I skipped round various big clumps of brambles, edging away as far as I could from the master's flow of improving talk. The child's mind was mine again, and mine was the child's rather scornful attitude towards all 'grand' attire. 'I couldn't possibly have skipped like this in that long pink dress,' I thought.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Arnold-Forster's dreams of flying developed in a

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 83-4.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 85-6.

way which is comparable to the process of development recorded by some lucid dream subjects. That is to say, there was a progressive increase in the range of achievements possible, and once a certain type of activity had been added to the range it remained a permanent acquisition. However, the process of development in Mrs. Arnold-Forster's case did not take place as a result of her increasing success in her intentions within her dreams, but in response to her thinking, while awake, of types of dream which she would like to have. She believed that concentrating on a given possibility had a certain auto-suggestive effect, and that eventually the desired dream would occur.

I then became anxious above all things to achieve a dream in which I should fly over the sea. The dream came at last, and I found myself on the shore looking at the waters of the Atlantic. Beginning at first with short uncertain flights over the sea, I soon found that I need not fear. Flying in the air or gliding on the water was equally safe and easy, and so I started, and with a flight like that of a sea-gull, I flew away with boldness across the Atlantic waves.

The motions of aeroplanes have of late years suggested similar dreams, in which I take the pilot's place, and steer a small aeroplane through the looping flights of the practised airman. Mechanical difficulties are rare in dreams of flying, and if anything untoward does happen (and even in my dreams I do not understand an engine) I have only to desert my plane and to take refuge in my natural way of flight.<sup>1</sup>

The following observations also illustrate the progressive development of Mrs. Arnold-Forster's flying dreams.

Oftenest of all nowadays the flying dream occurs in surroundings of lofty rooms and the great staircases of palatial buildings which I do not know. Sometimes I am in the British Museum or one of the other public galleries. I want to get to the end of the long rooms, and I fly lightly along them. As a bird in a room

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 67-8.

naturally flies along the ceiling, I float upwards and fly along at that level. One does not realize, until one gets accustomed to flying instead of walking, how big a space there is between the ceiling and the tops of doors and windows. One has to float downwards for some distance and steer through the doorway in order to get from room to room or from one gallery to another. When the flying or gliding dream begins I find myself always now in my 'flying dress' – it is a dress of straight close folds which fall three or four inches below my feet. The reason for this is that, once or twice when I have been moving among crowds in busy streets, gliding just clear of the ground, I thought that people must notice that my feet never move like theirs. In Oxford Street one day, when the pavement was very crowded, I feared that it would attract attention disagreeably if people noticed this fact, and that the curiosity of it might lead to an inconvenient amount of notice. I left the thronged thoroughfare and went quickly down Duke Street to avoid observation. Once in the quieter street, I flew along comfortably, but the next time I began to dream I found that I wore a long dress which hid my feet entirely, and no one can see that I am not walking just as they are. It has struck me sometimes as a curious thing that, however crowded the rooms may be when I am flying, no notice whatever is taken even of the most daring flights, but I have learnt now that this is almost always the case. Either it is quite unnoticed or more probably I am unseen.<sup>1</sup>

The following remarks would seem to indicate that Mrs. Arnold-Forster's flying dreams possessed some of the characteristics of lucid dreams.

Flying or gliding dreams, in whatever shape they occur, bring with them a keen sense of pleasure. Even when such a dream is full of varied incident or adventure, it is always restful and refreshing. I awake reluctantly from it with a sense of regret that it should be over. Its outlines are generally very clear-cut and easily recalled to memory, and it is hardly ever inconsequent, as some dreams are.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 74-5.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold-Forster, p. 66.

Like Dr. van Eeden, Mrs. Arnold-Forster concluded from her observations that physical sensations had little effect upon her dreams of flying.

. . . I have made very many attempts to see whether some particular bodily attitude during sleep would have any effect upon dream flying. My notes show that lying on my back, lying upon either side, or as I often lie face downwards with my head pillowed on one arm, the sleeping attitude apparently makes no difference whatever to the flying dream. I made other experiments to see whether a pillow wedged at the foot of the bed, so that the feet were firmly pressed against it, would make any difference, but it did not apparently do so. The hands, moreover, are constantly used in these dreams, a slight waving or paddling motion giving direction or velocity to the flight; but I find that I fly just as well if either or both my hands are imprisoned under the body, and even the fact of waking up with one hand 'gone to sleep' by reason of continued pressure on it has not apparently affected the dream.<sup>1</sup>

Many of Mrs. Arnold-Forster's dreams had considerable narrative interest. It has been observed that her flying dreams more closely resembled lucid dreams than does the average non-lucid dream. It would appear that her flying dreams sometimes displayed the humorous accuracy of characterization that is typical of certain lucid dreams. The following two extracts will illustrate this.

When the dream began I was waiting in a high office-like room which I knew to be closely connected with the War Office. Its walls were painted a light green colour, and whilst I waited I noticed that the prints which hung round it were arranged very irregularly and very high up on the walls. I was expecting a dispatch that I had volunteered to carry to the Army Headquarters in Belgium, flying in the manner in which I fly in my dreams.

There was some delay in its coming, and I flew up round the room partly to test my power of flight, but also to see if the

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 140-1.

window would make a good starting-place. Whilst I circled round I examined the pictures – one, a small engraving of the second Earl Grey, was framed in a narrow ‘early Victorian’ gold frame, and as it hung crookedly, it caught my attention, and I tried to straighten it, but the nail on which it hung was loose and the picture came off into my hand. At that moment the door opened and an official came in. I descended and began to apologize and explain, but he smiled and said it did not signify. ‘In fact,’ he said, ‘it is rather a lucky coincidence – we were wondering what we could possibly send with you to serve as an introduction or passport. Lord Grey’s relationship to Sir Edward Grey, our Secretary of State, is well known abroad. His picture will introduce you at once and be a guarantee of your good faith; you must take it with you!’ ‘How tiresome of the War Office!’ I thought; ‘fancy having to carry this framed picture on my flight!’ However, I could not well refuse, and I fastened it as well as I could by means of its cord to my waist. I asked for a map of the country as being absolutely necessary to guide my flight. The official said that they had hunted all over the War Office for a map of Belgium but could only find a very old one; but he added: ‘This will matter less because all the towns and villages of Belgium are so old that you will find them all marked upon this old map.’<sup>1</sup>

In my dream I was present at a party given in the rooms of the Royal Society in Burlington House. Lord Kelvin, Lord Rayleigh, Sir William Ramsay, my brother-in-law Sir Arthur Rucker, and many others whom I knew, were there. They were standing together in a little group, and my brother-in-law asked me to explain to them my method of flying. I could not explain how it was done, only that it seemed to me much easier to fly than to walk. At this suggestion I made some experimental flights – circling round the ceiling, rising and falling, and showing them also the gliding or floating movement near the ground. They all discussed it critically as though they were rather ‘on the defensive’ about the proceeding, looking upon it, I think, as a new and doubtful experiment, rather savouring of a conjuring trick. Then Lord Kelvin came forward and, speaking with that gracious manner that his friends so

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 71–2.

well remember, said that he felt the power of human flight to be less surprising, less baffling than the others seemed to think it. 'The law of gravitation had probably been in this case temporarily suspended.' – 'Clearly this law does not for the moment affect you when you fly,' he said to me. The others who were present agreed to this, and said that this was probably the solution of the puzzle. An assistant was standing behind the group of men, and in order to show them that flying is not really difficult, I took his hand, and begging him to have confidence in me and to trust to my guidance, I succeeded in making him fly a few inches from the ground.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Arnold-Forster comments upon the presence of certain sensory modalities in dreams. She gives examples of dreams in which colour played an important part, and also states that smell and taste have been present in certain of her dreams. Among her remarks are the following:

My mother's dreams . . . seem to centre round colour, and colour seems to be the fact in them that she remembers most clearly.

'In a gentian dream last night,' she records, 'I found a lovely clump of *Gentiana verna* growing on low rocks together with a mossy-looking plant whose yellowish green was in strong contrast with the colour of the leaves of the gentian – the starry flowers were, of course, of the deep gentian blue.'

Just as some people describe their dream world as being a colourless one, others say that they have no sense of smell in their dreams. Possibly it is their memory of these sense impressions that is at fault, for I find in my own notes many observations of smell as well as of taste, observations not only of fragrant flower scents, but also of subtler impressions of smell such as that which occurs in the following dream: 'I was motor-ing through a countryside of steep hills and valleys; dusk was beginning to fall; 'lighting-up time' had not actually come, but I was warned by the faint scent, cold, clean and unmistakable, that belongs to valley mist, that, besides the natural darkening of the evening, a light mist was beginning to rise and to obscure the road.'

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 68–9.

The sense of taste comes also into certain dreams, but all these impressions are quickly forgotten when we wake. I have looked at the wares of many a confectioner, in the hope, never, I fear, to be realized in a waking world, that I might find amongst them the candy of a certain dream, candy of an entrancing green colour, and of a flavour that only a dream confectioner seems able to supply.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arnold-Forster, pp. 145-6.

## XXI

### Yves Delage

Yves Delage observed his dreams with great interest over a long period, but did not become a habitual lucid dreamer. The type of repeated pre-lucid dream which he had has already been described.<sup>1</sup> However, he recognized the interest of lucid dreams, and describes the few experiences of them which he did have.

His dreams appeared to be characterized by a certain degree of emotional conflict. Although he was aware that he was dreaming, he still found it necessary to overcome a certain emotional resistance in order to do apparently dangerous things. Further, his motive for doing these dangerous things seems peculiar to himself – though perhaps it is paralleled by Subject A on occasion – in that Delage seemed to find it interesting to do things which would normally be prohibited, ‘in order to see what would happen’.

I say to myself: here I am in a situation which may be troublesome or pleasant, but I know very well that it is completely unreal. From this point of my dream, knowing that I cannot run any risk, I allow scenes to unfold themselves before me. I adopt the attitude of an interested spectator, watching an accident or catastrophe which cannot affect him. I think: over there are waiting for me people who want to kill me; I then try to run away; but suddenly, I realize that I am dreaming and I say to myself: since I have nothing to fear I am going to meet my enemies, I will defy them, I will even strike them *in order to see what will happen*. However, although I am sure enough of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 25.

the illusory character of the situation to adopt a course of action which would be unwise in real life, I have to overcome an instinctive feeling of fear. Several times, I have in this way thrown myself on purpose into some danger in order to see what would come of it.<sup>1</sup>

Delage's dream of throwing himself from a precipice has already been quoted. Elsewhere, Delage comments on dreams of this type:

It would not be at all accurate to confuse this experience with an ordinary day-dream. In the latter, I should not experience either this childish satisfaction, nor this remnant of instinctive fear, nor the curiosity to see what would happen, since, having not lost my contact with reality, I should know that what followed would depend entirely on my own fancy. On the other hand, in conscious dreams, the awareness of the fact that I am dreaming, is the only point of contact with reality. Everything else belongs to the dream which, although more or less directed by my will in certain respects, still contains a very considerable degree of scope for the operation of the unforeseen, independently of my will and controlled by factors outside my consciousness. Everything appears vividly objective and as convincing as the events of real life, in a way which is quite different from the feeble impressions of day-dreams.<sup>2</sup>

Here is a more complete account of an interesting lucid dream from which an extract has already been quoted:

I find myself in Paris, at the bottom of the Rue Soufflot, where it meets with the Boulevard Saint-Michel. I am standing on the pavement which is on one's right when one goes towards the Pantheon and I am looking towards the other side of the road, where I see an enormous second-hand bookshop. Long counters stretch along the shop-front under arcades, and there are assistants perched on ladders arranging the books. On the ground between the pillars there are tables loaded with books, and there are passers-by browsing through them and even people sitting to read. I look at this spectacle with a certain

<sup>1</sup> Delage, pp. 452-3; my translation.

<sup>2</sup> Delage, p. 454; my translation.

surprise, but without remembering in my dream that this is not in accordance with reality. I know very well that in that position there is no second-hand bookshop, but a large café. But in my dream I do not remember this.

I move away and, a short distance away on the Boulevard, between the street corner and the Medici fountain, I join a group of loiterers who are gathered round a contortionist. At this moment I become analytical. I remember coming to Paris the day before, which was a Saturday, and it occurs to me that the next day, Monday, I shall come again to Paris, as usual, for the sitting of the Academy. And from this I conclude (which is not very meritorious) that today is a Sunday. All at once, I say to myself: 'How is it that I am here on a Sunday? This is hardly ever the case.' And at once it dawns on me: 'If it is Sunday and I think I am in Paris, I must be dreaming.' The dream immediately becomes completely lucid, without losing any of its hallucinatory character nor any part of its vividness.

Thus, the consideration which brought me to the conviction that I was dreaming was not the weighty argument that the corner of the rue Soufflot seems to be occupied by a shop which (in reality, but not in my dream, for the memory does not occur to me) I know very well is not there, but it is this very feeble argument that I find myself in Paris on a day when I am not usually there.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, we should mention that Delage had one type of dream which, although non-lucid, was to some extent subject to his control. It is interesting to contrast this kind of control with that described by lucidly dreaming subjects. Delage is able to modify the total dream environment in a way that does not seem to come easily to lucid dreamers, and he is, of course, much more emotionally involved in the dream situation.

Here is a dream that I have had several times with certain variations of detail. Perhaps I should say in passing that I must have obtained the idea of this arrangement of the cave from accounts which I had read of the life of the ornithorhynchus, a

<sup>1</sup> Delage, pp. 455-6; my translation.

small Australian mammal, whose burrow is arranged very nearly as is the cavern of my dream.

I dream that I am being pursued by people who have designs on my life. They may be criminals, savages, or, on a number of occasions, soldiers of an enemy power at war with France. I am on the point of being caught, sometimes I already have been caught, when a thought occurs to me. I think that there is an admirable way of evading the attention of the pursuers: it is to hide in a cavern which is completely inaccessible because its entry is under water, and it cannot be entered without diving into a lake. Neither lake nor cavern present in my dream has an external mental image. This is simply a thought which comes into my mind as I run along a road or the corridors of a house. Instantly, by an act of will, I change the scene and translate it into another setting where there are the necessary lake and cavern. Sometimes, even, if I have already been captured, I set back the course of events and go back to a time before I had been taken, in order to make the action develop in another way and to give it another outcome. To this end I set everything, pursuers and pursued, at a great distance. I give myself a start in order to arrive first and unobserved at a convenient point of the lake. Once there, I dive and enter the cavern. Here I experience a feeling of perfect security, even taking pleasure in hearing above my head, separated from me only by a thin layer of earth, the sounds of the pursuit on foot or on horseback, searching in all directions, completely at a loss.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Delage, pp. 457–8; my translation.

## Dr. van Eeden

In a paper which was read on April 22nd, 1913, Dr. van Eeden said:

Since 1896 I have studied my own dreams, writing down the most interesting in my diary. In 1898 I began to keep a separate account for a particular kind of dream which seemed to me the most important, and I have continued it up to this day. Altogether I collected about 500 dreams, of which 352 are of the particular kind just mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

The 'particular kind of dream' to which he referred was, of course, the lucid type.

Van Eeden considers the supposition that physical sensations influence dreams. He states the conclusions which he has drawn on this point as follows:

As the outcome of careful observations, I maintain my conviction that the bodily conditions of the sleeper have, as a rule, no influence on the character of dreams, with the exception of a few rare and abnormal cases, near the moment of waking up, or in those dreams which I have classified as *pathological*, in which fever, indigestion, or some poison, plays a rôle, and which form a small minority. For myself as the observer, I may state that I have been in good health all the time of observation. I had no important complaints of any nervous or visceral kind. My sleep and digestion both are usually good. Yet I have had the most terrible nightmares, while my body was as fresh and healthy as usual, and I have had delicious peaceful dreams on

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 431-2.

board ship in a heavy storm, or in a sleeping-car on the railway . . .

I wish, therefore, to define the true dream as *that state where-in bodily sensations, be they visceral, internal or peripheral, cannot penetrate to the mind directly, but only in the psychical, non-spatial form of a symbol or an image.*<sup>1</sup>

Van Eeden insists on the possibility of complete recollection and volition in a dream:

I can only say that I made my observations during normal deep and healthy sleep, and that in 352 cases I had a full recollection of my day-life, and could act voluntarily, though I was so fast asleep that no bodily sensations penetrated into my perception.<sup>2</sup>

Van Eeden makes a clear distinction between the kinds of false awakening which we have called Type (1) and Type (2). He describes Type (1) in the following way:

. . . It often happens that I dream that I wake up and tell my lucid dream to some other person. This latter is then a dream of the common form. . . . From this dream I wake up in the real waking world, very much amazed at the curious wanderings of my mind. The impression is as if I had been rising through spheres of different depths, of which the lucid dream was the deepest.<sup>3</sup>

A Type (2) false awakening is described in the following way:

We have the sensation of waking up in our ordinary sleeping-room and then we begin to realize that there is something uncanny around us; we see inexplicable movements or hear strange noises, and then we know that we are still asleep. In my first experience of this dream I was rather afraid and wanted nervously to wake up really. I think this is the case with most people who have it. They become frightened and nervous, and at last wake up with palpitations, a sweating brow and so on.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 438-40.

<sup>3</sup> Van Eeden, p. 449.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 440-1.

<sup>4</sup> Van Eeden, p. 456.

It is interesting to observe the similarity of this description with others already quoted.

Although van Eeden does not explicitly discuss the perceptual quality of his lucid dreams, we may infer that it was very close to that of waking life. The consideration of his lucid dreams leads van Eeden to the following philosophical reflections:

When we see certain objects, say the blue sky, we have learned to explain this phenomenon by an infinitely complicated process. To bring about this simple fact, the perception of a blue sky, we require not less than trillions of vibrations of the most subtle kind, coming from the sun, and striking an instrument so wonderfully elaborate and fine as our retinas and the optic nerves.

And now, during sleep, the same phenomenon is repeated, — exactly repeated. When I see the blue sky in a lucid dream, I see it as clearly, as brightly, as consciously as I now see this paper. Pray, what is the difference? Are these trillions of vibrations and the wonderful machinery of the retinas not wanted? How is this second image then created?<sup>1</sup>

The emotional quality of van Eeden's lucid dream is described in the following passage:

Lucid dreams are also symbolic . . . I never remarked anything sexual or erotic in them. Their symbolism takes the form of beautiful landscapes, — different luminous phenomena, sunlight, clouds, and especially a deep blue sky. In a perfect instance of the lucid dream I float through immensely wide landscapes, with a clear blue, sunny sky, and a feeling of deep bliss and gratitude, which I feel impelled to express by eloquent words of thankfulness and piety. Sometimes these words seem to me a little rhetorical, but I cannot help it, as it is very difficult in dreams to control emotional impulses. Sometimes I conceive of what appears as a symbol, warning, consoling, approving. A cloud gathers or the light brightens. Only once could I see the disc of the sun.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, p. 459.

<sup>2</sup> Van Eeden, p. 449.

Van Eeden comments particularly upon the quality of auditory sensation in a lucid dream.

The sensation of the *voice* during a lucid dream is most marvellous, and after many repetitions still a source of amazement. I use my voice as loudly as I can, and though I know quite well that my physical body is lying in profound sleep, I can hardly believe that this loud voice is inaudible in the waking world. Yet, though I have sung, shouted, and spoken loudly in hundreds of dreams, my wife has never heard my voice, and in several cases was able to assure me that I had slept quite peacefully.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Van Eeden, pp. 447-8.

## P. D. Ouspensky

The Russian philosopher, Ouspensky, was interested throughout his life in the possible modifications of consciousness. He states his reasons for wishing to cultivate lucid dreams as follows:

(1) I wanted to collect as much material as possible for judging the structure and origin of dreams immediately on awakening.

(2) I wanted to verify a rather fantastic idea of my own which had made its appearance almost in my childhood: *was it not possible to preserve consciousness in dreams*, that is, to know while dreaming that one is asleep and *to think consciously* as we think when awake.<sup>1</sup>

Ouspensky started trying to observe ordinary, non-lucid dreams. He observed that studying dreams by writing them down, thinking about them, and so on produced changes in his dreams. So he rejected these methods of observation. He then turned to attempts to preserve consciousness in sleep, and believed that in this way he could observe dreams without changing them.

If is difficult to see how he, or anyone, could be sure that he had succeeded in doing this. Lucid dreams as a class appear to differ in certain respects from the class of non-lucid dreams. For example, the texture of the experience seems to be a more accurate reproduction of waking life, and they

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 272.

have a greater degree of coherence. But it is impossible to tell how far these differences, as they appear in the subjects' reports, depend on the qualities of the original experience and how far they arise from the greater difficulty of remembering ordinary dreams.

However, Ouspensky believed that in a lucid dream state he was able to observe, unchanged, all the types of dream which he had in the ordinary way.

I had in 'half-dream states' all the dreams I was able to have in the ordinary way. Gradually my whole repertoire of dreams passed before me. And I was able to observe these dreams quite consciously, could see how they were created, how they passed one into another, and could understand all their mechanism.<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that Ouspensky differs from other observers by entering his lucid dreams by maintaining awareness as the transition from the waking state takes place, rather than by being aroused to lucidity by some reminder when a dream is already going on. However, nothing in Ouspensky's descriptions of his dreams would entitle us to suppose that they were different from other people's lucid dreams, except that other lucid dreamers do not usually claim that the dreams which they are having are exactly like their non-lucid dreams. But no other habitual lucid dreamer has been interested in studying dreams from exactly the same point of view as Ouspensky, and it would be necessary to compare Ouspensky's results with those of another lucid dreamer who also had a definite intention of having his ordinary kinds of dream when he was able to observe them consciously.

In general, Ouspensky's conclusions about the formation of dreams seem to be that they can usually be seen to derive from physical sensations, or from straightforward memories

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 274.

of waking experience, often of childhood impressions. Ouspensky does not accept psychoanalytical methods of dream interpretation. When he began his studies of dreams psychoanalysis was not yet known, and he observes that when he did know of psychoanalysis he saw in it 'nothing of value, nothing that would make me alter the least of my conclusions though they are invariably all opposed to the psychoanalytical'.

The following interpretations are typical of Ouspensky's observations:

When I happened to press my hand with my knee and the hand became numb, I dreamt that a dog was biting my hand. When I wanted to take something in my hands or lift it, it fell out of my hands because my hands were as limp as rags and refused to obey me. I remember once in a dream I had to break something with a hammer, and the hammer was as if made of indiarubber; it rebounded from the object I was striking, and I could not give any force to my blows. This, of course, was simply the sensation of relaxed muscles.<sup>1</sup>

To the category of constantly recurring dreams belonged also dreams of flying. I used to fly fairly often and was very fond of these dreams. In 'half-dream states' I saw that flying depended on a slight giddiness which occurs in sleep from time to time without any pathological cause, but probably simply in connection with the horizontal position of the body. There was no erotic element in the dreams of flying.

Amusing dreams which occur very often, those in which one sees oneself undressed or half-dressed walking in the street or among people, also required no complicated theories for their explanation. This was simply the sensation of one's half-dressed body. As I noticed in 'half-dream states', these dreams occurred chiefly when I was feeling cold during sleep. The cold made me realize that I was undressed, and this sensation penetrated into my dreams.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the recurring dreams could be explained only in

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> Ouspensky, pp. 276-7.

connection with others. Such were the dreams of stairs, often described in psychological literature. These are strange dreams, and many people have them. You go up huge, gloomy, endless staircases, find certain passages leading out, remember the way, then lose it again, come upon unfamiliar landings, turnings, doors, etc. This is one of the most typical recurring dreams. And as a rule you meet no one, you are usually alone amidst these large empty staircases.

As I understood in 'half-dream states', these dreams are a combination of two motives or recollections. The first motive is created by motor memory, the memory of direction. These dreams of stairs are in no way different from dreams of long corridors, with endless court-yards through which you pass, with streets, alleys, gardens, parks, fields, woods; in a word these are dreams of *roads* or *ways*. We all know many roads and ways; in houses, up stairs and along corridors; in towns, in the country, in the mountains; and we can see all these roads in dreams, although very often we see not the roads themselves but, if it can be so expressed, the general feeling of them. Each way has its own particular sensation. These sensations are created by thousands of small details reflected and impressed in various corners of our memory. Later these sensations are reproduced in dreams, though for the creation of the desired sensation dreams very often use the accidental material of images. Because of this the 'road' you see in dreams may not resemble outwardly the road you actually know and remember when awake, but it will produce the same impressions as the road you know and are familiar with, and will give you the same sensations.

'Stairs' are similar to 'roads', only, as has already been said, they contain another motive as well. This motive consists in a certain mystical significance which stairs have in the life of every man. Everybody in his life often experiences on the stairs a sense of something new and unknown awaiting him that very moment on the next floor, behind a closed door. Everyone can recollect many such moments in his life. A man ascends the stairs not knowing what awaits him. For children it is often their arrival at school, or generally the first impression of school, and such impressions remain throughout life. Further, stairs are often the scene of hesitations, decisions, change of

decisions, and so on. All this taken together and united with memories of motion creates dreams about staircases.<sup>1</sup>

There was only one dream which I was unable to explain. That was the dream in which I saw myself *running on all fours*, and sometimes very fast. It seemed to be in certain cases the swiftest, safest, and most reliable means of locomotion. In a moment of danger, or in general in any difficult situation, I always preferred in the dream this means of locomotion to any other.

For some reason I do not remember this dream in 'half-dream states'. And I understood the origin of this 'running on all fours' only later when I was observing a small child who was only just beginning to walk. He could walk, but to him it was still a great adventure and his position on two legs was still very uncertain, unstable and unreliable. He apparently distrusted himself in this position. If therefore anything unexpected happened, if a door opened, or a noise was heard from the street, or even if the cat jumped off the sofa, he dropped immediately on all fours.<sup>2</sup>

As Ouspensky was primarily concerned with making observations in order to arrive at this kind of understanding of his dreams he did not attempt to increase his control of them. He observes, however, that a potential control was present.

The fact is that in 'half-dream states' I was having all the dreams I usually had. But I was fully conscious, I could see and understand how these dreams were created, what they were built from, what was their cause, and in general what was cause and what was effect. Further, I saw that in 'half-dream states' I had a certain control over dreams. I could create them and could see what I wanted to see, although this was not always successful and must not be understood too literally. Usually I only gave the first impetus, and after that the dreams developed as it were of their own accord, sometimes greatly astonishing me by the unexpected and strange turns which they took.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, pp. 277-8.

<sup>2</sup> Ouspensky, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup> Ouspensky, p. 274.

In fact, it sounds as though Ouspensky in spite of himself found that a higher degree of control of the dream began to develop, although he tried to prevent this, and when he altered the dream in accordance with his own volition he referred to this as a 'false observation'.

My original aim was to create consciousness in dreams . . . But soon there began to appear 'false observations', i.e., merely new dreams. I remember once seeing myself in a large empty room without windows. Besides myself there was in the room only a small black kitten. 'I am dreaming,' I say to myself. 'How can I know whether I am really asleep or not? Suppose I try this way. Let this black kitten be transformed into a large white dog. In a waking state it is impossible and if it comes off it will mean that I am asleep.' I say this to myself and immediately the black kitten becomes transformed into a large white dog. At the same time the opposite wall disappears, disclosing a mountain landscape with a river like a ribbon receding into the distance.

'This is curious,' I say to myself; 'I did not order this landscape. Where did it come from?' Some faint recollection begins to stir in me, a recollection of having seen this landscape somewhere and of its being somehow connected with the white dog. But I feel that if I let myself go into it I shall forget the most important thing that I have to remember, namely, *that I am asleep and am conscious of myself*. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The following is a typical example of one of Ouspensky's lucid dreams, with the kind of interpretation which he gave of the causes of it.

I am falling asleep. Golden dots, sparks and tiny stars appear and disappear before my eyes . . . From the first moment to the last I observed how pictures appeared and how they were transformed into one another. The golden sparks and dots were transformed into a net with regular meshes. Then the golden net was transformed into the helmets of the Roman soldiers. The pulsation which I heard was transformed into the measured

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 279.

tread of the marching detachment. The sensation of this pulsation means the relaxation of many small muscles, which in its turn produces a sensation of slight giddiness. This sensation of slight giddiness was immediately manifested in my seeing the soldiers, while lying on the window-sill of a *high* house and looking down; and when this giddiness increased a little, I rose from the window and flew over the gulf. This at once brought with it by association the sensation of the sea, the wind and the sun, and if I had not awakened, probably at the next moment of the dream I should have seen myself in the open sea, on a ship, and so on.<sup>1</sup>

Ouspensky believed that 'man cannot in sleep think about himself *unless the thought is itself a dream*. A man can never pronounce his own name in sleep. If I pronounced my name in sleep, I immediately woke up.' Ouspensky has theoretical reasons for supposing this to be an absolute limitation. This arises from his views on degrees of self-consciousness. It is true that I do not know of a report by anyone that they have succeeded in remembering or pronouncing their name in a lucid dream without waking up, but it does not occur to many people to try. Oliver Fox frequently claims to have been aware of his identity, occupations and past life history in his lucid dreams, and from this it would sound as though he was in a position to state his name if he had wished to do so. On one occasion he did produce his name in answer to a question. It is true that this led to the termination of the experience, but the situation was such that to state his name had considerable dramatic significance.

The discussion of memory in lucid dreams has shown that there are probably certain areas of the waking memory which are less accessible than others in a lucid dream state. We are not therefore in a position to conclude that any area is necessarily permanently inaccessible. Even a tentative

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> Ouspensky, p. 281.

opinion could only be formed as a result of a number of people trying deliberately, over a long period, to remember the various types of thing in question in their dreams.

We have noted the power of mimicry of personality which is observed in lucid dreams. Ouspensky comments not only on this but also on the elaborate and coherent plots which some of his dreams possessed.<sup>1</sup> This latter characteristic is also remarked upon by Mrs. Arnold-Forster in connection with her non-lucid dreams.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix C.

## XXIV

### Oliver Fox

Oliver Fox claims to have had, at least on certain occasions, a more complete recollection of his past life within his lucid dreams than does any other subject. He stresses, however, that this was dependent on his possessing a high degree of lucidity.

. . . I found that though I might know I was dreaming, there were *degrees* of realization, and the vividness or perfection of the experience was proportionate to the extent of the consciousness manifesting in the dream. To get the best results I had to know all about the past life of my earthly self, just as one does in waking life, to realize my body was asleep in bed, and to appreciate the extended powers at my command in this seemingly disembodied state.<sup>1</sup>

In view of Subject B's observations, it would seem that the most difficult exercise of memory in a lucid dream, at least so far as the events of one's own past life are concerned, would be to trace the events of the last few days up to the moment of actually going to bed on the night in question. Fox does not explicitly state that his memory of the events of his life passed this test, so it remains an open question whether it would have done.

Fox had both lucid dreams and deliberately induced out-of-the-body experiences – he referred to the latter as states of 'astral projection'. He believed that by deliberately prolonging a lucid dream when it had become difficult to do so,

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 34-5.

it was possible to enter the out-of-the-body state. His account of his first experiment in doing this is as follows:

I dreamed that I was walking by the water on the Western Shore. It was morning; the sky a light blue; the foam-flecked waves were greenish in the sunshine. I forget just how it happened, but something told me that I was dreaming. Perhaps I walked through a telegraph-post, or became aware that my body had no weight. I decided to prolong the dream and continued my walk, the scenery now appearing extraordinarily vivid and clear. Very soon my body began to draw me back. I experienced dual consciousness: I could feel myself lying in bed and walking by the sea at one and the same time. Moreover, I could dimly see the objects in my bedroom, as well as the dream-scenery. I willed to continue dreaming. A battle ensued; now my bedroom became clearly visible and the shore-scene dim; then my bedroom would become indistinct and the shore-scene brighter. My will triumphed. I lost the sense of dual consciousness. My bedroom faded altogether from my vision, and I was out on the shore, feeling indescribably free and elated. Soon my body began to call again, and at the same time I became aware of a sharp, neuralgic pain in my forehead (not my physical forehead) and the top of my head. As I willed to continue dreaming, this pain increased in intensity; but this time there was no dual consciousness, or alternating clearness of bedroom and shore – the bedroom was not visible. I fought against my body by steadily willing to remain in the Dream World. The pain in my forehead gradually increased, reached a maximum, and then, to my delight, suddenly ceased. As the pain vanished, something seemed to ‘click’ in my brain. I had won the battle. My body pulled no longer, and I was free!<sup>1</sup>

Fox thought that an out-of-the-body experience could also be entered from a Type (2) false awakening – that it was only necessary to sit up ‘out of his body’ and leave the bed. When he did this, however, he did not seem to see his physical body lying on the bed behind him, as some other subjects report.

<sup>1</sup> Fox, pp. 37–8.

It may be of some relevance to the question of distinguishing between lucid dreams and out-of-the-body experiences that Fox mentions the experience of catalepsy at the termination of out-of-the-body states but not at the end of lucid dreams.

Fox, like Dr. Whiteman, refers to a somewhat curious phenomenon – that of ‘seeing’ with his eyes closed. When this happened, he took it as a sign that he was in a state similar to that of a Type (2) false awakening. The experience of ‘seeing’ with one’s eyes closed is also reported by another subject who has been investigated by the Institute, and who has experimented in the voluntary induction of out-of-the-body states over a considerable period of time.

I have seen with my eyes closed on several occasions. This has happened when I have gone to bed extremely tired and always in the hypnagogic state. Oddly enough the objects seen have been outside my normal field of vision for the direction in which I have been lying.

The same phenomenon is reported by Dr. Ernst Mach:

A peculiar phenomenon that I have experienced frequently for some years is the following. I awaken and lie still with my eyes closed. Before me I see the bedspread with all its little folds, and my hands in all their detail, lying on it motionless and solid-looking. If I open my eyes I find it is quite dark in the room, or perhaps light, but the bedspread and my hands are disposed quite differently from the way in which they appeared to me.<sup>1</sup>

Fox refers to a state resembling a Type (2) false awakening as the ‘Trance Condition’, regardless of whether he entered it from sleep or waking. Here is an example of the way in which he describes ‘leaving his body’ when he found himself in such a condition.

<sup>1</sup> E. Mach, *Die Analyse der Empfindungen*, 2nd edition, Fischer, Jena, 1900, p. 130; my translation. The original appears in Appendix F.

I was lying on the bed in the afternoon when I experienced the False Awakening, imagining that my wife and two friends were sitting in the room and talking. I felt too tired to take any part in this conversation and 'went to sleep' again. When I next became aware of my surroundings I realized that I was in the Trance Condition and could leave my body. I therefore sat up (out of my body, as it were) and then leisurely got off the bed. Dual consciousness was very strong. I could feel myself lying on the bed and standing by it, my legs pressing against the coverlet, simultaneously; but though I could see all the objects in the room quite clearly, I could not see my body when I looked for it upon the bed. Everything seemed just as real as in waking life – more so, extra vivid – and I felt indescribably well and free, my brain seeming extraordinarily alert. I left the bed and walked slowly round the room to the door, the sense of dual consciousness diminishing as I moved farther away from my body; but just as I was going to leave the room, my body pulled me back instantaneously and the trance was broken. There was no final stage of apparent catalepsy, and I experienced no unpleasant after-effects.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fox, p. 71.

## Dr. Whiteman

Dr. Whiteman is a lecturer in mathematics at Cape Town University, and has had a very large number of lucid dream experiences throughout his life. The serial numbers of the cases which he quotes in his book *The Mystical Life* indicate that they are drawn from a population of nearly 3,000 experiences. Of course, not all of these experiences are classified by Dr. Whiteman as lucid dreams.

The experiences of Dr. Whiteman provide a good illustration of the fact that the more a subject develops his lucid dreaming, the more difficult it becomes to decide whether his experiences are more appropriately to be classified as lucid dreams or as out-of-the-body experiences. Spontaneous 'crisis' out-of-the-body experiences are, on the whole, easily distinguishable from spontaneous lucid dreams occurring during sleep. But the more elaborate and consistent the experience becomes, the less appropriate it seems to be to place undue emphasis, when classifying it, on whether or not it was initiated during sleep, or on whether or not the subject seemed to see his ordinary physical body at any stage of the experience.

Dr. Whiteman's classification of his experiences does not, in fact, depend at all on either of these considerations, but only on psychological criteria. Dr. Whiteman distinguishes 'dream' from 'separation' by reference to the subject's ability, in a 'separated' state, to recall physical conditions or his physical form or personality, and to make rational

comparisons between his present state and that of normal experience. Further, in a 'separated' state, the subject should, on attending to the phenomena which he is experiencing, 'realize that they are neither irrational (as in dream) nor coldly material (as in the physical world), but that, on the contrary, they can be objectively and rationally, yet sympathetically, surveyed by a higher judgement in accord with their essential nature'.<sup>1</sup> I take this to mean that the phenomena of the lucid dream should be seen to conform to some kind of psychological meaningfulness. However, no one but Dr. Whiteman has attempted to apply this criterion to their lucid dreams, and it would be difficult to say which experiences were to be regarded as psychologically meaningful in this sense. However, it is possible to gain some insight into the criterion as Dr. Whiteman understood it and applied it to his own experiences.

We see that both lucid dreams and 'out-of-the-body' experiences would be classified by Dr. Whiteman as states of 'separation'.

Dr. Whiteman distinguishes a somewhat lower grade of experience which he calls 'fantasy-separation'. In this kind of experience, although the observer is capable of rational reflection, the experiences do not completely fulfil the condition of psychological meaningfulness.

... the phenomena are somewhat disagreeable, or apparently irrational, and atoned for only by their intellectual interest and the remarkable bodily freedom typical of separations. We have hardly any power to improve conditions or become liberated to higher ones. In brief, there is rational reflection, but no rational control over unharmonized influences!<sup>2</sup>

The following example will illustrate what Dr. Whiteman means by fantasy elements in his lucid dreams. Similar incongruities are not commonly reported by habitual dreamers

<sup>1</sup> Whiteman, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Whiteman, pp. 49-50.

other than Dr. Whiteman, but longitudinal studies of so few subjects have yet been possible that this fact does not enable us to draw any final conclusion about their frequency in general.

Towards the end of a vivid quasi-physical separation into a strange house, I tried to get out by ascending a small staircase. But the way up suddenly contracted, and realizing that fantasy-obstacles were being imposed I turned back again. The floor of the room towards the left began to take on the appearance of sloping away in darkness, and almost at once it was as if I were being drawn, or were gradually slipping, towards a rectangular pit or well of water placed there . . .<sup>1</sup>

In his classification of types of experience, Dr. Whiteman further specifies that 'full separation' should be characterized by the fact that

no consciousness is located in the physical body. More precisely, if we have spatial or visual awareness of the physical body, or of a body which resembles or is believed to be the physical body, we also perceive unmistakably that the form in which our consciousness is altogether located is distinct and fully apart from that body.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whiteman, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Whiteman, p. 51.

## Subjects A and D

Subjects A and D have experienced both voluntary and involuntary out-of-the-body states as well as lucid dreams in the course of their lives.

Both of them report experiencing their first out-of-the-body states involuntarily as children of about three or four years of age. Subject D describes his first out-of-the-body experiences in this way:

My first experience of astral projection (if it was this) occurred when I was a child between three-and-a-half and four. I had a very bad attack of scarlet fever and nearly died.

At the foot of my bed was a wardrobe. On the top of this my toys had been placed. I used to see a broad shaft of light streaming from my toys. I never succeeded in getting to the top, but would feel myself pulled backward.

I could see my bed beneath me, but also I could see myself climbing, from a position in the bed corresponding to my normal visual field. I saw myself dressed in a sailor suit similar to that which I usually wore. Double vision was thus involved; seeing from my physical body my astral body, and from my astral the bed a few feet beneath me.

I cannot now recall whether my double vision was simultaneous or not, i.e., whether I had my physical sight one moment and astral at another.

Later, when between five and six, I frequently used to float out above my bed, over the stairs leading from my bedroom and into the street. While floating above the stairs I could see over a paraffin oil lamp suspended from the ceiling. This lamp with its deep blue glass container used to interest me when in my normal condition because of its rather beautiful colouring.

When astrally projected I could see the wick within the lamp. This (as far as I can recall) was invisible from the floor. I would go through the closed door into the street, above the houses, see the roofs beneath me and a nearby school from this elevated position. I do not remember ever getting farther than this; the rest would be a confused nightmare.<sup>1</sup>

Subject A describes his earliest experience of an out-of-the-body state as follows:

When I was about three to five years old, and had been put to bed, I used very often to feel myself being lifted up from the bed. This frightened me and I used to scream so that someone would come. They used to say I had been having a nightmare, but I was sure that I had not been dreaming.<sup>2</sup>

In this case, we have of course to consider the possibility that this may have been an experience of levitation – i.e. that the subject's physical body rose from the bed. This possibility cannot be ruled out, since this subject has on several occasions in his late life been associated with the production of what appeared to be psychokinetic phenomena. However, the hypothesis that they were 'out-of-the-body' experiences would accord with his description of his childhood experiences equally well, so far as we can tell from the evidence contained in his account of them.

In adult life, both Subjects A and D attempted consciously to induce out-of-the-body experiences. In both cases, they describe their preparations for these attempts as consisting mainly of an intense focussing of their attention upon their objective during at least the preceding day. Subject A's experience of this kind usually began by a seeming displacement of consciousness away from his physical body – for example, he would describe himself as 'falling through the bed'. Subject D's voluntary 'projections', on the other hand,

<sup>1</sup> Subject D.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A.

illustrate once more the difficulty of drawing a clear dividing-line between lucid dreams and out-of-the-body states, since he describes himself as simply 'finding himself' in a different environment. Here is an account of his first experience in this direction:

My first attempt at conscious projection was made when I was about forty-five. I had been reading du Maurier's 'Peter Ibbetson'. The chief character in that novel used to meet his girl-friend by astrally projecting himself from his prison cell. He did this by placing his hands behind his head, crossing his feet and willing himself to the meeting place. I spent the whole of one day concentrating on the idea of projecting myself to a certain place that night. Of course it was impossible during the whole of the day to think of nothing else, but I put in every minute possible willing and thinking of this. When I went to bed I assumed the position described and immediately found myself in a street with overhead lamps suspended along the middle of the road.

My head was quite clear. I thought to myself, this is not where I intended to project myself: I wonder if I am dreaming. I was outside a large block of buildings of the kind which has a common entrance and is used for residential purposes. I decided to test the reality or otherwise of my experience by going in. Nobody could be seen on the ground floor but two landings up I could see two men talking together. I made up my mind to go to them and see if anything would happen. As I climbed the stairs I could feel my legs going through the usual movements but could not feel the stairs themselves. When I got to the men they went on talking for a few seconds, then one of them looked in my direction, but his eyes opened wide and he threw up his hands. Immediately after this I found myself awake and in bed again.<sup>1</sup>

This experience differs from the standard lucid dream in one respect. The subject refers to having dual physical sensations. That is, he could feel pressure on the back of his head

<sup>1</sup> Subject D.

from the pillow, and other sensations appropriate to his position in bed, at the same time as he was experiencing the sensations proper to his 'out-of-the-body' experience. Lucid dreamers usually stress that they do not experience any of the sensations proper to their physical body while they are having lucid dreams.

In connection with out-of-the-body experiences, both Subjects A and D comment on a lack of certain normal proprioceptive sensations – primarily those connected with the sense of weight or pressure. Subject A says on this point:

The condition of the body is, I should say, similar to that of an astronaut outside his capsule – there is no feeling of weight.<sup>1</sup>

Both subjects report other features in connection with their out-of-the-body experiences which are not found in association with lucid dreams. For example, both subjects seemed to pass through walls in out-of-the-body states, as Oliver Fox also claims to have done. It does not seem to have occurred to anyone to attempt this in a lucid dream, though there is no reason to suppose that it would be impossible. Then again, both subjects report the experience of catalepsy at the termination of certain out-of-the-body experiences, though not following lucid dreams.

Subject A reports flying frequently, but only in lucid dreams; Subject D reports numerous flying dreams, but never in connection with lucidity. Their observations in this connection are as follows;

I have had flying dreams all my life. These dreams are sometimes so vivid that in a half-waking state I have thought: Oh! At last I can do again what I used to do in my childhood, flying at will. I will get an easy living demonstrating this in future! These dreams were not associated with lucidity. The

<sup>1</sup> Subject A.

emotional quality associated with flying dreams was one of elation. A feeling, usually, of having regained a lost art.<sup>1</sup>

I have had flying dreams not infrequently. There was a marvellous sensation of utter freedom! There may have been a few times when the flying dream was not of the lucid type but if that was so it left no impression on my mind!<sup>2</sup>

Subject D does not report false awakening, but Subject A reports fairly frequent false awakenings of Type (2).

In connection with the question of ESP, it may be of interest to report one experience of possible ESP in an out-of-the-body state in the case of each of these subjects.

I was living abroad and my son and his wife were living in a flat in London which I had never visited.

One day I decided to attempt a projection to their flat. I had never discussed my attempts at projection with them nor had they any reason to suspect my intention to attempt this. Having partially fasted for 24 hours, I lay down on the bed and concentrated. After a time the ticking of the clock became inaudible for short periods and during those periods I began to have sensations of falling. Eventually I seemed to fall completely through the bed and found myself in a room on which I had difficulty in focussing my attention, as if I were in a state of alcoholic intoxication. Everything was swimming and topsy-turvy, and in the confusion I dimly saw two people moving. Meanwhile, in London, my son and daughter-in-law woke up feeling too hot and strangely alarmed. They got up and walked about attempting to throw off their feelings of apprehension and the feeling that someone or something was in the room. The time at which this occurred coincided, allowing for longitude, with the time at which the projection was attempted (3 a.m.). Finding their experience inexplicable, my son sent me a cable in the morning asking me whether I had been doing anything the previous night. I asked him to send me full particulars of what he had experienced before I told him of my attempt at projection. I was able to give a partial description of the flat but this

<sup>1</sup> Subject D.

<sup>2</sup> Subject A.

could not be regarded as of high evidential value since many of the things I had noticed were common to many rooms!<sup>1</sup>

The experience described by Subject D is of a seemingly 'clairvoyant' rather than 'telepathic' nature.

One night I concentrated on visiting Brighton. I had not been there since I was a boy of fourteen. I found myself in a town the most conspicuous feature of which was what appeared to be an Eastern palace. That would, of course, be the Pavilion. I had no conscious recollection of this place, but must have seen it on my one-day visit as a boy. I saw a bridge with slender brick arches. I was floating some distance from the ground and found myself against a hotel. I forced myself against the wall of this and then found myself in a dining room. Nobody appeared to notice me. To attract attention I touched a woman on the neck, and then seemed to be immediately ejected by an invisible force. My next recollection is of seeing two or three windmills.

Shortly after this I met somebody who lived at Hove. I described my projection to him. He told me that that year the Council had erected some windmills in connection with an advertising stunt associated with Brighton and Hove. Of this I had no recollection of having heard.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Subject A.

<sup>2</sup> Subject D.

## XXVII

### Subjects B and C

The lucid dreams of both Subjects B and C were initiated by the interest which they took in examining the accounts of former subjects, and both remark on the effects of studying the literature of lucid dreams as a means of inducing them in oneself.

Subjects B and C both report false awakenings of Type (1) and Subject B has experienced the Type (2) false awakening; but neither of Subjects B and C has had an out-of-the-body experience.

Subject B had never flown in ordinary dreams, but acquired the art in lucid dreams. Subject C has flown (or, as he puts it, 'skimmed') in ordinary dreams, but has not yet succeeded in flying in lucid dreams.

Subject C was particularly struck by the fact that while having his lucid dreams he did not sense the external world at all. He says: 'This was quite contrary to my *a priori* expectation.' Further, and again contrary to his expectation, there did not seem to be any danger of waking up. On the contrary, he says of one dream:

Trying to maintain the lucidity was like trying to keep awake when one is dreadfully sleepy: one starts trying to pretend to oneself one is still awake (i.e. still lucid) when one has in fact passed the point of no return.

Subject C give this example of a dream with rather poor quality lucidity:

At some point in a non-lucid dream lucidity occurred. I tried to remember the distinction between dream-motivation and the motivation to remain lucid. I also made a generalized attempt to remember what it was I had to remember (ESP, etc.); but it was like trying to remember a safety drill during an accident; there wasn't being enough time, or one wasn't sufficiently detached.

This description is comparable with Subject B's description of a dream in which he was finding it difficult to retain lucidity, and felt there was not, in some way, enough time for what he wanted to do.

The following initiation of a lucid dream by Subject C demonstrates that a previous, non-lucid dream may be correctly remembered in a lucid one.

I saw a letter-rack full of letters and looked to see if there were any addressed to me. But the scene seemed familiar to me in some way, and it suddenly dawned upon me with a sort of flash of joy that this was because I had dreamed something like this before! In other words I remembered a previous, non-lucid dream in which I had appeared to find large numbers of letters addressed to me in this same rack.

It happens that Subject C had told someone of his earlier letter-rack dream before this lucid dream occurred, and this person was able to verify the fact that Subject C had done so.



## APPENDICES



*Two Further Examples of Lucid Dreams Starting from the Waking State*

(1) Case of Mrs. J. Gwynne-Bettany:<sup>1</sup>

. . . I was walking in a country lane at A., the place where my parents then resided. I was reading geometry as I walked along, a subject little likely to produce fancies or morbid phenomena of any kind, when, in a moment, I saw a bedroom known as the White Room in my home, and upon the floor lay my mother, to all appearance dead. The vision must have remained some minutes, during which time my real surroundings appeared to pale and die out; but as the vision faded, actual surroundings came back, at first dimly, and then clearly.

I could not doubt that what I had seen was real, so, instead of going home, I went at once to the house of our medical man and found him at home. He at once set out with me for my home, on the way putting questions I could not answer, as my mother was to all appearance well when I left home.

I led the doctor straight to the White Room, where we found my mother actually lying as in my vision. This was true even to minute details. She had been seized suddenly by an attack at the heart, and would soon have breathed her last but for the doctor's timely advent . . .

Mrs. Gwynne-Bettany added:

The occasion I described was, I believe, the only one on which I saw a scene transported apparently into the actual field of vision, to the exclusion of objects and surroundings actually present.

I have had other visions in which I have seen events happening as they *really were*, in another place, but I have been also conscious of *real* surroundings.

<sup>1</sup> E. Gurney, F. W. H. Myers & F. Podmore, *Phantasms of the Living*, Trübner & Co., London, Vol. I, 1886, pp. 194-5.

(2) Case Communicated to the Author by Mrs. Eva Hellström:

During March 1957 it was decided that some members of S.P.F. (Sällskapet för Parapsykologisk Forskning, Sveavägen 81, Stockholm) should participate in some telepathy experiments between England and Sweden. Mr. S., whom none of us had met, should be the sender . . .

. . . The first evening I lay down on my bed relaxing. Then I tried to think myself over there in order to get contact. I had never done anything like that before. I was thinking: 'Now I am travelling by train to Gothenburg . . . now with the steamer across the North Sea . . . arriving at Tilbury . . . travelling to London . . . then taking the train towards B., in the neighbourhood of which H. is situated.'

Then something peculiar happened. I had a vision of the continuation. Without consciously trying to go on to H. in my thoughts I suddenly was there in a typical English street with semi detached houses and I knew that Mr. S. was living in the left part of one of the houses and that the entrance was in the front on the left side. I went through a small hall into a room on the right facing the street. There I saw a strange big thing or a piece of furniture, entirely black, which I did not know what it was. Then everything disappeared. I was fully awake all the time.

I thought: 'I have lived in England for seven years. I know approximately what English houses look like, it probably is my imagination which is carrying me away. The room facing the street would probably be a dining-room, the drawing-room usually faces the garden and I don't think Mr. S. has been sitting in the dining-room sending from there.'

Two months later Mrs. Hellström visited Mr. S. at his house.

She describes the relevant part of her visit as follows:

I told Mr. S. about my vision during the experiment and said: 'Now I am so frightfully curious to see what you have in the front room? Isn't that your dining-room and isn't there a kind of strange black furniture standing against the wall to the

hall?' – 'Come, let us go and look,' he said. We went into the room, which had once been a dining-room but was now used by Mr. S. as a study. At the actual wall which I had been facing in my vision, a large black apparatus was standing. It was a big slide projector and epidiascope. The wall was covered with a bookshelf with Mr. S.'s entire literature on parapsychology and in that corner Mr. S. had been sitting while sending to us in Sweden. It was his 'Psychic corner'.

## APPENDIX B

### *A Further Example of Detachment under Stress*

. . . I tumbled down 500 ft. of ice in the Lake District mountains. I had no feelings of fear or panic as I lost my balance and fell down the ice. Instead, I was physically relaxed and so detached mentally that I was not in the least concerned about the events of my immediate future (or lack of it!) For all I knew then I might have been speeding to my death or to serious injury but was not even remotely interested. I had fairly severe friction burns on my thighs and some lacerations on my forehead but experienced no pain during the descent.

## APPENDIX C

### *A Dream of P. D. Ouspensky's*

I remember . . . one dream, full of movement, dramatic situations and the most varied emotions. If I am not mistaken it was during the Japanese war. In the dream it was a war in Russia itself. A part of Russia was occupied by the armies of some strange people, called by a strange name, which I have forgotten. I had to pass at all costs through the enemy lines on some extremely important personal affairs. In connection with this a whole series of tragic, amusing, melodramatic incidents occurred. All this would have made a complete scenario for

cinema production; and everything was in its right place, nothing was out of tune with the general course of the play. There were many interesting types and scenes. The monk with whom I spoke in a monastery still lives in my memory; he was entirely outside life and outside all that took place around him, and at the same time he was full of little cares and little anxieties connected at that moment with me. The strange colonel of the enemy army with a pointed grey beard and incessantly blinking eyes was fully a living man and at the same time a very clear and definite type of man-machine, whose life is divided into several compartments with impenetrable partitions. Even the type of his imaginary nationality, the sound of the language he spoke with other officers, all this was in perfect keeping. The dream was full of small realistic details. I galloped through the enemy lines on a big white horse, and during one of the halts I brushed some white hairs off my coat with my sleeve.<sup>1</sup>

## APPENDIX D

### *Originals of Passages Quoted from Delage (1919)*

(The passages are given in the order in which they appear in the original.)

pp. 384-385

Je suis au Laboratoire de Roscoff. Une nuit, je suis réveillé par des coups pressants frappés à la porte de ma chambre. Je me soulève et demande: 'Qui est là? - Monsieur, répond la voix de Marty (le gardien du Laboratoire), c'est Mme H—,' (une personne qui habitait véritablement la ville en ce moment et qui faisait partie de mes relations) 'qui vous prie de venir tout de suite chez elle pour Mlle P—,' (une personne faisant véritablement partie de la maison de Mme H— et que je connaissais également) 'qui est tombée subitement malade. - C'est bien, dis-je, le temps de m'habiller et j'y cours.' Je m'habille à la

<sup>1</sup> Ouspensky, pp. 264-5.

hâte, mais avant de sortir, j'entre dans mon cabinet de toilette pour me passer une éponge mouillée sur la figure. La sensation de l'eau fraîche me réveille et me fait constater que j'avais rêvé tout ce qui précédait et que personne n'était venu me demander. Je me recouche donc et me rendors. Mais peu de temps après, les mêmes coups résonnent de nouveau à ma porte. 'Eh bien, Monsieur, vous ne venez donc pas? – Eh quoi, c'est donc vrai, je croyais avoir rêvé – Mais pas du tout, hâtez-vous, on vous attend avec impatience. – C'est bien, j'y cours.' De nouveau, je m'habille, de nouveau, dans mon cabinet de toilette, je me passe de l'eau fraîche sur la figure, de nouveau la sensation de l'eau fraîche me réveille et me fait comprendre que j'avais été le jouet d'une répétition de mon rêve. Je me recouche donc et me rendors.

La même scène se renouvelle presque identiquement encore deux fois. Au matin, quand je me réveille en réalité, je reconnais au pot-à-eau plein, à la cuvette vide, à l'éponge sèche que tout cela n'avait été qu'un rêve; non seulement les coups frappés à ma porte et les conversations avec le gardien, mais de m'être habillé, d'avoir été dans le cabinet de toilette, de m'être lavé la figure, d'avoir cru que je me réveillais après un rêve et m'étais recouché. Toute la série des actes, des raisonnements et des pensées n'avait été qu'un même rêve répété quatre fois de suite sans interruption du sommeil et sans que j'aie bougé de mon lit.

pp. 45<sup>0</sup>–45<sup>1</sup>

Je rêve de nouveau que je devrais être aveugle et que néanmoins j'y vois clair, mais je me rappelle qu'antérieurement j'ai eu cette illusion en rêve. illusion qui s'est évanouie au réveil; et alors, avec anxiété, je me pose la question: Est-ce que je rêve? ou suis-je éveillé? J'ai l'impression que le problème est délicat, que je risque de me tromper, de tirer une conclusion fautive et je m'efforce de réunir toutes les raisons qui peuvent éclairer la solution. Je me place bien en face d'un objet que je regarde; j'ouvre les yeux, je le vois; je ferme les yeux, je ne le vois plus (bien entendu, dans mon sommeil, tous ces mouvements sont parfaitement imaginaires). Je me tâte, je me secoue, frappe du pied pour m'assurer que je suis bien éveillé et,

toujours sans exception, je conclus que je suis éveillé. Une fois même dans ces circonstances, je rêve que me belle-fille est auprès de moi. Je m'adresse à elle: Louise, lui dis-je, regardez, j'y vois clair, mais je crains que ce soit un rêve. Suis-je bien éveillé? Pincez-moi le bras pour que j'en sois bien sûr.' Elle ne me répond pas, mais me pince le bras; je sens à peine le pression de sa main: 'Plus fort, lui dis-je.' Elle obéit, mais, sans doute par crainte de me faire mal, me pince si légèrement que je le sens à peine. L'épreuve néanmoins me paraît concluante: et, à vrai dire, je suis si bien persuadé d'être éveillé que je m'adresse à elle moins pour me convaincre que pour la convaincre elle-même. Pas une minute il ne me vient à l'idée de penser que si je rêvais la vérification ne prouverait rien puisqu'elle serait révée elle-même. Donc, je suis convaincu et me trouve tout heureux.

pp. 452-453

Je me dis: me voici dans une situation fâcheuse ou agréable, mais je sais très bien qu'elle n'a rien de réel. Dès lors, sachant que je n'ai aucun risque à courir, je laisse la scène se dérouler en spectateur curieux, assistant à un accident ou à une catastrophe qui ne saurait l'atteindre: de ce côté, m'attendent des gens qui en veulent à ma vie: je cherche à fuir; mais, tout à coup, le fait que je rêve se révèle à moi et je me dis: puisque je n'ai rien à craindre, je vais au devant de mes ennemis, je les brave, je les frappe même *pour voir ce qui va arriver*. Et cependant, bien que je me sente assez sûr du caractère illusoire de la scène pour tenter une chose qui serait folie dans la vie réelle, je suis obligé de dominer, de vaincre un sentiment instinctif inspiré par la crainte. Bien des fois, il m'est arrivé ainsi de me jeter à dessein dans un danger pour voir ce qui va en résulter.

P. 453

A la suite de péripéties variées, je me trouve au bord d'un précipice effrayant dont la seule vue me fait frissonner: une falaise à pic ou même en surplomb de plusieurs centaines de pieds de hauteur, et, au fond, tantôt des rochers aigus, tantôt des maisons et des arbres qui me paraissent tout petits par l'éloignement. Au moment où je tremble et me cramponne,

brusquement le rêve devient conscient: je sais que je rêve, que tout cela n'est qu'illusion et que je ne cours aucun danger réel. Alors, pour voir quelle sera l'issue de cette décision, je prends le parti de m'élancer à corps perdu dans le vide. Ainsi fais-je et toujours j'arrive au fond sans secousse, à moins que ma chute ne se termine par un vol délicieux.

P. 454

Ce serait envisager les choses d'une manière très inexacte de confondre ce cas avec celui de la simple rêverie. Dans cette dernière, je n'éprouverais ni cette satisfaction puérole, ni ce reste de crainte instinctive, ni la curiosité de savoir ce qui va arriver, puisque, n'ayant aucunement perdu contact avec la réalité, je saurais que ce qui s'ensuivra dépend uniquement de ma fantaisie. Au contraire, dans les rêves conscients, la connaissance du fait que je rêve est le seul point de contact avec la réalité, tout le reste est du rêve qui, pour être plus ou moins dirigé par ma volonté dans certaines de ses parties, n'en a pas moins une part très large, très prépondérante d'imprévu indépendant de ma volonté et situé hors de ma connaissance. Tout cela est fortement objectivé et impressionnant comme les faits de la vie réelle, de toute autre façon que les pales évocations de la rêverie.

pp. 455-456

Je me vois à Paris, au bas de la rue Soufflot, à sa jonction avec le boulevard Saint-Michel. Je suis sur le trottoir qui est à droite quand on monte vers le Panthéon et je regarde le côté opposé de la rue. Je constate que là se trouve un vaste étalage de bouquiniste; d'immenses rayons bordent la façade sous des arcades, et des employés juchés sur des échelles sont occupés à manier les bouquins. A terre entre les piliers, sont des tables chargées de livres que consultent les passants et même des lecteurs assis. Je considère ce spectacle avec un certain étonnement, mais sans me rappeler dans mon rêve qu'il n'est pas conforme à la réalité, car je sais très bien qu'à cette place se trouve non un bouquiniste, mais un grand café. Mais dans mon rêve, ce souvenir ne me vient pas.

Je m'éloigne et, tout auprès, sur le boulevard, entre le coin de la rue et la fontaine Médicis, je me mêle à des badauds qui font cercle autour d'un gymnaste forain. A ce moment, je me mets à ratiociner. Je me rappelle être venu à Paris la veille, qui était un samedi et il me vient à l'idée que le lendemain lundi, je viendrai encore à Paris, selon mon habitude, pour la séance de l'Académie. Et, de là, je conclus (ce qui n'est pas bien méritoire), que le jour présent est un dimanche. Et tout à coup, je me dis: 'Comment se fait-il que je sois ici un dimanche? Cela ne m'arrive presque jamais'; et aussitôt, la lumière se fait dans mon esprit: 'Si c'est dimanche et si je me crois à Paris, c'est que je rêve.' Immédiatement, le rêve devient conscient de la manière la plus nette, sans rien perdre de son caractère hallucinatoire ni de la vigueur des images qu'il représente.

Ainsi, ce qui a fait naître en moi la conviction que je rêvais, ce n'est point cet argument valable que le coin de la rue Soufflot m'apparaît occupé par un magasin que, (dans la réalité, mais non dans mon rêve, puisque le souvenir ne m'en revient pas), je sais fort bien ne pas y être, mais cet argument bien médiocre que je me vois à Paris un jour où je n'ai pas l'habitude d'y venir.

pp. 457-458

En voici un que j'ai fait souvent avec diverses variantes dans le détail. Je dirai en passant que l'idée de cette disposition de la caverne doit avoir été puisée par moi dans les relations que j'ai lues touchant les moeurs de l'ornithorynque, mammifère inférieur de l'Australie, dont la retraite est disposée à peu près comme la caverne de mon rêve.

Je suis poursuivi par des gens qui en veulent à ma vie: ce sont ou des malfaiteurs ou des sauvages ou souvent des soldats d'une puissance ennemie en guerre avec la France. Je vais être atteint, quelquefois même je suis déjà pris, quand une pensée surgit dans mon cerveau: je me rapelle qu'il y a un moyen admirable de tromper la vigilance des poursuivants, c'est de me cacher dans une caverne tout à fait inaccessible parce que son entrée est submergée et qu'il faut plonger dans l'eau d'un lac pour y pénétrer. Remarquez qu'à ce moment il n'y a dans mon rêve ni lac, ni caverne à l'état d'image mentale extériorisée, c'est une simple pensée qui me vient au cerveau pendant que

je suis dans une rue ou dans les corridors d'une maison. A ce moment, par un acte de ma volonté, je change la scène et la transporte dans un autre cadre où se trouvent le lac et la caverne nécessaires. Parfois même, s'il arrive que j'étais déjà pris, je remonte le cours des événements et me replace à un moment où je ne l'étais pas encore pour faire dérouler la scène dans une autre direction et lui donner une issue différente. Donc je replace le tout, poursuivants et poursuivi, à bonne distance, je prends de l'avance pour arriver le premier et sans être vu à l'endroit convenable du lac; là, je plonge et pénètre dans la caverne où j'éprouve un sentiment parfait de sécurité, prenant même plaisir à entendre au-dessus de ma tête, séparés de moi par une mince couche de terre, les pas des poursuivants à pied ou à cheval, errant en tous sens, complètement désorientés.

## APPENDIX E

*Originals of Passages Quoted from Hervey de Saint-Denys*  
(1964)

pp. 358-359

Chemin faisant, sachant parfaitement que je rêve, je pense aux idées de M. Maury; je me demande quel serait à son avis la portion de mon encéphale qui se maintient ainsi éveillée. Il faudrait bien, me disais-je, qu'il trouvât mon cerveau éveillé tout entier, car je me crois sincèrement en ce moment la plénitude de mes facultés intellectuelles, je sens que je puis raisonner et me souvenir. Ce que j'ai lu sur les théories matérialistes, et ce que je me propose de noter au sujet de ce rêve s'offrent très clairement à mon esprit.

p. 359

Je fais même ce raisonnement que les images qui m'apparaissent, dans ce songe, ne me sont pas plus imposées que les images qui s'offrent réellement à mes yeux quand je suis éveillé; que je garde aussi bien mon libre arbitre de tourner à

droite ou à gauche, de fixer mes yeux dans une direction ou dans une autre, etc., et enfin d'amener certaines scènes ou de provoquer certaines visions suivant que je *voudrai* ou *ne voudrai pas* agir mentalement en conséquence. Exemple: *si je veux* briser une branche de ces arbres que je crois voir, elle m'apparaîtra brisée. *Si je ne le veux pas*, elle gardera aux yeux de mon esprit son apparence intacte. En quoi le rêve diffère-t-il ici, pour moi, de la réalité? Je me souviens, je raisonne, je veux, je ne veux pas: je ne suis pas même le jouet de l'illusion qui me captive. Si les actes de ma volonté ne sont pas suivis d'efforts réels, c'est uniquement parce que mes organes au lieu d'obéir réellement à ma pensée n'en font que le simulacre, mais le phénomène psychologique est le même.

## APPENDIX F

### *Original of Passage Quoted from Mach (1900)*

p. 130

Eine eigenthümliche Erscheinung, die mir seit einigen Jahren häufiger begegnet, ist folgende. Ich erwache und liege mit geschlossenen Augen ruhig da. Vor mir sehe ich die Bettdecke mit allen ihren Fältchen, und auf derselben meine Hände mit allen Einzelheiten ruhig und unveränderlich. Oeffne ich die Augen, so ist es entweder ganz dunkel, oder zwar hell, aber die Decke und die Hände liegen ganz anders, als sie mir erschienen waren.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. Mach, *Die Analyse der Empfindungen*, 2nd edition, Fischer, Jena, 1900, p. 130.

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