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Stray Thoughts.

As a nation we shrink instinctively from that which is new; we are built that way, therefore readers do not express themselves as freely as Americans would. I often receive letters from my readers, but they do not wish their remarks to be published, even when no names are used, hence one cannot reproduce experiences which would be so helpful to fellow students toiling along strange and often forbidding paths. The Americans derive much comfort and inspiration from these confessions, and undoubtedly we should do the same. Readers will sometime say: "It is all right teachers and writers of the new self-culture showing results, but they are different either they had it in them, or they were lucky." Yet one finds people who have only taken up the new philosophy a short time showing remarkable results. I could fill every page of this magazine with stories of people who have been lifted from poverty, raised from despair and misery, rescued from a monotonous, dour existence, or illumined and inspired from their contact with the New Knowledge.

Anyhow, readers who do not make the headway they would like must go on, carry out the suggestions given and have confidence in the steady growth of faculty and improvement, and they will not find their confidence misplaced.

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We are all more or less sticklers for "authority." We are ready to accept a statement made by a great man, where that of an unknown individual would not be noticed. Here is a statement by Prof. Elmer Gates I should like to give as a sort of text this month: "Give people more mind, and all undertakings will be ameliorated and better results accomplished." This means that with more mind whatever weaknesses we may possess will disappear, and if that be done we naturally become quite different men and women and we then accomplish things we never before considered, or thought ourselves capable of.

STRAY THOUGHTS.

And here is another statement by Prof. William Sadler, M.D., in a series of articles in a prominent magazine, dealing with the power of mind: "The mind sits in the place of power, upon the throne of the nerve-centres, in a position of absolute controlling influence." Everyone will accept his assertion, and if they do, and think a little on it, they must come to the conclusion that the mind must be able to control the body. If this is true, then the mistakes the body makes, in being ill, awkward, imperfect, &c., may all be remedied.

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It is not much use appealing to the converted, but I fancy there is a fair sprinkling of Journal readers who still doubt their possibilities—once more, the fear of the new and strange. Let us hope the two sayings quoted above will help them.

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Here, too, is a thought from the "Nautilus" that should be useful to many: "Man is the magnet which generates his own magnetism according to his secret thoughts. Jesus said: 'Whatsoever ye desire, believe that ye receive and ye shall have.' You can fool others as to your thoughts and deeds, *but you cannot fool your own character.* And it is your character which fixes you the quality of your magnetism. You attract all through your life that which affinizes with your true character. Be still and know. *Be honest with yourself* and you you *will* know. Desire is the organizing principle of life. Desire is the Law of Attraction which brings together the atoms. It is the first of the seven principles by which all life comes into being. Attraction! *Expectant* desire brings to us the things desired. What do you desire? Always good, never anything else. When you begin to *expect* good everywhere, out of everything; when you hold the thought that everything is good; and everything is working for greater good, you find yourself charged with *expectant* desire. The other kind of desire is dead, or, at least, it is insulated in such a way that it cannot work."

—o—

"The person who can truthfully say to himself: 'I will be governed only by the spiritual within myself,' will overcome all false conditions that may have entered into his life."—"Ether Wave."

—o—

"The secret of health lies largely in one's attitude. How are you thinking? Are you judging from appearances, your mental conceptions of them, or from the basis of Truth, which is 'righteous judgment'? Are you 'double-minded,' that is, do you believe that everything must have its opposite? that if there is good there must be bad? health and sickness, opulence and poverty, happiness and misery? If so, you are partaking of the Tree of Duality, the forbidden tree. If so, is it any wonder you have mixed conditions in your life? The more you give place in your thought to evil, adversity, disease, &c., the more you will see of them: because they are the goggles (false mental conceptions) through which and by which you see these untrue images."—"Power."

BRAINS: HOW TO GROW THEM.

We do not understand that the very fact of living makes us builders of our brains. Feelings, emotions, sensations, actions, speech, all enter into the operation of brain construction, so that the least thoughtful, even the thought-less, contributes to the process.

Above all, most important of all, in fact, is thought, the magical tool wherewith we fashion this cardinal part of man's being.

Apart from this potent power is the effect wrought on us by those around us, and whilst, as stated, thought ranks first because of the possibilities lying within it, yet in the lives of nearly all people the play upon them of others, or environment, or circumstances, is the dominating factor.

Through the want of knowledge of one's inner powers men live on the surface of life. They do so because it saves them so much trouble in exploiting themselves, for as Rochefoucauld says: "The mind is more indolent than the body." This would not seem at first to be the case, because not one in ten thousand can stop mental activity. Well may the mind be likened to wild horses in its restlessness, but mental activity must not be confused with thinking, which is the attribute of the trained mind only found in a few. The difficulty in getting the mind to work is so great that people avoid the exertion by a hundred different expedients

No, this feverish, restless, almost ceaseless movement of the mind is the very thing which destroys thought, for a certain harmony or quiescence is imperative to the act of thinking, so that mental indolence may well accompany an active mind, just as it may be the companion of a dull, lethargic mind; thus it happens that the bulk of people go through life and rarely think for themselves, allowing their newspapers, books, teachers, pastors, doctors, lawyers, and others to do it for them, performing only that portion of thinking which is necessary in their daily avocations. Seeing that neither of the two differs much from one year to another it means a certain routine and dead level.

Thus we leave out of account altogether, or almost so, what ought to be supremely important facts in the growing of a brain, and what growth does take place is done for us by the universal urge which is pushing us to perfection. The slowness of the process may be gauged by noting how little we have surpassed the ideas of Plato, and going back to 427 B.C. ought to see some improvement, yet the governments of many civilized countries do not approach his "Republic."

It is supposed that man is so many-sided that the thinkers belong to one school and mankind of the doers to another, but this way of looking at the question does not rid us of it, because every man by the laws of his being must be a thinker. It is only one of the hundred experiments referred to to shift responsibility from the shoulders of the mentally indolent.

If life is passed in this manner, all thinking being done on the surface, so that a little of it goes a long way, it must be clear brain-growth can be but slow, for circumstances or environment cannot contribute much to the process of the growth.

Returning now to the analogy of the bridge we see that the materials we choose are those which happen to be the nearest to

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us, those supplied by others, and these are put into the structure without examination.

This would be bad enough in itself, but it becomes infinitely worse when we employ incompetent workmen to build the bridge. Building a brain is far more complex a task than building a bridge because the materials that the builder uses are, at any rate, stable, whereas those of the brain are extremely plastic, and the force using the brain is still more subtle.

As has been suggested the average brain is built haphazard; a certain amount of training is given it, but it is very inadequate for the business of life, and hence we have an instrument second to none in the universe, a most marvellous piece of mechanism of which not more than twenty per cent. is ever used. It is manifest that where only a portion of oneself is put out only a very partial expression of oneself is the result. Building a brain is seen to have in the problem a number of unsuspected factors, because even were we expert builders ourselves, which we are not normally, the materials alone would be difficult to obtain. The usual way we build is to fetch cart load after cart load, dumping one down on the top of the other till we can scarcely move, then proceed to pick out a brick here, a stone there, a piece of wood now, a piece of iron later, always rummaging about this huge pile, and hindering ourselves in constructing the building, for we have no room to move freely.

The wonder is that we succeed in building a mind at all. Even the clever builders erect such lop-sided structures, quite passable one side—sometimes beautiful—but the reverse on the other, that it is not surprising the less experienced ones make such a hash of the business. They muddle through somehow, and are content with what they have done because they do not think they can alter things. It has never occurred to them that there was a science of mind-building, nor that the human being contained a tithe of those powers that the new psychology now knows to be the case.

LESSON VI.

It will be remembered that in Lesson I attention was drawn to two startling statements by Professor Elmer Gates, viz. : (1) the brain undergoes perpetual alteration and is never finished, (2) it is not too late to improve it in old age. Evidence of the second is commonplace, but the first one is not so marked. Remarkable as is the assertion there is nothing which need throw the slightest doubt upon it when a little reflection is indulged in. The human body may reach a point after which alterations do not occur, because the individual can do all he wants to. It would be difficult for him to conceive any kind of action or movement which the body will not make when required. It is equal to all emergencies; it is superior to the entire animal creation. But, physically alone, as Richard Jefferies pointed out in 1883: "Man is altogether different from every other animal, every other living creature known. He is different in body. In his purely natural state—in his true natural state—he is immeasurably stronger. No animal approaches to the physical perfection of which a man is capable. He can weary the strongest horse, he can outrun the swiftest stag, he can bear extremes of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, which would exterminate every living thing. Merely in bodily strength he is superior to all. The stories of antiquity were deemed

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fables historically, but search has shown that they are not intrinsically fables. Man of flesh and blood is capable of all that Ajax, all that Hercules did. Feats in modern days have surpassed these, as when Webb swam the Channel; mythology contains nothing equal to that. The difference does not end here. Animals think to a certain extent, but if their conceptions be ever so clever, not having hands they cannot execute them."

Had Jefferies lived to-day he could have chronicled the cases of men sitting in huge ovens whilst meat roasted, of going fifty and sixty days without food, following one's daily avocation for forty days without food, surviving the rigours of an arctic winter where animals succumbed, and many other tests proving the wonderful adaptability of the human body and its irresistible strength.

Immediately we leave the purely physical side the difference between animals and man becomes inconceivable. The animal not needing a mind is not furnished with the instruments or mechanism of consciousness in the same way as man. The restlessness of the human mind, shown by the speculation and purely academic outpourings and debates and the strong desire to get to the root of problems which have vexed mankind for thousands of years, is an indubitable proof of man being more than he seems, and possessing potentialities far transcending anything of which we have any knowledge. Why, the author quoted in this lesson was thoroughly dissatisfied with the idea of deity—it was not lofty enough, not sufficiently satisfying to man's highest cravings. Some men never rise above a pint of beer, bread and cheese, a picture show, or a football match. But when we find the idealist—and no one will question the right of applying the name to Richard Jefferies or Walt Whitman—demanding a more sublime conception than that of deity we instinctively feel that there are parts of our nature with which we have little in common, and that the reason for this is because the mechanism is inadequate.

It is therefore only logical to assume that more brains are needed to translate strong desires and yearnings into definite consciousness, and the two statements of Professor Gates must beyond question be true.

Furthermore, we have the tremendous statement, made by an equally authoritative psychologist, that the human mind has the power to double its capacity, and having done so, to repeat the process. The importance of this discovery is apt to be overlooked, because the logical result of its acceptance involves principles that would alter the destiny of the whole human race. I should like readers and pupils to recall this fact from time to time, to let it become thoroughly familiar, and not regard it as a statement that affects humanity of the next century.

There is an inseparable connection between brains and mind, and to get more of the former we must increase the power of the latter. This will have been obvious to the majority of those who have studied New Thought, though one side of the question may have been given greater attention than the other. There has been too much made of memory methods, and the laws of memory. This is the mechanical side, and a ponderous machinery is often constructed which makes the work of recollecting and learning immaterial facts far more cumbrous

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and laborious than is worth spending time on. In fact, many so-called systems injure the mind very much and blind the pupil to the true lines of growth. They fail to apprehend the underlying principle of all brain growth, and only achieve an infinitesimal part of what they would do.

One has advanced a good way when one accepts as a fact the truth of the statement that man has never done growing. The fact that change is perpetual in every living thing has been admitted for years, but change has not been identified with growth, and it is true that the two are not identical in those cases where one lacks metaphysical knowledge, but every change may be transmuted into growth. The man who allows changes to take place in his physical and mental world without seeking to either understand or direct them cannot grow much.

True, Nature acts as a mother and sees that everything man wants is provided. When he takes no interest in the changes that go on unceasingly in his being Nature takes over the work in accordance with certain broad principles that apply to humanity generally. But when we deputise Nature to do for us what we ought to do for ourselves we no longer grow, and taking as our motto one I am never tired of quoting, knowing its power when properly understood and used in accordance with the principles laid down in "Affirmations: Their Use and Power"—"Whilst I live I grow"—we may gradually regain what we have lost.

Exercise.—Each day entertain the idea that growth is perpetual. Dismiss the current conception of "stages," such as infancy, youth, manhood, maturity, &c., because this idea places limitations on one's thinking, and all limitations as regards the mentality wither the power which is ever welling up in the individual for expression. Think of the brain as ever growing, ever expanding, as ever waiting for instructions from the mind to develop. Banish all preconceived ideas as to intellect being a product of either parentage or birth. All experience and science are against the theory, though it is widely held. Get rid of the idea that your brains are inferior to those of others. All they want is a chance. They want the obstacles referred to in a previous lesson removing, that is all. Though you may not be brilliant at figures, science, mathematics, philosophy, or there may be a dearth of ideas, attribute this to its proper cause—you have never trained your brain along physical lines.

Holding this mental attitude day after day will enable that possession of ability to take root in the mind, and which is so essential to real mental growth.

LESSON VIII

One important fact arising out of the last lesson is that the daily turning the mind into one channel the more natural the practice becomes and the easier also. This means that what at first seemed far-fetched or impossible has become a natural attitude of the mind, and schemes which at one time seemed too good to be true no longer appear in that guise.

There is one danger that should be noted: Change being perpetual one must not get into a mental groove. One must not suppose that the entertaining of an idea that was unfamiliar and which by repetition has become part of one's own mental furniture will accomplish everything. It is merely one step, a

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means to an end only: no idea need be kept to exclusively, otherwise the growth we are seeking will be retarded. Change means the letting go of an idea, so when we take the work out of Dame Nature's hands we must let go of that which has served its purpose. Just as food retained in the body after its nourishment has been extracted becomes a source of danger to the body, so does the worn-out idea clog the mind. This it is that religionists and politicians suffer from. Let the effete be thrown out of the mind as it is in the case of the body. A basic idea like: "While I live I grow" may remain, but outside that comes the desire for expansion and growth. It is true results may be obtained by the holding of one or two conceptions in the mind, but these results when measured by what might have been achieved seem meagre and inconsequential.

It is when we cling tenaciously to all the old ideas that our arms are so full that we cannot grasp the new ideas that are within our reach, they pass us. Mental lumber is indeed more difficult to throw overboard. We seem to lack the strength, or when we think we have got rid of it we find it in its old place, as though being liquid we had put it in a sieve and imagined we had effectually removed it.

We should not be so foolish as to ignore the fact that minds are different, and that what is easy to one mind is the opposite to another. To minds which have not led an active life, where thinking has not been a necessity, it would be advisable to go more slowly and take one or two of the ideas given, working on them till familiar and natural. In this way the mind will be strengthened, and it can then extend to larger ideas. The reading should correspond to the thinking. It is no use taking up heavy, stodgy, profound reading till you feel the need for it. There is an abundance of excellent material, and when the style has been found which appeals to one the mind can obtain mental refreshment and recreation. What you need is encouragement, not criticism, and as soon as you undertake the building of a better brain you have to exercise a more rigid supervision over everything that takes place in your sphere. Your being is a mass of powers, talents, forces, thought and emotional currents, and you receive impressions and influences through the five senses. Unless those five senses be watched, directed, trained, and raised to higher levels the work will be tedious and the results poor.

One thought of extreme helpfulness here is that we each have all the tools or implements ready to hand for the building of a bigger brain. It is not as though we must borrow from others, or that they have what we have not. Every man contains within himself positively every factor necessary for his fullest development, and in this the unique character of man is revealed. Everything else in Nature is a part of something else: some aspect of consciousness is expressed. But man carries within himself the various tools needed for the fullest expression of his being.

Therefore, ultimately, each one will acquire all the brains he needs, and the necessary period will depend on the intensity with which he sets working his earnestness, faith, and making the fullest use of those powers which he finds manifesting in himself at any particular moment. There are too many anxious to get brains who look afar off at the accomplishments they see in others, or wish to be "clever," but they do not take into

account one of the strongest laws we have, which tells us that Nature never jumps, never skips over things, but proceeds by a process of orderly, sequential steps. Thus the weak man does not become a giant of strength in a day, nor the dullard a brilliant scholar in the twinkling of an eye.

It is only as each link in the chain is made that we pass on from the lower to the higher, and when we examine the question carefully we see the absolute justice and necessity for it. Fortunately, time is a very elastic element in the case, and the scientific use of the mind makes headway comparatively rapid.

It has generally been supposed (amongst other fallacies connected with psychology) that there was a limit to start with, that we were provided at birth with a measure, and that measure could not contain more than its own capacity. This idea handicapped and paralysed effort from the start. Luckily we now know better, and the absolutely unlimited field before us places every ideal within our grasp.

Exercise.—Cultivate daily those traits or faculties of the mind which stand out most strongly in your character. You may raise them higher if you have been accustomed to put them to inferior use. Take the thoughts that arise continually in the mind. Note whether they are of a constructive character or not; if they are hold them frequently, devoting a few moments to thinking quietly over them, at the same time desiring strongly that they shall yield their inner side to you, for every thought has an outer and an inner side, and it is nearly always the former we contract, the reason being that that aspect seems to satisfy all we wish to know or feel, so we let the thought go without having understood or appreciated fully all its possibilities. Just as the eye can only see what it has been trained to see, hence the Russian proverb: "He goes through the wood, seeing only trees," so in like manner the mind only cognises that which is most obvious, that, too, which it has been habitually accustomed to noting. We contact the side of thought which best serves our purpose at the moment. In other words, we are satisfied with the aspect we find because we have not any use for any other. This attitude of mind must be changed if we wish to grow more brains, and hence the value of this exercise.

Some reference was made a few pages back to memory. By reason of the wide advertising given some years ago by Ambrose Loisetete the public began to think there could be no improvement of the mind unless some "memory system" occupied a prominent place in the study. Before Loisetete's time, stretching back in our own country to the time of Henry IV, we find teachers of memory systems. These exacted pledges of secrecy from their pupils like the modern mnemonists. An examination of nearly every one reveals little that was not known before, and the difference between them is not very marked.

Mnemonics had been a favourite study of the author's before its advertising become common, and he had taken personal lessons from one of the foremost masters of the subject, a teacher whose name was known before Loisetete appeared on the scene.

The writer therefore thinks the question of mnemonics may well be considered at this juncture, for many readers may regard a course of brain growth incomplete without some reference to the subject.

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The value of a good memory can scarcely be too extravagantly extolled, and there has been no dearth of textbooks.

The one underlying feature—it can hardly be termed a principle—in nearly every one was a “figure alphabet,” first used by Stanislaus Winckelmann, in 1648. As to show how dependent modern mnemonists have been on this writer, I give his alphabet:

I	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	O
B	C	F	G	L	M	N	R	S	T
P	K	V							
W	Z								

Following the method in shorthand the consonants were taken to represent words, and vowels being supplied by the student. The use of this table was by means of using letters for figures to connect dates and sets of digits into words, because words are more easily remembered than figures, which have no connection with each other. Thus if one wished to remember that one's railway ticket or bank pass-book bore the number 659079 one would make a word like “milestones.”

This figure-alphabet was nearly always the principal advantage of the “system,” as though one's success in life depended on the recalling of figures! The writer has seen scores of pages devoted exclusively to their consideration, and by the time the pupil had mastered the arbitrary and puzzling devices, including a table of a hundred words which were to be committed to memory, backwards and forwards, as well as page upon page of “key-words,” each word representing a number, he was in a worse condition mentally than before taking up the study of memory improvement. It strikes the average reader that the “inventor,” as these writers delighted to dub themselves, were simply carried away as by a game, that they could coin phrases which would carry in themselves some fact connected with dates or figures.

Nearly everyone would like to possess a good memory; that goes without saying, but how many want to store away for all time the accession of the kings of England, or rulers of other lands, or tables of atomic weights? A mere handful. For a boy at school such facts might be useful, but he could learn the dates with infinitely less trouble than the artificial means employed. For instance, to memorise the accession of Henry VIII we have the idiotic phrase: “Henry loved eight toasted quail” to give the year.

There are some minds which appear to have special difficulties in remembering figures, but outside examinations they can always jot them down in a note-book and have done with it and relieve their mind, instead of cramming it with masses of unconnected words which require the use of the “key-words” already referred to to link them up.

Besides, it requires a genius almost to construct suggestive phrases. If the pupil is not naturally imaginative he can never use the “systems” for practical purposes.

Even the great Leibnitz was so far enamoured of figure-alphabets that he wrote a book on memory, giving out “a secret how numbers, especially those of chronology, &c., can be conveyed to the memory so as never to be forgotten.” This is worth recording as showing how important the “secret” was considered.

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Dr. Richard Grey, in 1730, added to the ranks of mnemonists. I will here quote another "secret" of the worthy doctor's, which may interest some readers. It contains a hint which may be used occasionally, if one does not wear it threadbare. To remember times, dates, distances, or any abstruse or uncommon details all that is necessary to do is to "make such a change in the ending of the name of a person, planet, coin, &c, without altering the beginning of it, as shall readily suggest the thing sought at the same time that the beginning of the word being preserved, shall be a leading or promoting syllable to the ending of it so changed." Three examples may be cited to give the pupil some idea of the mental gymnastics which the devotee had to master to use the "system." "Cr-othf, Del-etok, Ab-eneb, Ex-a-f-na, Tem-bybe, Cy-ruts." Here we get Cr standing for creation; othf is equivalent to 4004; Del gives us the deluge; etok, 2348; Ab refers to the calling of Abraham, aneb, 1921. Thus we have the creation of the world, the date of the deluge and that of the calling of Abraham. The book is packed with these things: but supposing they have been religiously committed to memory of what use are they? How is one set of facts to be picked out; even if they are useful? Some systems have used "suggesters," or words for linking together two or more unrelated words, then all one has to do is to remember the "suggester," or a key-word, when the whole phrase is supposed to flash to the memory.

Now the reader will see from the example quoted just now that the words which convey the date in their termination are not words at all, but merely consonants and vowels which are their equivalent. They impose a greater tax on the memory on that account. It is true that modern systems have banished this absurdity, yet quoting from one of the most up-to-date ones obtainable we still find such phrases as "Edward III made mobile mob, all WaRTS, aye leal," to give the year 1327. Text books by all authors bristle with these sentences, the use of capital letters giving figures that are to be remembered.

In Major Peniowski's method to remember "Achillea millefolium" he tells us that he at once thought of a roof covered with snow. This led him to think of an eagle with a thousand feathers, obviously "aquila," the Latin for "eagle," and "mille," a "thousand," "folium," a "leaf." In reading Esperanto this suggestiveness is very marked, causing a German to believe it is based on his language, whilst the Frenchman and Englishman are sure the auxiliary language has its root in their respective tongues. But when the Major having reached the stage just referred to, proceeds to "high mountains," where eagles dwell, to the sentence: "roofs covered with snow are to be found in high mountains, and so are eagles," we can only say that the two words to be recalled are far simpler to remember than such a roundabout and clumsy expedient. Certainly he made much of correlation, which Pick and Loissette were not slow to introduce into their systems.

Some of the ancients who produced amazing results, placed much faith in localization. They pictured a large room divided into floor to ceiling into different compartments—the number depending on the number of things to be remembered.

(To be continued).

Fasting: A New Path to Power.

When an animal is ill it refuses to take food of any kind, but goes away into a corner till it is better. Man, on the other hand, when ill, is crammed with jellies, port wine, beef tea, and numberless concoctions. In the first case the animal is obeying the voice of nature, which may always be trusted; in the other it is the voice of custom which is followed. There is a greater amount of ignorance on the question of fasting than on almost any subject. Some people imagine they would not live were they to miss a couple of meals at a stretch. Now by fasting the organs of digestion are given a much needed rest, for it is admitted on all hands that most diseases have their origin in derangement of the stomach, yet it is the last thought in the world which occurs to a man to give that abused organ a thorough cleaning and complete rest. This partly arises from what is said above, and because there is an idea that all our strength comes from food, which is a fallacy.

Fasting has another aim besides that of resting the organs, in itself admirable, and would save many doctor's bills, but it is chiefly concerned with the higher nature of man. The body will become more refined, the atoms lighter and the law of gravity will in course of time be overcome, which means far more than appears on the surface: it means the conquest of death, for what is of the earth is drawn to the earth; that is one of the reasons for dissolution. From a mere health standpoint, however, the action of fasting may be taken up by everyone with advantage, as there are few who will not benefit inestimably by a periodical fasting—say once every three months.

Begin by a 24 hours' fast, if of regular habits; if young and vigorous a 48 hours' is better. Take nothing into the body during that period but distilled water, cold, or in preference, where it can be had, water drawn direct from a spring. First thing in the morning drink a pint of hot water, boiled. The reason for taking this is that boiled water having lost its life, so to speak, as food does in cooking, does not stimulate to the same extent that unboiled water will do.

The first effect that will be evidenced after the fast will be constipation, the fæces hardening, a sinking sensation in the region of the stomach, a coated tongue, and bad breath. The cause of the two last named signs is that the filth in the body—man is always filling his body with decaying matter—is making itself manifest. After the filth in the stomach has been disposed of the fat near the surface of the body is used up, and as this is composed of effete matter to a great extent it is absorbed. Thus man will act as his own scavenger, and a few fasts carried out as above suggested will remake the body, and to those who do not know what actual hunger is, who are accustomed to take their meals with clock-like punctuality, whether they want them or not, or who take a certain quantity whether it is needed or not, but because this amount has been consumed always, will experience an actual relish with the plainest comestibles, to say nothing to clearer mentality and greater bodily vigour. When Dr. Tanner and Succi, the Italian fasting man, commenced their fast they lost about three quarters of a pound per day in weight, but when they took food after the fast they put it on at the rate of one and a half pounds—just double, showing how

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easy it is to take control of the body, and regulate the demand and supply. One writer along these lines gives a good simile which is worth repeating:—"You should feed the body as the fireman does his boiler, when the pressure of steam is low he feeds the fire, but when the pressure is high, and not much work to be done, he withholds the fuel, and so should you."

Had we not had the examples of the fasting before us authenticated by medical men, one might have doubted the staying powers of the human frame, but when 40 days can be passed without a bit of food, the ordinary man or woman need not fear a three days' or five days' fast. When it has been accomplished give the body plain and wholesome food, and when you have attained the weight you want lessen the quantity—not the quality—of the food, and you will be rarely troubled with ache or pain.

There is no need to go to bed to practise this fast, as work will assist in burning out the effete matter, but anyone who is feeble can take matters easy to start with, as after the first pangs of hunger have disappeared there will be no inconvenience.

Milk baths are no new thing, and this shows that nourishment may be given to the body without first passing through the stomach. All the components of food are found in the air, and much of our food is drawn from this source, though this is not always recognised. The Hindu Yogi binds earth to naval and stomach during his meditations when he goes months without food.

Savoury smells saluting the nostrils will often cause an appetite where none existed before. Let these be avoided during the fast. The mind can aid very much. Go out as much as possible into the air, drink in the air as though it were food, filling the lungs and expiring slowly (through the nostrils, of course) and imagine the tissue is being built up with it, which is what is really happening. A friend of the writer's, a manufacturing chemist, whose work is both laborious and long, makes his mid-day meal on a couple of bananas or a pear or two, and little else for the first or last meal, and yet to look at the man one would imagine he "lived well." Certainly he is never ill, is always jolly and buoyant, keen in intellect, and filled with magnetism. One of the New Thought papers not long ago had an article headed, "The Food Habit," as though eating was a kind of luxury, to be indulged in by those who had nothing better to do. By cultivating the will (which is dealt with in another series) it will be possible to regulate the amount of food necessary to support the body in perfect health.

To prevent the constipation referred to, take an internal bath: these baths are the secret of a well-known New York doctor's success, the information being imparted only under secrecy. Inject with an enema at least four quarts of warm into the body and retain it for about ten minutes. At night last thing inject about a pint, and keep this in the body all night as it will flush the colon - an organ which has been described as the sink of the body, though there is no room here to deal with the matter fully.

On breaking the fast, take the juice of a couple of oranges followed by a little toast and a poached or lightly boiled egg half an hour after. Toasted wheat has been recommended by

some writers because it acts as a kind of scrubbing brush to scour off the coating from the alimentary canal, and puts vitality into those leaves that line the cavity, and open the lacteals, so that whatever is eaten will nourish the body. Toasted wheat could not be obtained in this country until quite lately, and only now in large towns, but Granose, Grape Nuts, or other wheaten preparations will do almost as well. When the toasted wheat is taken do not eat anything with it, nor put any food into the stomach for a couple of hours. Those accustomed to meat, should the stomach sour, may eat a little salted fish.

Remember, that both the quality of food we eat and the quantity are determined by the will, and that we can make any food palatable to us by our attitude. In 99 cases out of 100 our bodies are masters. The will should be the master, because the fact of its being more highly organised shows it has the right to be.

The above suggestions if put into practice will give health and vim to all.

The Aura : its Meaning and Use.

Every object, whether man or stone or tree, is surrounded with an envelope, like the sun, invisible to ordinary eyesight because the human eye only responds to a certain range of vibration which we call sight. Thus, for instance, there is at each end of the spectrum certain colours which the eye cannot see, although it is known they are there. It has been aptly said that we only see what we have been trained to see; a savage cannot recognise a picture any more than a dog can. This surrounding envelope consist of a very subtle matter, a kind of ether, and this is represented in the old paintings of saints as the "glory" round the head, or the aureole, halo. In actuality, however, this halo surrounds the whole body, not merely the head. It is an accepted fact, well attested by medical and lay writers, that when a man loses a leg or arm he feels pain where the limb used to be. Again, in mesmerism, it is a common thing to remove this etheric matter by means of passes, and the limb from which it has been removed becomes quite insensible to heat, cold or pain. In ordinary hypnosis, and under anesthetics, too, all sensibility is removed.

There are more planes in nature than this one, which is the lowest, and these planes interpenetrate each other rather than exist in layers, just as in the human body liquid and gaseous matter interpenetrates the densest portion, as in the most solid substance we know ether permeates it. We should be conscious of this aura were we but to train our consciousness to respond to the vibrations of which it composed. All thought is vibration, and in every human being these vibrations have their limit. With the clairvoyant, who has trained his inner faculties, he is able to recognise these finer forces as matter.

Many of the hypnotist's subjects have described a light streaming from the ends of the fingers, and it has been photographed repeatedly. This is the aura, the colour and shape of

which depend upon the point the man has reached in evolution. In the case of a savage, for example, scarcely any would be visible at all, but as he advanced little by little a mist would be observed round his body by those who were capable of discerning it. In an ordinary man it would be a vapour of a dark colour, varying in tint from moment to moment as the thoughts and feelings underwent a change, because it is moulded largely by these factors.

It will be as well here to describe the meanings ascribed by clairvoyants to the colours of the aura. Black: hatred and malice. People who give way to passionate anger are seen to be surrounded in black clouds. Red: if deep, signifies anger, and it is usually found on a dark background. A lurid red gives sensuality. Brown shows avarice. Sometimes it is shown in bars across the astral body—(so called because its matter was thought at one time to be similar in composition to that of the stars). Orange: pride or ambition. Yellow: intellectuality. Green: adaptability, sometimes evil or deceit. Grey-green: cunning. Greenish-brown: jealousy. Grey: depression. If livid, fear. Crimson: Love, but the colour must be clear. Blue: if dark, religious feeling. Light Blue: devotion to a high ideal. In "Man Visible and Invisible" there are twenty-five tints of aura shown with the characteristics denoted by each, but they are only modifications of the primary colours dealt with above.

I am indebted to the work just mentioned, though it is not the only one dealing with this interesting subject, for much of what follows. In the case of a savage it has been observed that rays of a rosy hue have streamed the shoulders and neck, while from the top of the head has come a pale yellow, from the middle of the body a pale green has emanated, and the legs and feet a grey-brown tint. In an undeveloped man of low passions clouds of murky red float around the middle of the body, a small patch of yellow tending to orange is in the vicinity of the head, and lower down is surrounded by a dirty green. In the "man in the street"—the ordinary man, neither very good, nor very bad—we find the colours purer, a pale mist-cloud, as it were, enveloping him, egg-shaped, and extending about two or three feet outside the periphery of the body. As the man progresses his aura becomes purer, also extends beyond the body, but liable to undergo a startling change from time to time, and it is affected, too, by strong emotion.

For example: When a mother snatches her baby up and kisses it, a number of narrow lines run round the body in zig-zag fashion, though in quite orderly lines, and independent of these, large rings of deep crimson—about half-a-dozen, will swirl round her and a beautiful play of brilliant colours, nearly all rosy—will suffuse the aura. Again in the case of devotion the whole of the aura assumes a bluish tinge, with the zig-zag lines just described flashing across it, beneath which large rings of deeper blue with inner circles of white whirled gracefully. Intense anger marks itself in a terrible way. Another writer (Mrs. Annie Besant), described some years ago, how a flash of murky red emanated from a man who struck a woman to the ground. Large irregular shaped rings of dull dirty black with forks and pointed streaks of dark red resembling flashes of lightning very much were noted. Irritability marks itself by

sharp drops of scarlet looking like a snow storm, a red one, of course, in this case, and a friend of the writer's, who has astral vision, describes some very beautiful clouds about people at whose aura he looks.

In the case of really advanced men the aura is not only beautiful like a lovely sunrise, but extends quite a distance from the body. It is the mingling of these auras which people feel when they either disagree with a person or feel strongly attached to them, and in addition to there being an aura of character there is another of health which interpenetrates the other, so that the subject is a more complicated one than appears on the surface.

A few years ago Dr. Kilner wrote an interesting monograph on the subject of the human aura, and to aid the reader to see it his book was accompanied by several "screens." By the help of these many were able to see the auric envelope. The work served the useful purpose of convincing people inclined to doubt the existence of the aura of its reality.

It may have been noted that feeling, as well as thought, has its aura, and this renders it difficult to see exactly to which it belongs. In the Lesson on Thought Photography more is said respecting the subject. Thought-Forms are thrown off from the body, appearing very much like the material of the aura itself, this being due to the fact that it is composed of the same matter, but flung off as the thought leaves the brain. It is a kind of detached aura which though permanent in a sense in that it always adheres to the body, may give off a portion of itself.

Seeing that the aura changes with the character no man can improve himself without its being felt by sensitive people. Neither action nor speech is necessary to sum him up, and it is curious to note how animals, even domesticated ones, can sense the character of a man through his aura. For instance, a man who loves animals will be made a fuss of the first time he meets a strange dog. The same animal will avoid another individual, however kind he may be to it, or however well he feeds it. There is a rooted antipathy which pretended liking for the dog will not deceive. Lion tamers and those who have had to do with wild animals are aware that if smoking or intoxicants are indulged in the animals are not as obedient, and are more easily roused. Now any clairvoyant knows that the use of these things affect the aura very much, and produce a magnetism which vibrates out of harmony with the usual vibrations.

It is an admitted in the East that there are holy men with whom tigers and other savage beasts will play, rolling at their feet like big kittens. They know instinctively that these men will not injure them. For one thing, the strongest force in the universe, love, sets up the most powerful vibrations known, and these create an aura which extends a great distance—that of the Buddha was said to radiate three miles from his body—and these animals feel the vibrations mingling with their own aura long before they see the object causing it. It is not the gun which the animal sees that gives rise to hatred on its part, but the aura which surrounds the man and stirs up discordant vibrations in the animal's own etheric envelope.

Seeing that a part of the aura may become detached, or shed, we can understand that cathedrals, castles, and old build-

ings are haunted with the auras of the actors who centuries ago played their part there. When science could no longer ignore the evidence of the super-physical it fell back on a kind of memory of the past which adhered to walls, and settled over certain districts. Even sounds of a supposed supernatural origin were assigned to a reproduction of vibrations under certain conditions. It certainly got very near the truth, and as nothing in Nature can be destroyed, only changed, so the auras of strong personalities, of men who changed the world they lived in, persisted even centuries after their death, being visible to sensitive persons, or affecting their own auras. The organisation of the cat is so sensitive to auric emanations that the Egyptians and other nations employed the animal in its magical and religious ceremonies, and it was a sacred animal. Algernon Blackwood, in his novel "Dr. John Silence," a kind of Sherlock Holmes in the realm of the psychic, provides a cat for the doctor, because where man fails to detect disturbances in the psychic currents the cat does not.

To those who would develop this sight they should follow the rules for the acquisition of clairvoyance and with patience they will be able to develop some phase of this marvellous faculty, though in New Thought it has no attractions for many, as there are certain glammers which require a careful training to distinguish. The time will come when every man will possess this sight, however, and untruthfulness will no longer avail. The real character will stand out, and what one thinks will take colour and show itself to the other. It is only a question of time.

Esoteric Vibrations.

All life is vibration. The densest matter of which we have any conception, such as a diamond, a block of solid steel, a lump of stone, is composed of multitudinous particles, too small to be seen by the naked eye, called molecules, no two of which touch each other. These molecules are in constant motion, though one might stare at a piece of coal or pebble and not detect a tremor not even with a powerful microscope. Nevertheless science affirms that this is so, and it is on this that so much is based in her teachings.

So in the same way, all *feelings* are vibrations; emotions are vibrations, and this is why music moves so many people. Each note vibrates to a certain number of vibrations. The colours, too, are nothing but vibrations.

An interesting experiment is that with the Eidephone, which makes beautiful diagrams, according to the note sung into it. Geometric patterns of great beauty, like the figures seen in the kaleidoscope are found, the sand or fine seeds sprinkled on the sheet of stretched india-rubber falling apart as the note is continued till the pattern is formed.

It is a fact well known to architects that a body of men crossing a bridge in step would tend to bring it down, so they are ordered to fall out of step. A bridge has been "fiddled down" before to-day, and the story of walking round the walls of Jericho seven times blowing a trumpet and bring them down is no piece of imagination. Everything in nature has its key-

PATHS TO THE NEW POWER.

note, and when found it can accomplish wonderful things. The difficulty is to do this, the task being a matter of years of study. For until this keynote is known little progress in evolving oneself is made.

Vibration arises from a force in nature which manifests itself in two aspects positive and negative. Inhalation and exhalation are other examples, and this is one reason why such great stress is laid in the East on correct breathing, and the value of rhythm.

In the early history of the church chants were understood as the Sanscrit mantrams have always been—the setting up of certain vibrations which affected man's subtler vehicles, or sheaths, bringing about spiritual or internal illumination.

Magic is built up on vibrations in its various ceremonies; responses may be evoked in others by being in harmonious vibration, and what we usually call intuition is but ability to respond to vibrations finer and more rapid than those to which most people normally respond.

Take a violin and tune two strings to exactly the same pitch. Then twang one string violently, and a moment after you will find the other string has taken the vibration up, and is sounding on its own accord. If a harp is in the room, or any other stringed instrument, then any string attuned to the one set vibrating will immediately begin to vibrate in unison.

In human beings we have a mass or bundle of vibrations. The coarser in mind or body the individual is the slower and denser will be the vibrations to which he will respond. Animal man was indeed made of dust of the ground—the lowest form of visible matter, but as ages rolled on he slowly climbed the spiral pathway which leads to more rarefied states of existence. At first he could only respond to certain rates of vibration, just as to-day there are people who cannot detect one tune from another. It is said they have no ear for music. Going a step further we find people who could detect a wrong note if struck on an instrument, yet be unable to know if a vocalist sang a little flat or sharp. So people would be found unable to distinguish between very delicate shades of colour, although they would indignantly repudiate the suggestion that they were colour-blind. So, in regard to hearing. There are people who can distinctly hear the cry of the bat, but they are few and far between. Then, too, people can sometimes scent things some distance away, almost like a dog at night. This refining of the ordinary senses, when we have *all* the five senses thus abnormally developed means a quickening of the rates of vibration. This should be the aim of all, because as Professor Stoddard, of the University of New York, points out: "The mainspring of life is desire, and the ceasing of desire is the signal for death. The old distinction between man and beast turned upon this. The desires of the beast are constant and uniform; those of man are progressive. The animal desires the same thing to-day that it desired yesterday, and more life will come with more desire. More life can only come by a refining of the desires, for something which will satisfy the higher nature of man. Every man, no matter how degraded, has within him a desire for something which he cannot express, and the reason he seeks society, work, or change in occupation or recreation is the wish to escape the necessity of thinking about what it is that he really wants. He imagines

that it must be his restless, ill-trained mind, and he endeavours to find satisfaction in the outward things of life, like Dr. Faustus did, and with the same and inevitable result, because he has within himself the capacity for enjoyment of an undreamt and a higher kind."

It is here that the value of the finer vibrations becomes apparent, and he who would hear "the music of the spheres" must learn to cultivate possibilities. This is done by refining the life generally. In other words, it is by finding one's keynote.

To do this lead the simple life as much as possible. There are millions of vibrations all round one which one is unable to respond to, because of the grossness of the instrument—the physical body. That is why saints, mystics and ascetics have ever lived in worlds of their own. The average man has marvelled at them, if he has been fortunate enough to come in contact with them, and supposed that they were affected in their minds. But if he got into closer touch with them he would find how far above the run of the commonplace individual they are. A lecturer told an audience in Yorkshire that probably there were not half-a-dozen thinking people in all Europe! In Athens, in the ancient days, hardly any two men wore the same kind of clothes, showing the individuality of the Athenians. He was strongly of opinion that the present race in Europe, though clever in making machinery and inventions were far behind the races referred to intellectually.

One effect of simple food - non-animal - bloodless—is the stilling of certain cross-vibrations. This will give more sensitiveness. Then the cultivation of the mind by the means suggested above, with long deep breaths will give further sensitiveness, so that when a person in an angry mood enters a room the student will be aware of it even if he does not see him. Many persons cannot stay in the Tower of London on account of the peculiar and unpleasant sensation which they feel while there. Here again the reason is not far to seek; the vibrations are impinging upon a more sensitive brain which responds to them. Sometimes flashes of colour will be seen or music heard which no one else in the immediate vicinity will be cognisant of. This is a further indication that finer and higher vibrations are being sensed, through making the body more responsive.

An hour a day is imperative to any one who wishes to gain this super-sensitiveness to higher and esoteric vibrations. The hour should be spent alone in a well warmed and comfortable room, not too much furnished, and not too many carpets and rugs about, as these affect the magnetism. Aspire to know the highest—of course, all angry, mean, impure, or selfish thoughts must be put aside before entering the room, otherwise there is great danger in such sittings for meditation and contemplation. After five minutes quiet thinking of as lofty a subject as possible—say truth, which, being abstract may give rise to difficulty, but not if imagined as a brilliant and large star or ball of pure white fire or flame which is sending out rays which are permeating you at every point; being absorbed into your very fibre and tissue until you have become truth itself.

Sit with the spine perfectly erect (sitting cross-legged on the floor, like the Oriental) is the best position the whole weight of the body resting on the spine. Now sing a note as near as possible in the key that you speak. This is much more difficult to do than would be supposed, and it will probably require many attempts before success is attained. If after three minutes slow chanting in a monotone a quiver is felt at the base of the neck then you may know that you have FOUND YOUR KEYNOTE, and neither the writer nor anyone else, save a Master, can give you any further instruction. Be careful not to lose your consciousness, but if you do, do not be afraid, but you had better take a friend into your confidence, so that he can be near you and prevent anyone interfering with you until the normal consciousness has been restored. This may take place a few hours after the experiment. If the note has been found once it can generally be repeated, and the vibrations will be suffused over the whole body, and give a feeling of peace and well-being which is difficult to describe in words. Mark well, once more, however, that it is a dangerous thing to play with, and has to do with the unlocking of forces of great potency. We are only as yet on the verge of Life; what we know of consciousness is as nought compared to what lies ahead of us, and the knowledge contained in these pages will be a preliminary step to more important truths which await us.

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