

PSYCHOLOGY

Dream Mate Marriages

When persons marry their dream mate, unhappiness and discord for the couple and their children can well be expected, although the finding is contrary to romantic notions.

► WHEN A man marries his dream girl or a girl marries the man of her dreams, there will be unhappiness, discord, perhaps divorce, and a bad start for the children of the marriage.

This finding, which is so contrary to popular romantic notions, was reported by Dr. H. V. Dicks of the Tavistock Clinic, London, Eng., at the Fifth International Congress on Mental Health, Toronto.

"The psychic processes which interfere with good marital relations," he said, "appear to me to stem from disappointment in expectation of how the marriage partner should play his or her sexual marital role.

"This means that people destined to fail in marriage love and marry not a real person, but a more or less distorted image of inner phantasies projected into the partner."

Marriage, more even than war, he said, brings to light neurotic faults and distortions of personality.

Images and memories of parental unhappiness seem to be the crucial factor that makes people unable to be happily married and stay so, he finds.

The trouble with marrying a dream mate is that too often the person either does not fit the secret wish for a parent substitute or fits it only too well. Either way, the person who marries a dream figure or image cannot be happy because he or she is still immature or crippled emotionally.

Such a person still has the feelings of a demanding child who both loves and hates his parents. The love and hate and demanding are turned to the dream choice he or she has married, with disastrous results.

The child of such a marriage, deprived of a complete, loving, stable family, becomes the founder of an unhappy family in his turn.

Wide differences in race, religion, social class and education can also make for tension and unhappiness in marriage because these differences bring disappointment of a person's expectation, or dream, of what the marriage partner will be like.

In spite of all the unhappy marriages, Dr. Dicks believes that "deep down most of mankind cherishes the values of marriage and of the happy, secure family as perhaps the greatest and most natural source of satisfaction and personal worth."

That, he said, is why unhappily married men and women feel so guilty and make such efforts to keep the marriage going and to protect their children from the effects of the conflicts between the husband and wife.

As to remedies, Dr. Dicks proposed two. One, a long term remedy, is politico-social

planning for friendly neighborhoods around factories and elsewhere so that families can put down roots, feel supported and at the same time develop independence.

The short term remedy, which he says must be applied quickly, consists of segregation and custody of the severest forms of lunacy and idiocy, treatment of less severe forms of mental sickness, and sending into communities trained mental hygienists to work with the family doctor, the public health staffs, the maternity nurses, the teachers and administrators.

Science News Letter, August 28, 1954

MEDICINE

Spontaneous "Cure" Of Cancer Does Happen

► THE "SPONTANEOUS cure" of a cancer that could not be removed by operation is reported by Drs. James O. Ferguson and B. Marden Black of the Mayo Clinic in the *Proceedings of the Staff Meetings of the Mayo Clinic* (July 28).

The cancer was located on the descending colon, which is part of the large intestine. It was so solidly fixed to the pelvic bones that the surgeons did not think it could be removed. Because it obstructed the colon, an opening was cut from the intestines to the outside of the body. X-ray treatments were given and the patient was sent home.

Two years later he returned to the clinic asking to have the intestinal opening closed. He was well and had regained lost weight. The mass where the cancer had been had disappeared.

At operation no sign of the previously proved cancer could be found. Part of the colon had also disappeared, leaving two blind ends. The surgeons opened and stitched these together and later closed the opening to the outside. The patient recovered uneventfully.

The doctors think it "most unlikely" that the advanced cancer disappeared solely from X-ray treatment, since this was not particularly intensive. They consider it more likely that the piece of the colon died from lack of blood supply and was absorbed.

The case, while "most unusual," serves to emphasize, the doctors state, the uncertainties in foretelling the outcome particularly after treatment of cancer.

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The *cockroach*, one of the first forms of animal life known on land, has more than 3,500 species still surviving.

INVENTION

Patent Fossil Method For Oil Prospecting

► A "NOVEL" method of prospecting for oil by mapping ancient shore lines, now buried in the earth, from microfossils contained in soil samples has been granted a patent.

William S. Hoffmeister of Tulsa, Okla., won patent number 2,686,108 for his new process to identify areas in which exploratory oil wells can be drilled that "will be most likely to contain oil deposits." It is used after the traps in the earth suitable for oil deposits have been located.

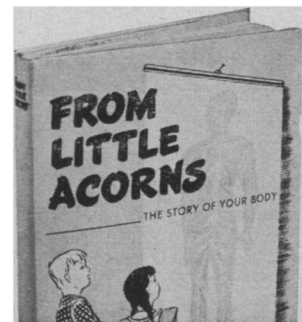
The inventor claims that by his method, "the area which must be considered in the search for oil may be substantially narrowed, with the result that a greater percentage of producing wells can be drilled, reducing the unit cost of exploration and drilling per producing well."

Only the smallest forms of pollen and spores are ever carried any distance from the shore line into the sea. A quantitative count of the total number or the number of a particular size of fossil spores thus gives the approximate location of an ancient shore line. Mr. Hoffmeister calls these spores and pollen "microfossils," since they have a diameter not more than about 200 microns, or a one hundred twenty-fifth of an inch.

Samples from boreholes in the test area are digested in hydrofluoric acid, which dissolves the mineral matter, and the microfossils that remain are counted under a microscope from samples mounted on slides.

Mr. Hoffmeister assigned his patent to Standard Oil Development Company.

Science News Letter, August 28, 1954



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by Frances W. Butterfield

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