

The Bible Student.

CONTINUING

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Can Dreams Convey a Revelation?

It is probable that the appearance of dreams among the media of Revelation described by Scripture, constitutes more or less of a stumbling-block to most readers of the Bible. The disordered and bizarre character of the phantasmagoria of dreams seems to mark them out as particularly unfit to serve as vehicles of revelation. To this is added the superstitious use of them by all nations in the lower stages of culture, including not only classical antiquity, but also the ancient peoples with which the Israelites stood in closest relations. (Cf. EBERS' *Aegypten und die Bücher Moses*, 321; LENORMANT, *La Divination et la science des Présages chez les Chaldéens*, 126-149; VASCHIDE and PIÉRON, *Prophetic Dreams in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, in *The Monist* for January, 1901, ix. ii., 161-194; BOUCHÉ-LECLERCQ, *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité*, I., 276-329; or for a succinct general account, LEHMANN, *Aberglaube und Zauberei*, as per index.) We naturally question whether we are not to look upon their appearance in the Scriptural narrative just as we look upon them in the Gilgamesh epic or

the annals of Assurbanipal, on the stèle of Bentrest or the inscriptions of Karnak, in the verses of Homer or the histories of Herodotus. We cannot, to be sure, fail to note the immense difference between the two cases, in the nature of the dreams recorded as well as in the circumstances which occasioned them and the ends they serve. But we are not without temptation to say shortly with KANT (*Anthropologie*, I., § 29): "We must not accept dream-tales as revelations from the invisible world." And we are pretty sure, if we begin, like WIRSIUS, with a faithful statement of the fact: "But God has seen fit to reveal Himself not only to the waking but sometimes also to the sleeping,"—to lapse at once (like WIRSIUS) into an apologetical vein, and to close by raising the question, "Why should God wish to manifest Himself, in this singular way, by night and to the sleeping, when the manifestation must appear obscure, uncertain, and little adapted either to the dignity of the Revealer and the things revealed, or to the use of him to whom the revelation is made?" (WIRSIUS, *De Prophetis et Prophetia*, ch. V., in his *Miscell. Sac.* I., pp. 22-27).

**Biblical
Estimate of
Dreams.**

It is only right that we should bear in mind from the outset, however, that the estimate put by the Biblical writers upon dreams as such, differs in nothing from that of men of average good sense of our own day. Any allusions to the ordinary run of dreams that may occur in the pages of Scripture are, of course, merely incidental; and they are therefore also infrequent. But there are enough of them to convey a very clear notion of how they are thought of. Men were visited then too with pleasant dreams which they knew were too good to be true (Ps. cxxvi. 1); and afflicted with nightmares which drove rest from their couches (Job vii. 14). Dreams were the standing symbols of the evanescent and shadowy, which fly away and cannot be found (Job. xx. 8, Ps. lxxiii. 20). They therefore are recognized as misleading and vain (Ecc. v. 7, Is. xxix. 8). The hungry man may dream that he eats, but his soul continues empty; the thirsty man may dream that he drinks, but he remains faint (Is. xxix. 8). For the dream has its origin in the multiplicity of cares, and is itself but vanity (Ecc. v. 3, 7). When the Son of Sirach (xxxiv. 12) represents dreams as but reflections of our waking experiences, to regard which is to catch at a shadow and follow after the wind, he has in no respect passed beyond the Biblical view: everywhere in the Biblical books they are looked upon as vanities which may pass into something even worse (Jude 8) (cf. DELITZSCH, *Biblical Psychology*, p. 328; ORELLI, *Hersog* ², 733).

**Rarity of
Prophetic
Dreams.**

It is also but right that we should bear constantly in mind that the place taken

by the supernatural dream in the Bible is an extremely limited one. Very exaggerated language is often met with in this matter. Even BOUCHÉ-LECLERCQ, for example, who usually studies precision of speech, allows himself to say, "The Scriptures are filled with apparitions and prophetic dreams" (*Op. cit.*, p. 278). Nothing could be more contrary to the fact. The truth is that the supernatural dream is a very uncommon phenomenon in Scripture. There are ten or a dozen cases in which direct divine visitations in dreams are recorded: [Gen. xv. 12 (Abraham); xx. 3, 6 (Abimelech); xxviii. 12 (Jacob); xxxi. 10, 11 (Jacob); xxxi. 24 (Laban); I. Kings xxxv. 15 (Solomon); Mat. i. 20 (Joseph); ii. 12 (the Magi); ii. 13 (Joseph); ii. 19 (Joseph); ii. 22 (Joseph); xxvii. 19 (Pilate's Wife)]. There are also recorded nine or ten instances of symbolical dreams which receive divine interpretations: [Gen. xxxvii. 5-6 (Joseph); xxxvii. 9, 10 (Joseph)—cf. xxxvii. 19, xlii. 9; xl. 5-16 (Pharaoh's Butler and Baker); xli. 1, 5 (Pharaoh's two dreams); Judges vii. 13-15; (a man in Midian's camp); Dan. ii. 13, 26 (Nebuchadnezzar); Dan. iv. 5 (do.); Dan. vii. 1 (Daniel)]. These are the only examples of the prophetic dream adduced,* and their distribution on the page of Scripture is worth noting. Of the first series, no less than five (or about half of the whole number) occur in the first two chapters of Matthew, and four or five of the remainder in the book of Genesis. That is to say, if we neglect the doubtful case of Matt. xxvii. 19, there is but a single instance of direct divine visitation in a dream recorded outside of Genesis and the

*There are also recorded several visions given at night to waking recipients: and these occur in all parts of the Bible. But these are not dreams.

opening two chapters of Matthew—viz. the visitation to Solomon, I. Kings xxxv. 15. Similarly in the second series, there are no instances of the symbolical dream recorded—with the single exception of the doubtful case of Judges vii. 13-15—except in the story of Joseph in Genesis and in Daniel, in both of which episodes the people of God are brought into the closest contact with the dream-loving peoples of the East. In one word the record of prophetic dreams is confined to the Book of Genesis, Daniel and the opening chapters of Matthew. In addition to these recorded instances, however, there are a few allusions to prophetic dreams which must be kept in mind in order to survey the entire Biblical material. In a few passages there is mention of dreams as a recognized mode of prophecy. Perhaps those in Job (iv. 13, xxxiii. 15) stand somewhat apart. Elsewhere we have such allusions only in Numbers xii. 6, Deut. xiii. 1-5, I. Samuel xxviii. 6, 15, Joel ii. 28 (cf. Acts ii. 17). They are also spoken of as a favorite method of the false prophets (Jer. xxiii. 25, 28, 32, xxvii. 9, xxix. 8, Zech. x. 2). Such allusions may suggest that, throughout the whole history, dream revelations occurred. But in the record of the history, as we have seen, little is made of them; and in by far the greater part of it, no mention of them is made at all.

No Superstitious Use of Dreams. We should still further keep in mind that the Biblical writers are entirely free from the superstitious view of dreams characteristic of the surrounding peoples and of all uncultured society. The religious view of dreams is no doubt inculcated both by the examples recorded in which God sent to men messages in their sleep, and by the

general recognition of the fact that God may choose the vehicle of a dream in order to make known His will to His servants. But the superstitious view which regards all dreams as omens, and seeks to utilize them for human ends, receives no support whatever from the Biblical notices. Therefore there arose no "houses of dreams" in Israel: there was no place for a guild of dream-examiners or dream-critics. When, on rare occasions, God did vouchsafe symbolical dreams to men, the professed dream-interpreters of the most highly trained castes stood helpless before them (Gen. xxxvii. xi. xli., Dan. ii. iv.). The interpretation of really God-sent dreams belonged solely to God Himself, the sender, and only His messengers could read their import. There could be no more striking indication of the gulf that opens between the Biblical and the ethnic view of dreams as vehicles of supernatural information than this. If there is a hint of an overestimate of dreams as such among some Israelites (Jer. xxiii. 25sq., xxvii. 9), this is mentioned only to be condemned, and is obviously a trait not native to Israel, but, like all the sooth-saying in vogue among the ill-instructed of the land, borrowed from the surrounding heathenism (cf. LEHMANN, as cited, p. 56: "Their witchcraft is always borrowed from aliens; it is a transgression of the law, and not a natural consequence of their own religion"). If there are possible suggestions that there were methods by which prophetic dreams were sought (Jer. xxix. 8, I. Sam. xxviii. 6, 15), these suggestions are obscure, and involve no commendation of such practices as were in use among the heathen. All the supernatural dreams mentioned in the Bible were the unsought gift of Jehovah; and there is not the

slightest trace, from the beginning to the end of the Scriptural narrative, of recommendation of any of the superstitious practices of either seeking or interpreting dreams which constitute the very nerve of ethnic dream lore. (Cf. the excellent remarks of F. B. JEVONS, in *Hastings' Dict. of the Bible*, I. 622.)

Relative Depreciation Of Revelation By Dreams. Once more it should be borne in mind that the rank among the means of revelation accorded by Scripture to dreams is not a high one. It is quite possible, to be sure, to exaggerate the indications of the low esteem in which revelation by dreams was held. It is scarcely accurate to say, for example, with BARRY (*Smith's Dict. of the Bible*, I. 617; cf. ORELLI, as cited), that the "greater number" of them "were granted, for prediction or for warning, to those who were aliens to the Jewish covenant;" and when they were given to God's "chosen servants, they were almost always referred to the periods of their earliest and most imperfect knowledge of Him;" and "moreover they belong especially to the earliest age, and became less frequent as the revelations of prophecy increase." As many of the recorded dreams were sent to Israelites as to non-Israelites; no particular stage of religious development is marked in their recipients; they occur at the end of the prophetic period (Daniel) and at the close of the Old Testament dispensation (Mat.) in as large numbers as among the Patriarchs. Nevertheless there is not obscurely marked a certain graduation in the media of revelation, and the first place is not accorded to dreams. Not only is Moses set off from the other prophets of his day by the fact that God spoke

to him mouth to mouth, but to them in dreams (Numb. xii. 6); and dreams are always subordinated to prophecy and even to the Urim in the several enumerations of the media of revelation (Deut. xv. 1, &c., I. Sam. xxviii. 6, 15, Joel ii. 28); but throughout the whole period of the writing prophets they seem not to have been in use at all by the prophets of Jehovah, and appeal to them appears to have been a characteristic of the false prophets (Jer. xxiii. 25, xxviii. 32, xxvii. 9; xxix. 8, Zech. x. 2). So sharp is Jeremiah's polemic against those who are continually saying "I have dreamed, I have dreamed;" and so emphatically does he contrast the prophet "that hath a dream" with the prophet "that hath God's Word;" that the question has been raised whether he does not mean to exclude dreams altogether from the vehicles of revelation. This is certainly an exaggeration of his meaning. Meanwhile, however, it is clear that dreams did not rank high among the vehicles of revelation, and it is significant that no one of the great writing prophets ever appeals to them. No instance of the prophetic dream is recorded, indeed, throughout the whole period from Solomon to Daniel, as before none had been recorded from the Exodus to Solomon (except Judges vii. 13-15), and as again in the whole period of the New Testament none are recorded except those to Joseph. The dream, evidently, while recognized as a real medium of revelation, was not either a common or a favorite means of learning the Divine will. (See especially KÖNIC'S *Offenbarungsbegriff*, I. 55, II. 9 sq., 63 sq.)

The Precise Question Involved.

The question that is raised, therefore, by the Biblical references to revelation

in dreams is something very different from the question raised by the superstitious view of dreams prevalent among uncultured peoples. It is an understatement rather than an overstatement when Dr. JEVONS (as cited, p. 622) says that "the Scriptures start from a spiritual height, to which the religious consciousness of the heathen world attained only after a long course of evolution, and then only in the case of an isolated genius like Plato." They do not ascribe any special sacredness or significance to dreams in general. They do not recommend any class or variety of dreams whatever to our scrutiny, that we may perchance find guidance in them by this or that system of interpretation. They simply affirm that God has on rare occasions in making known his will to men, chosen to approach them also through the medium of their night-visions, and has through these warned them of danger, awakened them to a sense of wrong-doing, communicated His will or made known His purposes to them. The sole question which is raised by the affirmation of such a use of dreams on God's part as this, is whether there is anything inherent in the very nature of dreams which renders it either impossible for God so to make use of them, or derogatory to Him to suppose that He has done so. Possibly the precisising of the question is already to answer it; and we may feel inclined to reply by simply asking, why God should not, amid the many ways in which he finds access to the human heart, choose also this way,—viz. to visit men in the night (Psalm xvii. 3), when, though they be asleep, yet their heart may be waking (Cant. v. 2),—and to impress on them with that force of conviction which He alone knows how to produce, the assurance of His presence and the terms of His

message.

Surely, when we **All Revelation a** speak of such a **Condescension.** itation and its resultant revelation as derogatory to God, we are in grave danger of confusing things that greatly differ. There is a sense in which it is derogatory to God to suppose that He will have any commerce with man; particularly with sinful man. Possibly, if we realized as we should the infinite condescension which is involved in the speaking of God to man at all, we should be less inclined to raise difficulties as to the degree of that condescension in these or those particular circumstances. There are no degrees in the infinite. There can no revelation take place in which God does not stoop infinitely. The subjection of His truth to human modes of thinking, the clothing of His conceptions in human dress, at its best, involves an infinite derogation. When looked at *sub specie aeternitatis* the difference between approaching man through the medium of his dreams and through the medium of his waking apprehension—make it the highest possible exercise of human reason, if you will—may not seem, after all, so very great. The cry of the heart that has really seen God must in any case be, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?"

No Inherent Irrationality In Dreams.

And, then, there are dreams and dreams. The question is not whether we may believe of any dream we choose, that it is a revelation from God; or of any dream we choose, that it might be made a suitable vehicle for a revelation from God. There are no doubt dreams which it would require a

direct revelation of God to our waking reason to make us accept as from God. And there are dreams which we could not but judge unsuitable vehicles for a Divine revelation. But are there not also dreams,—even natural dreams such as are experienced by us all,—in which this unsuitability is less apparent? There certainly seems no reason why dreams as such should be excluded from the possibility of being so ordered as to be made the vehicles of revelations. "The psychology of dreams and visions," writes Dr. G. T. LADD,—“so far as we can speak of such a psychology—furnishes us with neither sufficient motive nor sufficient means for denying the truth of the Biblical narratives. On the contrary, there are certain grounds for confirming the truth of some of these narratives. . . . Even in ordinary dreams the dreamer is still the human soul. The soul acts, then, even in dreaming, as a unity, which involves within itself the functions and activities of the higher—even of the ethical and religious—powers. . . . The possibility of even the highest forms of real ethical and religious activities in dreams cannot be denied. . . . There is nothing in the physiological or psychical conditions of dream-life to prevent such psychical activity for the reception of revealed truth. . . . It is, certainly just, therefore, that those few dreams which are revealed in the Bible as factors in the course of revelation should be allowed the subordinate position which is claimed for them. However open to suspicion on account of their apparent magical character, and near alliance to the customs of divination practiced among the heathen, some of its accounts of the interpretation of dreams may be” [how little true this is we have already seen] “it remains

in general true that the Bible does not transgress the safe limits of possible or even actual experience” (*The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture*, II. 436,—the whole chapter should be read: cf. also LEHMANN, as cited, p. 397: “That the conceptions in dreams are subject to the same laws as in waking consciousness clearly follows from the fact that there are no sharp delimitations between the dreaming and the waking states”).

The Dreaming So accustomed are we to think of the Soul Human. dreams as characterized by the elision of this or that power of the soul—of the organizing or critical reason, conscience, or what not,—that it may be important for us to emphasize the golden sentence in the extract we have just quoted from Dr. LADD. After all, the dreamer is the human soul; and the human soul is a unit; and where it acts it acts as a unit. What is really lacking in dream images is not rationality, morality or spirituality, but purposiveness, “finality,” voluntary control. The soul has no object in view in dreaming. It lays aside its strivings; and no longer seeking the ends that characterize its efforts in waking hours, abandons its activities to drift along the lines of simple association. These lines are very multiplex and the result is accordingly confused and absurd. But there is no dormancy of mental powers involved; and there is no one of our mental powers which does not exhibit itself now and again in our dreaming, as the sequence of images floating aimlessly through the mind calls it into activity. When it is thus called into action, in fact, it may even exhibit itself with what appears to be peculiar force and produce effects apparently unattainable in waking hours. The literature of dreams is crowded with

instances of quite remarkable feats of memory, reasoning, conscience. It would seem that the withdrawal of the attention from the distracting cares of life,—the abandonment of strenuous effort to attain a specified end and the consequent escape of the soul from the rut in which the will would drive it,—often releases the higher activities of this or that faculty called into operation in sleep. Even finality itself, the elimination of which is the characteristic feature of dreaming, may thus on occasion intrude itself afresh and with special force into our dreams; and may organize all their images to an end impressed on the mind either by its habits of thought or by recent intensity of action or by the projection of the anxiety and worry of our waking state into our sleep.

Every line of intellectual life supplies abundance of instances of remarkable dream-performances of this kind. Jurists have prepared briefs in their dreams of which they have been only too glad to avail themselves in their waking hours. Statesmen have in their dreams obtained quite a new insight into policy. Lecturers have elaborated their lectures; mathematicians have solved their most difficult problems; authors have composed in whole or in part their most admired productions, in dreams. Dr. FRANKLIN told CABANIS that the bearings and issue of political events which had puzzled him when awake were not unfrequently unfolded to him in his dreams. It was in a dream that REINHOLD, KANT's pupil, worked out his table of the categories. ZWINGLI, puzzled to find a Biblical parallel to the use of the copula in the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, had Ex. xii. 11 suggested to

him in a dream. CONDORCET informs us that he often completed his unfinished calculations in his dreams: and the same thing has frequently occurred in the case of other mathematicians, such as MAIGNAN, GÖNS, WÄHNERT. CONDILLAC tells us that when engaged on his *Cours d'Études* he frequently developed and finished a subject in his dreams which he had broken off before retiring to rest. The story given by COLERIDGE of the composition of his *Kubla Khan* in a dream is well known. Possibly no more instructive instance is on record, however, than the account which is given by ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON in his delightful *Chapter on Dreams* (*Works*, Thistle edition, vol. xv., Scribner, 1899, p. 250 sq.), of how "the little people" of his brain, who had been wont to amuse him with quite absurd farragos harnessed themselves to their task and dreamed consecutively and artistically for him when he became a craftsman in the art of story-telling. Now, they trimmed and pared their dream stories, and set them on all fours, and made them run from a beginning to an end, and fitted them to the laws of life, and even filled them with dramatic situations of guileful art,—making the conduct of the actors psychologically correct, and aptly graduating the emotion up to the impressive climax. The specimen he gives of one of these dream stories fully bears out his praise of the work of his "little people;" and he points to the *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and to the Christmas story *Olalla*, as instances of published tales the main parts of which he owed to his dreams. Such examples as these are full of instruction as to the possible activity of our highest powers in dreams. (See ABERCROMBIE'S *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers*, &c., part iii.,

§ iv., I esp., pp. 216-21; CARPENTER'S *Principles of Mental Physiology*, pp. 584 sq., &c.)

It is only natural that when dreams of this higher order are induced by the excitement of the moral or religious emotions rather than of the purely intellectual faculties, their effect on the mind and heart should be very great. And as a matter of fact the annals of religion are sown with instances in which the whole life of men of the first rank, for time and eternity, has been suspended on a dream. We may recall the dream of EVAGRIUS of Pontus, for example (recorded by SOZOMEN, *Ante-Nicene Library*, 3d series, xiii., 368), which nerved him to flee temptation and conditioned his whole future career. Or we may recall the dream of PATRICK, given in his "Confession" (see MACLEAR'S *Conversion of the Celts*, p. 71), in which he heard the Irish calling him to come to their aid and the Lord pleading His outpoured blood, and on which hung all his labors as the Apostle to the Irish. The role played by dreams in the conversion of such soldiers of Christ as JOHN BUNYAN, JOHN NEWTON, JAMES GARDINER, ALEXANDER DUFF is too well known to require more than a passing allusion. Such cases are in no sense either rare or strange. They are the natural result of our awakened conscience obtruding itself into the visions of the night, and are psychological phenomena of precisely the same order as the continuance of unfinished mathematical calculations into the sleeping state, or the familiar experience of waking anxieties following the victim even into his dreams. Providentially, on the other hand, they have been the instruments of Divine grace and levers by which

the world has been moved. With such dreams and their issues before our eyes, we should find no difficulty in recognizing a Providential element in dreams, or indeed in extending the control of Divine Providence to the whole world of dreams. No dream comes to us in our sleep, any more than any occurrence of our waking hours, except by the appointment and under the direction of Him who Himself never either slumbers or sleeps, and in whose hands all things co-operate for the working out of His ends. We may now and again be able to trace with special clearness the hands of the great Potter, moulding the vessel to its uses, in, say, an unusual dream producing a profoundly arresting effect on the consciousness. But in all the dreams that visit us we must believe the hands of the universal Governor are active, working out His will. (Cf. DELITZSCH as cited; and an article, *Dreams and the Moral Life* in the *Homiletical Review* for September, 1890.)

The Providential and Revelational Use of Dreams Connected.

This recognition of the presence of God in His providential government in all dreams, and especially of His use of special dreams in the mode of what we commonly call "Special Providence," may go far towards removing the antecedent hesitation we may feel in thinking of His employment of dreams also as a medium of revelation. Does not His frequent providential use of dreams—in awakening the conscience by visions of judgment, in comforting the awakened sinner by visions of grace,—in leading the soul, in a word, to a saving apprehension of the gospel or firing it to enthusiastic service of its Lord—supply a basis for recognizing the

propriety of His occasional extraordinary use of dreams of old as media of revelation? And may we not even put it objectively, and say that the providential use of dreams supplies a basis for their revelational use? May there not, that is to say, have been a providential element in the revelational dreams themselves? KURZ says, surely not unwisely, (*Geschichte des A. B.*, I. 163): "Jacob's dream was not a natural but a prophetic one—a vehicle of Divine revelation and promise: but it had its natural basis in the state of Jacob's soul at the time." May it not be that each of the prophetic dreams recorded in Scripture had a natural basis in the state of the subject's soul at the time? In that case they would be so far assimilated to the more extraordinary dreams which happen every day around us. We say, *so far* assimilated. For such a supposition would supply no account of the particular dream that was dreamed. It would only supply, so far, an account of the fact that it was this person at this time, to whom such a dream was vouchsafed. In other words, it would tend to our perceiving the truly harmonious co-workings of God's providence and of God's grace; and it would, so far, supply us with an account of why God spoke to those fathers in this one of His diverse manners of revelation. He had brought them by His providential dealings into such a state of mind that they were prepared to meet with Him in the night watches and to receive on the prepared surface of their minds the impressions which He designed to convey to them.

**Special Reasons
For Revelations
By Dreams.**

And if we persist, now, in pressing the question why, after all, God should have

chosen to speak to these fathers especially in dreams, perhaps we cannot do more wisely than to answer simply with old SPANHEIM: "It was His will so to do." We may also, however, take a further leaf from SPANHEIM and offer at least some of the further reasons which he proceeds at once to elaborate. "(1) It is certain," he says, "that the night-time, devoted to quiet and silence, is especially suitable to the reception of a revelation, since the mind is then more tranquil, the soul more sedate and composed, and therefore more apt for receiving conceptions of spiritual things. It is in still water, not in turbid, that the images of bodies and objects of all sorts are best reflected. (2) It is certain also that at this time the mind is less distracted and less divided by the multitude of objects by which it is usually affected in the day-time. In the silence and darkness of the night, the soul is collected and bent back on itself and is therefore the more secured to itself and to God and better fitted to receive a heavenly revelation which demands the whole man and not a divided and distracted one. (3) It is certain also that in the night-time all objects are seen in the large, and affect the mind especially forcibly. A slight sound is magnified into a great noise, and a faint light into a bright one; an external voice strikes the ear with a great blow and affects the mind more than in the day-time. This is therefore the very time that is especially suitable for affecting and moving the human mind. (4)" (SPANHEIM, *Dubia Evangelica*, 2d pt., Geneva, 1700, pp. 239-240; cf. also WITSIUS, as cited, who condenses SPANHEIM, and RIVETUS, in *Gen. Exercit.*, cxxiv.) This is certainly overdrawn; and if taken at its height would tend to suggest that all revelations might best be

made in dreams,—which after all is not the Scriptural opinion. Rather are dreams accounted in Scripture among the less suitable methods of revelation. But it is only an exaggeration of considerations assuredly valid in their own place and in right proportions: such as will doubtless avail to remove any antecedent hesitancy that may haunt us to admit dreams also into the company of suitable media of revelations. God has other ways and better ways of revealing Himself than in dreams. But these, too, He may fitly use and occasions may arise when they become the most suitable means of revealing Himself. "In circumstances," says LANGE (*Life of Christ*, I., 293), "when the daily life of pious men is devoted more to the concerns of the

world, the susceptibilities of the mind for divine things would be more easily concentrated during the season of night, as the night violet emits its fragrance during the darkness." This seems but his poetical way of saying that just as the release of the mind from the ruts in which the will was driving it has so often resulted in the spontaneous solving in dreams of what has proved an insoluble puzzle to it when awake, so the release of the soul from its day-time cares may now and again open it the more fully to the approach of God. So read, his remark has certainly its relative validity. And it may have its light to throw on the occasional choice by God of dreams as the media of His revelations. B. B. W.