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DEVOTED TO

THE UNIFICATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND SPIRITUAL THOUGHT

AND THE

NEW PHILOSOPHY OF HEALTH.

HORATIO W. DRESSER, Editor.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY
OF HYPNOTISM.

BY LA FOREST POTTER, M. D.

HYPNOTISM is a child of Astrology. As far back as the Middle Ages it was believed by eminent philosophers that the heavenly bodies exercised a mysterious influence on human beings. In the latter part of the seventeenth century Anton Mesmer, a Viennese doctor, announced the theory of Animal Magnetism or Mesmerism, maintaining that human beings influenced each other by means of a vital fluid, or peculiar physical force, which under certain circumstances can be transmitted from one animal to another. Various inanimate objects, such as metals, crystals, magnets, were also supposed to possess and to be capable of inducing and terminating the mesmeric state, and of exciting, arresting or modifying its phenomena. This theory was investigated and rejected by the scientific world later.

It is significant, however, that this investigation was initiated, it is believed, less through the scientific aspect of the theory than through the mysterious factor which has been, and ever will be, the all-potent source of human effort, the intuition, the felt need of wider scope, the belief that we have within us a deeper life ever seeking expression. So mesmerism was ac-

cepted less through reason than feeling ; and inasmuch as these two factors have battled since the world began, its later rejection was not unexpected.

In 1841 Braid of Manchester, England, first established mesmerism on what may be called a scientific basis. He believed that the phenomena in question are caused by certain changes in the nervous system ; in a word, that they are subjective, the changes occurring through an artificial sleep produced by fatigue of the eyelids, and concentration of the consciousness on a single idea consequent on fixing the gaze on an object. To this state he gave the name *hypnotism*, meaning sleep.

From the theory of Mr. Braid to the last word of the nineteenth century (Myers), including that of Charcot, Heidenhain, Bennett, Bernheim and Liebeault, we have various explanations of hypnosis, each point of view opposed in the main to the others, and all confessedly unsatisfactory. Each theory has utilized and advanced on the other, so that in Mr. Myer's belief in a double consciousness we read a conception which more nearly than the rest includes the phenomena observed. The theory is briefly this:

A stream of consciousness flows on within us at a level beneath the threshold of ordinary waking life, and this consciousness embraces unknown powers of which hypnotic phenomena give us the first sample. While this theory furnishes us with by far the clearest idea among current speculations, it yet leaves the main question unanswered.

Very much the same superstition, the same idea of an occult, mysterious agency envelops hypnotic investigation today that enveloped Astrology in the Middle Ages. From the days of the influence which the heavenly bodies were supposed to exert on man to hypnotic suggestions of modern times, the spirit of superstition has clogged the wheels of progress.

The latest theory of hypnosis, the fruitage of four centuries of investigation, gives us little more than theory. If speculative

thought once held that unusual phenomena occur through fluid emanations from one to another, it now holds that they are caused by subjective act.

Of what practical use, then, is Hypnotism? Is it ennobling to mankind, or is it debasing? Is it a factor in growth, or hostile to it? Whether it be the one or the other, we should know more of it — to cultivate or destroy. So powerful a factor as the last four centuries have proved the phenomenon to be must have no negative function.

Let us now examine the theory of double consciousness and ascertain if through it we may approach more vitally the subject before us. The theory of Myers limits the hypnotist's power to that of a mere imitator of the phenomena — the finger, as it were, which pulls the trigger, ignoring the occult power resident in the operator, to which Bernheim in a measure still holds.

Before touching on this last question, let us study the relation of the two planes of consciousness. The evidence for the possession of a double consciousness we may, I think, at once assume. Hardly an act of our lives but that tends to demonstrate the existence of a higher plane of action. We daily sleep and dream on it. In hypnosis we remember events of the waking and sleeping states, of which in ordinary life we have no consciousness. We control on the one plane sensation, before which on the other we are powerless. For example, it is well known that in this state the leg may be amputated without pain. Again, in waking life the soldier in battle feels no wound, a higher consciousness is dominant.

What relation has the higher plane to so-called normal life?

Let us revert a moment to the law of psychology, that all sensation — that is, all thought or feeling and consequent act from external to internal environment — tends through excess of repetition to automatism (if I may be permitted the word), which we may venture to call activity on a higher plane; or following our metaphor, sensation currents of the lower plane broadening and strengthening by accumulation at length over-

flow into this higher plane. If we become expert in addition, during the process the figures place themselves in our mind without conscious effort ; we apparently no longer use the ordinary consciousness.

Concentration of sensation, therefore, is, I conceive, advance to this higher and larger subliminal plane of activity.

This is the law of growth.

Dominating this psychic law, vitally associated with it, is the intuitive—the fundamental function which permeates all planes of consciousness. The centres of sleep, imitation, imagination, memory and the cosmic centre, are part and parcel of this essential power with which life began. As through concentration in waking life we reach mainly by psychic law the higher plane, so through concentration in artificial sleep (or hypnosis) we reach through fundamental law this same plane.

Our daily recurring sleep comes through essential power, although we are influenced by fatigue, position and time. Thus, I believe, we daily ascend into the higher consciousness through fundamental and psychic function. Having studied the subliminal plane in its relation to waking life, what relation has hypnotism to this consciousness ?

Let it be clearly understood that a distinction exists (as to the mode of origin) between the so-called miraculous occult phenomena of the waking state and that which has happened only during hypnotic sleep. I wish to make this distinction at the outset, for I believe that much confusion has arisen on this point. Hypnotism, I conceive, is mainly induced by the idea of sleep self-suggested, or suggested by the operator, under certain conditions of unbalance, and its phenomena are due to suggestion working principally through psychic law on the higher plane. Although the subliminal consciousness is reached in this state, yet its function is limited, and this limitation is due to the inhibition (or shutting off through sleep) of the lower psychic consciousness, leaving activity mainly under the dominance of the functions, imitation, memory and imagination,

which, while active on the lower plane, are yet independent of it through fundamental law. The essential distinction here sought, then, is the method of reaching the higher plane of consciousness. In the waking state this plane is reached through response to the strongest suggestion, that is, by repetition of sensation, with gradual overflow to higher planes; and if the suggestion be not unusual, e. g., as in the automatism which comes from habit, the subliminal function is only slightly active. If, on the other hand, the suggestions are vital, that is, if they appeal to the consciousness with fundamental force—e. g., in the crises of life, involving life and death—we have the sudden and extreme concentration and overflow which penetrates far into the higher consciousness.

The more intense the life (using this word in its best sense), the stronger and purer the emotion, the greater the function of this higher plane. Gail Hamilton illustrates this truth in her late book called "X-Rays," as do all the seers and evangelists of the higher knowledge with which the world life teems. In hypnotism we reach this plane of consciousness through appeal to the fundamental function, sleep. This function being one with essential power, permeating all planes, through it, under certain conditions, we gain immediate access to the subliminal consciousness; although entrance is effected through the function of sleep, this function is modified by the character of the stimulus or suggestion which has induced it; namely, the suggestor. In natural sleep, into which in a sense we are daily hypnotized, an especially strong suggestion will modify it—for example, the phenomena of dreaming; and if this suggestion be strong enough, through it runs a thread of consciousness of the waking state, as when a mother wakes "instinctively" to minister to a child's requirements. So in hypnotism, under certain conditions of unbalance or inhibition, the suggestion of sleep is strong enough to modify the natural function and establish *rapport* with the suggestor.

An hypnotic patient may obey implicitly a suggestion, or

refuse it, according to the auto-suggestion from the subliminal plane. If a subject be told to assume the character of a fish-vender, and refuse, but accept the character of an auctioneer, it is because of a bias obtained somewhere in life, and registered in the subliminal consciousness to which access is gained. If he be told to commit murder he refuses, because on this plane the fundamental law is dominant. Not only could he not fail to refuse such a proposition, but his sense of right would be so acutely discriminative that even doubtful suggestion would be accurately measured. The hypnotic is, however, mainly a helpless imitator, since the imitation centre being fundamental, that is, independent of the inhibited forces, has for its function the initiation of all sensation from without and within.

Inasmuch as psychic law is clearly directed in the hypnotic state, there can be logically no limitation to this direction. Is, then, hypnotism a factor, a life ascent? Undoubtedly, but limitation there must be through the fundamental forces. It is as if the great All-Power allowed these exceptional experiences for hint of what may be through wise use of psychic power.

To hypnotize, then, is to artificially narrow the stream of consciousness through the sleep centres by suggestion. In natural sleep there is a narrowing through the fundamental forces. In artificial sleep, or hypnotism, we have the abrupt entrance from without (through suggestion) of idea or image, and sudden narrowing of the consciousness to the suggested idea. Because of the suddenness of this concentration of cell current, many of these discriminating selective forces of reason are cut off from action; as a result we have less direction to the main stream of consciousness, and therefore ready acceptance of the suggestion. The character of the suggestion which accomplishes this abrupt deviation from the normal must be fundamental to life's processes; that is, must appeal to the will (limitation) with vital force; and this vital force we find to reside in the intense desire of the hypnotic patient to imitate (possess) that which the suggestion implies, or with which it is

associated. As the plant responds through feeling to environment, and concentrates its forces for growth, so will man through desire (feeling) effect through imitation similar concentration. The desire to know the mysterious, the unusual, the occult, is innate, is fundamental to all, and associated with the hypnotizer in this possession. Further, the sleep function is vital to growth. Through a beneficent law, it is a part of life's earliest expression. Every form of life through sleep repairs its waste. With the idea of sleep mentally or verbally suggested, in accordance with this same fundamental law is merged the personality of the suggestor (the hypnotist), and through this connection rapport is maintained with the conscious world. Sleep in this condition is rarely profound, and is mainly under the dominance of its projector. Hence all his acts (since Reason's function sleeps, and to a limited extent his thought) will set in motion the machinery of this hypnotized consciousness. So vital is this connection that responses occur from the slightest suggestion; for example, emotion may be aroused by simply placing the patient in the appropriate position. Thus we have, as the necessary conditions for hypnotism, first, the fundamental quality of suggestion, and, second, its abrupt entrance into consciousness.

The activity of the centres and paths for imitation, memory, imagination, etc., having existed from earliest human life, it follows that their accessible channels will receive readily currents arising from any degree of unbalance existent in the system. We notice in idiots those acts which presumably have received stimulus through these primitive paths. Pinal has recorded the case of an idiot who was something like a sheep, both in respect to tastes, mode of life and form of the head. She had aversion to meat, and ate bread and vegetables greedily. Her demonstrations of sensibility, joy or trouble were confined to the repetition of ill-articulated words; for example, "Bah, ma, bah." If she wanted to resist or express her discontent she tried to butt with the crown of her head. She slept on the floor in the position of an animal.

Now as these fundamental channels are always accessible to suggestion, through their function, we may account for those flashings to the cosmic centre, and memory in not unusual function is stimulated.

But why is one susceptible to hypnosis and not another? What are the special conditions favorable to its production? The hypnotic patient responds first because he is unbalanced; that is, coordination of the reasoning power is limited. This unbalance must not be so great that no concentration is possible, as in Idiocy; nor of the kind in which inhibitory power is too active, as in Neurasthenia and Hysteria, but must approximate to these degrees. An example of this is the sailor or soldier, who being accustomed to obey through reason, soon through sheer force of repetition, obeys independent of the reasoning power.

This inhibition, therefore, is disease, the degree of unbalance we call infirmity of purpose — a disposition to be led, influenced, the tendency (if I may use the word) which not a few human beings manifest through life in excess, and which heredity must needs explain. The suggestion which to this degree of unbalance means acceptance, to the balanced would mean refusal through inhibitory activity. Each would desire to receive the suggestion of sleep because of its fundamental nature; but the balanced consciousness would oppose the desire, and the unbalanced succumb to it. Any impression or suggestion, if it be vital (strong) enough, tends to ungear the consciousness. In moments of anger, fright, or during the state of joy, we are easily dominated by the strongest influence, whether it be word or act, and in proportion to the degree of disharmony of mental forces, in that ratio are we easily or with difficulty acted upon. Were these unbalanced patients to receive suggestions other than sleep, they would respond to a limited extent; but the appeal being made to a fundamental centre, through it access is gained to the plane on which all action is independent (in a sense) of reason, namely, the intuitive, and therefore the patient becomes perforce an imitator.

The unbalance necessary to produce hypnosis limits the production of its phenomena. It means that the lower plane being active in the waking state, it will necessarily dominate in the artificial state. As on this plane, through inhibition of activity, the imitation function is left its chief representative, it is therefore this function that is most active. The unusual enlargement of the mental field in this state (the so-called "mysterious" function) is due, I believe, mainly to concentration to those fundamental centres, namely, memory, imagination, and exceptionally the cosmic centres which are in close proximity. All the *truly* enlarged mental vision, all phenomena which transcend experience and express prevision, which have vital meaning, have to do with the same psychic concentration observed in hypnotism; but its initiation must come through the activity of the whole life and not a *part* of it, through that balance attainable by vital stimulations or suggestions which are not fitful and narrow, but constant and ever broadening. I believe the true trance state is an auto-suggestion achieved by perfected balance. I believe that all the grand mysteries of human effort come through the life suggestion, and not from the hypnotist. The scope of hypnotism must necessarily, it seems to me, be narrow. It means for the ordinary mortal activity on the lower plane of life, dependence mainly on the operator. The higher plane is not effectively reached.

It is conceivable, on the other hand, that experimentation in this field has been confined to a class of the lower order whose subliminal function has been little used. It may be that, given the desired quality of hypnotist and patient, vast possibilities lie in this direction.



I count life just a staff
To try the soul's strength on, educe the man
Who keeps one end in view, make
All things serve.
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

— *R. Browning.*

CHARACTER BUILDING.

BY HORATIO W. DRESSER.

(CONTINUED FROM MAY NUMBER.)

LONG experience in the endeavor to reform mankind has shown conclusively that the only permanent cure for human ills is the voluntary reformation of the man himself. It affords only temporary relief to doctor effects, to pass laws regulating the sale of liquors, or to use external force. Behind the effect is invariably the cause that produced it. Back of the habit, the sorrow, the vice, the suffering, is always the individual who thinks, acts, and suffers. With each individual the universal power takes a different form.

In each person there is a particular capability and an intimately close desire or ambition. To know that individual power and to bring it into full control is clearly the way to bring about all reforms in the outer world. There must first of all be *desire* to live a nobler, fuller, better life. No one can make this change for another. But the desire once there, then the way is clear onward and upward to the highest spiritual attainment.

It is true many maintain that we must take ourselves just as we are, that we cannot change our dispositions. My leading thesis all along is that we *can* not only alter our temperaments, but modify our external surroundings, if we will thus strike at the heart of things; that our real power in life comes through the obstacles we have overcome in ourselves; that to him that overcometh shall be given; that in fact the only solution to life's problem is to know how we have sinned and suffered ignorantly,

how we have created our own happiness and misery, and how by self-knowledge and self-control we may learn wisely to direct our forces and transmute them into spiritual power. All our trials, our pains, and pleasures centre about our life problem, about the uncontrolled part of our nature. The intensity of the nervous man is revealed in everything he does. If he suffers, he suffers acutely. He is extremely happy or most uncomfortable. The same lack of reserve power is revealed in his speech, in his handwriting, in all that enters into daily life. If he finds himself going too far in one direction, he reverses the machinery and rushes to the other extreme. He is always flying off on a tangent. He has not yet found his centre, because in a word he is a creature of impulse; his forces possess him, whereas he should possess and direct them. The development of the calm centre of self-control must, then, ever be the first step in the endeavor to change one's disposition. Then we can little by little learn to hold ourselves still, and with a word of command marshal the undisciplined army of forces, tendencies, and impulses. After the nervous man has stopped himself again and again, every time he finds himself walking nervously, until by and by the walking machinery is under control; he can walk rapidly or slowly *without hurrying inside*, without nervous tension, because he is master of the impulse that controls it. He can then take up one tendency after another until he learns to be moderate in all things and in all ways. He does this by developing a counter-activity; that is, he takes time day by day to calm himself. He pauses again and again with the suggestion, Peace, be still! Can we not say confidently that there is not a tendency in the human organism which can resist the power of such persistent endeavor, not a disease that cannot be overcome, no element of self or selfishness which cannot be conquered!

But mere thought, I repeat, is not enough. It is not enough to say we *will* do it, or that some time we will begin; but we must take ourselves on the spur of the moment, in the midst of

a sentence, whenever we find ourselves nervous or excited, or whenever we find ourselves going off on a tangent, take positive hold of ourselves and turn squarely and fairly the other way. There is enough power with us, but we have not rightly used it. It may be that we do not really change our inner dispositions, but at any rate we learn how to redirect our forces in such a manner that the entire outer life is altered. There are enough people in this generation who have thus transformed their lives to convince even the skeptic that it can and has been done.

But let us return once more to the thought stream which we have been so long observing. How is it that these decisive experiences become so effectual? It is because the thought is concentrated, the mind is held long enough to register an impression, to stamp an ideal or picture on the responsive plate of consciousness. Think of the passing states of consciousness as a molten stream on which the thought is stamped. The nervous man makes the change in his life because he holds still long enough to make a change in his mental life. The process may be illustrated by looking up an unfamiliar word in the dictionary. One reads enough about it and thinks about it long enough to grasp its meaning, thereby making it a part of one's vocabulary. It is the quiet thought about an ideal which is effective, like the suggestion to awake at a given hour in the morning. If the suggestion is dismissed in quiet confidence, the sleep will be restful. But if one be anxious lest one oversleep, the night will be disturbed by the feeling of necessity that one must awake early. "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." Return first of all to the point of view of the observer. Calm yourself and wait. Remember that life is cooperative. We are not living to ourselves alone. When the soul comes uppermost in its quiet individual strength it is *fated* to succeed, for the power of God moves with it. Recognition and cooperation, rather than affirmation, this is the way. One has no need to assert one's will if one knows the way, if

one understands the law. All doubt, all fear, all worriment, all nervousness is so much useless expenditure of energy.

These calm moments in the inner world stamp their impress on the after life. One feels stronger and more self-reliant. Self has been put aside, and the triumph over self — is not this the essence of the character-building process? If the temptation to follow the selfish dictate be mastered, the power behind the temptation is transmitted to the higher plane. But if one weakens before it, the next opportunity to learn the lesson may be harder, until it will become more and more difficult to overcome the rigid front of selfishness.

It is really, then, a matter of economy to take the current when it serves; and the quiet, decisive method of mastering self is surely the best way. Do not fight self as if it were a demon to be cast out, but calmly realize the power of the higher ideal. Turn your thought toward that, and gradually the lower self will lose its power. Every time the selfish impulse comes, the personal aspersion, the sentiment of recrimination, retaliation, of jealousy or anger, pause a moment, become calm; do not express it, but turn it into its opposite. Do not judge, but calmly wait until you know. Have the broadest possible charity coupled with wise discernment. Root out sarcasm by refraining from giving it words. Do not make fun of others' beliefs, but be tolerant even of selfishness itself, knowing that each one of your fellow-creatures is consciously or unconsciously engaged in the same moral struggle. Love even those who condemn, for they condemn through lack of knowledge of this great creative process. When praise is given, look toward the highest that is in you whence all your wisdom came, and thus avoid giving it a personal turn. Take home and apply to yourself the law of action and reaction, noting that even now while you are observing the thought stream you are sowing seeds which shall bear fruit according to their kind. Is it not clear that people have neglected these little opportunities largely because they have not yet fully realized the absolute nature of the law of cause and effect?

Once realize the full meaning of this law, and you will see the tremendous responsibility put upon you. It is true that but a small part of life is voluntary. I would emphasize the fact again and again that we live related lives, depending on one another, and every instant dependent on the Infinite Spirit. But here deep within is the chooser stamping his choice by every deed he performs. It takes but the slightest move sometimes to turn the mind into self or out of it. One should be particularly on one's guard never to study self by mere self-analysis. Do not contemplate your own moods and thoughts as if to force them to tell you your faults; but rise to the plane of the higher self, the Christ in you, and let it come by revelation. If you see the ideal you are to realize, you have nothing to do with faults and mistakes. These are unfinished deeds, aspirations on the evolutionary road to the fuller spiritual life. The wise man views life as a whole, and regards all errors and failures as means to the higher end. He is ever contented, patient while doing the best he knows; for the way to enter a more congenial field is not to chafe under present circumstances, nor try to run away from them. Wherever we go, we are sure to take our problem with us. That is the one thing which we cannot shake off when we go to Europe or pass into another life. The place to meet it where its solution shall make one's character strongest is here where the problem arises. Rich or poor, imprisoned or free, ill or in good health, every soul is on the same basis in this respect; every life may be made beautiful by the way it is lived, and the more trying the circumstances the greater the victory may become. Whether we have a poor inheritance or a good one makes little difference. If it be good, one must learn how to deserve and keep it. If it be poor, here is an opportunity for self-development. To him that overcometh more shall be given. It is not what our parents have done for us, but what we meet and master in our own lives, that gives us power; and the solution of life's mystery must be worked out afresh by each individual.

If one man is more highly favored than his fellows, then he is given a severer test in some new direction. Every man may have the greatest moral power, but in order to obtain it he must take himself just where he is and earn the right to be a master through his willingness to serve. Character is never to be built up for self alone. It comes at its best while we are living for others. Yet I am trying to show throughout that the inception of all activity is in this deep-lying inner world, where we accept or neglect our moral opportunities.

But there is one other aspect of the character-building process on which I would lay special stress; namely, its physical side. As you look within to observe the interplay of thought you find the spirit ever willing to come forth, but the body is like a prison hampering the spirit on every side. Here, then, is an opportunity for cooperation on the physical plane. Where you find the body stiff and restricted, develop it by careful attention and exercise until it is free. Remember that the soul is like the life of the rosebud: it is pressing from within, but it must have the favorable environment of atmosphere and sunlight in order to expand. And so with the body. It is dense and compact; the right kind of exercise will free and perfect the instrument so that it shall no longer be an obstacle.

But throughout this discussion I have laid great stress on the apparently fixed conditions which we are born into, the obstacles that stand in our way, and the dangers of introspection. I have emphasized all this in order to show what splendid opportunities lie open before the man of character. From infancy to old age, in the inner world and in the outer, he is beset by conditions and conventionalities which tend to hold him where he is. No new idea, no new method is accepted without strenuous opposition. Everything possible is done to defeat the man of character, and to hold all men down to a dead level. Here is the supreme occasion. Let him seek the inner world where his own deepest conviction abides; let him be true to it come what may; let him calmly yet decisively take his stand on the

bed-rock of individuality, and move forward confidently. He is free in reality. These conditions are put there only to test him. They are the conditions necessary to call out his power. The occasion makes the man — if he takes it.

Thus we return each time to the profound truth that all life is related, that its purpose is mutual helpfulness, that its effect upon us depends precisely on the attitude we take in regard to it. Every condition may be made a help or a hindrance. We faint and weaken under circumstances, we give way before pain and misery. We hesitate to express conviction, and haltingly keep back our real sentiments. But the greater power lies in us and not in our environment. We are bound down only so long as we are willing to have it so. When the soul decides to make a change in life and come forth from its subjective prison, no power in the universe can stand in its way. And I have tried to show why, how it is that everything depends on the little acts of choice far within the inner world where at will we ever select between two courses. All that is needed is the recognition of the fact that consciously or unconsciously we do create our own conditions and our own happiness and misery. If, then, we do it any way, if we are constantly wielding this mighty power, the only question is, How shall it be directed — shall we choose the wise or the unwise, the altruistic or the selfish course?

In closing, then, I would lay special emphasis on the ability to calm the mind and wait for opportunities. Again and again become the observer. When troubles and doubts come seek the silent realm and let the activities settle until you can see clearly and calmly. When you are too intense wait for the commotion to settle. When supreme occasions arise be regardless of the consequences. Choose the wiser way, the unselfish course, the deed that makes for character. Do not falter before any obstacle that stands in the pathway of individual development along unselfish lines. If the task seems momentarily too hard, pause to gather reserve power. "In quietness and confi-

dence shall be your strength." Not the serenity of the good-natured man who lets himself be trampled on, but the repose of the man who comprehends the law, the trust of the man who first of all trusts himself, the dignity and self-protectiveness of the one who has wise self-respect. Through him the power of the Almighty is made known; through him the gentleness of the Christ spirit speaks. He stands for what he is truly worth; he lives what he believes; he helps his fellow-man by what he is, and character is the fruition of his life day by day because he is faithful to the ever-present divinity otherwise called opportunity.



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW METAPHYSICAL MOVEMENT.*

BY E. M. CHESLEY.

I—IN the first place, the New Metaphysical Movement stands for the deeper realities of the universe, the things which are eternal, the things which are above and beyond the outer and phenomenal realm. The word *metaphysics* does not now signify, as it did among the followers of Aristotle, that which comes after the *physics*. It has, in the History of Philosophy, acquired a far profounder meaning. It signifies, and this meaning is now well recognized among thinkers, the science of real being, as distinguished from mere changeable, phenomenal being. It signifies *ontology*, the science of that which eternally *is*, as distinguished from that which merely *appears* in outer, temporary manifestation. The New Metaphysical Movement, therefore, concerns itself with absolute truth, as distinguished from relative truth. And it especially concerns itself with the practical application of that absolute Truth of Being in

* Read before the Metaphysical Club, April 5, 1898.

all the affairs of our daily and hourly living. It calls men back to a recognition of the grand noumenal verities, the things which pertain to their higher rational and eternal natures.

2—It is a grand movement of the Spirit. It emphasizes God as the one only Absolute Reality. It emphasizes the kingdom of God to be established on this earth of ours here and now. It calls men back to the actual, practical recognition of that sublime declaration of the Apostle Paul, "In God we live and move and have our being." The New Thought Movement does not merely hold this mighty spiritual truth as a beautiful intellectual theory to be talked about and wondered over and logically dissected; but it bends all its energies to *the living this great fact of our life in God*. Since we do indeed live and move and have our being in the one Infinite Ocean of the Divine Life, since we are rays of the one Eternal Logos, and are in our inmost, essential being, of the same divine substance, the New Philosophy of Health believes in recognizing, using, claiming, this stupendous truth. Our true and Higher Self, then, is absolute in its nature. It is without sin, without weakness, without disease, without death. Let the Immortal Ego know and claim its divine inheritance here and now. Let it claim its freedom, its wholeness, its peace, its power, its poise. Let us continue to think the thoughts of love and truth and wisdom, as befits our royal birthright. And that splendid affirmation of the truth of our being, that understanding and that life, shall revolutionize our whole psychical and physical nature and transform gradually our whole environment. It shall quicken all the vital energies of the body; it shall establish health and sanity on firm, rational and enduring foundations.

3—The New Metaphysical Movement accepts the far-reaching and transcendent truth declared by Jesus, the world's greatest spiritual teacher, as set forth in the sixth chapter of the Gospel by Matthew. I allude to the truth of perfect faith in God, the truth that God is our All-sufficiency in all things—a truth requiring great renunciation of the personal, selfish will. The

wisdom of Jesus was so deep, so high, so metaphysical in this teaching of perfect dependence on the Good Law that the Christian world has in large part failed to understand him, failed to appreciate the beauty and the richness of his philosophy of life. The professed disciples of the Master have tacitly questioned his good judgment in this regard, and have too often slurred over this central heart of his teaching as impracticable, fanciful and, forsooth, unscientific. As though empirical science could judge of the divine truths of the Spirit! Consequently they have never given themselves unreservedly to this great Law of the Good, this eternal law of all true life; they have not really believed in it; they have not complied with its conditions; *and so they have not been able to prove its beneficent working.* Instead of seeking that divine freedom which comes through obedience, they have fallen back too often into the mire of materialism and worldly doubt. The New Philosophy of Health is earnestly endeavoring to *resurrect* this sublime doctrine of our entire dependence on God,—this doctrine which abolishes the demon of fear, worry and anxiety, and which restores to the soul its true life and health and freedom in a universe of Good. If God *is* Infinite Love and Wisdom, if God *is* omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, it is high time we awoke to a more practical recognition of the plain and simple facts. "Do not cumber yourself," says Emerson, "with fruitless pains to mend and remedy remote effects; make first the soul erect, and all things will go well." That is, put the soul in right and true relations with the eternal reality of things, and all will go well. This is the exact, practical teaching of the New Metaphysics.

4—The New Thought Movement is a much-needed revival of genuine, practical Christianity. The finer and profounder truths of the Christian religion have been buried away under the ignorance and skepticism, the formalism and materialism, of centuries of undevelopment. The Light which lighteth every man coming into the world is beginning to shine out anew. The New Thought Movement is in the order of Divine Provi-

dence. It has of course its crudities, its over-statements, its illogical and uncultured adherents, even its perversions of fundamental truth. But all these things and more has Christianity itself had to contend with. These errors will drop away as the race evolves. The heart of the metaphysical movement is good and sound and strong. It is a genuine fulfilment of that great prophetic declaration of Jesus that he had many more things to communicate to the world, but it was not ready to receive them; but that when the Spirit of Truth should come, it would lead the world into all the truth—that is, gradually, as its needs require. The New Thought Movement I take to be one of these grand revelations of the Eternal Logos, ever working in human history. And the new philosophy has come *to stay*, for it is founded upon the bed-rock of divine reality. It has a certain eternal significance. It really means the regeneration and transformation of the whole life of man—a work which goes on unceasingly with all the future progress of the soul.

5—The *glory* of the New Philosophy, its one preeminent virtue, is its insistence on the practical applicability of the great and divine truths of the Spirit here and now. Not theory—we have had too much of that—but life and life more abundant, that is its unceasing claim, that is its perennial aspiration. Jesus went about teaching divine truth. He also went about healing the bodies of the sick. The two things are inseparable. The Divine Truth thoroughly lived, realized, believed in, has power to heal the ills of the body as well as the ills of the soul. To affirm the one and deny the possibility of the other is to my mind a perversion of the teaching of Jesus. I take it to be disloyalty to the truth of the Christian religion in its wholeness. Mind and body constitute a unit. The physical is a continuous expression of the mental and the spiritual life. The healing of the diseases of the body through the power of mind is not done in any supernatural way, but in strict accordance with the divinely natural laws of the higher spiritual order. The call to all the churches of today is: Back to the teaching

of the Master; back to the plainest, the simplest, the most elementary truths of the Spirit. "And the glory which thou, O Father, hast given unto me, I have given unto them." "And the things that I do, they shall do also, and greater things than these shall they do." We are not only "heirs of God"—his riches, his wisdom, and his power—but we are "fellow-heirs with Christ."

6—The New Philosophy of Health emphasizes the eternal reality of spirit and the essential unreality of matter. For this it has been criticized by those who do not know. But in this doctrine of Idealism it has the support and companionship of the greatest and wisest thinkers of all time. In this elect company we find the ancient and venerable Vedanta philosophy of India. Here we find the modern German Transcendental philosophy—the richest and ripest product of our century—represented by Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. Here we find Parmenides, Plato and Plotinus. Here we find Spinoza, Berkeley, Leibnitz and Emerson. To this goal now rapidly tends all modern physical science. For modern science teaches that the cells, and even the ultimate atoms, of the body are psychical in their nature, in other words, are living intelligences. It resolves the whole external physical world into a supersensible cosmic ether, filled with innumerable vortex-motion etheric atoms. It is now dimly discerning, through its most advanced representatives, that all matter is but a mode of motion, or lower vibration, of Spirit. It even contends, with Mr. Herbert Spencer and many others, that the whole material universe, with all its splendid laws and processes, is but a vast, orderly and persistent system of mental impressions, or vivid states of consciousness, wrought in our minds by that one absolute reality, the Infinite and Unknowable Power which men call God. So is it always. The slow-moving, cautious, skeptical, scientific intellect ultimately confirms, in its own empirical way, the high intuitions of a more spiritual and metaphysical philosophy.

7—For some time past I have had occasion to follow the

literature of the New Thought pretty closely and to watch its progress. I find that it is more and more becoming a great and widespread movement in the interests of the higher spiritual life, in the interests of a truer and deeper philosophy of the whole nature of man. The New Metaphysics emphasizes the central truths taught by the seers and saviors of our race — the life of God in the soul of man, the divinity of human nature, the common brotherhood of the children of God, the eternal reality of the Good. The bodily healing is coming to be regarded as secondary, the growth and formation of character primary and all-important. Doubtless the New Thought Movement will fulfil its high aims and promises in this regard more and more perfectly in the ever-advancing order of human evolution.



We see in this life that we shape and can form all our future: every one of us, every day, is trying to shape tomorrow. Today we fix the fate of tomorrow; tomorrow we will fix the fate of the day after tomorrow, and so on. It is quite logical that this reasoning can be pushed backward, too. If we can cut off one portion and explain that portion and understand it, then, if it be true that nature is uniform, the same explanation must apply to the whole chain of time. If it be true that we are working out our own destiny here within this short space of time, if it be true that everything must have a cause as we see it now, it must also be true that that which we are now is the effect of the whole of the past; therefore no other person is necessary to shape the destiny of mankind but man himself. — *Swami Vivekananda.*



Away with all these patronizing distinctions of Pagan and Christian, lost and saved, damned and elect. It is far worse for us to use them than it was for the Greeks to call the rest of the world barbarians.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

HEALING.

II.

WHEN we have given credit to the factors of cure in the patient — desire to be healed, faith, temperament, receptivity, auto-suggestion, expectant attention and the rest — what shall we say of those cases in which all this was insufficient, and the patient was cured by a mental healer? Let us return to our typical case, namely, the person who, receptive and willing, but unable to help himself, comes for silent treatment — what are the factors on the healer's side?

In the first place there is desire to heal, sympathy, a longing to play one's part in nature's wonderful process. The healer has himself suffered, has found relief by mental means, and knows what it is to be freed from bondage to fear, medicine and doctors. He is not a believer in disease as something that is likely to seize a person externally. He believes that suffering is neither an affliction nor a necessity, but a condition brought about through ignorance, wrong ways of living and thinking; that one may learn to take life so as to avoid sickness altogether, finally overcoming all friction, so that that which once meant a curse shall prove a blessing by the way in which it is received. In short, that our understanding or mental attitude is of more consequence in our reaction upon life than any and all of its material conditions. Accordingly his first effort is to bring about a change in the mental attitude of the patient.

This may often be done by audible explanation; as, for example, when the patient is uncharitable or is suffering from

suppressed grief, for one can in a few quiet words point out the wiser way. But we will assume that the average patient of whom we are speaking really requires the silent help. The patient comes in the willing attitude before described. The healer comes in a sympathetic attitude. If intuitive, he does not ask questions of the patient, and will not permit a rehearsal of symptoms and sufferings; for this will tend to refresh the troubles, fears, mental pictures, etc. The past is passed, and the patient should now be concerned solely with the present and future. The healer sits down by the patient, and asks him to become quiet and receptive in a comfortable position. The patient is not to force himself to be still, but simply to become restfully expectant, and to think rather of the healer than of himself.

The healer then turns the mind aside from the noisy world without, shuts out sound, light and physical feeling as much as possible, and rises to the kingdom of the inner self or soul — just as one might ascend a mountain summit in order to survey the world beneath from a higher region. As a rule, people find it difficult to concentrate at first and withdraw the attention from the outer world; for all sorts of thoughts rush in upon the mind. But after a time it becomes almost instinctive to fix the attention on that Power which, always with the soul, only need be recognized in order to become actively uppermost in consciousness. Any uplifting thought that will enable one to realize the omnipresence of love, wisdom, goodness, power, will bring about the result, and it is best not to commit one's self to a set form of words; nor should one treat any two cases alike, since one should always seek the wisdom which applies to a particular case. Yet oftentimes the same realization, such as "In him we live and move and have our being," is the most helpful means of entering the silence; and frequently one uses the same words or suggestions with which to command one's self and quiet the troubled atmosphere of the patient; namely, "Peace, be still, peace, peace!"

There is, however, in the more spiritual process no reasoning, no attempt to transfer definite thoughts, and *no effort to control the mind of the patient*. It is rather the healer's place to bring down a gentle, soothing atmosphere about the patient from which he shall absorb according to his need and receptivity. The spiritual healer is not, then, himself the all-powerful mind or factor, he is the willing instrument of the higher power. His first desire is to become spiritually open, and free himself, and then to turn to the patient that the same state may be induced or set up there.

If, therefore, one uses certain ideal suggestions or passages of Scripture at first, in order to hold the thought in the right direction it should be remembered that the words are only a stepping-stone to something higher. It is not the word or thought that is the reality; it is the living essence which the word or thought suggests. That essence or Spirit is ever with us. God is here within, inseparable from the soul; and when the soul feels the divine presence it possesses the thing itself and has no need of words. To realize this oneness with Deity and withdraw the consciousness from all that is painful and morbid is, in a word, the substance of the silent spiritual method.

The first step, let me repeat, is to direct the consciousness toward the omnipresent Spirit, to become peaceful, quiet, poised, *master of the situation*; then when one is thus open and free to turn to the sufferer, carrying the same gentle yet strong and stimulating influence, enveloping him with an atmosphere so powerful that no inharmonious condition either of mind or body can long withstand it. And it is a well-established fact that the power thus directed towards the patient meets resistance just where the sufferer is in discord; that is, mind and body are open, free, responsive, except in particular regions; and here the healing power meets an obstacle. Nature is trying to restore equilibrium, and meets opposition at this restricted point. Even if one knows nothing about the patient's trouble at the

outset, the healing experience will soon reveal the location of it, because one's thought directed toward the patient will come against this obstruction, and the healing power will bear down upon it until gradually the condition begins to change in somewhat the same way that ice melts under the heat of the sun. The thought of the healer directs and focuses the power there where it is most needed, and holds it there persistently, with the idea of course that the condition is gradually changing, that the patient is giving up his fears, haunting mental pictures and painful consciousness of sensation, and becoming open to the higher power. This is continued until an impression is made, until enough has been accomplished to start the right reaction, and then the work continues subconsciously even after the treatment is finished.

The healer, then, is like the person with good sight who offers kindly assistance to a blind man. The one with good sight sees the way open before him as he proceeds, and therefore steps along confidently. And in this same spirit of confidence one should guide the sufferer, because one knows the way, because of what one knows about the human mind, the effect of thought, the nature of disease and the rich possibilities of our spiritual existence. One should not dwell upon symptoms and doubts, but see the *outcome*, think of the patient as *he ought to be*, in good health, poised, calm and strong. One should be stronger in the *right* thought than the sufferer is in the wrong, penetrating persistently to the very core of the disturbance, opening it out and expanding it, until the new life is started up with a thrill throughout mind and body.

Here the question arises, Does the healer really open the mind to an *outside* force which is then directed toward the patient, or is this force *resident* in the healer? Or, assuming that there is a definite suggestion given, or a thought transferred to the patient, does this thought simply quicken the dormant healing power in the patient? Probably many healers would maintain that power or life is actually absorbed from without by the

drawn too closely together, and there must be expansion both of mind and body. This is just what results from this elevation of thought to the plane of spiritual consciousness. It throws the atoms apart, the confined power has a chance to come forth, the nervous tension is removed, and gradually as the mind becomes peaceful and happy the entire physical system becomes open and free, in much the same way in which one is limbered up on a cold day by going into the sunlight.

But how, you ask, does this realization of the divine ideal and of oneness with God through spiritual concentration reach another person and cause a like expansion? Probably the best illustration of this process is that of the transfer of sound vibration. When two pianos are in adjoining rooms, if a note on one is struck the corresponding chord on the other will vibrate. Likewise in human speech. The will or desire on my part to communicate with you causes my ideas to take shape in language which you understand, a process is set up in my brain, transmitted to the vocal chords, and thus by vibration to your ear, brain, and finally to your consciousness. And your understanding of what I say is precisely dependent on the attention which you give to it, the receptivity to it, and the sympathy of experience. If you have entered the silence and communed with God, you know what I mean. If not, my words convey little or nothing to you; for it is the experience or consciousness which counts, not the words.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



How hard it seems sometimes that when the spirit is so willing, when the character has been so greatly softened by sorrow and suffering, that the soul has so little power over the body and over circumstances, but must gradually attain this power through years of persistent endeavor.

METAPHYSICAL CLUB.

201 Clarendon St., Opposite Trinity Church, Boston, Mass.

ORGANIZED to promote interest in, and the practice of, a true spiritual philosophy of life and health;—to develop the highest self-culture through right-thinking, as a means of bringing one's loftiest ideals into present realization;—to stimulate faith in, and study of, the higher nature of man in its relation to health and happiness;—to advance the intelligent and systematic treatment of disease by the mental method.

HEADQUARTERS for the Club, at the above address, are freely open to members, and to others interested in the movement, from 9 A. M. until 5 P. M., daily (except Sunday).

LECTURES will be given from November to May. Announcement later. Admission to non-members twenty-five cents.

MEMBERSHIP in the Club may be secured by the payment in advance of **Three Dollars**, which is the annual fee. All who sympathize with the purposes of the Club are cordially invited to join.

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CONTINUATION IN ABSTRACT OF ADDRESSES GIVEN BEFORE THE METAPHYSICAL CLUB, AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 5.

Of the Significance of the Metaphysical Movement, Mr. Edward A. Pennock said: "If before writing this paper I had questioned some half a dozen people interested in the metaphysical movement as to their conception of its meaning and purpose, I should probably have received as many different answers, varying in accordance with the characteristics that had been most emphasized in the thought and experience of each individual. To verify this supposition would certainly convince the inquirer that such a movement must be non-sectarian, broad and inclusive. We gladly accept this as our first principle: a free and untrammelled search for truth wherever it may be found, absolutely divorced from creed, dogma, or personal authority. The metaphysical movement is first and foremost a sincere effort to discover a fundamental philosophy of life that will regard the entire universe, a philosophy which is based on realities and not on phenomena, a philosophy which is so inclusive and so practical as to be applicable to all phases of life. This is no new philosophy. It is older than Christianity, but was restated by Jesus in those terse sentences: 'The kingdom of God is within you,' and 'Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

"It may now well be asked what ideas the metaphysical movement holds in relation to life. The fundamental idea is always the idea of God; the attempt to state in words our conception of the Infinite. The metaphysical movement means a belief in an Immanent God, an Indwelling Spirit, All-wisdom, All-love, All-power, All-goodness, ever present in the universe and in man. If the Lord our God is one God, and everywhere present and all-powerful and all-good, what becomes of evil? It becomes a negative quality, without power or reality, comparable to darkness. It only has the power and existence in man's erroneous thought. When Jesus said, 'Resist not evil, but

overcome evil with good,' he may as well have said, 'Do not fight darkness, but bring in the light.'

"Taking up the next point in the problem of life, the metaphysical movement believes in a Divine humanity — in man as being so typical of this Immanent Love that he may be called the child of God ; and in a creative Source for all human life so near and so concerned in man's welfare that we may personify it and call it the All-Father. This is no cold abstraction, no unfeeling principle, but the very essence of all human love and sympathy, so infinitely great as to be past finding out."

Mr. Fred V. Fuller also said in part : "What does this movement promise to the individual, to society, to the church, to sociological and allied reform movements, to art, and science and education? A book might be written as an answer, for the metaphysical method of dealing with all these vital topics is the fundamental and root method. It would in every disturbing social problem which confronts us seek the cause, and then aid in advancing its solution along the evolutionary line of least resistance, and not confusedly treat the effect, as is being so universally done in almost every field. It would vigorously try to see beyond the mere isness of conditions into their whyness. I shall pass by the splendid promise and fulfilment metaphysics holds out to the individual for his health, happiness, exhilaration and spiritual realization to glance at its effect on the church. In the church the metaphysical movement promises to be the leaven which, inoculating the letter of its faith, shall magically transform it into spirit — a soft, warm breathing of faith through demonstration which shall set palpitating with life things long rigid and formal. The liberal church can well claim, however, that we give them no new fundamental religious ideas ; and we do not, for in an intellectual and surface way they have had about all our basic ideas for centuries, but we have shown them how to absolutely apply and make vital these old ideas through scientific knowledge of the laws of mind.

BOOK NOTES.

WHOSE SOUL HAVE I NOW? A Novel. By MARY CLAY KNAPP. Cloth; cover design by Denslow. 240 pp. 75 cents. Chicago and New York: Rand, McNally & Co.

The evident purpose of this novel is to show the possibility of thought or soul transference, or perhaps the acute development of the "inner eye and ear," so that in *perceiving* so clearly the mental states of another one seems to become possessed as it were of the other soul. As for instance: "I know nothing of the occult; so far as any scientific knowledge of it was concerned, it was a sealed book to me. But I did know and could tell what was in the mind of people; I was conscious in advance of what they were going to say to me, and would frame my answer accordingly. I was never deceived, no one could deceive me, so clearly and in such antagonism did the true and false stand out." And this: "I had become so sensitive to my husband's condition that in addition to my own state of mind I knew what was passing in his. It was not necessary to be in his presence to know this, though the effect was stronger and more depressing when with him than when separated. My spirit even followed him; guarded him in a manner. I knew when he needed me; I would suddenly feel his mind calling me to him when at a distance."

Although a novel, the story is told simply and with little complexity, picturing many phases of human nature, with strong and helpful comparisons between the *real* and the superficial life.

THE DREAM CHILD. By FLORENCE HUNTLEY. 229 pp. \$2.50. Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co.

This book is dedicated to "all seekers after Truth," but it is questionable whether real *Truth*-seekers will find much that is truly satisfactory. Many good points are made, but the general tenor is not inspiring; and although perhaps quite comprehensible to advanced students in occultism, it cannot be said to give much light on the problems of daily life. There is, however, one scarlet thread running through the whole gray fabric—the unwavering constancy and faithfulness of Frank Varien to the wife whom he could not understand, but *believed* in, and whose course, if not wise from all points of view, is at least the result of his highest understanding.

F. N. B.

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201 Clarendon Street, Boston, Mass.

(See Club announcement on another page.)

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