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Dream Stories.

Some of the most popular novels in our language owe their origin entirely to dreams, for the wonderful workings of the brain during sleep often furnish material which the author is not slow to turn to good account. Had it not been for a dream, "Robinson Crusoe" would probably never have been written. At the time the plot was first conceived Defoe was suffering from great mental worry that resulted in his slumbers being broken by incessant nightmares. On one of these occasions he dreamed that he was stranded on a desert island alone, and began to work out in the dream a means of existence. So pleased was he with the experience that Defoe confessed to feelings of disappointment when he awoke, and he hastened to put his vision into readable form.

"Rienzi" was the dream offspring of Lord Lytton's brain, the whole plot appearing before him in the short space of two hours' sleep between violent attacks of neuralgia. Kingsley, after a hard day's fishing, went to sleep, only to get a shadowy outline of "Westward Ho" in his dreams, though what connection the story had with his sport it is difficult to understand. Few people know why Coleridge's entrancing poem, "Kubla Khan," remains unfinished, but this masterpiece has a very remarkable history. The poet has just taken an anodyne and dropped off to sleep, when the poem began to shape itself in his mind, and the lines to run in rhyming order. When he awoke, he rushed to his writing table and wrote out the lines as we now have them, without a second's pause, but his memory failed him at the conclusion, so the work was never completed. An-

other famous poem composed in a dream was "The Bells," while the same author, Edgar Poe, formulated one of his finest pieces of prose, "The Masque of the Red Death," during the hours of unconsciousness.

"The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" probably caused Stevenson more mental trouble than any of his other works, but a dream got him out of the difficulty. He began a story about a man's double, but it appeared so unsatisfactory to him that he tore it up without banishing the theme from his mind. One night, however, he dreamed the scene at the window and a few minor incidents, while the second night the remainder of the plot followed, and the story was soon on paper.

Only two authors are known to have gone so far as to cultivate dreams for the purpose of plot manufacturers. Dry-

den often ate raw beefsteaks at night, and the nightmares that followed originated some of his most notable poems. Mayne Reid confessed that his prolificacy in producing novels was due in some measure to his habit of eating a handful of chestnuts ere he retired to rest, when in need of a plot.—[Ex.]

TRADE TOPIC.

The Children's Aid Society of Toronto, in an advertisement in this issue, indicate that they would be pleased to hear of good Christian homes in the country for a few bright boys between the age of five and ten years, where they would be cared for as children of the household. Address W. Duncan, Secretary, 229 Simcoe street, Toronto, Ont.