

THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

A POPULAR STUDY

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"The Art of Thinking," &c.

"The proper moulding of the will is, indeed, in one sense, the goal of all education."

ROUSSEAU: *Outlines of Psychology.*



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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE power of the mind over body and brain is a subject as old as thought itself, but it is one that is marked by constant growth, and is, moreover, of perennial interest. We have, in the main, two schools of thought in reference to mental phenomena controlled by will: the sceptical and the credulous. The first doubts everything, and the second believes everything. In the following pages I have endeavoured to show that truth, as always, lies midway between two extremes.

T. S. K.

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THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

“The human mind will not be confined to any limits.”—GOETHE.

I.

IT is one of the theories of an ancient system of teaching, modernised in present-day Theosophy, that at the beginning of each century the Great Souls, who are the instruments of the Deity, infuse into the thought of the period a number of spiritual ideas, with the avowed object of turning man's attention away from the worldly pursuits which too much absorb his interests. These Great Souls, once human themselves, endeavour to secure a general revival of idealism in its manifold forms, and their disciples profess themselves able to identify the work, even to the extent of naming particular movements. Whether the theory is true or not we do not pause to inquire; all we would say is that the twentieth century is still in its infancy, and we have upon us, and have had for some years, a strongly developed movement in favour of the study of mental forces and mental development. It may be purely fortuitous that a new interest in Mind should gather fresh power in

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the first decade of the century : that we leave to those curious enough to inquire into such matters. Our object is to analyse the movement itself, and to show what it is likely to accomplish.

II.

A movement which has no recognised head and no one system of doctrine, but is, withal, made up of a heterogeneous group of writers and teachers, as wide apart as the poles in point of ability, principles, and literary gifts—such a movement, we say, is most difficult to describe in a few words. There are, first, the medical professors of the Salpêtrière, who believe in and practise hypnotism as a means of curing functional disorders of the body and banishing delusions from the mind; then there are the upholders of Suggestion, as represented by the Nancy school. These French teachers have their disciples, in small numbers, perhaps, in every country. Next come the Spiritualists, by no means a decreasing quantity, who have some results to offer which the most sceptical find it difficult to explain away. They have an abundant literature, some of it signed by names that stand high in the world of science. Then we have the Psychical Researchers : ladies and gentlemen who peer and wait in haunted houses and practise telepathy in their drawing-rooms. Here again, there are names of repute, and a *dossier* of authenticated happenings, for which a purely material hypothesis seems inadequate. After them comes a mass of Christian Scientists and Mental Healers—and they bring with them books by the



hundredweight. There are big books, little books; some of them good, some of them bad, and some of them shockingly bad; and they compel one to realise that something must be happening somewhere to account for all this literary activity, this confident assertion, and this undying optimism. Here are manuals of "Mesmerism" jostling books on "Vegetarianism"; a handy guide to "Astrology" nestles snugly under the wing of a weighty tome on the "Education of the Will"; "Phrenology" hobnobs with "Palmistry," and "Cookery" with "Casuistry"; a little manual on "Memory Culture" faces one on "Mental Fascination"; "Luck" and "Success" are back to back; "Physical Culture" lies side by side with something about "How to Live on Sixpence a Day."

Now we will suppose that the reader is smitten with curiosity to know what all this means; for these books are not printed for the fun of the thing. Some are offered at sixpence; others at two guineas. They are sold in considerable quantities, too, and that being so, there must be buyers. Who are they? And what prompts their interest in such matters? Is there no general basis upon which this odd array of books can be explained? There is, and the curious reader will soon discover it, once his mind is brought to bear on the subject. He may properly begin his investigations by reading works of the best class: Bernheim and Liébeault; Bramwell and Tuckey; Lévy, Schofield, and a host of others. What does he learn from them? That mind is to a considerable extent the *cause* and *cure* of bodily disease. A theme so striking, armed

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with proofs adduced by men of great medical learning, probity, and experience, gives room for long-continued reflection. He must inquire into the methods used; above all, he must scrutinise carefully their teaching as to the influence and power of the will. Some of them confine their researches to matters of health; one or two go a step further, and trace the effects of the will-controlled mind in every sphere where mind is an active agent.

Spiritualism and Psychological Research give the investigation an altogether different turn. Probably the somewhat weird nature of the experiments acts as a deterrent, but the inquirer cannot fail to be impressed with the confident faith of those who commune with the dead, or think they do; neither can he treat lightly the care and precision exercised in psychical research.

III.

It is at this juncture the reader may chance to come across what are called "New Thought" books, the vast array of which we have previously referred to. He finds to his dismay that for the most part they have taken the proved results of medical research and exaggerated them to the last degree. A professor of the Nancy school will show how mind can affect the body, and what means to adopt to cure a functional disorder; the author of the New Thought school magnifies this claim out of all recognition, and brings out a blazing manual on *How to Live for Ever*. Not content with showing how mental force is superior to physical

force, he rushes to the conclusion that physical force can hardly be said to exist. Of course, there are New Thought writers who would disown the extremists in the group, but from the scientific point of view they are all extremists, more or less; instead of arguing their way to truth, step by step, they take a series of leaps over the chief difficulties, and appear to rejoice in the absence of certified observation and experiment. But there is one sense in which they may be said to take their own direction without any promptings from medical research. Almost to a man, these writers draw a portion of their wisdom from the East. In some form or other Yogi practices and Yogi philosophy occupy considerable space, the main difference being that whereas the Eastern adept lives entirely for the life of the soul, the New Thought believes in living for the world as well, and has opened up a department for the advancement of business by occult means.

The reader who has taken the trouble to wade through this flood of printed matter, good, bad, and indifferent, may for the time being fail to discover an underlying idea. One can scarcely be surprised, for when mind-healing, mesmerism, cookery, physical culture, palmistry, psychical research, luck, astrology, will-power, ghosts, cheap living, and a host of other items are mixed up together and called a "movement," the true inwardness is not easy to determine. We will, however, venture to suggest that the explanation, after all, is a simple one: it is a case of supply to meet the demand.

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There is an increasing public which is greatly interested in the subject of the *force of mind*. Discoveries have been made which indicate that thought-force is more intensive and extensive than we had imagined: a large area for new observations and new experiments has been opened up, and enthusiastic workers are now busy in making tests and recording results. For a long time *matter*—we use the word in its broadest signification—has held the field, but by a swing of the pendulum *mind* is about to claim the prior place. Let us see how this theory will work.

IV.

The labours of medical professors at the Salpêtrière and at Nancy are admittedly in the interests of mind as a curative factor. Whether we accept their theories or not, no one can be in doubt as to what those theories are: they affirm mental supremacy in no uncertain language. What of the Spiritualists? The latest expositor, one who, though not a Spiritualist himself, has made critical but sympathetic investigations, is Mr. Hamlin Garland; and his opinion, stated briefly, is that the phenomena do more to illustrate the power of mind over body than anything else. This opinion is supported by a wealth of comment from Richet and others, whilst Lombroso's conversion, as narrated by him in an English magazine, is as startling in its record of mental dominance over matter as it is in its logical consistency. Even the faith of the ordinary séance worshipper is, with all its illusions, a silent tribute to the truth which

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convinced an eminent alienist. The Psychical Researchers need no comment: their *raison d'être* is a study of mind in its relation to body, and to other minds.

The curious compound made up of New Thought publications offers little resistance to our hypothesis when we understand how the compound originated. The great majority of its contributors are men and women who want to teach their fellows the art of thinking; for, they say, if you can only think on scientific lines, you can make an easy conquest of the others, of world, and of yourself. It is an alluring promise to dangle before a credulous public, and they cannot make it good, but it shows how mentality is the uppermost idea, and explains the manner in which it is thrashed out in infinite detail. That is why you are asked to buy little books on luck, mental fascination, success, mesmerism, memory-culture, and occult forces; larger books on right thinking, the power of the soul, and destiny; and mightier tomes on power and will.

Now to think properly, you must live on approved principles. You can't eat and drink what you like with impunity; food has to be regulated according to needs of the cult. Hence there springs up a group of books on vegetarianism, fruit-feeding, no-breakfast plan, nutose, Fletcherism, and what not, as well as more general volumes on physical culture, deep breathing, and health by thought. The presence of palmistry in the list is explained by the belief that the lines on the hand are "made" by the brain, and astrology

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is a sort of sister science which always tries to keep palmistry from feeling lonely.

In this way it is possible to arrive at the one underlying idea of the movement, i.e., *mind-force* in all its many ramifications. Of course, the idea is as old as civilisation itself, but it has passed through a great number of stages; from the apparently natural telepathy of the savage, to the forced product of modern research; from the incantations of the medicine-man to the almost exact science of hypnotism; from wizardry and witchcraft to the Spiritualism which is honoured in high places; and from the advanced mentality of the Hindoo to the amateur and often misdirected mind-power of the to-day. And yet in the movement which is taking place before our eyes, there are new and hopeful features. The men who are in it, and who count for most, are pursuing their investigations on the scientific method. There are plenty who do not follow this course, but they are the quacks whose chief interest is to make some money and exploit commercially the public interest in these matters. As a rule, where phenomena temporarily resist analysis, the wise principle of suspended judgment is enforced; and under this head there are grouped many startling occurrences which, when scientifically solved, should do much to revolutionise mental science. Again, habits of thought are being inquired into in a way that can only produce good results. However exaggerated some of the New Thought literature is in its claims, we are bound to admit, and we do so gladly, that its ethic is pure and its tendency

wholesome. The teaching is always on the side of right: right thinking, right feeling, right doing. There is no fancy skating over very thin ice, no doubtful morality; even where the theme is dollars, there is a frankness about the advice offered which, to say the least, cannot be charged with the sin of hypocrisy. It is straightforward throughout.

And we cannot but remember that every movement in a world like this is sure to have its offensive personalities and its over-enthusiastic devotees. Their voluble ignorance acts to the detriment of the cautious inquirer and the convinced disciple, who desire to make slow and sure progress by the display of proved facts and carefully reasoned hypotheses. Nevertheless, it seems to us that Mind-force is destined to have a long innings, and our object in the following pages is to present a popular statement of facts, now generally accepted, as against the vain imaginations of the charlatan.

V.

We shall begin by examining the constitution of the mind itself. This is the most central of all questions. Matter has forces which we call material, although we are only using the best words we can find to describe something about which we know very little; mind also has its forces, and of these, too, we can only judge by results. At the threshold, therefore, we are impressed by our ignorance rather than our comprehensive knowledge; and we have to start out on a line of

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inquiry, handicapped by this limitation. But we soon discover an advantage in realising the mind is a unity; there is not one mind for feeling, one for thinking, and one for an exercise of will. All three are operations of one mind. What *that* is, we shall, of course, never know. It is the everlasting riddle of personality. And it looks as if we shall have to be content with a mere surface knowledge of thought itself, whether we regard it as the result of the invisible *ego* acting through the brain, or as a purely brain product. We may find it interesting to discuss a few theories, but at the conclusion we shall be like Omar, who said:

Myself, when young, did eagerly frequent
Doctor and saint, and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door as in I went.

But we can safely say that mind-force, in all its manifestations, is a unity. We may weep for the sorrows of Lear or for the miseries of the unemployed; we may try to grapple with Hegel, or plumb the depths of Socialistic finance; or we may resolve to be Tariff Reformers, and act accordingly; but all these feelings, thinkings, and doings are the expressions of one power: *Mind*. As to whether there is one expression which assumes priority over others is not a question that will detain us long. "Actions speak louder than words." As T. H. Green says, "The will is the man himself." Will is the controlling power, and it is our aim to exhibit its working, its limitations, its achievements, and its forms of education.

VI.

The relationship between mind and body has always been a centre of strife between materialist and spiritualist—or should we say mentalist? The history of the strife is full of amazing interest. Sometimes the battle went to the materialist, and the spiritual philosopher retired discomfited. Then the materialist found himself in a tight corner, and began to compromise. In these days, the tendency is all in favour of mind; and Mind-force is the study of the immediate future. Its effects on bodily ailments have been demonstrated over and over again. Functional disorders especially are amenable to treatment, and when an observer is convinced of the reality of such recoveries, he begins to inquire into the *modus operandi*. (The theory of the subconscious mind, one of the most fruitful ideas of the present generation, as Professor William James remarks, offers a good working hypothesis. It can explain facts which no normal intelligence can explain, and we shall give some examples of its operations. Will is a factor which works in conjunction with the subconscious mind by means of suggestion. Suggestion may be used in three ways: in hypnosis; by a second person, generally a physician, whilst the patient is wide awake; and by the patient himself. The terms used to describe these methods are hypnotic suggestion, hetero-suggestion, and auto-suggestion.) Our own point of view is decided by the last of the three, for reasons which will be stated in the concluding chapter. Suggestion is best understood by observing its action in daily

life, where, unconsciously, we are absorbing tendencies both good and evil. It operates in childhood, as seen in instances where a stammering youngster quickly infects another who does not stammer, through a sort of physical sympathy; it is seen in religious worship where the ritual and the sermon combine to impress a group of ideas on the assembled congregation; it is the basis of theatrical representation, of moral improvement, and of advertising business. We are, as men and women, the sum total of our experiences: what we have heard, seen, and known.

But this is indirect suggestion. Direct suggestion is based on the fact that every thought tends to become an action. In the chapter on will-power in relation to health, we shall give evidence in support of that statement.

VII.

It used to be the fashion to smile at miracles, both ancient and modern; and although we still smile at Joshua's commanding the sun to stand still, we are not so sure about the falsity of the New Testament miracles of healing. Some of them have been reproduced in modified forms within the past fifty years—not at Bethshan, the oily centre of religious emotionalism—but at the chief hospitals of European and American cities. Of course, they are no longer miracles in the theological sense, but they still remain "wonderful works." It will be plain from the authoritative narratives we shall quote, that therapeutics is entering upon a new and larger sphere of operation.

But it has been discovered that will-power, acting through suggestion, can also rebuild the brain. Hence its educational advantages are obvious. Backward children can be quickened in their intelligence: morally defectives can be purified; timidity and nervousness can be abolished. In adult life it might be thought that, as the brain has reached its full development, there is no room for a further increase of its power. Experience has proved this to be false—as seen in memory culture. The science of moods is still in its infancy, but in the chapter on “Creative Imagination,” we shall show how moods are artificially incepted and sustained, the theory being that a mood is a mode of relationship between the conscious and subconscious mind. Great writers and thinkers have, in their methods, given distinct proof of auto-suggestion. Their insistence on particular kinds of ink and paper, on certain bodily positions, and surroundings, as being necessary to the creative mood, can be interpreted in no other way. This aspect of the influence of mind on the depth and range of its own operations, opens up a large field of discussion, for the psychology of genius is not yet a fixed science.

In these days, when everything is commercialised, it is not to be wondered at that a mental fact, hitherto unexploited, should be pressed into the service of business. The New Thought writers, about whom we have already learned something, preach the doctrine of multiplying dollars by thought-force or will-power. Success depends on business habits, to some

extent, but mostly on thinking—so we are informed. The idea is pleasantly democratic and individualistic: success is open to everybody on the same terms, but the best thinker gets the most money. We shall analyse one of these optimistic booklets in order to see how far the chances of the writer can be upheld.

The last chapter deals with the development of character. There the will has its greatest scope, its most serious work, and its most signal victories. The perception of an ideal, and the efforts to attain it—these are the two elements in character building. Effort, properly guided, and suitably enforced, means ultimate success. But first there must be an element of desire. Often the radical evil is not the absence of good aspirations, but the impotence of will through an overmastering bodily desire. We must therefore get the body into position first; the soul can then adjust itself more readily to ethical requirements. We shall discuss the various agencies at the disposal of those who, having seen “the Spirit of the Summit,” are striving upwards to their ideal, and during the discussion, it will become clear that for degenerate lives hypnotic suggestion alone can at once impart moral vision and ensure permanent character.

VIII.

Such is our programme. The world to-day is greatly interested in the force of mind, and we intend to hold the scales justly, as between scepticism on the one hand, and exaggeration on the

other. We wish to study first the psychology of the will, the relationship between mind and body, and show the theory underlying the various forms of suggestion. After that, will-power will be exhibited in its relation to health, education, imagination, business, and conduct.

CHAPTER II.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE WILL.

“The will is of little use for purposes of purely psychological classification.”—ROYCE: *Outlines of Psychology*.

I.

THE most casual student of Nature is familiar with the working of forces about which, as yet, science can give little explanation. Thus, for instance, it is possible to manufacture electricity and use it for purposes of lighting, heating, and locomotion, and even to write learned books about it; but the force itself is still a mystery. In the same way every thoughtful man knows there is a force called Mind, the working of which is understood both in health and disease; but, although we have many erudite tomes on the subject of mental physiology, no one is able to say positively what mind is in itself. Some say it is a function of the brain, but even so, there remains the difficulty of explaining how matter becomes conscious; and, if mind is a purely spiritual entity, working through the brain as a medium, we have still to show how a union is possible; whilst mind itself is then a greater mystery than before.

But of one thing we are quite certain: mind is a unity. The old psychologists used to divide human

intelligence into three sections: feeling, intellect, and will, each of which was carefully defined, and just as carefully kept apart.

To read such definitions nowadays brings to mind the saying "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." An act of will was regarded as an absolutely different operation from an act of thought;¹ reason was, indeed, in some quarters, the pulpit especially, feared as an enemy to truth; one we should have no dealings with; rather ought we to follow Feeling which masqueraded in the guise of "Heart." This old psychology was one of the little systems which have their day and cease to be. Mental powers are no longer looked upon as faculties engaged in a civil war among themselves; they are orderly manifestations of one great whole. It is of the utmost importance that this fact should be grasped at the outset, for in the pages to follow, the uninitiated reader will find references to imagination, suggestion, sympathy, and other agencies; and he may not unnaturally say that as this is a book about "Will-Power" why does not the author keep to his subject? We desire, therefore, to explain the position more fully in the preliminary stages, to prevent any misapprehension when the practical side is under discussion.

¹ "All our deeds were considered by the early psychologists to be due to a peculiar faculty called the will, without whose fiat action could not occur. Thoughts and impressions, being intrinsically inactive, were supposed to produce conduct only through the intermediation of this superior agent. Until they twitched its coat-tails, so to speak, no outward behaviour could occur. This doctrine was long ago exploded by the discovery of the phenomena of reflex action: in which sensible impressions, as you know, produce movement immediately, and of themselves."—James: *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*, p. 170.

II.

Mind is a unity, and it expresses itself in the form of thought. Just think for a moment: Can you imagine a thought in which there is no feeling, and no will? Take a subject as emotionless as possible: Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*. Two youths sit down to work a rider on Prop. V., Book I. Here the chances of feeling are reduced to a minimum. Among these heartless angles and triangles, there does not appear to be much room for feeling of any kind: there is no warmth about an axiom or a postulate: they belong to what Tennyson calls "the freezing reason's colder part." But when the two youths have been working for five minutes, feeling, although previously present in the sense of duty, begins to manifest itself in another form. One of them, after groping about for a time, suddenly thought he had got on the right track, and a smile played on his features. As he worked on, clearing up point after point in the argument, he became quite excited: one step more and the proof would be complete. "Got it!" he cries aloud, at the same time turning round to see how fares his companion. That individual is not doing at all well: he is still groping about in the geometrical darkness; but there is, nevertheless, no lack of emotion, and if we wait long enough, we shall hear the name of Euclid referred to in very impolite terms, and see his *Elements* on a journey through the air to the other end of the room. Mathematics are a source of light on the process of reasoning, but they are inseparable from pleasure and pain. The difficulty of following the argument

will arouse disgust: the beauty and completeness of a proof imparts a real sense of pleasure.¹ Further, these two youths were using will-power the whole of the time; one to good effect, the other without happy results. It is impossible to centre the attention on any problem, mathematical or otherwise, without using the will to control the faculties required for analysis and synthesis. If your business books do not balance the first time, you begin again, and check each item until the missing amount is traced. Here we have feeling in the desire to discover an error: we have thought in the use of perception and reflection; and we have will in the control of the faculties needed to track the forgotten entry. But in order to show how in one brief experience the mind may manifest itself in every possible manner, we will quote the neat description of Prof. R. P. Halleck.

“We are constantly busied with things which bring into play all the powers of the mind. A boy looks into a garden and sees a tree laden with fruit. This mental activity is chiefly *perception*. The tree is at some little distance, and he is puzzled to decide whether the branches are laden with apples or quinces. He calls up by the *representative power* mental images of former quinces that he has seen. Next, he proceeds to compare the fruit before him with this image, and he decides that both the colour and the shape differ somewhat from those of the quince. In this activity he is *thinking*. He is pleased with the juicy-looking fruit. Memories come to him of the pleasure experienced in eating

¹ Dewey : *Psychology*, p. 18.

other apples, and with these memories comes *emotion*. But still he stands there. The mental state is incomplete. The more he looks at the apples, the more he wants them, the stronger becomes his emotion. But he soon finds out that to want and to feel do not bring the apples to him. A high fence is between him and them. Finally, his *will* causes him to act. He climbs the fence, plucks the fruit, and begins to eat. This boy has now brought every mental power into play. He has perceived, remembered, thought, felt, acted; and he is now, in consequence, eating the fruit."¹

III.

But each expression of mind has its dominating characteristic. In the feeling of anger we display our antipathy to some great wrong, or our personal resentment against an impertinent trespass on our individual rights; in pondering over a reflection like Pope's "Whatever is, is right," we see the mind engaged in comparing a great variety of events, coldly, and logically, judging them from the standpoint of the poet's axiom; in resolving to take a journey and carrying out the necessary preparations, we see mind in the act of coming to a decision and making that decision actual. Thus the old division of mind into feeling, intellect, and will, has its basis in the fact that these three qualities predominate in certain mental expressions, but, as we have proved, there is, notwithstanding, a deep, underlying, and essential unity; for they are all manifestations of thought-force

¹ *Psychology and Psychic Culture*, pp. 51-2.

modified by circumstances. In order to emphasise this fact, let us analyse an act of will. A popular dictionary defines the word as "an act of determining to do or not to do something." Very well. I determine at 3 o'clock to catch the 3.45 train from King's Cross to Edinburgh. It is now 2 o'clock, so I have a full hour in which to enjoy a new book. According to the dictionary, I have exercised my will; but when, at 3 p.m., I jump up and begin to get ready—what is that? Another act of will? No, that is Volition: the Will *determines*—Volition *carries out* the determination.

Now let us inquire, what is behind this act of will? First, I *know* my presence is required in Edinburgh for consultation on particular business: the correspondence is in my desk at this moment, and the last letter concludes by saying, "Come as soon as you can, the matter is getting urgent." I have therefore a *reason* for the journey. If I had not, and suddenly determined to take the 3.45 train for Edinburgh, without any fixed purpose in view, I should certainly perform an act of will, but, as its motive would be lacking, my family might properly begin to be anxious about my mental condition. An act of will is organically connected with other mental actions, and cannot, logically, be separated from them. Moreover, if the truth must be told about the journey northwards, I should have to admit that as it is to my financial advantage, I have a natural *desire* to go; so that not only do the circumstances reveal the presence of intellect and will, but *feeling* also. John Stuart Mill aptly remarks, "He who chooses his plan for himself, employs

all his faculties. He must use *observation* to see; *reasoning* and *judgment* to foresee; *activity* to gather materials for *decision*; *discrimination* to decide, and *self-control* to hold his deliberate decision." These illustrations will, we trust, make clear the unity of the mind; for when in later chapters it is affirmed that the way to maintain health by will-power is to use auto-suggestion, it will be remembered that auto-suggestion is only a method of consciously applying thought-force. Dr. Hack Tuke's classic work is called *The Influence of the Mind on the Body to Elucidate the Action of the Imagination*. Here, imagination means thought-force sometimes controlled, sometimes not; and he divides his list of cures under the old headings of intellect, emotion, and will. Thirty-six per cent. were due to the intellect; fifty-six per cent. to the emotions; and eight per cent. to the will. But all three kinds of cures are mind-cures, whether by sympathy, suggestion in its three-fold forms, imagination, emotion, or any other expression of thought-force. The two points to be kept before the attention are: (1) that there is only one mind, and (2) the will is the controlling factor.

IV.

It may readily be granted that the matter is not necessarily clear, even after the foregoing exposition. One may easily grasp the idea of unity, but unity in *what*? When all these expressions of mind have been classified, how shall we describe their sum total? What is the mind itself? Here we come face to face with an eternal problem, and

although in a popular treatise it would be out of place to discuss so profound a proposition, it is of some importance that we should refer to the question of *personality* so far as it affects *will*. Hume says, "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception."¹ And yet he adds, "I must confess this difficulty is too hard for my understanding." Very true, and still the ego is unfound.

The point to be noted is that the mind is the ego: the self. Anger affects the flow of blood to the brain, but when the office boy spills the red ink over your new trousers, it is not your *brain* that is angry: it is *you* yourself. This is an elementary, but very important difference. The brain answers to your thoughts and impulses, but it is not the essential ego, any more than the heart in your chest is, when it beats in response to the feeling of love. Now men have been trying for ages to define the ego, but they have not yet succeeded in doing so. We do not even know its place in the brain. Prof. Jacques Loeb records some experiments which throw an interesting light on this problem.

"Experiments on the brain indicate that while there exists to a certain extent an anatomical localisation in the cortex, the assumption of a psychical localisation is contradicted by the facts. If such a localisation were correct, we should expect that

¹ *Treatise on Human Nature*.

an animal from whose hemispheres the occipital and temporal regions are removed, would become blind and deaf, but would remain normal in other directions. But Goltz has shown that such an animal (dog) becomes hopelessly idiotic. The processes of association even of the other senses are no longer normal. This agrees with the idea that in processes of association, the cerebral hemispheres act as a whole and not as a mosaic of a number of independent parts. Goltz has proved that if we remove one whole hemisphere in a dog, the personality of the animal, or in other words, the sum total of its associations, remains the same. The dog recognises its friends, and all other objects it has ever known, and it reacts in such a way as to indicate that its associative memory has not suffered through the operation. But if the anterior part of both hemispheres be removed, the dog is no longer normal, but idiotic. It no longer reacts in the same way as it did before, and it is obvious its associative memory has suffered. If we ask at present what determines this difference, we are at a loss to give an answer.'¹

Such experiments are impossible on human beings, but we know part of the brain can be removed without injury to the intelligence, although the removal of the whole would mean death. The problem must be left where it is, although we cannot forego the remark that when future investigators shall have located the ego, we shall be only one step nearer a solution. A dead brain may, as

¹ *Comparative Physiology of the Brain and Comparative Psychology*, p. 262.



an organ, be as complete as a living one : how does life, if it is life alone, give even a complex organ the power of self-realisation ?

V.

The will is the controlling factor : that is the final element in mind. As Höffding points out, " If any one of the three species of conscious elements is to be regarded as the original form of consciousness, it must evidently be the will. In the instinct but slightly raised above reflex movement, is given the primitive form of consciousness, and in this the element of will is evidently the strongest ; the intellectual and emotional elements acquire significance only as links in the chain that leads to action. Afterwards, too, the will forms at all stages the constant basis. Activity is a fundamental property of conscious life, since always a force must be presupposed which holds together the manifold elements of consciousness."¹

But as the mind is a unity, we cannot proceed to educate the will without employing intellect and feeling, and thus far strengthening them as factors in the development of personality. And yet " the education of the will is really of far greater importance, as shaping the destiny of the individual, than that of the intellect. Theory and doctrine, and inculcation of laws and propositions, will never of themselves lead to the uniform habit of right action. It is by doing that we learn to do ; by overcoming that we learn to overcome ; by obeying reason and conscience that we learn to obey ; and every right

¹ Höffding : *Psychology*, p. 99.

action which we cause to spring out of pure principles, whether by authority, precept or example, will have a greater weight in the formation of character than all the theory in the world."¹

The method we propose to pursue, therefore, is that of suggestion. The man who feels he cannot pass a public-house without an irresistible temptation to enter and drink to excess, must tell himself he *can*, and proceed to walk past the place of temptation; a student who is conscious of a strong inclination to shirk an important duty, the result of which negligence will cost him dear, as he well knows, is to say he can resist the inclination, and at once proceed to perform the allotted task; a city man who tries to assure himself that grave responsibilities devolving upon him do not exist, should admit they do exist, and go out boldly to meet them; the ailing individual should not act as if he were ailing, and the man apparently suffering defeat should maintain the spirit of a conqueror. As Prof. Royce says, "To teach one to will involves teaching him first to take note of his own conduct. But to teach him this, you must first establish in him the desired conduct. You must get him to do, before he has consciously willed this particular sort of doing. The involuntary conduct must precede the voluntary."² This may look like putting the cart before the horse, but it is not. It is a true method of education based on real psychology of the will. We have not to aim at a strong will, and wait until it "comes." Act as if it had already come.

¹ Quoted in Haddock's *Training of the Will*, p. 58.

² *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 374.

CHAPTER III.

MIND AND BODY.

“The knowledge concerning the sympathies, and the concordance between the mind and the body is fit to be made a knowledge of itself.”—BACON: *Advancement of Learning*.

I.

“IN the writings of some recent philosophers,” says Jevons, in his *Principles of Science*, “especially of Auguste Comte and in some degree of John Stuart Mill, there is an erroneous and hurtful tendency to represent our knowledge as assuming an approximately complete character. At least these and many other writers fail to impress upon their readers a truth that cannot be too constantly borne in mind, namely, that the utmost successes which our scientific method can accomplish will not enable us to comprehend more than an infinitesimal fraction of what there doubtless is to comprehend.”

It is now many years since Jevons penned these words, but they are quite as necessary to-day as they were when the *Principles of Science* was first published. The assumption of approximately complete knowledge in many scientific manuals is as surprising as it is unfortunate, for the growth of knowledge during the past fifty years is of such a

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nature that instead of suggesting the confidence of conquest it provides good reasons for humility; whilst the dogmatic spirit embodied in sixpenny paper-covered volumes for the benefit of the masses, is utterly alien to the best traditions of the scientific method. When "science" resorts to propagandism, and follows the example of the street preacher, there is not much to choose between the secularist who knows all about this world and the evangelist who knows all about the next. Prof. Haeckel is just as positive in his monism as Dr. Ballard is in his Christianity, and they are both equally anxious the world should believe them, which makes one suspect the German biologist is a man of Gospel temperament, an unfortunate item, surely, in the make-up of a man of science. The man in the pulpit may be pardoned his dogmas: he believes it to be his business to proclaim them at the bidding and call of a higher Person, but the University professor as pamphleteer in the interests of a science as positive as any theology the world has ever known, is anything but an edifying spectacle, considering the little we know of the subjects about which he writes with airy confidence. Has he ever come within an ace of explaining the "Seven Riddles of the World" as outlined by his fellow-countryman Dubois-Reymond? Where can we find a real and true explanation of consciousness, the chemistry of a thought, or of the simplest phenomena of sleep? That imagination and will can cure certain fundamental disorders has been proved beyond a doubt, but who can say *how* it is done? We are using electricity every day of our

lives and yet no one can tell us what it is, essentially. The truth is we live in a world of mysteries despite the clamant tones of "Science," falsely so-called. If we knew the planet on which we live with anything like "approximately complete knowledge," to use Jevons' phrase, we might be forgiven our ignorance of the grammar used by the supposed inhabitants of Mars; but when the most elementary facts of common life still refuse to yield their secrets, it is unseemly, not to say humiliating, that the name of science should be used to dignify the prejudiced opinions of men who do not now seem to have a spark of the true scientific spirit. Among the phenomena which still resist the skill of the best research are the inter-relationships of body and mind; and in the interests of knowledge generally, we think it is only just to commence our own remarks by a confession of our agnosticism as against the positive philosophy which is nowadays thrust upon the reading public.

II.

In this chapter we have to ascertain what are the results of recent research in the relationship between Mind and Body; to inquire into phenomena for which at present no adequate explanation is forthcoming; and to discover from such practical experiences as are available, how far the will can affect the body and the body affect the will.

At the outset we are confronted by an elementary, but none the less difficult problem. *What is a thought?* A simple question, apparently; so simple that the man in the street feels able to answer

it. To him it is something that we think: not a reality, except in so far as it is real to the thinker, but a sort of brain flash, which appears very much after the manner of a shooting star; one moment it is there, the next it is gone. He blandly assures us that yesterday, when he thought of going to Margate, it was only a sudden idea arising out of a picture in a railway carriage, and that he just as suddenly decided not to go when he remembered a previous appointment. "Such an idea," he continues, "is to me like a flash from my pocket electric lamp: I cannot find the flash afterwards any more than I can find the idea which originated in my brain. A thought is nothing."

We have all heard such philosophy in a smoking compartment, and as a means of beguiling the tedium of a long journey it may be allowed to pass; but it only shows how confidently the average man, with a simmering of education, will lay down the law on abstruse problems. And yet it must be confessed that our ablest professors of psychology, even those of the most advanced experimental school, do not tell us how the brain thinks, although we may be sure they would if they could.¹ For two thousand years the best minds have been engaged in the study of mind, and we are still no nearer a solution of the essential problem of thought. The library of philosophy in all its aspects is indeed a fine testimony to the industry and research of men

¹ The chapter on this subject in Carl Snyder's *Modern Conceptions in Science* is most inadequate. Of course it is no more a duty of the psychologist to explain thought than it is for a physicist to explain electricity, but they are the only men to whom we can look for information,

in every age, and if we have to face failure in the end, the fault cannot be ascribed to inertia or incompetence. The field of psychology, especially, has possessed more than its share of brains and energy. Nevertheless, there is no one in the world to-day who, as the result of combined analysis and experiment, can explain the nature of a thought. Prof. E. W. Scripture, in his 1907 edition of *Thinking, Feeling, Doing*, affirms that we know how the liver secretes bile, but not how the brain secretes thought. "A feeling of anger is accompanied by an increase of blood in the brain; but no matter how minute our knowledge of the chemical process between the blood and the brain may be, we know we can never discover the chemistry of anger."¹

Never? That sounds very hopeless, for it is equivalent to saying the problem is absolutely insoluble. Perhaps Prof. Scripture feels that after centuries of investigation his pessimism is justifiable? At any rate, of one thing we are sure: the problem has not yet been solved.

Take another author, Prof. C. A. Strong, who pursues a somewhat different method. His interesting study entitled *Why the Mind Needs a Body* makes it clear that we are still debating the two theories of inter-actionism and parallelism; in other words, the theory of Huxley, that consciousness is an effect of brain action, and the theory of Prof. Clifford, that consciousness and brain process

Vide p. 243. See also Halleck's *The Education of the Central Nervous System*, p. 19: "Imagination, thought, emotion, and will have never been localised. No one has ever made it clear how mere brain cells can imagine or think,"

merely flow side by side. Each theory has its champions, but none of them has been able to prove his claims; the abler representatives of both sides are like two equally matched chess players with an unfinished game before them. The onlookers never know which will win the next move, and when the game is drawing to a close, something untoward happens—the table is accidentally overturned and the pawns are on the floor.

Such is the position to-day in relation to consciousness and thought. We have learned treatises by the score, some of them—for instance, Wundt's *Physiological Psychology*—perfect marvels of observation and analysis; we have experiments with intricate mechanisms that profess to detect immediately the telling of a lie; we possess the carefully drawn up reports of experts in mental diseases, and have no lack of diligent students in every branch of psychology—and yet we have but touched the fringe of the world of mind.

Alas for our alleged “approximately complete knowledge”! Not only are we destitute of such in relation to thought, but we have had to revise our dogmatisms on the nature of matter; and whereas once we were sure there was an unbridgable gulf between the organic and the inorganic, we are now being told that in a sense all matter is living. Science is a never ending story of changing boundaries. But the one boundary which never seems to change is that between matter that is conscious and matter that is unconscious.¹ Spencer

¹ See an interesting chapter, entitled “About Indefinable Boundary Lines,” in Francis Jacox's *Cities from All Quarters*.

admitted there is not the remotest possibility of interpreting mind in the terms of matter. Probably we shall realise, some day, that the first of all enigmas is not the nature of thought, but how we become persons.¹

III.

Now the object of this introductory confession of our ignorance is to suggest the desirability of studying those unusual phenomena of mind which no knowledge of physical facts can explain. Such a suggestion is not so obvious as might at first appear, in spite of Dr. Lévy's "Il est banal de parler de l'influence de l'esprit sur le corps."² There is still a vast amount of scepticism as to psychical phenomena of this type, which taking into account the little we know of psychical forces, is not a little surprising. True, there is a goodly array of names of repute, both living and dead, in every country, which stand for scientific inquiry: Tuke, Lloyd Tuckey, Barrett, Lodge, Crookes, and Wallace in England; Liébeault, Bernheim, Richet, Lévy, and many more in France; Hyslop and William James in America; Lombroso in Italy; and a goodly number in Germany. But, as yet, psychical research, in the sense of studying body and soul, has apparently not reached the stage when it can be taken up seriously by the whole college of medical and psychological professors and students:

¹ "The assumption that the mind is a real being which can be acted upon by the brain, and which can act on the body through the brain, is the only one compatible with all the facts of experience."—G. T. Ladd: *Philosophy of Mind*, p. 476.

² *L'Éducation Rationnelle de la Volonté*, p. 14.

for, whether we like it or not, philosophy in every department has its fashions; and philosophers, in their way, are as sensitive to criticism as a West End lady who feels she is not wearing the proper thing. Until it becomes "proper," speaking philosophically, to study psychical phenomena of every class, we shall have to be content with isolated investigations pursued by men with more courage than their fellows. It has ever been so. The history of natural science is replete with instances of glaring prejudice, and when the history of modern psychical research comes to be written, there are a few men of light and leading whose reputation for possessing openmindedness and breadth of outlook will suffer a severe shock.

But it is only fair to admit that apart from the authors previously mentioned, and some more or less desultory work of private societies, these questions of trance, hypnotism, auto-suggestion, materialisations, mind cures, and the rest have been handled—there is no other word—by quacks and charlatans who have not scrupled to exploit them commercially or to combine with them the practice of pseudo-sciences like astrology and palmistry.¹ The associations of psychical phenomena have been most unfortunate. In Spiritualism fraud has been exposed over and over again; mental healers without a scrap of medical knowledge have allowed people to die by inches whilst under their treatment; music-hall managers have impressed the hypnotist

¹ Dr. Maudsley, however, is candid enough to admit that "quackery seems to have got hold of a truth which legitimate medicine fails to appreciate or use adequately."—*Body and Mind*, I, 38.

into their service as a humorous "turn"; in fact, all along the line there has been, amid much that was inexplicable, an atmosphere of trickery, fraud, and money grabbing. One must therefore plead some excuse for the lofty indifference of the professor, as well as for the satire of the unbelieving crowd which, on superphysical matters, does not trouble to distinguish between the authority of Alfred Russel Wallace and that of a Bond Street palmist.

One important factor has already been delivered from its "friends." The use of hypnotism in medicine is becoming so common that no one affects surprise. But it was not always so. Prejudice had to be overcome. Sir F. R. Cruise, honorary physician to the King, says, "We are upbraided occasionally by weak-minded folk who say that hypnotism is sometimes allied with quackery and charlatanism. Be it so. It is all the more the special duty of the Physician to rescue it from such evil surroundings, and to place it in its true position. As we make it, so it shall be."¹ What is true of hypnotism will become true of auto-suggestion and other departments of mental physiology which at present are lightly esteemed.

IV.

But what of the phenomena themselves? Are they not sufficiently striking to attract the attention of all thoughtful people? Too striking, you say? Yes, perhaps they are at first, especially to those whose idea of mind is the brain within the skull,

¹ Introduction to *Treatment by Suggestion*, by C. Lloyd Tuckey, M.D.

and who talk glibly about a chemical action of which they do not understand a particle. To other minds the marvels of imagination and will are of a kind that provoke intelligent inquiry, and for the sake of clearness we propose to reproduce a few cases from the pages of Hack Tuke's famous treatise, of which we give the full title—*Illustrations of the Influence of the Mind Upon the Body in Health and Disease, Designed to Elucidate the Action of the Imagination*.¹

(1) It is recorded of a certain Van Swieten that he passed a dead dog on the roadside, the stench from which caused him to vomit. He passed the same place several years after, and vomited again, on remembering the former occasion, although, of course, there was no actual stench to act upon his sense of smell.²

(2) Dr. Bouchet states that in 1847 a little girl, Louise Parguin, whom excessive fear had rendered dumb and paralytic in all her limbs, was brought to him. "For two months everything had been done by the physicians, but to no purpose. In despair, her father came with his child to Paris. The girl, who had heard of the great city, its great physicians, and the Hôtel-Dieu spoken of only in the most extravagant way, arrived full of faith to be cured. In the evening I saw her dumb and paralytic; and, displeased at finding such a patient in the hospital, made no prescription. She was in the same state the next morning; I put off all treatment during the day. During the day she began

¹ Published in 1872, by Daniel Hack Tuke, M.D., F.R.C.P., LL.D.

² Vol. I, p. 137,

to speak; the day after to move her limbs; and on the third day she walked about the wards completely cured. Her faith had saved her."¹

(3) In hysteria the influence of the will *versus* the reflex action of voluntary muscles is constantly seen. Mr. Skey records the case of a young lady of sixteen, who for many months had been suffering from inversion of the left foot, which was twisted at right angles with the other, and was treated by orthopædic surgeons with an elaborate apparatus of splints. Neither they, nor Mr. Skey, though he recognised the nature of the affliction, succeeding in curing it. Psychological agents, however, effected a cure in a few minutes. She willed to use her foot like other people, and she did.

Dr. Tuke lived in a scientifically critical era, but in order to bring the matter more up to date, we will take the testimony of modern authorities. The following is from Dr. Forbes Winslow :

“ It is a well established fact that alterations of tissue have been the result of a morbid concentration of the attention to particular organic structures. Certain feelings of uneasiness, or even pain, originate in the mind a suspicion of disease existing in particular parts of the body, it may be in the lungs, stomach, heart, brain, liver, or kidneys. . . . This deviation from a normal state of certain functions frequently lapses into actual *structural* disease as the effect of the faculty of attention being for a lengthened period concentrated on this action. The continuous direction of the mind to vital tissues, *imagined* to be in an unhealthy state, undoubtedly

¹ Tuke, Vol. II, p. 189.

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causes an exaltation of their special functions, and an increase of susceptibility by (it may be presumed) concentrating to them an abnormal quantity of blood, this being followed by (1) undue vascular action, (2) capillary congestion, (3) an excess in the evolution of nerve force, and (4) appreciable *structural* alteration."¹

This is sufficiently forceful, but with a view to making the evidence as complete as possible, we provide a few cases from one of the most recent writers, Dr. C. Lloyd Tuckey.

(1) A student asked for an aperient pill, and in mistake the dispenser gave him one composed of opium and antimony. Instead of making him perspire and feel drowsy, it had the effect the student expected it to have.²

(2) Mr. Woodhouse Braine, a noted anæsthetist, found to his chagrin, at the last moment before commencing an operation, that he had no ether in the inhaling bag. The patient, a girl, had had ether three years previously. For the sake of experiment, until the ether sent for had arrived, he put the empty bag over the patient's face, and she soon exclaimed, "I've got it; I'm going off." She did: and one of the tumours in the scalp was removed. Then somebody said "She is coming to." The bag was applied again, and once more she relapsed into unconsciousness, when the second tumour was removed.³

(3) Mr. Horatio Ross, a celebrated sportsman,

¹ *Obscure Diseases of the Mind and Brain.*†

² *Treatment by Suggestion*, p. II.

³ *Ibid.*, p. II.

when eighty-two years of age, was attacked with hemiplegia, which was perhaps embolic. A London specialist told him he would never be able to use his arm again. Mr. Ross then consulted Dr. Foulis, of Edinburgh, with the result that he urged Mr. Ross to use his will power. He did. Many times a day he willed his arm to move, and tried to move it. Soon the paralysed muscles began to regain their power. Two months slipped by with slow improvement. At the end of four months he had practically recovered, and in the following August he got to the moor and shot several brace of grouse.¹

By way of varying the class of cases given, we refer, lastly, to one of a most unusual kind, recorded by Dr. Laycock. A woman, forty-eight years of age, who had passed the menopause, was in attendance during her daughter's *accouchement*. So strong was her imaginative sympathy that the associated feelings produced in her all the symptoms of renewed motherhood.²

V.

These illustrations are selected from scores of others, and the first question to arise is, Are they true? The answer depends largely on our ability to analyse the value of testimony. The authors quoted are eminently clever, sane, and sagacious; they are also men of high standing in their profession. Their experience is in a minor degree confirmed by the general practitioner; they have

¹ *Treatment by Suggestion*, p. 396-7.

² *Nervous Diseases of Women*.

no self-interest in fabricating cases, and they could not have been in formal collusion to deceive. Their testimony, in fact, is convincing, and as most people meet with similar instances at some time in their lives, we see no reason for rejecting as impossible or untrue, the formidable array of authenticated narratives which come from responsible medical men the world over. The drift of opinion among doctors has generally been in favour of the employment of the patient's imagination and will in effecting a cure; the wonder is that so few have been willing to go more deeply into the subject in order to make a more scientific use of this mental factor.

A critical scrutiny of the specimen cases quoted suggests the following claims:—

(1) Mental sympathy with others can unconsciously effect changes in organic functions.

(2) Imagination can modify, and even overcome, the action of certain physical laws which govern the body.

(3) Will-power, consciously and confidently exercised, can cure nervous derangements.

These claims do not rest upon inferences drawn from the few cases here recorded; they rest upon experiment, the details of which are to be found in the abundant and authoritative literature of medical psychology. As claims, however, they are sufficiently interesting to call for further investigation, not so much by adding other instances to those already given, as by seeking more light on the nature of the mental force employed. In a previous section, where we discussed the psychology of will,

it was made tolerably clear that the mind of man is a unity; and that although we use terms like feeling, intellect, will, imagination, and sympathy, to describe certain aspects of mental expression, the essential point to remember is: thought is a force controlled by a person in whose conscious realisation of himself is the secret of will. Consider for a moment the case of the mother whose sympathy for her daughter's labour pains induced a return of motherhood symptoms in herself. Here there is an unsought for and unexpected action of mind on body; and akin to it is the incident related of Van Swieten, the difference between the two being that in the one thought-force is manifested as sympathy, and in the other as imagination. The student who swallowed an opium and antimony pill, believing it to be an aperient, and the girl who took for granted the inhaling bag containing ether, when it did not, show another aspect of imagination at work. In none of these cases is there a deliberate and determined exercise of will. The effect of mental conception on bodily organism was more or less unconscious. But if such results are obtainable without conscious control, it follows that still greater results should be possible from the reasoned use of the will. Such a result is that recorded of Mr. Horatio Ross, who, at the advanced age of eighty-two, was able to overcome a paralysis of his arm.

Now the force which can do all these things is confessedly unknowable from the analytical point of view. In speaking of brain and thought, Prof. William James remarks that "chemical action must

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of course accompany activity, but little is known of its exact nature."¹ The most suggestive theory is that popularised by Prentice Mulford, namely, that "thoughts are *things*," and he drew his inspiration from the wisdom of the East where others of us will have to turn, now that Western science has confessed its limitations. Most people seem to fancy that a thought is a no-thing, whereas the evidence is all the other way.² When a prospective mother receives a severe and sudden shock due to fright, the object which causes the fright is sometimes imprinted on the unborn child. Cases are on record where the bodily formation of the infant has been changed by the operation of such causes. These facts go to suggest that an idea vividly apprehended, is a definite *something*; we do not know what it is, or how it travels along the nerves, or the manner in which it is translated from the abstract into the concrete. All we know is that a thinking being can create thoughts and that those thoughts, so far from being mere brain flashes, are, judging solely from their effects, real entities, apparently composed of a spiritual substance, the nature of which is outside the range of discovery by our present faculties. Hence the only possible way to arrive at a really scientific conclusion is to study, arrange, and classify the effects of thought, not merely on the body, but on the mind itself, as well as on other minds. Unconscious and unpremeditated effects have only a partial value; such a value

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, Vol I, p. 101.

² What does Lévy mean when he says "Thought is not an event which dies 'in a world ethereal, supersensible, imperceptible'; it has continually its likeness and repercussion in our organism"?

as tends to call attention to facts worthy of investigation. It is the conscious and sympathetic control of thought by will-power which offers the greatest scope for inquiry. Not only can will modify the laws of the body; it can also—as we shall see later on—hypnotise itself into accomplishing what at first it believed to be impossible, and thus becomes a factor of the highest importance in education; indeed, without it, no mind seems capable of reaching its apex of development.

But has will-power no limits? Does mind never lose its power to control the body? What follows when the will itself is diseased and the mind deranged? Man then becomes a mass of disorganised sensations, perceptions, and judgments. However supreme the will-controlled mind may be, it is open to attack from the side of the body, simply because it resides in a physical organ which, when overtaxed or otherwise injured, makes rational life impossible. This is the fact which Christian Science and some other systems persistently ignore. So long as reason is ours, we may believe that "Mind is all," but when the loss of reason prevents rational thought and conduct, how can the will be used to re-establish health, assist our mental development, and exercise all the powers accredited to it? The thing is impossible. If our bodies were purely and wholly the creation of our wills, we could live as long as we liked, and die when we were so disposed; but body and mind were born together, and their lives are inextricably bound up the one with the other. Sometimes the mind will die first, that is as a rational intelligence,

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and the body will live on for years; but the body never dies without taking the mind with it. A Dum-Dum bullet through the heart is death complete.

CHAPTER IV.

AUTO-SUGGESTION : IN THEORY.

“Toute idée acceptée par le cerveau tend à se faire acte.”—LÉVY.

I.

IN the last chapter we saw that in spite of the fact of our ignorance concerning the nature of thought-force, it was possible to study its manifestations with advantage, much in the same way as we use the power of electricity, although we are ignorant of its nature. Now thought-force has one pre-eminent method of operation when we desire to control it for beneficent ends: that method is *suggestion*. A medical hypnotist, having induced hypnosis in a patient who is under treatment for hypochondria, which we will suppose imparts the fear of walking out alone, suggests to the sufferer that he will in future have no fear at all: that the causes giving rise to such fears have been removed. Awakening out of the trancelike sleep, he finds himself cured; no longer is he afraid of open places (agoraphobia), or of being abroad without the protection of a friend. Thousands of cases are on record where hypnotism has accomplished what drugs have failed to do, and the curious, perhaps doubtful, reader is referred to Dr. Milne Bramwell's *Hypnotism: Its History, Practice, and Theory*,

wherein authoritative results are recounted in great numbers and with much detail.

Now it is but a step from the use of suggestion in hypnosis to its use in a fully awakened condition.¹ Here is a man who has suffered for months from insomnia. All drugs have failed; every device has been tried; but bromides, hop-pillows, counting numbers, and long, tiring walks have proved ineffective. Will the patient be hypnotised? No. He believes many cures have been made, but he has a strong objection to anæsthetics and losing consciousness: hypnotism he abhors. The doctor says, "Why not try your will-power through auto-suggestion? If suggestion can work wonders in the hypnotic state, why not use the same power in the conscious state, where the continued repetition of verbal affirmations can atone for any loss of intensity? Or I will make the suggestions myself." The cure once commenced in earnest is soon complete.

It is generally supposed by readers who have not given any special attention to the subject, that suggestion is a specific something used only in the practice of hypnotism. This is perhaps natural, because the main associations of the word are hypnotic. But the more we look into the attendant phenomena, the more do we find that suggestion

¹ "At bottom, then, suggestion and imitation and the main facts of hypnotism are all one. The person whom we involuntarily imitate is one who, to some extent, has hypnotised us. Something in his bearing or character puts us in touch with him: he captures our attention, and before we know it we are repeating his acts or manner. In the case of imitation, the suggestion is offered by another person's conduct: in hypnotism it is by word of mouth." —Stratton: *Experimental Psychology and Culture*, p. 210.

per se is totally devoid of unusual features; such as, for instance, the state of hypnosis itself. Instead of being regarded as a proceeding with elements of magic in it, we propose to illustrate suggestion as a principle of action that has been in use from time immemorial—perhaps not consciously, but still not the less actually. It will be made clear that the only difference between suggestion in hypnotism and that which we practise in daily life, is the conscious direction of the one and the unconscious exercise of the other. True, the use of hypnotism means the use of suggestion by a person other than ourselves, whilst the suggestion we practise daily is auto-suggestion; but the underlying force is the same—the hypnotic state giving it greater intensity than is possible in a fully awakened condition.

Suggestion runs through the whole course of our mental life as an active agent in development: that is, *indirect* suggestion as distinct from *direct*, of which we shall have much to say in subsequent pages. The training of an infant's eyes affords an illustration of the fact that "when a train of sensations, ideas, or thought—in short, when any mental train—is suddenly interrupted by any object or idea, with strong motor qualities, this new object or idea is specially fitted to develop action in its direction. This definition, like all others, requires concrete illustrations to make it plain. An infant's eyes will follow a ball rolling across the floor, although they will speedily lose the ball when at rest. A child playing in a meadow will chase a butterfly flitting by. In these cases, sense objects

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in motion broke in upon the child's mental train, and suggested movement of eye or of the entire body in their direction. A part of this movement was, of course, reflex, but we must remember that reflex movement in nerve cells lies at the basis of every higher act of will. A sensory stimulus pours into a nerve cell, is reflected outward along a motor nerve, and movement results. The highest acts of will merely have deliberation, choice, and inhibition added to these fundamental reflexes."¹

Children are always imitative: not because they *will* to do so as others do; but because they cannot help it. Their surroundings are so many suggestions to repeat what they see and hear.

"Imitation is the result of suggestion. A child on a visit watched the facial contortions of a person afflicted with St. Vitus' dance, and soon began from sympathetic imitation, to acquire the same movements. When this child returned home, the affection spread to the other children. These nervous twitchings would probably soon have become habitual, had not the children been carefully separated from each other and exposed to nothing that suggested such movements. Persons have become confirmed stammerers from early association with one who stuttered. The motor response to impulses to speak soon became habitually uncertain. In fact, the stammering made a permanent change in the reactions in the motor cells. The writer knows a child who contracted from an older

¹ Halleck: *Education of the Central Nervous System*, p. 218. Dr. Thomas Brown's *Philosophy of the Mind* contains an interesting section on "Suggestion" in the associational sense.

person the permanent habit of squinting in a most unsightly manner. It would be hard work to give parents and teachers illustrations which are fraught with graver practical meaning than these. Children should be kept away from sense objects which suggest vicious or unwise courses of action. One reaction to such suggestion modifies the nerve in this matter, or changes its manner of responding matter. Repeated reactions plough out new paths to normal stimuli.”¹

When the child grows, these unsought-for suggestions, as we may call them, lose much of their power because personality is growing, and ideas of another type begin to make their appeal—that is to say, personal influences take their place. Direct suggestion begins to make itself felt, and parental commandment becomes a stronger force than any other, even though sometimes it may be broken. Then there is the suggestion from books. Those who have specialised in the psychology of youthful literature know only too well how the blood-and-thunder story sometimes matures into an actual crime—and how the murder in the penny dreadful acted as a direct suggestion to the reader. An effort to restrict youthful knowledge within prescribed boundaries simply means that certain items of knowledge always contain a “Go-thou-and-do-likewise” influence. It is for this reason that

¹ Halleck : *Education of the Central Nervous System*, p. 219. A little volume, entitled *Imitation ; or the Mimetic Force in Nature and Human Nature*, by R. Steel, is worth reading in this connection. The same idea is seen in insect mimicry, where the colour of the leaf suggests the colour of the moment. The habits of the chameleon should be noted as an additional study on the Nature side.

Dr. Waldstein, in his *Subconscious Self*, pleads for a kind of education which will fill the youthful mind with a plentitude of healthy and morally vigorous ideas, so that the evil suggestion, coming from whatever quarter shall find no response. Professor Scripture asks, "How shall we develop children so as to produce in them minds well balanced in respect to suggestion? Is not this as important a task as learning to do percentage or parse a sentence? The problem is still unsolved."¹

II.

It has frequently been pointed out that in matters of character we become like that which we admire. Let a man admire the athlete, and he will tend to develop on the same lines; likewise let a man espouse some lofty ideal of self-sacrifice, and his steps will turn in the direction of a suitable opportunity to benefit others. When admiration becomes suffused with deep feeling, we get the religious element, and all worship is direct suggestion. The scrutiny of an ornate religious service from this point of view may be interesting and provocative of further reflection. First there is—in the larger buildings, at least—the impressiveness of architecture, as in St. Peter's at Rome; and those who have read Horace Bushnell's essay on *Building Eras in Religion* can never look on an exterior, much less an interior, with feelings of cold indifference. These vast structures were built to suggest the permanence and beauty of spiritual

¹ *Thinking, Feeling, Doing*, p. 224.

ideas. The service itself brings into prominence by visible symbols the central facts of the faith. In front of the whole congregation is the elevated cross; and meditation on its true inwardness is intended to kill all passions that are selfish, and arouse into activity the principles of self-sacrifice; the swinging of the censers, the lighted candles, the vestments, the genuflexions, are all so many symbols conveying through emotion direct suggestions to the moral sense. Of course, familiarity with these sights tends to rob them of effective significance, in which case the service becomes one of routine and formalism. Churches which pride themselves on the absence of ritual, naturally give more attention to sermons for which the congregation allows a longer space of time, and demands more by way of intrinsic contents than is usual in other religious societies. But a sermon is suggestion of the strongest possible type: the hearer is not left to ponder the mystery of a lonely Prophet who died as a martyr to his convictions, and obtain what moral impetus he may from such a spectacle; the living preacher's voice sounds in his ears: "Do this, do that." The choral element in worship is perhaps more powerful than any other, for we live by our emotions rather than by our reflections. The sound of the organ, first plaintive and pleading, then strong and jubilant, is combined with the mysticism of the hymn-writer, and together they work the miracle of changing depression into gladness, and despair into hope. All worship is suggestion. There may be defects in current theology, and ecclesiasticism may be full of contradictions, but

the devout church-goer feels the benefit of regular ministrations; and even though you prove the Scripture to be full of inaccuracies, it will be to him as nothing. He is a man of feeling, and he will go where feeling can be fed. That is why religion stands the assaults that have been so often made against it.

III.

But the drama is the most striking illustration we can have of the principle of suggestion: for the actor, whom we have seen in the flesh, comes before us as Hamlet, and arouses our pity on behalf of that prince; the scenery is got up to represent local colour; the clothes worn belong to the period in which the events happened; nothing is left undone to make the illusion complete. You forget, as far as possible, the underlying realities: the fact that the Hamlet on the stage was in his motor-car half an hour ago; that Ophelia has a country house in Sussex; and that the ghost in reality may be a substantial person of thirteen stone. You transfer your convictions and give sense impressions the lead; you imagine what you see to be the real thing, and let natural emotions follow.

There are few things which affect any kind of crowd more than stage dramas. Almost every man and woman in the audience experience the same emotion at the same identical moment: and although these emotions may not be immediately transmuted into actions, the sense of reality is none the less keen, despite the consciousness of the spectator that he is a victim to an illusion, and has

laughed and wept over imaginary events. Sometimes, however, the sentiments arising out of the scenes are so strong that they, like habitual suggestions, tend to transform themselves into deeds. One has frequently heard of the manager of a popular theatre who, because he only played melodramas, was obliged to protect the villain of the piece from the violence of the spectators, who were incensed at the crimes, though imaginary, which the villain had committed. "We have here," says Monsieur Le Bon, "in my opinion, one of the most remarkable indications of the mental state of crowds, and especially of the faculty with which they can be influenced by suggestion. The unreal has almost as much influence on them as the real."¹ Yes, that is the very essence of the drama as an art and a moral agent; for the *Katharsis* of Aristotle is a purging of impurities from the emotions by theatrical representations which discover the mysteries of life to the wondering audience.

IV.

All practical teachers of ethics are aware of the advisability of acting on the notion that a man's character is better than it really is, in point of fact. The reputation of a champion weight-lifter may be in advance of his actual powers; but he, knowing his reputation is always at stake, is nerved to do better than he otherwise would do. Act towards a man as if he had a higher character than he has,

¹ *Psychologie des Foules*. The details of a particularly objectionable suicide narrated in the press, sometimes starts a small epidemic of suicides. Suggestion again.

and you adopt the best method of improving him, provided, of course, there is some moral basis on which to work. This fact is the foundation of Mr. Jerome's play, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*. Asked how he came to write the play, the author replied, "I do not quite know where the thought originated. Perhaps it was in the life of an old couple who pretended to be exceedingly fond of each other in the presence of a certain friend, but who were really continually quarrelling. The friend always approached them as if they were an ideal Darby and Joan, and he always spoke so highly of their love for each other that they were ashamed to be anything else but loving in his presence. It struck me then that if we always emphasised the best in the life of others, that best would be developed.

"I really think the attitude of the 'Passer-by' would work in practical life. Half the world always seems to me to be sneering at the other half. We are always trying to find the bad in each other. In national, in political, in personal relations, in all spheres of life I find this spirit. One nation always suspects another. Every action on the part of a foreign government is construed to be antagonistic and spiteful. . . . Every class is occupied in sneering at the other class. . . . In individual relations, too, we are jealous of each other, and speak evil of one another. Now I fancy if you ignored evil it would cease to exist. If you always emphasised the good it would become supreme and universal."

The notion of extinguishing moral evil by

denying it or ignoring it is not so senseless as it appears. Those who have the improvement of society at heart have used every kind of agency, but with inconspicuous results; the moral suasion school have little to encourage them, and the representatives of the law have still less—in fact, their methods leave elements of trouble behind which have long since called a halt. Mankind is not perfectible, neither in the big city nor the small village, and every scheme which proceeds on that assumption is doomed to failure. Mr. Jerome's notion of emphasising the good is a positive method, and well worth an extended trial. The difficulty is to form a practicable plan. We shall return to this subject in the chapter dealing with Conduct.

V.

Business offers a fine field for the work of suggestion, which is seen to good advantage in advertisements. The American, as usual, was the first to exploit psychology commercially. He argued that if a man could be suggested out of a disease, or insomnia, or an evil habit, he could be suggested into buying a new typewriter, a lawn-mower, or an adding machine. Therefore advertising began to receive an elaborate attention which had previously been denied it. Once on a time advertisers had been content to announce their existence and place of business, and impart a general invitation to the world to come and buy. We have changed all that. Says an expert: A good advertisement should (1) attract attention; (2) fix attention by a catch-line which tickles the reader's desire; (3) intensify that

desire and explain just how you can meet the desire awakened. A study of modern advertisements is one long commentary on the principle of suggestion. Those lengthy testimonials from pathetic sufferers in favour of some quack nostrum are intended to appeal to similar sufferers who will buy the medicine and take it in strong faith; the probability being that imagination does far more to effect a cure than the soapy pill which costs 1s. 1½d. a box. The goods that are much advertised may be of less value than those feebly advertised; but the continual suggestion, year in, year out, that Sam Sampson's Saggattine is the best tonic in the world, unconsciously hypnotises people into believing it is; and they find themselves acting accordingly. Repetition, cleverly varied, is one of the secrets of successful advertising. Keep your goods in full view of the public, and constantly affirm their matchless character. The people will buy once and buy again—unless you have lied to them. Force, emphasis, reiteration, direct suggestion—these are the agencies which move the masses, because they appeal to fundamental facts in human nature.

VI.

But there is one thought which must, long ago, have occurred to the mind of every reader. It is this: if suggestion is so subtle an agency in the evolving of opinions and convictions, and in the formation of character, does it not reduce the dignity of man by representing him as wholly a product of his environment? Liébeault, always bold to accept conclusions, is quite prepared with an affirmative.

“ Without being aware of it, we acquire moral and political predispositions and prejudices; we are impregnated with the mental atmosphere about us. We honestly believe, and defend as we would our own welfare, social and religious principles which may be opposed to common sense, not to say reason. These principles were held by our ancestors; they are also national, and descend from father to son. It is impossible to destroy them by argument, and dangerous to do so by force. Their fallacy is pointed out in vain. Man thinks by imitation, and however absurd his thoughts may be, they form part of the man, and are finally transmitted from generation to generation, as instincts are.”¹

It is confessedly difficult to disagree with this statement: in fact it is only another way of saying we are, more or less, the results of heredity and environment. One of the commonplace functions of historical criticism is to show how far a great man was the child of the age, and how far he was in advance of it; and if we care to examine ourselves honestly, we shall probably find there are plenty of facts to mark our identity with the life of the moment, and just as few to indicate where we have left our contemporaries behind us. For the most part we are all copyists, because we receive the same suggestions from the complex life in which we live and move and have our being. The man who is a particular person in a special sense, and can rise above the common level, partly by resisting the ordinary mass of suggestions, partly by absorbing them and bringing out their hidden possibilities—this man is the man of genius.

¹ Quoted in Bernheim's *Suggestive Therapeutics*, p. 160.

VII.

Although we may not know the nature of thought-force, we may profitably inquire into its method of operation. The theory is sufficiently stated by Lévy in the words "Every idea accepted by the brain tends to become an action,"¹ and quotes Setchenoff approvingly, where he says, "A thought is an act in the state of birth." This seems too obvious to need either comment or example, but, like many other commonplaces, it calls for emphasis, especially in view of what is to follow. Why are parents so anxious that their children shall not fall into bad society? Because in too many cases an evil suggestion, appealing to a natural instinct, is a stronger psychological factor than the power of the will; the result being a course of action is pursued against the dictates of the better self. Every thought with active possibilities in it tends to become an action; the work of conscience is to sift such thoughts according to a standard of right and wrong; the will is exercised in carrying out the verdict of conscience, and the total result of its not always successful efforts is character.

True, there are some thoughts which may be added to our minds just as one might add a book to one's library; a mathematical formula, for example. But the thoughts we have in view are strongly tinged with desire and feeling, and we are naturally interested to know how it is they reproduce themselves in the memory, sometimes by a deliberate effort, sometimes by association, and

¹ *L'Education Rationnelle de la Volonté*, p. 1.

sometimes in a manner that would seem to indicate there is another mind in us of which we are only dimly conscious. Thoughts and feelings, to use a colloquialism, are said to "come"; we know not how or why. The late F. W. H. Myers was an early exponent of the theory that we possess a subliminal mind; and since his time psychologists of standing have taken up the idea as one which explains phenomena that could not otherwise be understood. Myers affirmed that "the stream of consciousness in which we habitually live is not the only consciousness in connection with our organism. . . . I accord no primacy to my ordinary waking self except that among many potential selves this one has shown itself the fittest to meet the needs of common life." Various names have been given to this new element: subconscious, transliminal, unconscious, subliminal, and others, but we prefer to use subconscious as being more accurately descriptive. The adoption of the theory by leading teachers is justified by them on the ground that it provides the best explanation of instinct and intuition; of unusual gifts; of hypnotism; of dual personality; and of sleep and dreams. We have not space to enumerate instances of each phenomenon, even were it desirable, but we propose to select two of the most typical. Archbishop Whately tells us that when he was a child of quite tender years, knowing only the figures from one to ten, he could mentally work out problems which an adult arithmetician could not work out on paper in a fraction of the time. In a few years, however, this faculty quite disappeared, and at the age of

fourteen he was by no means as proficient at figures as the ordinary youth. The boy prodigy—musical, mathematical, or what not—as well as the adult with marvellous memory gifts, can only be explained by postulating a subconscious mind with which the conscious mind is in some unusual state of beneficent relationship. But the most striking evidence is furnished by hypnotic experiments, and we wish to give an account of one in its entirety. The importance of the subject will justify the length of the quotation.

Anna Fortwanger, twenty-three years of age, a peasant-girl from Southern Germany—ignorant, unsophisticated, a stranger to the English language—was brought to my office in November, 1904, by her employer, an acquaintance who was at the time a member of the London Society for Psychological Research. This girl had been treated for homesickness, and found to possess unusual psychic power. In the hope that she might prove clairvoyant, I had my friend throw her into an hypnotic sleep, and, to make sure that it was not feigned, applied the severest tests. Smelling-salts, so strong that every guest shrunk from inhaling them closer than at arm's length, were put to the girl's nostrils without apparent effect upon her. Under the suggestion that it was a fragrant rose, she inhaled it with apparent delight. She chewed with relish an uncoated strychnine tablet in response to the suggestion that it was a delicious sweet. Her arms were then extended, and across them was laid a heavy library chair, which was supported as easily

as if it had been a feather. Finally a revolver, loaded with blank cartridges, was fired within two feet of her ear. Not a muscle moved a hair's breadth.

The girl was then directed to go up two flights of stairs, proceed along the landing to the front room (a large room with an alcove), enter the apartment, and describe what she saw. Neither the girl nor the hypnotiser had any knowledge of the room or of my house. Thought-transference as explanatory of what followed is thus absolutely excluded.

Questions—all in German—were then put as follows (it is understood that the girl's body reclined in an easy chair in my office, while her transliminal was engaged two flights above):

1.—“What do you see?”

“A round table with books on it.”

(This table stood in front of the door, and would naturally attract immediate attention.)

2.—“What else do you see?”

“A large picture of a lady on the wall.”

(My wife has an engraving of a Raphael Madonna over the mantel, and three other pictures.)

“Describe them.”

“One is a picture of a horse.”

(This answer I regarded as an error; but a subsequent inspection of the room disclosed on the mantel-shelf, under the Madonna, a small photograph of one of my horses, sent to the house a day or two before, and placed there inadvertently by my wife.)

3.—“What else do you see?”

“Seven chairs.”

(No member of the family was aware that there were so many chairs in the room.)

4.—“Is there anything else in the room you would like to speak of?”

“Yes, a bed with a little darling.”

“Do you mean a doll?”

“No; a real live darling.”

“Describe her.”

“She has light hair, and is pretty.”

“How old would you say she is?”

“Eight years.”

(The exact age of my little daughter Kathryn, who was asleep in the alcove.)

I now motioned an older daughter to go upstairs and enter the room. Anna was then asked whether there were other persons present.

“Yes,” she said; “a young lady has just come in—the one I was introduced to this evening. I did not catch her name.”

Anna was then directed to go upstairs and place her hand on the young lady’s arm. She rose at the word, and, with closed eyes, made her way through the strange passages and doors to the room in question, touched my daughter’s arm, and then descended the stairs to my office, there resuming her seat in the easy chair.

Curious to test her powers further, I requested the operator to send Anna up to the house of a friend in Manhattan Avenue, and have her tell us what was going on there at four minutes after nine. In great detail she described the doings of each member of the family, and her account was verified that same evening.

She was then awakened, but retained no recollection of any of these occurrences.

Witness: John H. Thompson, Junr., Old Bridge, New Jersey.

At a second séance, where similar events happened the same year, there were present, Mrs. Jordan L. Mott, Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, Miss Evelina S. Hamilton, Mr. William S. Walsh, of the *New York Herald*, Mrs. Leslie Cotton, the portrait-painter.

VIII.

Yes, the subconscious mind is an undoubted fact: but we know little about it as yet. We know it is active in the sleep of the ordinary mind, whether that sleep be natural or induced; we know that its memory far surpasses the memory of our waking consciousness; but we do not know how it insinuates itself into the conscious mind; or what are the laws of their mutual intercourse. Experiments seem to teach that suggestions offered to us by others sink down into the subconscious mind and begin to take effect at once. Thus is why every thought tends to realise itself as Lévy remarks; and why strong feelings surge up into consciousness unexpectedly and without invitation. Men have been known to puzzle themselves all day with an intricate matter, retiring to rest with the problem still unsolved. Next morning they arise, and the solution suddenly appears like a flash of light. Why? Presumably because during sleep the subconscious mind performed a task impossible to the wakeful intelligence.

For this reason Charles Godfrey Leland, along with many others, after varied experiments, decided that the moments previous to sleep were the best for suggestion. His own words are:

“Resolve before going to sleep that if there be anything whatever for you to do which requires Will or Resolution, be it to undertake repulsive or hard work or duty, to face a disagreeable person, to fast, or make a speech, to say ‘No’ to anything, in short, to keep up to the mark or make *any* kind of effort, that *you will do it*—as calmly and unthinkingly as may be. Do not desire to do it sternly or forcibly, or in spite of obstacles—but simply and coolly make up your mind to *do it*—and it will much more likely be done. And it is absolutely true—*experto crede*—that if persevered in, this willing yourself to will by easy impulse unto impulse given, will lead to marvellous and most satisfactory results.”¹

This plan is confirmed by everyday experience. Before deciding an important issue most men (as if distrusting the judgment of the ordinary consciousness, and instinctively relying on the judgment of another consciousness which is active during sleep), say “I’ll sleep on it first.”

IX.

To recapitulate. We have seen how suggestion is an active agency in almost every sphere of our conscious life. We beheld it in the mental unfolding of an infant, in the later discipline of youth,

¹ *Have you a Strong Will?* pp. 36-37.

and in religious worship; in the drama, and in the world of commerce. We saw that auto-suggestion is the scientific use of a force which hitherto has been allowed to exert itself according to the caprice of circumstance: whereas we ought to organise its powers into a system for helpful service to mind and body. Only in this way can we assist our moral and intellectual independence.

Inquiring into the manner in which suggestion works from the psychological point of view, we found that every thought, especially the desire-thought, has a strong tendency to realise itself in action. This tendency to action, although part and parcel of a thought *per se*, is best explained by the existence of the subconscious mind, which works independently of conscious intelligence. In sleep we can solve difficulties that master us in our waking moments: i.e., in the unconsciousness of the night we have a clearer brain than at any other time. All thoughts and feelings, especially those marked by impressiveness and desire, sink into the subconscious mind. Later they surge up almost weirdly into the conscious mind, and many of our sudden impulses, unexpected revelations of memory, and other phenomena, are thus supplied with a reasonable hypothesis; in fact, hypnotism, sleep, memory, dual personality, and intuition are otherwise unsolved problems. As a means of using the power of suggestion systematically, in conjunction with the subconscious mind, we advise the methods outlined by Lévy, C. G. Leland, and others, wherein the moments just before sleep are prescribed as the best for impressing the deeper

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mind. The waking mind is then losing its power; soon the subconscious will begin to reign alone. But it is nevertheless your very self, and for practical purposes you need not recognise its separateness; so offer your suggestions, not in the spirit of faith, but in the spirit of a knowledge which is confidence based upon the result of observation and experiment. There is, however, no passage in literature which more happily summarises the *spirit* of this chapter than the words, "Whatsoever things ye desire . . . *believe that ye have them*; and ye shall receive them."

CHAPTER V.

THE WILL AND HEALTH.

“The good soul improves the body.”—PLATO’S *Republic*.

I.

As Christian Science has made a good deal of stir in the world by its rapid growth, its wealth, and occasionally by its appearance in the police court, and at Coroners’ inquests, we may be pardoned if we devote some space to a few remarks on its history and present status. The reason for so doing is perfectly obvious, inasmuch as Christian Science is a form of natural religion founded on the supremacy of mind over body.

Those who have tried to read Mrs. Eddy’s book on “Science and Health,” and have had the courage to go through its voluminous pages to the end, must have been alternately amazed and amused; amazed at the pseudo metaphysics, and amused with the attempt to formulate a system without the intelligence required for such a task. It must, however, be conceded that Mrs. Eddy preaches a fact, although, of course, she stole it from somebody else, who, in turn, found it in a book, the author of which no doubt found it in a previous book—so that at last we

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can trace it back to the borders of the prehistoric. Mrs. Eddy's fact is simply that mind influences body, and she has learnt to illustrate, expound, and enforce it with a verbiage that is truly astonishing. It is one of the easiest things in the world to expose the absurdities of Christian Science—that is, as stated in its literature. For instance, the statements that (1) there is no pain, and that (2) matter is nothing. To reduce such claims to comedy is a work that we can undertake even in the most frivolous moments of social intercourse. But the actual results of Christian Science practice are quite another thing. Whether its devotees believe all Mrs. Eddy says or not is beside the point. Take any 500 Christian Scientists you like, and you will find that 250 of them can prove to the satisfaction of any committee you may care to appoint, that they have been greatly benefited in health by the rules and regulations of their religion.¹ It stands to reason that if there was not something tangible, realisable, possible, in Christian Science, it would fall to the ground like a house of cards, instead of which, it is increasing its strength, enlarging its borders, and adding to its numbers. Perhaps the Christian churches are a little alarmed, but their alarm is quite unnecessary. If Mrs. Eddy has done nothing more than draw attention to the fact that Christ had a definite healing mission, she would have done good service. The churches have quite misconstrued the New Testament miracles of healing. Their general teaching on the subject is that

¹ "The cures are many of them undeniable and mainly functional though I have known of one case of varicose veins cured."—Dr. A. T. Schofield, *Force of Mind*, p. 204.

miracles were simply a means of drawing attention to the Divine Person of Christ, and of proving His divine power. We are now coming to see that such miracles were not the means to an end, but an end in themselves, and that the Prophet's intention was that His disciples themselves should exercise faith like unto His own, so that they might perform similar miracles; and that men might realise they had in themselves a life force, the powers of which they were to be taught to use for others. The older view of Christ's miracles has always been a defect in Protestant theology, necessitating as it does, an explanation of the reason why the age of miracles ceased with Christ and His Apostles. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic authorities have maintained that miracles have been a continuous factor in the life of the Church and its Saints, and certainly this is a more logical contention, although many alleged happenings are open to the gravest doubt. But Mrs. Eddy determined to rescue this almost forgotten aspect of Christ's work, and hence her teaching is called "Christian" Science—a fact which has made it comparatively easy for thousands of Church members, dissatisfied with the orthodox creed, to find worship, health, and happiness in the new community.

As previously intimated, the underlying philosophy of the Christian Science "Bible" is hardly worth serious thought. Neither Mrs. Eddy nor any of her literary coadjutors possesses a tithe of the education and analytical power required to produce a consistent rationale of life, and it is

significant that the best literature expounding the principles of mental healing comes from outsiders who will not identify themselves with the Prophetess.

But what Mrs. Eddy has done, and done very skilfully, is to persuade a vast number of people that health is largely—she would say *wholly*—a matter of will-power. She may be altogether wrong in the way she explains the matter to adoring disciples, and she undoubtedly goes to almost impious extremes in her worship of Mind¹ (with a capital "M"); but one must not therefore be unfair in an estimate of her practical services to mankind. No woman of this generation has produced as much mental contentedness in the world as she has done, and although incidentally, or by thought prepenance, the work has brought in a rich harvest of dollars, the beneficent result is a fact which cannot be gainsaid.

II.

But what, then, is the truth about the relation of the will to health? It can be stated in a few simple clauses. By the systematic use of will-power

- (a) Health can, in a great measure, be maintained.
- (b) Certain functional disorders can be cured.
- (c) The substance of both body and brain can be developed and modified, but no new substance can be created.

We will examine and illustrate these points one by one.

¹ Notably her conviction that marriage is out of date, and that conception is possible by *Thought* alone.

No serious exception can be taken to the statement that will-power used systematically, can maintain the body in health. Of course, a good deal turns on what is meant by "health" and "systematic use." The question as to what health is, essentially is very difficult; for confident as we may be that we know all about it, there is much we do not know. Like many of life's commonplaces, it has mysteries to which familiarity blinds us. Here, for instance, is a popular definition—intended for the average reader.

"By detailed comparison among organisms of the same species, a standard is fixed as an indicator of the average of function and balance of functions. This standard is the "normal" which, in terms of evolution, may be called the co-efficient of biological efficiency in the widest sense. The form of the maintenance of the normal in each function and in the total functions constituting the organism is health." That is the formal definition. The description added, says, "Health is characterised by certain easily ascertained symptoms—temperature varying from 97° to 99° F.; respirations averaging sixteen per minute in the adult male; pulse rate 60 to 70, and so on. Such departures from these normals as impair the elasticity or structure of the organism constitute disease."¹

As definitions go, this is exceptionally well worded, but, after all, does it define? Scarcely. We agree to call certain conditions health, such conditions being obtained by methods of comparison: that is all it seems to say. But if mind

¹ *Harmsworth Encyclopædia*.—Art.: "Health."

can exert so striking an influence on body, and body react on mind, surely these phenomena taken together are bound to change the current definitions of health, whether coined for students or for the public generally. At any rate, the definitions we have do not spring out of a study of the nature of man so much as from a study—quite empirical—of temperatures, the breathing of the lungs, and the beatings of the heart. Let us go a step further. What is Pain? Here, again, the world is confident it knows. Has it not suffered the tortures of neuralgia and neuritis? But even medical professors are not so unanimous about the essence of pain as they are about the essence of health. Says one authority, “It is a very important fact that the sensibility to pain is distinct from the power of ordinary sensation. This distinction was first fully established by Mons. Beau, of Paris, who has shown conclusively that the sensibility to pain may be diminished or suspended while ordinary sensation remains.”¹ The man in the street would call pain a most unpleasant sensation or feeling, but if it be a truly physical and nervous sensation, how does it happen that a man shivering with ague over a hot fire, is enjoying a temperature five degrees above the normal?

The fact is, all profound research into these matters goes to suggest that health and disease are, in the main, caused by an irregular relationship

¹ Dalton's *Physiology*, p. 411. It may be said that recent textbooks do not contain satisfactory statements on this point, but the following from Dr. Noël Paton, Professor of Physiology in the University of Glasgow, is conclusive: “All pain, since it means a change in our consciousness, is metaphysical. There is not such a thing as ‘physical pain.’”—*Essentials of Human Physiology*.

between the spiritual substance we call mind, and the material substance we call body; and the significance of the theory lies in the claim that since mind is supreme, it holds the key to the situation. This is the only basis on which we can build an explanation of the manner in which thought-force can modify and develop bodily tissues. It should be remembered that life, both mental and physical, is a unity. "Though we commonly regard mental and bodily life as distinct," says Herbert Spencer, "it needs only to ascend somewhat above the ordinary point of view to see that they are subdivisions of life in general, and that no line of demarcation can be drawn between them other than arbitrarily."¹ We would commend this statement to the reader's careful attention, mainly because it suggests, in conjunction with the phenomena of healing previously recorded, that mentality is not merely and solely resident in the brain even though there it may find its chief centre; in a secondary, but real sense, it is suffused throughout the entire body. If you fix your attention on the little finger of the left hand, and concentrate long enough, you will find an increased flow of blood in that direction. More than that: if you persist in believing any part of your physique is diseased, when it is not, it will, in all likelihood, become diseased.² Delboeuf

¹ *Principles of Psychology.*

² "Dr. Lys says that mind produces atheroma, dilated heart, Grave's disease, dyspepsia, jaundice, cirrhosis, chorea, cancer, pernicious anæmia, foetal deformities, and alopecia." This evidence is supported by many other distinguished physicians. *The Force of Mind*, by A. T. Schofield, M.D., p. 80.

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produced an actual burn on the skin of a patient by suggesting there *was* a burn.

Now the facts we have illustrated and enforced are these :

(1) Mind and Body are bound together in the closest unity.

(2) Mind-force is supreme.

It is logical, therefore, to infer that the rational will controlling this mind-force can do much to maintain the body in health by driving away the hosts of insidious enemies that surround us. And the first lesson to be learned is that of courage; not the courage that is conscious of itself, but the unconscious confidence of a man who, whilst he zealously lives a righteous life in the physical sense, does not feel that health is a battle to be won. Nor does he make health a sort of cult, and devote specified times to the examination of diet, mirrored inspections of the tongue, or stethoscopic beatings of the heart. Herbert Spencer with his finger on his pulse, to guard against undue excitement during conversation with his friends, is a picture of what we ought not to do.

The right attitude can be stated from another point of view: don't fear disease, for that is to invite it. How easily one can *imagine* oneself into an illness needs no demonstrating. It is only another instance of how mind can affect body; or to be more exact, how the mind can translate an idea into a bodily fact. The Christian Scientists may not be right when they set up man as a sort of divinity, the Soul being the God within, but they are right when they emphasise the dominance of the

mind and urge men to be confident in themselves.

An Arab fable says that one day a traveller met the Plague going to Cairo, and asked what was the object of the visit. "To kill three thousand people," rejoined the Plague. Some time afterwards the traveller met the Plague on its return journey, and complained that thirty thousand had been killed. "I am not responsible for that," protested the Plague. "I only killed three thousand. The other twenty-seven thousand died of fright at my arrival." A fitting counterpart to the above fable is given by Goethe, who says that Napoleon visited those sick of the plague to show that the man who could vanquish fear could vanquish the plague as well. "And he was right," adds the poet. "'Tis incredible what force the will has in such cases; it penetrates the body and puts it in a state of activity which repels all hurtful influences, whilst fear invites them."¹

III.

At this juncture we have to face the objector. "Can we ward off a prevailing epidemic by merely believing it will pass us by?" "When smallpox is raging, are we to take no physical precautions, but simply trust in mental resistance?" Rather advanced people would say Yes; that is, people who, when they discovered the supremacy of mind, were so overjoyed that their enthusiasm led them to believe matter did not exist at all. We prefer to be more reasonable. Body is a fact just as much as mind, and whilst fear can produce actual disease

¹ Quoted in *Ars Vivendi*, by Arthur Lovell.

from the mental side, the germ of tetanus can find its way into the physical system through an open sore, and thus set up disease from the bodily side, and without so much as asking the mind's permission. No, we cannot afford to ignore the purely physical laws of health any more than we can ignore those that are mental, even to the taking of special precautions during seasons of epidemics. The really important element to cultivate is a perennial confidence in our own power to resist: we are to suggest to ourselves that health is ours now, and will continue to be ours.

But when, it will be asked, are we to suggest this comfortable idea to ourselves? If the best health is unconscious of itself, like the digestion of the man who said he did not know he had got one, will not this introspection into physical conditions have a tendency to become morbid? This is a question with a good deal of point in it, and we cannot afford to shirk it. Of course, in the case of people who are frequently indisposed, there is bound to be a more than ordinary amount of attention given to ways and means of securing health, and such attention, though open to morbid possibilities, through fear and pessimistic leanings, is not necessarily injurious: indeed, to forego it would be morally culpable, whilst if pursued in a hopeful spirit, the effect cannot but be beneficial. It sometimes happens, however, that a hitherto healthy man finds himself suddenly attacked by a functional disorder of the heart. That in itself is a suggestive fact for believers in the ultra-wonderful power of mind; because it is an instance, duplicated every day, of

illness beginning with the body and not what is called the soul. He never feared anything, never even dreamed of heart trouble until one day in trying to catch a tram he over-ran himself. To his surprise he discovered he had had an enlarged heart for many weeks, and at once began a remedy with digitalis and other specifics. He was specially cautioned against anxiety, as this might act injuriously on the heart and retard a cure. In due time his heart was pronounced normal. Then began a certain cautiousness in running any distance; a carefulness in eating; scrupulous exactitude about exercise. Was this needless? Not at all. He had had a warning and he took it seriously. But he also took it hopefully. The danger is always in morbid introspection, and once a man is declared organically sound, he should breathe hope just as much as he breathes air.

The systematic use of will-power previously referred to now calls for remark. We mean that whenever you take exercise in whatever form you take it, accompany physical exertion with mental faith; believe that every step you take in your walk, every swing of the dumb-bell, every formal action of the body, is bringing health to you. To go through any system of exercise as a duty merely, and not as a pleasure, is futile; to do it grudgingly, because you have to do it, is the height of absurdity, for your mind is killing every chance of a reflex influence from the body. Remember Spencer's dictum about the unity of bodily and mental life, so that when you think of health, think health into every organ; and when you go through your

exercises, believe they are doing just what you want them to do. In this way you recognise the essential unity and *will yourself to be well*.

IV.

Learn to control the emotions: that is the next item in the curriculum of health. Of one of these—fear—we have already had something to say, but there are many others, chief among them being *anger*. Moralists never seem to have made their regulations sufficiently plain on this subject. Practical life teaches us the impossibility of escaping events which bring immediate anger in their train; and yet our teachers would have us free from any semblance of such an emotion. Christ forbids it in one place, but in another place He becomes angry Himself, so that it is difficult to obtain the desired consistency. Our best guide would seem to be the mental physiologist, who says nothing by way of the moral condemnation of anger, but much by way of exhibiting its effect on the body. Dr. W. B. Carpenter (quoting from Burdach's *Psychologie*) refers to a case where, after an operation, a mother who was suckling her child, became violently angry at something—so angry indeed, that she poisoned her milk, and the child, partaking of it from her breast, died.¹ *Violently angry!* The adverb is suggestive. Not the anger which is annoyance, but the anger that shakes us: that is the emotion to avoid. Prof. Elmer Gates is a practical psychologist who is worth listening to, and he says his "experiments have demonstrated that every

¹ *Mental Physiology*, p. 680.

emotion of a false and disagreeable nature produces a poison in the blood and all tissues."¹

Even Tyndall could feel the force of this argument. "Mind, like force, is known to us only through matter. Take, then, what hypothesis you will, consider matter as an instrument through which the insulated mind exercises its powers, or consider both as so inextricably mixed that they stand or fall together; from both points of view the care of the body is equally important. The morality of clean blood ought to be one of the best lessons taught us by our pastors and masters. The physical is the substratum of the spiritual, and this fact ought to give to the food we eat, and to the air we breathe, a transcendental significance. Boldly and truly writes Mr. Ruskin: 'Whenever you throw your window wide open in the morning, you let in Athena, as Wisdom and fresh air at the same instant; whenever you draw a pure, long, full breath of night heaven you take Athena into your heart, through your blood and with the blood into the thoughts of the brain.' No higher value than this could be assigned to atmospheric oxygen."² Life is a partnership between mind and body, and we have not yet been able to transcribe the deeds under which they agreed to do business together. But we have discovered that mind is the senior partner.

It has been proved, if such proof were necessary, that in some mysterious manner, pleasurable emotions have the power of building up physical

¹ *Mind and Brain*, p. 21.

² *Hours of Exercise in the Alps*, p. 301.

organisms and maintaining right relationships between mind and body; whilst unpleasant emotions retard health, sometimes ultimately destroying it altogether. The tonic of laughter, the cheer of good fellowship, the pleasure of a tour in a strange country, the contemplation of beautiful pictures—these are feelings which serve us as health givers. But grief, anguish, melancholy, envy, jealousy, hate and other emotions exert a depressing, in some cases an actually poisonous, influence on bodily organisms; and a good deal of the illness we meet with is due to bad feeling—in other words, an inability to regulate the emotions.¹ Of course, an excess of pleasure-emotion is frequently injurious, and occasionally fatal, but this only adds point to the moral which underlies these facts. Happiness consists largely in what is called mental poise; the state of mind in which there is an even balance between pain and pleasure. Perhaps we ought to call it a *power* of mind, for such is its efficiency that when grief and ruin come as devastating enemies, it evinces a marvellous faculty for recuperation; so that although the balance was temporarily much disturbed, and deep depression was heavy in the scales, the right relationship was restored by a new access of hope. Optimism is the natural outlook of man just as suffering is part and

¹ Prof. Liébeault says: "Without doubt it is the anxiety, the worry, the silent and continuous sorrow, the carking cares of life which, for the most part, are the causes of psychical affection. The weakening emotions are not only the cause of nervous disease, they are also the cause of somatic diseases with lesions. The human mind is, in this respect, a veritable Pandora's box from which spring all mental ills, and also, as counterparts of these, all physical disorders."

parcel of his earthly lot. Life is a continual oscillation between the extremes of feeling. For many of these oscillations we are ourselves responsible; the others lie at the door of Fate. The man who is knocked down and maimed for life by a careless chauffeur is permanently handicapped through no fault of his own. But in a large measure "we are masters of our fate and captains of the soul." Self-control is the first outcome of true self-knowledge. Once we realise the part played by feeling in regard to health—to mention only one sphere—we instinctively seek after the mind which, although it feels acutely, and knows the borders of despair, is resolute enough to believe itself a conqueror; a mind that is human, knowing the subtleties of envy, jealousy, and hate, and yet allows none of these things to poison the blood, to dim the eye, or warp the judgment.

Mental poise! Textbooks of educational psychology are all but silent on this practical issue. One searches in vain for a strenuous chapter wherein the professor will come down from his raised platform, and, talking as man to man, give us the benefit of his thought and research by telling us how in a turbulent world like this, one can conquer the anxieties and worries of everyday existence. Is it expecting too much of him? Perhaps it is. We must be content, therefore, to fight our battle alone. And we can do it if we *will*.

V.

The next point to be dealt with is, the claims that certain functional disorders can be cured by will-

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power. These are mainly nerve derangements, such as the various forms of neuralgia, irritability, hysteria, hypochondria, and insomnia: but palpitation of the heart, impaired digestion, and other troubles, not directly nervous, have succumbed to treatment. It is not affirmed that every man or woman who suffers from any of these complaints can be cured by suggestion acting through will; there are people in the world whose prejudices against new methods are so strong that no amount of evidence will convince them of the truth. Belief in the methods employed is necessary to success. And it is not affirmed that the use of thought-force by suggestion is to take the place of other arts of healing. "I wish to add to the wealth of therapy, not to undermine it," says Liébeault, who adds: "There is an art whereby the spirit is made to react on the body . . . without the intervention of any mesmeriser, without fetishism, incantation, cabalistic formula, or any verbal or other artifices, but solely by concentrating the attention upon the one thought of getting well . . . a simple negation of or disbelief in, disease is undoubtedly capable of effecting such complete changes in the whole human system as are in themselves sufficient to bring about great cures." An English medical writer of distinction, Dr. T. S. Clouston, is of opinion that "in certain disordered nervous conditions, especially, the accentuated suggestion and the rousing of action in other parts of the brain will dissipate disease. . . . An Italian doctor, Gerbi, stated that by using an insect squeezed between his fingers and then applied to aching teeth he had been able

to cure four hundred and one cases out of six hundred and twenty-nine. Long ago Sir Benjamin Brodie recorded a case of severe neuralgia which had prevented his patient from walking for years, and which he had failed to cure by ordinary medical means. The patient happened to have a spiritual instructor of strong character and great faith, who in the name of the Saviour, solemnly and earnestly told her that she should get up and walk, which she did at once.

“ Many cases of defective action of the muscles and what are called ‘ motor neuroses ’ have been apparently cured by strong mental influences. Epilepsy and palsies of many kinds have been thus removed. Sir Humphrey Davy tells us that he was taking the temperature of a man apparently suffering from paralysis, by putting a thermometer under his tongue, and the patient believing that this was an occult and effective mode of treatment, got up and walked and said he was cured when the thermometer was removed. All such cases, however, have been functional nervous disorders and not cases of real organic diseases. By the effect of mental attention certain diseases of impaired nutrition, from warts up to internal tumours, from scurvy to dropsy, have been cured by mental influences. This is perfectly explicable from what we know of the relation of the brain to the blood supply of the body. Through this ‘ vaso-motor ’ brain function it can be shut off or give an extra supply to almost any part of the body if the proper stimulus is applied, and thus cure diseases which are due to any particular part. Imagination,

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expectation, faith, hope, joy, fear, suggestion may all cure certain diseases.'¹

We will now quote some cures from Liébeault² and Lévy.³ Here are two of historic and literary interest :

(1) Suggestion is credited with having cured Pascal of a severe toothache. One day as that famous scholar was troubled with an excruciating toothache he determined to solve a problem, that of the cycloidal curve. When he had finished his work he found that his toothache had disappeared. During his mental occupation his attention was taken off the painful sensation, because it was concentrated upon another train of thought.

(2) It is well known that the philosopher Kant was troubled with palpitation of the heart and apt to become low-spirited in consequence. He triumphed over all symptoms of the disorder with which he was afflicted by turning his attention to his mental labours. He would quickly put himself in a sort of half-somnolent state, in which he was still able to concentrate his thoughts upon his work, but entirely lost the consciousness of his malady. This moral cure he also employed with success for cold in the head and cough. He became his own physician, and—what was certainly a dangerous example to set to imitators—made himself entirely independent of the resources of medical science.⁴

¹ *The Hygeine of the Mind.*

² Quoted in Ebbard's *Will-Power*, p. 98.

³ *L'Education Rationelle de la Volonté.*

⁴ Kant's remarkable letter to Hufeland, entitled "On the Power of the Mind to Master Disordered Feelings by Sheer Determination," is found entire in C. G. Leland's *Have you a Strong Will ?*

The following are from Lévy :

(1) During the morning I feel my right arm is extremely tired and feeble. It is exceedingly difficult for me to raise it; and when I move it I experience twitchings. I suggest to myself the disappearance of this weakness, at the same moment passing the other hand down the length of the arm several times. Then when I feel it growing a little stronger I practise moving it in every direction; at the same time telling myself that I must not have any more of the fatigue. Soon afterwards it entirely disappears.

(2) A species of neuralgia all over the face hindered me from speaking as I wish to do; the jaw seemed as if paralysed. I attributed it to the intense cold of the morning. It suddenly made its appearance during a visit I was making to a friend, and I felt perfectly sure that I made grimaces when speaking. I could only speak in breathless phrases. On retiring, the suffering became worse; I commenced to be restless; then it was that I thought of suggestion. A certain time afterwards I could report a considerable amelioration of the symptoms. After half an hour the pain recommenced; renewed auto-suggestion succeeded as at first. Then the pain returned, but in less degree this time; and after four or five auto-suggestions, I attained complete relief.

(3) Having often suffered from dim and easily fatigued eyesight, I have obtained immediate relief several times by suggestions more or less repeated. I have noticed that the change takes place of itself, but only after a certain time, when I

had reminded myself of actions which I have exercised on myself. I have noticed that the trouble with my eyes is much augmented by the fear I have experienced of its effects. It is by directing the suggestion above all on that one point that I seemed to have had the best results.

The list of complaints curable by mental methods, hypnotism barred, according to Dr. Hack Tuke, is as follows: Toothache, sciatica, painful joints, rheumatism, gout, pleurodynia, colic, epilepsy, whooping cough, contracted limbs, paralysis, headaches, neuralgias, constipation, asthma, warts, scurvy, dropsy, intermittent fever, alcoholism, and typhoid fever.

The evidence for curative auto-suggestion is unusually strong, and nervous sufferers especially can take courage in the hope of early release from their bondage. The array of medical authorities grows in impressiveness, and although it is really unnecessary to emphasise this fact, we deem it wise to do so because exception is taken to any form of medical advice that does not bear the professional stamp. The instinct is a good one, but it is carried too far.

VI.

“And how shall I begin to cure my sleeplessness by auto-suggestion?” we shall be asked. The first essential is to get the right point of view. This is that as body and mind are a unity, the laws of both should be scrupulously observed. You cannot use auto-suggestion for sleep and indulge in exciting games until a late hour. You *can* do so, of

course, but it would be useless to expect any benefit. To suggest sleep according to a prescribed formula after a lobster salad supper is ridiculous; that is to say, it is absurd to resort to a method of cure the possible effects of which are discounted in advance. The next essential is the prescribed formula. The basis of Lévy's principle is as follows: Sleep is preceded by a state of tranquillity or repose,¹ and the patient should therefore retire to a quiet bedroom where he is free from all disturbing noises and interruptions. He should close his eyes and mentally prepare himself for a real sleep, by regular breathing. So soon as he feels a degree of quietude, he should say aloud, but softly, "I sleep: I sleep;" repeating these words now and again until a state of drowsiness is induced. It is wrong to say "I shall sleep," because that implies a desire, and hence a possibility of non-fulfilment. Suggestion works by affirmation, not by promise. First attempts may not be rewarded with immediate success, but if the patient has confidence in the method of suggestion, a resolute will may be relied upon to do the rest.

Thus there are three elements to be observed in

¹ See Chap. IV, *L'Education de la Vo'onte*. See also "The Meditative Reflection," in Jules Payot's *L'Education de la Volonté*, p. 95. Dr. J. D. Quackenbos says. "The state of mental abstraction called reverie, immediately preceding natural sleep, has been found exceedingly appropriate for treatment by this kind of suggestion; and I advise my patients as they are about yielding to slumber, to say to themselves that they will no longer be slaves of the imperative conception, or of the evil habit, which is crippling their best expression. Lapse into sleep, with such a thought paramount, all but equivalents suggestion by another. Whilst waiting for sleep, then, it is possible so to influence the mind by repetition of an appropriate phrase as to convert the sense of the phrase into a dominate idea which influences function and conduct."—*Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p.82.

practice: first, mental quietude (Lévy calls it *recueillement*); second, emotional re-enforcement; and third, active re-enforcement. These re-enforcements simply mean that you are to use your *feeling* and *imagination* by enjoying the notion of sleep, and that you are to *act* as if you were asleep by closing your eyes and breathing slowly and regularly. Of course, in other cases of indisposition, other actions suitable to the end desired would have to be taken. Thus, in claustrophobia, where a man is afraid of confined spaces, as in travelling on a tube railway, he is to tell himself he does not feel the sense of mental suffocation, and proceed at once to take the lift, descend, and enter the train.

Prof. Ebbard has drawn up a long list of formulæ for all kinds of sufferers, but we cannot reproduce them here, partly because they are too long, partly because they are in some respects suitable only to a distinctly medical work.¹ But his plans are worth considering because they are founded on Lévy's *Volonté* and because they cover a large number of possibilities that arise in the course of experiments. These are bound to be useful, especially as any one functional disorder takes a variety of different forms.

VII.

However great the power of the will in developing and modifying the substance of brain and body, it cannot create new substance. This is the final point we have to consider on the question of health. We will first inquire into the power of development

¹ See *Will-Power*, pp. 133-232. A specimen is given in the first Appendix.

and modification, and afterwards examine the limitations of will.

One of the most remarkable evidences of development is seen in the study, after death, of a blind man's finger-tips. The concentration involved in reading books in Braille type, by which an oft repeated mental current is focused in the rounded end of the fingers employed, results in the formation in minute quantities of a kind of grey matter which has a strong affinity to the grey matter of the brain. It is interesting to observe that here a definite use of will, after a conscious and deliberate manner, is absent. The blind man, like any other man, had nerve sensations of touch in the finger-tips, but by developing them in reading raised letters, he accumulates extraordinary sensitiveness due to a multiplication of cells. Such a result was not to be unexpected when it is remembered that the whole power of concentration passes from the brain to the finger-tips.

But thought-force intelligently directed and controlled, can multiply the cells of the brain itself. This is a fact of great importance, as we shall see in a later chapter, where we deal with education. Prof. Elmer Gates conducted some experiments of which he gives the following account: "The first experiment in my investigations regarding the mind consisted in giving certain animals an extraordinary and excessive training in one mental faculty—*e.g.*, seeing or hearing—and in depriving other animals, identical in age and breed, of the opportunity of using that faculty. I then killed both classes of animals and examined their brains

to see if any structural difference had been caused by excessive mental activity, as compared with the deprivation or absence thereof. During five or six months, for five or six hours each day, I trained dogs in discriminating colours. The result was that upon examining the occipital areas of their brains I found a far greater number of brain cells than any animal of like breed ever possessed. These experiments serve to localise mental functions, and above all, to demonstrate the fact that more brains can be given to an animal, or a human being, in consequence of a better use of the mental faculties. The trained dogs were able to discriminate between seven shades of red and six or eight of green, besides manifesting in other ways more mental ability than any untrained dog."

He therefore argues that brain building of infants should begin a few weeks after birth. We decidedly disagree with him, but that is a discussion outside our present purpose. The really significant item is the manner in which concentration—which is will in action—can develop brain substance by multiplying its cells and thus increasing its power.

But after all, there is nothing new in this fact; the old saw that "practice makes perfect" has a thousand other illustrations to prove its truth, whether it be the training of a biceps, the keyboard skill of a pianist, or the mathematical power of a student. What is new, however, is the systematic use of will for the all-round education of youth.

Instances of modification are not so well known, but they are almost as plentiful and equally well

authenticated. Prof. William James believes that "Changes in the nutrition of the tissues may be produced by suggestion. . . . I may say that there seems no reasonable ground for doubting that in certain chosen subjects the suggestion of congestion, a burn, a blister, a raised papule, or a bleeding from the nose or skin, may produce the effect. Messrs. Beaunis, Berjon, Bernheim, Bourru, Burot, Charcot, Delboeuf, Dumont Pallier, Kraft-Ebing, Liébeault, Liégeois, Lipp, Malide, and others have recently vouched for one or other of these effects. Messrs. Delboeuf and Liégeois have annulled by suggestion the effects of a burn, and the other of a blister. Delboeuf was led to his experiments after seeing a burn on the skin produced by suggestion at the Salpêtrière by reasoning that if the idea of a pain could produce inflammation, it must be because pain was itself an inflammatory irritant, and that the abolition of it from a real burn ought, therefore, to entail the absence of inflammation. He applied the actual cautery (as well as vesicants) to symmetrical places on the skin, affirming that no pain should be felt on one of the sides. The result was a dry scorch on that side, with (as he assures me) no after mark, but on the other side a regular blister with suppuration and a subsequent scar."¹

This is testimony that can be relied upon, and we commend it especially to the sceptical. After such evidence, can we be surprised that real tumours have been dissipated by will-power working through suggestion? If thought-force is as

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. II, p. 612.

potent as we have seen it to be in the numerous cases quoted, why should the sufferer from disorders other than functional despair of being healed?¹ Where disease has not drained the nervous system and enfeebled the brain, so that powerful suggestions can, with a little practice, be brought to bear on the suffering organism, there ought to be ground for hope. The present writer has investigated cases where success has been achieved, and others which have been a dead failure, but he is obliged to believe a good percentage of the failures were due to the fact that will-power and suggestion were used half-heartedly and intermittently, with perhaps a spice of cynicism running through the whole of the experiments.

VIII.

The creation of new substance is a phase requiring some explanation. Strictly speaking, there never is anywhere and at any time a creation of new substance; but in some forms of life the loss of an organism is not a great deprivation, for there is an innate power of growing another to replace it. No such power belongs to the human organism. The loss of a lung is irreparable, and all the suggestion and will-power of the race could not provide another in its stead.² Again, if a Christian Scientist football player breaks his leg on the field, he finds

¹ "There is good evidence that nervous influences may not only cause functional derangement, but can cure structural disease of the liver."—Dr. Murchison, quoted in *Force of Mind*, p. 221.

² Will can only act according to intelligence, seeing it is part of intelligence itself. A child has will-power, but if it cannot grasp the idea of using it curatively, such power is valueless.

that although his will-power may be more than a match for a tumour, and can simply play shuttlecock with neuralgia, the broken bone is an insuperable difficulty; in fact, his religion allows him to send for the otherwise condemned medical man. Surgical cases are outside the "Science"—why we cannot say, except that any science other than surgery is both dumb and impotent. "High falutin" about suggestion and will is just as objectionable as it is about anything else. The people who talk of the conquest of death, physical immortality, and their ability to stultify poisons, are in an eminently safe position—for the present. They *will* die eventually, but when they are dead they are outside the scope of argument, and we shall be left with the grim consolation they were wrong. Of course we knew that before. As to stultifying poisons, we would undertake to kill any Christian Scientist now living with a dose of a little compound we know, but here again, the experiment is impossible, apart from the horror of murdering a fellow creature.

No, will-power has its limits, and it is both absurd and unscientific not to recognise them. In this chapter we have tried to steer between the Scylla of extravagant will worship and the Charybdis of pure scepticism, with what measure of success must be left to the reader's judgment. We are persuaded, however, that the claims set forth, and the evidence adduced in support of them, are of sufficient value to call for serious reflection.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WILL AND EDUCATION.

“ The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think than what to think. ”—BEATTIE.

I.

EDUCATION to-day is, in the main, carried on by men and women who have been carefully trained for their work, and who display considerable enthusiasm in the discharge of duties which constitute, more or less, a dreary routine. Perhaps we shall never attain the ideal state where, although education will adopt a *plan*, it will never be conducted according to a *system*. Theories of what subjects should be taught, and the methods adopted in teaching them, have been too abundant to make consistent progress possible; enthusiasm, so precious a virtue generally, has been a positive embarrassment in the world of education; for, even now, despite the serious attention given to the matter in conferences, in books, and in the press, we seem no nearer a solution than we were before. So devoted are the leaders of pedagogy to their movement, that the wealth of theory has rather hindered than helped the settlement of what is a most important issue.

It may not be proper for a layman to discourse at length on the evils of too many systems: even if it were, this is not the place. But we cannot resist the temptation to say that elementary education

to-day is suffering from two tyrannies: the curriculum has too many subjects, and it loses all sight of individuality.

II.

Everybody admits that certain subjects must be taught, and there is an approach to unanimity as to the manner in which such instruction should be administered. But instead of keeping to those subjects, say English, Arithmetic, Elementary Physiology, and Health, with some History and Science, there is a disposition everywhere to widen the list instead of deepening the knowledge of the things most essential. The penmanship and the grammar of some boys and girls who are turned out of the Council Schools as finished products is—well, call it extremely disappointing. We blame neither teachers nor scholars: we blame the system. A school is a sort of factory to turn out educated articles. The machinery is the same for a boy with a fine imagination as it is for one who will make a smart trader. No different method is pursued in treating two girls with diametrically opposite tendencies, and the most variant capabilities. Individuality is lost altogether.

Of course, there is a ready answer. It is this: the cost of education on the personal model would be too great. Undoubtedly it would on the lines at present followed. But reduce the number of subjects, and when you have arrived at a minimum, give that minimum two-thirds of the whole time; the remaining third to be devoted to the culture of the individual,

After all, education is, or should be, more concerned with mental powers than with systematised knowledge. The object of a school is to teach young learners the best methods of learning. Their real education will begin when school-days are over. What they want now is mental development—not feeding with facts. Parents are sometimes to blame for bolstering up the policy of a long list of subjects: they want to see their children little prodigies of learning: and in one case that came under our notice a father actually removed his boys from a school because so few subjects were taught, although they were taught with brilliant success. And the boys were so happy that they wanted to return before the holidays were over, a most damning fact in the father's opinion, for he believed boys ought to be a trifle miserable at school, with hard work and rigorous discipline!

III.

Granting a certain number of evils do exist, can the principle of suggestion contribute a real remedy? The question cannot be answered with as much confidence as could be desired, because the subject is almost virgin soil. It is, comparatively speaking, without a literature except on the strictly moral side: and this means that experiments have not been made on the scale required to establish true scientific results. But the emphasis which has been placed on mental processes by experiments in suggestion in other fields, would appear to confirm the wisdom of substituting *mental training* for *education*; the development of mind as contrasted

with the accumulation of facts. An illustration of what we mean may be obtained by reading the account of an experiment carried out by Dr. Sophie Bryant. Her object was to test intellectual character just as Dr. Galton had previously been testing physical character.

“I made my first attempt in the following manner. A number of children, all aged thirteen, were allowed to remain for about ten minutes in a room which they did not know, and were then required to write a description of it. I did not know the children personally at all, and I had no pre-conceived idea on the character-points which I expected to be revealed. I read the papers, noting on them what I found in them, and when I afterwards went to the teachers who knew the children, and gave the descriptions of character which I inferred, the agreement with their general impression was in all marked cases somewhat striking. The room described was, in this case, a school-room, having certain features in common with other schoolrooms, familiar to the children, but having certain features to itself, and a sufficient amount of ornament in pictures and otherwise to redeem it from being quite prosaic.”

The results were unusually interesting. Dr. Bryant found that some of the girls' impressions were numerous and faithful, but they showed little evidence of clear perceptions. Other girls had fewer impressions, but the perceptions were keener, and there had been some attempt at drawing inferences. The papers also showed marked divergencies in the degree of orderliness shown in arranging

impressions, as well as in the variety of colour interests displayed. Some girls showed a disposition to substitute feeling for thinking, and talked rapturously of a "lovely" room, and a "beautiful" this, that, and the other. Of this feature Dr. Bryant says, "I consider that an evident mark of over-emotionalism, and should, in the educational interest, recommend a wholesome diet of ideas accordingly."¹

Now here we have three points which demand attention: *mind* is the central fact: *individuality* is discovered by experiment; and the *remedy* is given in accordance with the result. Yes, "a diet of ideas" for the super-emotional; hard science for the over-imaginative; and poetry for the little genius in arithmetic: this is one method of abolishing the system and training the powers for their fullest use in after life.

IV.

Suggestion is already operative in some schools. The prominence given to biography is one of the forms it takes. The teacher will tell a story from Greek history, and delicately point the moral; or select the life of a modern man, and then suggest the good points worthy of imitation. Kingsley's *Heroes* may be of more value to a boy or girl than months of training in subjects where the interest is slow to develop, or where there is a positive aversion to them. The distinction between moral and mental education in cases of this kind is

¹ *Education*, Nov., 1890.

rather fine. The moral lesson begets a reflex influence which is seen in a more diligent application to studies; the purely mental lesson which requires close attention to be mastered is never devoid of moral elements; and yet, if we were called upon to choose, we should prefer an overplus of the moral to an overplus of the mental. Of course, there ought to be no excess anywhere. But it is pleasing to observe the use to which story telling is put in some of the more up-to-date schools, and to note the training of teachers for this particular duty. It is a step in the right direction, because it is hetero-suggestion.

Schoolmasters soon discover whether a boy works better by encouragement than by severe criticism. The boy with a bulldog disposition is fond of an appeal to his fighting instincts when dealing with a difficult subject; the other kind of boy is sensitive and diffident, and although he may have more brains than the fighter, he does his best only when someone is by his side to speak cheering words. Happily the tendency towards metallic discipline—the gospel of the cane—is dying out. The day when a savage tutor could thrash his class from the first boy to the last for not being quick enough at mental arithmetic, is gone for ever. Progress by encouragement seems to be the prevalent policy, and, of course, it is nothing more nor less than hetero-suggestion. When a boy despairs, and says “I can’t,” the teacher suggests he can; when the boy has done only moderately well, the teacher puts the best construction on it, and affirms his conviction that a better result will be forthcoming at

the next attempt. We have known cases where quite young children have been depressed because others in the class have outshone them in arithmetic; but, instead of pointedly accentuating this difference, the teacher, with more than ordinary prescience, persisted in giving higher marks than could be justified by facts. But the policy was successful. The backward little pupil felt sure she was doing better, and thus encouraged, worked all the harder. What is this but suggestion?

Now older pupils are not usually treated in this manner. It is thought they are old enough to dispense with the encouragement given to pupils of more tender years. This is quite a mistake, except in certain cases where the difficulty of a study is itself a direct incentive to effort. Most students do their best in the atmosphere of hope, and he is a wise teacher who trains them by kindly confidence. Besides, as the personality unfolds, some attention should be given to the practice of auto-suggestion, not for bright youths who literally march through their studies, after the manner of a military conquest, but for those whose constant failures bring about depression of mind, and produce a perennial state of sensitiveness and fear.

V.

Of actual experiments in educational suggestion, we have few records. Dr. Osgood Mason records one which is too interesting to be omitted. "A girl, fifteen years of age, a pupil in one of the Grammar Schools of New York, was intelligent in many ways; a good reader of such books as interested

her—history, biography, and the better class of novels—but for the routine of school studies she had no aptitude; and she was constantly being left back in her class. She could not concentrate her mind upon details which did not interest her. If she succeeded in learning a lesson, she did not remember it, and if she remembered it until she arrived at the class-room, when she arose to recite, it was suddenly gone; her mind became a perfect blank; she had not a word to say, and she was obliged to sit down in disgrace. She could write a good composition, but could never stand up and repeat it before the class. Teachers had been engaged to give her special lessons, so as to enable her to pass the preliminary examination, which would allow her to go up for entrance to the Normal College. After months of effort, they reported to the mother that it was entirely useless to go on; it was impossible for her to pass the preliminary examination, and they did not think it right to take her money with any such expectation. She was then brought to me, to inquire if anything could be done to help her. I prescribed hypnotic suggestion. It was then March 30th—the first examination was in May. I commenced treatment at once. The patient went into a quiet subjective condition, with closed eyes, but did not lose consciousness. I suggested she would be able to concentrate her mind on her studies; that her memory would be improved; and that she would lose her excessive self-consciousness and timidity, and in their place she would feel confidence in herself, and be able to stand up before the class and

recite. She was kept in the hypnotic condition one half-hour at each treatment, and the same, or similar suggestions, were quietly but very positively made and repeated at intervals during the time. She at once reported improvement in her ability both to study and recite. She had six treatments, and on May 25th she reported that, greatly to the surprise of her teachers, she had passed the preliminary examination with a percentage of 79, which entitled her to go up for the college examination. . . . She ultimately passed through her course at the Normal College with a percentage of 90."¹

Now the argument we have previously put forward holds good in this case as in others. If such results are obtainable from hypnotic suggestion, it follows that similar results can be obtained by auto-suggestion, if the student can be persuaded to exercise it. Just as a weak memory can be changed into a strong one, other faculties can be increased in efficiency by the same means. The backward girl treated by Dr. Mason was essentially intelligent: the real mischief was partly physical, partly moral; and as soon as they were put right, the mental element was free to assert itself.

VI.

But hetero-suggestion on children performed during hypnotic or natural sleep, is a practice that needs safeguarding, not because of any intrinsic dangers, but because of the danger of abuse. Dr.

¹ *Hypnotism and Suggestion*, p. 149.

Mason says, "Mothers could do much for their children by cultivating this faculty, and even in the simple form of suggestion in natural sleep children have been cured of bad habits as well as physical weaknesses. The firm, distinct suggestion whispered into the ear of the child, over and over, during its sleep, has strong influence, and is a means of teaching that no sensible person should ignore."

So long as the mother is left to use suggestion in this way, there may be no harm in it, but we confess we do not care to think of the possibilities opened up to others of instilling mischief, and perhaps worse, into the subconsciousness of a sleeping child. For incorrigible children, the practice may be useful: for others, too, there may be occasional advantages, but it is one of those matters which call for scrupulous care in administration.

Education as a science is still in the state of becoming, yet it shows some welcome signs of applying the forces of suggestion. The future will have to determine how far these may be pressed into the service of teaching, but we have seen that mental powers can profitably receive more attention than they have done; that backward pupils can be treated with success; that morals can be improved; that physical health can be restored;¹ and that suggestion in the form of encouragement is one of the most helpful features in advancement. But

¹ Dr. Mason quotes Dr. Berillon as saying that he had treated successfully 250 children for nervous insomnia, night-terror, somnambulism, kleptomania, stammering, inveterate idleness, uncleanness, cowardice, etc.

whatever the experiments of the future may decide, one step the educationist of to-day can safely take at once: that is to adopt a form of teaching which will bring out the *soul*. Thus M. Lavisse, addressing a primary school, exclaimed: "Ah, if I could call forth in a simple child a poetic sentiment—how great a thing!"¹

¹ *The Spiritualisation of Education*, by Lilian Whiting (article in *The Arena*).

CHAPTER VII.

WILL-POWER AND MEMORY TRAINING.

“Memory always obeys the command of the heart.”
—RIVAROL.

I.

MEMORY is the one faculty which, more than judgment, or any other manifestation of a trained intellect, readily lends itself to dramatic display. The recitation, without pause or mistake, of a lengthy narrative like Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, or the delivery of 100,000 lines of Eastern wisdom by Hindu priests, are feats which give memory a position of perhaps exaggerated importance; indeed, its marvels are considered good enough for a turn on the music-hall stage. But there is a side other than the showy exhibition of parrot-learned facts. The great utility of a good memory is so manifest that vast ability loses most of its power where recollection is weak. Without memory *per se*, there can indeed be no rational life at all; the failure to connect the past experience with the present could not but result in the destruction of reason.¹ As a rule, leaders of thought have

¹ “Without memory there could be no development or mental education. . . . It supplies us largely with the material for thought and reflection. When Faraday's memory failed him he was unable to make any more discoveries.”—Gore: *Art of Discovery*, p. 63.

been men of tenacious memory: Scaliger in past times, and Robertson Smith in later days, were veritable encyclopædias of knowledge—whilst men of action have displayed similar tenacity, although in a totally different sphere. The problem of memory training is to enable us to remember what we wish to remember, and to forget the rest. In actual life we often “forget the rest” but fail to remember the things important and valuable. And yet it is as wise to learn how to lose sight of life’s trivialities as it is to retain its significant lessons. Memory has a peculiar power of testing character. The people who crowd their talk with verbatim reports of every conversation they have held during the past week, write themselves down as inveterate gossips—if not social bores. They can remember what Mrs. Evermore said to somebody else on every one of the fifty occasions Mrs. Evermore was in their society, and yet Mrs. Evermore never talks about anything but racing and domestic servants. On the other hand, memory persistence sometimes brings the murderer to justice, and the man who sends a remittance to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as an atonement for some unexpiated sin, is another instance of the memory as a moral agent. Even with the best of people, unpleasant memories recur, but, fortunately, when the mind becomes engrossed in work, and life is armed with a purpose, the trivialities seem to take their own perspective, and sink into the limbo of the almost forgotten.

The books which profess to reveal the secret of “how to remember everything” are condemned by

their very purpose. To recollect what happened at 4 p.m. this day ten years ago—say the disappearance of the family cat—is not memory properly understood; it is unregenerate diary-ism in its worst form; where, instead of entries in a book, we have a gramophone for a brain, and putting the memory record on the machine, we get an account as perfect in its gossip as it could be, and just as wearisome.

II.

A bad memory is really a bad mental habit, and since all bad habits are difficult to get rid of, it follows that a bad memory can only be cured by exercises which, in their severity, atone for the wrong methods of mental working that have had their inevitable result in forgetfulness. Of course the faculty of remembering is not so good in some people as in others, but a man who is careless with a poor endowment soon realises that forgetting is a rather expensive amusement. So he repairs to a memory doctor, and finds, to his surprise, that instead of having to learn some cabalistic formulæ as a means of reminding him of the appointment to lunch with Jenkins to-morrow, and to see a shipping firm at three about an important cargo, he has to begin afresh, and learn how in a natural sense all knowledge may be unified, and in an artificial sense how out-of-the-way items may be codified for handy reference. The plain truth dawns upon him that a good memory depends on the attention he gives to the things he would

remember, and the care with which he links one fact with another. Here is an illustration. You are an Englishman, and pride yourself on the possession of two arts: speaking your native language grammatically, and acting in accordance with the rules of etiquette. Do you think about grammar when you are speaking, and is your mind consciously full of social regulations when you join your friends at dinner? We should say no. Correct English and good behaviour were once subjects of instruction, but that stage has long since been left behind, and both items have passed into the structure of your character; they are unconscious possessions.¹ All habits are memory instincts, so that where memory itself is bad, there is no remedy except going back to the old methods of impression by attention and association. We have read a number of books on memory and its cultivation, and examined various systems in detail,² but the one conclusion strongly borne in upon us is that no man can develop memory power unless he is deeply interested in what he wishes to remember, and uses his will effectively. Fine phrases about the psychology of attention, the reproductive faculty, visualising, and all else, are not of much use to the practical man. We propose, therefore, to outline a few exercises which embody the simplest methods of training: they will be based on

¹ "The more sure and perfect memory becomes, the more unconscious it becomes; and when an idea or mental state has been completely organised, it is revived without consciousness, and takes its part automatically in our mental operations, just as habitual movement does in our body."—Maudsley: *Body and Mind*, p. 25.

² The Pelman Foster system is the most truly psychological.

(a) pure will-power and (b) will-power through auto-suggestion.

A word or two first, as to these bases. When you find a man with a bad memory, you find a man with bad mental habits. One of them is a distrust of his memory. He openly accuses it of being "treacherous." He tells himself it is. He repeats it from time to time, until at last he has auto-suggested a respectable member of his intellectual faculties into gross unfaithfulness. To recover its character means going over the ground again, *affirming* that the slandered faculty is really capable of first-class work. We may not think it, but our mental gifts are like certain persons we know—inordinately sensitive: say an unkind thing about them and they tend to shrivel up at once; they act according to our estimate of them. Encourage them by confidence, and they will do their best to help us.

But at the beginning it is wise to try to remember by the exercise of pure will-power. Most of us are engaged in some kind of business, and we will, therefore, take a business man as our type. His bad memory shows itself in forgetting appointments, neglecting to transfer orders from his pocket-book to the order department, and other minutiae of a similar kind. Now it is not serious that he should be unable to remember the name of a new clerk within three months; the incapacity is more of a nuisance than a positive loss; but this forgetfulness to transfer orders and to keep important appointments is a grave matter indeed, if he wishes to keep abreast of his competitors. The "Cure"

will one day come unmasked. It assumes the form of a letter from a customer saying that as an order has not been filled for eight days, it has therefore been decided to send all future business elsewhere. Then the forgetful merchant has a shock, and as he curses his memory, says, "I really shall have to be more careful." Now that is the kind of shock wanted by all forgetful people. The initial lesson should be given by Sandow, who would take the culprit by the collar and give him a good shaking, saying, "Your memory is all right if you will only treat it properly. How can you hope to remember when you make no proper effort to do so? What is the good of making a note of an order in your pocket-book, if you have no systematic plan of passing it on to the right quarter? Wake up!" We would assure the reader that in a great many cases, flabbiness of will is at the bottom of all the mischief. Only a shock of some kind will bring men to themselves. Once that is accomplished, it is possible to pursue a mechanical plan of improvement, because there will be sufficient force to carry it through. The man is in earnest, and will play at memory training no longer; he wants the real thing. This means he has put forth his WILL and waits for the guidance of the instructor.

III.

(1) Give your complete attention to the work in hand. Interruptions will come—somebody wants to see you to-morrow at three; your opinion is asked about a special reduction in the price of goods; your signature is wanted for an agreement. But

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give complete attention to each interruption : there is nothing else you can do if you wish to grasp the details of your business. To sign an agreement after merely glancing at it, and with your mind still fixed on the original subject you were dealing with, is to invite disaster. Six hours a day of complete attention will use all the will-power you have.

(2) Associate all details, as much as possible, together, so that, to use a very common phrase, "One thing will remind you of another." Take the word "prices." Late in the evening you come across it in the paper, and it reminds you that whilst holding on to a strap in the tube car, you promised to send Jones, who was swaying about on another strap, your price for a side of the best Wiltshire. Of course you could not make a note in your book, but the association of the words "prices—Jones—Wiltshire" proved strong enough to recall the promise directly the first word appeared after an interval of a few hours; so make a note of it at once. Students who have to absorb information in the mass for examination purposes could not equal the task without using the associational method. Thus, "a student of English history can make the date 1666 bring up a large number of facts. The great fire which destroyed the larger part of London occurred in this year. The fire was the cause of the formation of the first fire insurance company in London. In that year tea was first brought from China to England. The year 1666 saw the following famous persons living—we notice that six of them are named John--

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John Milton, John Bunyan, John Dryden, John Locke, John Evelyn, John Churchill, Samuel Butler, Samuel Pepys, Samuel Richardson, Sir Thomas Browne, Thomas Hobbes, Sir Isaac Newton, Robert Herrick, Richard Baxter, Jeremy Taylor, William Wycherly, William Temple, William Penn, Daniel Defoe, Izaak Walton, and Robert Boyle, the father of chemistry."¹

(3) But interest is the chief factor. If you are in business, and really like it, you will not easily forget its duties, responsibilities, the letters you have written, the replies you expect, and the entire programme you have drawn up. Similarly a student who is keen on languages will simply rush through the Greek verbs in μ or the highly inflected rules of German grammar: he is even interested in that marvel of dullness called Grimm's Law. But as likely as not, mathematics are hateful to him. He complains of a bad memory, and although the axioms and postulates of Euclid present no difficulty, the power of remembering what certain propositions prove is deficient—or he thinks it is. The real truth will be found either in the absence of interest or in an active dislike of the subject—perhaps both. To find oneself placed in life where there is nothing to appeal to our natural taste, and everything to offend it, is to be in an unenviable position. The round man in the square hole will always be handicapped. But still we ought not to coddle ourselves. If interest is not instinctive, develop it. Let us use our will-power and be masters, not servants.

¹ Halleck : *Psychology and Psychic Culture*, p. 137.

IV.

So much for broad principles. In reference to detailed practices—lessons, if you like—your attention is called to the following.

(a) In passing down the street, select a certain shop window, and glancing at it as you pass, try to recall as many as you can of the things it contained. The purpose of this habit is to develop unconscious observation, which is nothing more than unconscious memory. The venue can be changed to the articles in a room, or in the office of a business friend.

(b) As a busy man, you need a diary of the day's doings. See that you follow it out conscientiously. It is no confession of weakness to keep a pocket-diary any more than it is to keep an office ledger. You cannot remember all the buyings and sellings and payments; and you cannot be expected to carry in your mind the dates and times of every engagement. But keep them with scruple as to time. An orderly mind means an orderly habit, and both are obtained by a disciplined will. Psychology demonstrates the connection between repeated actions and the nerve centres that control them; therefore study your diary for the day every morning. *Will* to remember, and to do.

(c) Mind wandering is really a virtue within certain limits, for concentration does not mean a fixed mental stare, but a moving of the mind's eyes to and fro over the area of a prescribed subject. Concentration on a rider in Euclid requires that the mind should consider half a dozen possible proofs before the right one is discovered, just as a

chess player must consider a good many possible moves before he is convinced that a particular one is the best. And yet in both cases the mind has been severely concentrated. Now one method of memory training is to control mental operations in this way by the power of the will, because when attention is thus strongly focused on a subject, we can remember its facts all the more easily. Mind wandering of the common type is seen in a man who sits down to read a novel, and whilst he is "reading" he thinks for some time of a football match; the need of a new pair of dancing-pumps; the landlady's last attempt at Yorkshire pudding; a lost bet; and other matters suggested by the words in the book. This is intellectual anarchy. Halleck suggests a drastic cure. "A sure cure for mind wandering is to make an abstract from memory of sermons, speeches, or books. If one is reading a work on history, let him, after finishing a page, close the book and repeat to himself the substance of that page. If he cannot do so with one reading, let him re-read until he can. It does not show good generalship to march into a hostile country leaving forts and armies unconquered in the rear. After finishing a chapter, let him repeat to himself, or to some friend, the substance of that chapter. At the end of the book, let him repeat the main facts in the entire work. The mind may wander at first, and scarcely anything may be retained from one reading; but as soon as the mind feels that it will be surely called upon to reproduce what has been read, its energy will be doubled. It will soon cease the lazy habit of merely allowing

impressions to come in and meet it; it will reach out to meet the impressions."¹

V.

How is suggestion used in memory culture? In the same way as it is used in any other sphere. Choosing the moments before sleep as best for experiment, determine to rise one hour before the accustomed time. The subconscious memory will wake you at the time appointed; perhaps not infallibly, and with the utmost regularity, but if you select seven consecutive mornings, varying the time if so disposed, you will have sufficient evidence of our statement to convince you of its truth. There should indeed be no difficulty on the face of it, for men who have never heard of auto-suggestion practise it continually.² Besides, suggestion in the state of hypnotism has accomplished wonders in the matter of time memory. Dr. Schofield refers to a remarkable experiment on a young lady, carried out by three medical men, one of them, Dr. Milne Bramwell, perhaps the best authority in England to-day. She was hypnotised in the presence of three medical men, and four suggestions were made that the patient should, after the expiration of the number of minutes they named, make a cross on a piece of paper. These numbers were 21,400, 21,420, 21,428, 21,434

¹ Halleck : *Psychology and Psychic Culture*, p. 148.

² "You have practised auto-suggestion unawares all your life. When you said, for instance, upon going to bed, 'I must get up at six o'clock to-morrow morning,' and so charged your mind with the thought that you did wake up, you practised auto-suggestion in a familiar way."—Quigley : *Success is for You*, p. 31.

minutes. On the right day, Thursday, March 26, the lady was hypnotised, and made the four crosses spontaneously without suggestion; two of them at the exact minute, one a minute, and the other two minutes too soon."¹

Now there is no reason why auto-suggestion enforced by will, should not achieve modified results of the same type. In the previous pages of this book, we have seen the effect of thought-force in various spheres of operation, and the presumption is that a determination to wake up at a specified hour, or even to perform a certain action at a stated time during the next day, will be met with success.

But why restrict suggestion to the uses just described? Is there any reason why it should not be pressed into other services on behalf of memory? Charles Godfrey Leland is so convinced of the power of the subconscious mind that he says: "Having the task selected, first give energetic forethought or a considerate determination to master it. This should precede all attempts to learn, by everybody, young or old. And when the lesson is mastered, let it be repeated with earnestness and serious attention before going to sleep, with the *will* that it shall be remembered on the morrow. And it will be found that this process not only secures the memory desired, but also greatly facilitates the whole course and process. . . . No one who has made even a very slight trial of the process of impressing on the mind before sleep something which must be remembered, can fail to be convinced ere long of the truth that there is in it a

¹ *Force of Mind*, p. 206.

marvellous power which will with easy and continued practice enable him to recall whatever he pleases. It follows, as a matter of course, that this would be of incredible value in education."¹

Undoubtedly it would. But it will be a long time before educational leaders or their pupils will have confidence enough in such a plan to import it into their methods. Still, the adult can please himself, and the anxiety of a student to amass the necessary knowledge to pass his examinations ought to induce a readiness to memorise facts on any system, especially one with large promises that are based on good psychology. At any rate, the affirmation "I can remember" will accomplish infinitely more than the memory destroying "I can't." Moreover there is every reason to believe that persistent auto-suggestion is the true method of brain building.

¹ *Have you a Strong Will ?* pp. 145-9.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILL-POWER AND THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION.

“When I write, the best things come to me in such a way that I cannot say whence they do come.”—*Reflections of Lichtenberg.*

I.

THE psychology of authorship presents some features of great interest to the student of mental methods—indeed, any branch of fine art, where the creative principle is at work, offers an inviting field for investigation. Dr. Hugo Erichsen has gathered together a vast number of details respecting the methods of authors,¹ and as they seem to show a dim consciousness of some form of suggestion, we will narrate a few of them, and afterwards provide an analysis.

(1) Of Kant, it is remarked, he rose at five and drew up a plan for the day. With the contents of this plan we need not trouble ourselves: what is of importance is the fact that he had a time set apart, as becomes a philosopher, for thinking, pure and simple; and whilst thus engaged, he always placed himself so that his eyes might fall on a certain old

¹ *Methods of Authors* (U.S.A., 1894). We are also indebted to some extent to the always interesting *Literary Characteristics of Men of Genius*, by Isaac Disraeli.

tower. This old tower became so necessary to his thoughts that when some poplar trees grew up and hid it from his sight, he found himself unable to think at all; until, at his earnest request, the trees were cropped, and the old tower was brought into sight again.

(2) Of Charles Dickens we are told that "some quaint little bronze figures on his desk were as much needed for the easy flow of his writing as blue ink or quill pens." This is decidedly curious when compared with the methods of Henrik Ibsen, who employed a number of similar objects on his study table, and who, when asked by Mrs. Alec Tweedie how he used them, replied, "That is my secret."

(3) Jean Paul Richter found the early morning in the open air the best of all times for getting ideas. Such compositions as his *Dreams of a Madman* he would set about by first seating himself at the harpsichord and "fantasying" for a while on it, till the ideas or "imaginings" came—which presently they did with a rush. "Ouida" also used the early morning, but before she commenced in earnest, would work herself up into a sort of literary trance.

(4) Zola, when a young man, was obliged to burn the midnight oil, and some of his best compositions were written by the aid of artificial light. So habituated did he become to work with blinds down and lights on, that when he became famous, and comparatively wealthy, he still kept up the old habit, and visitors might have found him in a closely-shuttered and brilliantly-lighted room when the sun was high in the heavens.

(5) Maurice Jokai, the Hungarian novelist, could not write well unless he used a certain kind of violet ink. When he ran short of a supply, he became quite perplexed; indeed, he had to stop work, for he could originate no thoughts worthy of the name. Jules Claretie, when work is easy, sings to himself, or rather hums, various tunes, without being conscious of the fact; when work is difficult, a dead silence reigns in the study. Sheridan composed at night with a profusion of lights around him, and a bottle of wine by his side. He used to say, "If a thought is slow to come, a glass of good wine encourages it; and when it does come, a glass of good wine rewards it." When Burns wished to test his own work, just committed to paper, he would swing at intervals on the hind leg of his elbow chair "by way," he says, "of calling forth my own critical strictures as my pen goes." Douglas Jerrold worked at a desk without a speck on it, using an inkstand in a marble shell clear of all litter, his little dog at his feet; and Dr. Johnson composed his Dictionary with the help of a purring cat on the table; and orange peel and tea were also necessary.

(6) Oliver Wendell Holmes always felt it necessary to have a pen in hand when composing: it seemed a kind of conductor, without which his thoughts would not flow continuously in proper order. Thomas Hardy, as a preliminary to serious work, removes his boots or slippers. Victorien Sardou always wrote a play twice: once on little scraps of paper, then on foolscap. He never deviated from this method.

II.

These interesting biographical touches indicate that all creative artists are not only subject to *moods*—that is a fact well known to everybody—but they are dependent upon trivialities of body, position, place, or surroundings, for the production and sustenance of such moods. Jokai required a certain kind of ink; Sardou is not particular about the ink, but his paper must be of a certain size for the first draft, and foolscap for the second. Zola liked artificial light even in the daytime; Rousseau could only compose in the forest; Charles Dickens and Ibsen were satisfied only when they had their table images; Thomas Hardy's chief concern is to adopt the Mohammedan practice of removing his foot-gear. Now a careful reflection on these idiosyncrasies would seem to show a half-realised consciousness of the power of suggestion: the colour of an ink, the size of a piece of paper, the sight of a little image, or the noise of a purring cat, became synonymous with the notion of flowing ideas; the presence of these objects had been marked by that fact on previous occasions, hence they became necessary accompaniments, if not originators, of the creative mood. It would not be wrong to affirm that this reliance on apparently trivial items imparted to them a certain hypnotic power: for do we not read that the failure of Jokai's ink supply resulted in the stoppage of his thoughts?

True, there have been authors—and there always will be—who were comparatively free from a reliance on trivialities when coveting the creative mood. Disraeli, in his chapter on "The Medita-

tions of Genius," has unearthed a large number of instances showing how certain writers obtained their own inspiration by reading the authors of the past. "It is a remarkable circumstance in the studies of men of genius, that previous to composition they have often awakened their imagination by the imagination of their favourite masters. By touching a magnet they become a magnet. A circumstance has been recorded of Gray, by Mr. Mathias, 'as worthy of all acceptation among the higher votaries of the divine art, when they are assured that Mr. Gray never sat down to compose any poetry without previously, and for a considerable time, reading the works of Spenser.' But the circumstance was not unusual with Malherbe, Corneille, and Racine; and the most fervid verses of Homer, and the most tender of Euripides, were often repeated by Milton. Even antiquity exhibits the same exciting intercourse of the mind of genius. Cicero informs us how his eloquence caught inspiration from a constant study of the Latin and Grecian poetry; and it has been recorded of Pompey, who was great even in his youth, that he never undertook any considerable enterprise without animating his genius by having read to him the character of Achilles in the first *Iliad*; although he acknowledges that the enthusiasm he caught came rather from the poet than the hero."

He goes on to state that music was the source of inspiration in some cases. Alfieri said almost all his tragedies were sketched in his mind either in the act of hearing music, or a few hours after. Milton and Warburton relied upon the organ to produce

the desired mood for compositions; Lord Bacon liked music to be played in the room adjoining his study, and Lord Morley has made a similar confession.

But the most significant fact, from the standpoint of this book, is the number of men who either sought the night or darkness as a means of inducing the mood in which the creative principle is usually active. Their purpose was, no doubt, to secure an absence of all distracting sights and sounds. Demosthenes had a subterranean place of study where he often continued for two or three months together. Malebranche, Hobbes, and Corneille, darkened their apartments when they wrote, in order to concentrate their thoughts, as Milton says of the mind, "in the spacious circuits of her musing." Wolf, the German metaphysician, relates of himself that he had by the most persevering habit, and in bed and amidst darkness, resolved his Algebraic problems and geometrically composed all his methods merely by the aid of his imagination and memory; and when in the daytime he verified the one and other of these operations, he had always found them true. Professor Dugald Stewart said there were probably few mathematicians who had not dreamed of an interesting problem, and Disraeli adds, with some acuteness, that "in these vivid scenes we are often so completely converted into spectators that a great poetical contemporary of our country thinks that even his dreams should not pass away unnoticed, and keeps what he calls a *register of nocturnals*."¹ The effect of darkness

¹ *Literary Character of Men of Genius*, p. 127.

upon thought is a subject worthy of careful investigation. There are men who claim that a darkened room intensifies the power of thinking, not merely by abstracting the attention from outward things, but because darkness itself has a positive effect on thought-substance, whatever that may be. Lord Chesterfield advised tuition in a dark apartment as a means of developing greater power of concentration and memory. That would seem to be a purely educational device, but, when we can join our own experiments of the contrasted effect of light and darkness, on mental acuteness, to other phenomena—such as children's instinctive fear of the night, and the inability of some genuine mediums to perform superphysical feats unless the lights are out—we are justified in saying there is sufficient material for a profitable inquiry by men of professional qualifications.

To return. Men of genius have sought their inspiration in solitude, silence, and darkness. Even in the light, their mental detachment from the things of sense has been so pronounced that without coming under the condemnation of Dr. Crichton Browne (in his *Dreamy Mental States*) as men of unsound mind, they were lost to time and space: like Isaac Newton, who could pass a whole day in deep abstraction entirely inattentive to objects close at hand. And in some cases they deliberately worked in rooms where nothing could catch the eye and direct the attention; a desk, a chair, and writing-paper constituted the sole furniture of Buffon's study. The only conclusion to be drawn is that all these uses of music and the arrangement of

external surroundings were found by experience to increase the power of imagination; and, looked at impartially, the whole of the facts point to an unconscious effort to reach the wealth of the subconscious mind.

III.

But we have more definite evidence than any yet produced that writers and artists have followed the law of suggestion, perhaps unconsciously, in the production of their best work. Says Dr. Quackenbos, "By auto-suggestion before sleep, Robert Louis Stevenson obtained material through immediate dream representation, for his most impressive romances; Kipling beheld the realistic pictures of his narratives; and Wagner heard sounding in the visions of his reverie messages addressed to his spiritual hearing, that became his musical motives."¹ We are afraid that none of the three could be claimed as a definite believer in the method of artistic creation by auto-suggestion, but that would neither invalidate the method nor disprove its truth. Thackeray confessed that the title for his novel, *Vanity Fair*, came to him in the middle of the night, and that he jumped out of bed and ran three times round the room, shouting the words. The presumption is that in the moments before sleep he was trying to find a title, and, not succeeding, "dropped off," still continuing the search. At midnight he awoke with the very title he wanted, and although on this occasion he did not say, "That is a stroke of genius," as he did on another occasion, he was so far

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p. 95.

pleased with himself as to run round the room three times with joy. In the world of art, similar results are claimed. Leland is of opinion that if an artist, say a painter, will take forethought for a certain picture—and by forethought he means a projection of will into the coming work—“whether the subject be determined or not, bringing himself to that state of easy assured confidence as a matter of course, that he will *retain* the subject, he will, if not at the first attempt, almost certainly at last, find himself possessed of it.” The author of the celebrated ballads is not, he declares, speaking without authority, for he adds: “I am indebted to the distinguished artist Herkomer for very valuable testimony as regards experience in, and confirmation of, what I have here asserted. . . . He explained to me, in 1878, that when he would execute a work of art, he just determined it with care or forethought in his mind and gave it a rest, as by sleep, during which time it unconsciously fructified or germinated, even as a seed when planted in the ground at last grows upward into the light and air. Now that the entire work should not be too much finished, or quite completed, and to leave room for after-thoughts or possible improvements, he was wont, as he said, to give the Will some lee-way or freedom; which is the same thing as if, before going to sleep, we *will* or determine that on the day following our imagination, or creative force, or inventive genius, shall be continually active—which will come to pass after some small practice and a few repetitions, as all may find for themselves.”¹

¹ *Have you a Strong Will?* pp. 92, 284.

Such an effect in the increased value of an art creation is said to be produced by auto-suggestion. Quackenbos makes an even stronger claim for hypnotic suggestion: "One of his patients, when unable to catch the expression of a face, was in the habit of coming to his office for psychic aid. When she was relaxed in sleep, he suggested to her the qualities of the great portrait-painters—Velasquez (marvellous realistic spirit and fidelity), Sir Joshua Reynolds (powerful light and shade effects), Titian (colour in its perfection), Whistler (subtle colour harmony—atmosphere), and especially Sargent (strong character expression). He pointed out to her that she could achieve like results by like methods, and the results were surprising, for some time within an hour after treatment she would put upon the canvas the exact expression that had vaguely haunted yet baffled her for days. This lady recently made a sensation in England, where her work was mistaken for Sargent's by the King himself."¹

IV.

Now let us look into this alleged increase in the efficiency of artistic talent. On the face of it, there is nothing to surprise us, for if auto-suggestion can cure diseases and purify character, why should we marvel that it can develop all kinds of mental faculty? We confess the matter is one which, perhaps owing to its newness, has a humorous side: the picture of a played-out poet seeking a theme, a *littérateur* whose brain has gone on strike, a

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p. 271.

dramatist who is stuck in the third act, a composer who can't finish a promising song—the picture of these men waiting for treatment in the ante-room of a Harley Street hypnotist is a spectacle for the Gods. But perhaps our smiles are only the smiles of ignorance. The psychology of the subconscious mind may have many wonders in store for us before the twentieth century is completed.

At present, indeed, we have no satisfactory science of moods, those peculiar combinations of thought and feeling which apparently defy analysis and yet are intimately known to us as real experiences. What are moods essentially? How are they induced? Do they come unasked? We might ask a score of questions, and not one of them would be conclusively answered. The odd methods of inducing the creative mood as outlined at the beginning of the chapter, suggest that whatever else it is, its main function is to aid the writer's concentration and expectancy: which, taken together, probably mean that in this way he is brought into closer touch with the wealth of his subconscious mind.

One of the most musical groupings of words ever penned is *Kubla Khan*, which was composed by Coleridge during sleep. This seems to show that the creative function is at its best when the normal intelligence is asleep; hence the wisdom of selecting the last moments of the waking intelligence as being the best for the purposes of auto-suggestion. Of course there is an unconscious cerebration going on, even when we are awake. Monsieur T. Ribot states that to effect a creative

act, there should be first, a need; then a combination of images; lastly, a realisation in an appropriate form; and in his analysis of the first phase he states the general preparation is unconscious.¹ The need *asserts itself*: we simply become aware of its presence. "In literature we possess one remarkable evidence of these fortuitous thoughts of genius," says Disraeli. "Pope and Swift, being in the country together, observed that if contemplative men were to notice 'the thoughts which suddenly present themselves to their minds when walking in the fields, etc., they might find many as well worth preserving as some of their more deliberate reflections.' They made a trial, and agreed to write down such involuntary thoughts as occurred during their stay there. These furnished out the 'Thoughts' in Pope's and Swift's *Miscellanies*. Among Lord Bacon's Remains, we find a paper entitled *Sudden Thoughts set down for Profit*. At all hours, by the side of Voltaire's bed, or on his table, stood his pen and ink with slips of paper. The margins of his books were covered with his 'sudden thoughts.'"²

These sudden thoughts are not all of them accounted for by the law of association. They spring up amid other thoughts as different from themselves as the East differs from the West.

When the unconscious element in our deeper reflections becomes more intimately known, we shall be able to describe the frenzy of genius with reference to its mental and physical associations:

¹ *The Creative Imagination*, p. 43.

² *Literary Character of Men of Genius*, p. 131.

inspiration will take its place as a fact in psychological textbooks of the future; and development of faculty by auto-suggestion will have been reduced to a practicable science.

V.

But let us not deceive ourselves. No kind of suggestion will make us poets, artists, or *littérateurs*, unless we have the real gift in us. F. W. H. Myers was inclined to put in a word for the benefit of the clodhopper. His exact words were to the effect that "what the gift of nature does in certain limited directions, for some few delicately constructed men, that can hypnotic suggestion do for the ordinary clodhopper, with results, of course, grotesque in comparison with the triumphs of art, but yet quite as striking in proportion to the common man's inferior powers." Perhaps so, but it would be safe to say that suggestion will never enable a man to write beautiful poetry unless he has the soul of a poet, and understands the technique of the art. Suggestion does not create anything; it simply uses a natural force to develop the powers we have, and to utilise the stores of knowledge already accumulated. And since the powers may be consciously developed, and the stores increased in size, the only rational method of procedure for those who essay creative work is to act as if suggestion had never been heard of; they should think deeply, gather new materials, and develop their ideas from every side; not seeking hurriedly to cast them into a final form, inasmuch as that function is the special duty of

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auto-suggestion, which, by placing us *en rapport* with the subconscious mind, the perfected idea long sought for will "well up" into the normal intelligence.

CHAPTER IX.

WILL-POWER IN BUSINESS.

Studies in Success Methods.

“Everything in this world depends on Will.”—
DISRAELI.

I.

How can I succeed in business? Since the expansion of English commerce, there has always been a certain type of literature, the object of which is to inform men what they were to do, and what they were to avoid if they would accumulate wealth. The Church, which nodded devout assent to the words of Christ as to the sin of laying up treasure on earth, was not at all slow to encourage habits of thrift; until at last one man, more honest than the rest, brought out a book on *How to Make the Best of Both Worlds*.¹ It is one of the instances where a man can be said to “eat his cake and have it,” for a wealthy Christian is, logically, a contradiction in terms, and it has been left to Mr. Carnegie, who is not a Christian in the usual sense, to say, “He who dies rich, dies disgraced.” In this section the ethics of wealth, or the religion of it, for that matter, will have no place. Most people, to judge from experience, whatever their

¹ By Rev. T. Binney.

creed, are seeking money in some way or other; and the more they can get, the better are they pleased. There will, therefore, be no risk of offending the delicate susceptibilities of some reader with ideals so spiritual that a talk about the best methods of amassing wealth will be highly objectionable. One sometimes meets with really unworldly people, but they either have enough to live on, or they exist, like parasites, on the work of others. It is no virtue in itself to despise money, and the things of this life. Rather earn the one and enjoy the other.

The older books on success in life have a good deal of sound advice in them, albeit they are as a rule stodgy in style and almost morbidly moral. A few of them are free from both defects, but they are, nevertheless, unsuited to the present time, for each age has its peculiar taste to satisfy; and a book written when no commercial use was made of electricity can hardly be suited to a period marked by electrical progress in every direction.

But what do these older writers, like Freedly, in his *Practical Treatise on Business*, and Smiles, in his *Thrift*, say about the secret of success? They make a reasonable allowance for native ability, and then give the verdict to determination, perseverance, indomitable will. Freedly was a real business man, writing about the only subject of which he knew anything. Speaking of business habits, he says:

“Are you master of your business? and have you habits of business? The former is presumed; but what is meant by habits of business? Habits

of business include six qualities. *Industry, arrangement, calculation, prudence, punctuality, and perseverance.* Are you industrious? Are you methodical? Are you calculating? Are you prudent? Are you punctual? Are you persevering? If so, you possess what is known by the familiar term, Habits of Business. It is not the possession of any one of these qualities in perfection, nor the occasional exercise of them by fits and starts, as it is called, that will constitute a man of business; but it is the possession of them all in an equal degree, and their continuous exercise as habits, that give reputation and constitute ability. The difference in men and their success may be attributed in a measure to a difference in their business habits; and many a man has made his fortune with no other capital than their superior cultivation."

Smiles, in his *Thrift*, expresses himself in similar strain :

"Competence and comfort lie within reach of most people were they to take the adequate means to secure and enjoy them. Men who are paid good wages might also become capitalists, and take their fair share in the improvement and well-being of the world. But it is only by the exercise of labour, energy, honesty, and thrift that they can advance their own position or that of their class." And what, according to Smiles, is the controlling power? It is seen in his choice of mottoes for chapter headings. At the head of the chapter from which the quotation is taken we find the saying of Goethe that "the great matter is to learn to rule

oneself," and the saying of Dumas that to constitute a man "there is nothing harder if one knows how to *will* it; nothing easier if one wills it."¹

These are good representative quotations of older views on success. Not that they embody everything their authors wished to convey: far from it. Here, for instance, is a set of maxims on which the astute Freedly bases his faith²:

1. Learn how to save.
2. And how to invest savings.
3. Protect yourself against great losses by providing against small ones.
4. Associate with the best men.
5. Do your work or business better than others can do it.

I would rather have this little cluster of suggestions than a good deal of the thought which passes for wisdom at the present moment, and for which, in volume form, the stiff price of two guineas is asked.

The newer books on success have their origin in America, and as the circumstance is of some interest, I propose to deal with it at some length. A readiness to believe in the supernatural has never been quite absent from the American mind, at least a certain section of it, hence the advent of Spiritualism in the late eighteenth and early nine-

¹ *Thrift*, by Samuel Smiles, Chapter II.

² His acuteness is seen in remarks like the following: "The magnetic needle and the weathercock have always been favourite illustrations of unsteadiness. but it seems to me they are examples of steadiness also. The mind of a business man may be allowed to vibrate. for that the needle does; but, like the needle, it must still be constant; it should veer like a weathercock, with changing times and circumstances, but, like a weathercock, it should always show which way 'the wind blows.'"

teenth centuries created an interest in occult things which grew with the passing years. Men who were absorbed in the race for wealth amused themselves in moments of leisure by conducting séances, and by studying translations of the sacred books of the East. They were attracted by the theory of power which the possession of secrets might give them; and they laboured assiduously to conquer themselves in the most approved methods of the Orient. That there was behind all this activity a good deal of real virtue, one can ungrudgingly admit, but it was not long before the "cute" Yankee began to turn his knowledge into money. He reasoned in this way: If so great a power belongs to Thought and Will that I can maintain my health at pleasure, and overcome all difficulties; if material facts are the obedient servants of a spiritual force, why cannot I exercise that force to attract dollars which cannot but obey my call? So he began a new kind of occultism, one to which the real Eastern adept, to his credit be it said, is a complete stranger. English readers of Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* know how opposed its teachings are to the world of profits, dividends, and balance-sheets. Quite right, too, for the poet based his ideas on the classic utterances of Eastern pundits. But the new occultism, whilst it retains much of the true idealism which marks Theosophy, adds in the most impious manner, what is called "The law of opulence." This means that your wealth will be according to your thought; to be successful you have only to *think* success into everything you do. We have

met stolid materialists who agree that this is the law of opulence, but whilst they simply mean to say the more hopeful and confident a man is, the more likely is he to succeed, the new teachers mean that Thought and Will produce these results alone, *magically*, as it were; not by sheer genius and hard work, unaided from the astral sphere.

To the American mind, always ready to receive a new idea, there was something captivating in this dream of what Will could do on the material plane, and books and pamphlets on the subject began to pour from the press. Even in England the teaching took root and spread rapidly. We have before us a forty-page catalogue issued by a London publisher, who seems to do a good business in works dealing with Health and Success by the power of Will. But the movement is still quite Transatlantic, and in their own country the Americans have Soul Culture Institutes, Success Clubs, and Metaphysical Societies by the dozen. These things appeal to them in a way that does not seem possible to the phlegmatic Englishman; in California and in New York State they welcome a God who is rescued, so to speak, from the skies, and distributed everywhere as an omnipresent Force, and they abolish the old notion of the total depravity of man, setting up instead the Soul as "the God within" who can do for them whatever they desire; but in Cornwall and Lancashire, these ideas are slow to gain even standing room. Why? Is it because, as De Tocqueville says, the individual in America is nothing and the State everything? and that the wide expansiveness of

territory enables people to appreciate a Pantheistic God? Who can tell?

III.

In contrasting the new methods of succeeding in business with the older ones, so familiar, the question arises as to whether the new guides have made an advance on the teachings of their predecessors. The commercial sages of the past and present are alike in one thing: they place great importance on determination and will. In what sense, then, do they differ? We are bound to confess that in theory, at least, the newer school shows a detail of knowledge and an appreciation of mental drill, about which the older moralists are silent. Smiles tells us of the necessity and value of will-power, but there is nothing behind it; no enlightenment, no exposition, nothing poetic. It is otherwise with the New Thought people. They infuse their teachings with both science and poetry; and, although the science may be false, and the poetry misleading, one cannot but confess that the general tone of their literature is optimistic—indeed, some of the best has a real element of inspiration. Of course, this may be an illustration of Lecky's opinion that we gain more from our illusions than from our knowledge.

Again, the new guides are more systematic than the older ones; they believe in a will intelligently developed. True, it is not always easy to discover what the system is: a mass of learned verbiage obstructs the way of the unbeliever; there are phrases about "Supreme Good," "Motives,"

“Unities,” psychical this, that, and the other, until the mind is well nigh bewildered. But some textbooks are fairly understandable, and show a keen desire to simplify the truth—as expounded by authorities—so that it may be grasped by the man in the street. One of these I hope to analyse at some length. In the older manuals of success there are no attempts at a system of teaching self-mastery and will-control. Mind was one thing, body another, and soul something else—in high command. Life was in compartments, and there was no relationship between a poem to illuminate the mind and a sermon to fire the soul with divine energy. As for the body, it was on a different plane altogether: along with the World and the Devil, it was classed as an enemy to be watched. And yet the past had its business geniuses, its conquerors, its inventors, and its successful merchants. They may have been brought up on “porridge and catechism,” but if the New Thought doctrines produce a better set of men (as they ought to do, provided their doctrines are true), the world will be glad to acknowledge that results are evidences it is hard to gainsay.

IV.

The reader will now be ready for a more detailed account as to how, by using his will-power, he may increase the number of his orders, and gradually swell his bank balance. The book we propose to analyse is O Hashnu Hara's *The Road to Success* (1/-). We select this little volume for several reasons. It is easily accessible;

it is a popular account of the science; it has been widely sold; and, lastly, it is eminently practical—in the sense that it tells you exactly what to do.

The thesis of the book is contained in the words:

“You can be free—free from worry, from poverty, from disease, from sorrow, and you can free yourself now.”

That is certainly good news, and as wealth is the subject immediately before us, it will be interesting to know how the author proposes to get rid of poverty. Not the poverty of a deserving man, be it remembered, but everybody's poverty. Within these 100 pages is the secret of universal plenty, stated with a confidence that would make even a Socialist blush.

How, then, is poverty to be abolished? *By thinking of opulence.* Simple, isn't it? Poor people who continually say “How poor I am!” frighten wealth away; wealthy people who think in thousands, and see visions of still greater wealth, *attract* the money-making schemes. “Attraction” is the keyword. Think success, and it comes: think failure and—*it* comes, too. Why? Not because there is a great law of the Universe behind it, but because “the world takes you at your own valuation; this is a well-known saying, and has a two-edged meaning. If you want to succeed in business, your mind must be keyed to the vibrations of success. You must THINK success into all you do, you must TALK success, APPEAR successful, and you have the world after you! Think failure, talk of your woes and bad

times, appear down-at-heel and poverty-stricken, and the world walks the other side, and gives you the go-by."

There is what the Americans call good "horse sense" in that argument; but there is little truth in the alleged science underlying the fact. To understand that science you must first realise the Universe of Matter and Spirit is a Unity. Get rid of the notion that there are exact boundaries between body and soul, matter and spirit, any more than there are such boundaries between Summer and Autumn. All things, whether called material or mental, are in a state of vibration: in the solid earth the vibration is very slow; it becomes more rapid in vegetable life; and more rapid still in human life; a further quickening of the pace is perceivable in light and colour; and in ether—which is the vivifying principle of all things—the vibration reaches its climax. The main point is that vibration is everywhere. Now people are said to vibrate according to specified degrees, and there is, therefore, a power in every man to attract things and persons, tuned to the same rate of vibration as himself. The author here quotes Emerson:

Whate'er in nature is thine own,
Floating in air or pent in stone,
Shall rive the hills and swim the sea,
And like thy shadow follow thee.

And goes on to say, "Man alone, out of all the manifestations of God in this Universe, has the power to *consciously* raise and lower his rate of

vibration. So if you are low down in the scale of evolution, and your thoughts and actions dwell upon things of lust, of materiality, of death, sickness, sin, poverty, and darkness, these things *are yours*, and they belong to your scale of vibrations; they will, *literally*,

Rive the hills and swim the sea,
And like thy shadow follow thee.

“ It will not make any difference to you whether you stay here or go to Timbuctoo, or any other remote region, as long as your vibratory rate is keyed to the rate of all these horrors, so will they cling to you, pursue you from one end of the world to the other, be a part of your very existence.”

And what is the cure? It is that “ if you stop to think, *now*, you will see that even the faintest desire for better conditions will raise your rate of vibration to a slightly higher scale, and make it possible for you to attract, very faintly, it is true, a slightly higher set of vibrations, representing different and better circumstances. Then, too often your old habits reassert themselves; the old vibrations close around you, and you sink back to the dead level to which you have made yourself belong. I am writing this book for the sole purpose of dragging you, or rather making you drag yourself, up from the dead-level. You will *now* understand that it is not *Fate*, but *yourself*, which has kept you low. You will see, too, how it is possible for you to get out of the rut. Persistent effort, continual affirmation of your relation to the higher rates of vibration, to better and happier conditions, will

bring them to you inevitably, and dispel the old conditions as the sunlight will dispel the fog. Not a half-hearted wish, mind you, and constant back-sliding, but a steady, concentrated effort of your will, a determination to go higher, come what may."

After chapters on "The Soul," "Auto-Suggestion," and "Health," in which there is nothing new, the author comes to close quarters with "Business Success and Opulence." Here we learn that "there are certain laws which, used in conjunction with ordinary business principles, can make you pre-eminent. I don't attempt to claim any power at all supernatural, or what you might call supernatural, for this ability the Soul possesses of '*drawing*' to itself that which is related to it; on the contrary. You cannot sit down and *will* so many thousands of pounds into your bank; you must work for it. You cannot train the Soul to attract a huge sum right away, even if you *are* working for it; you must build it up, and the length of time you take over the process is only dependent upon your own mental power of concentration and the strength of your faith in the *self*—the Soul."

It is this Soul which is a magnet to attract the dollars, and the magnetising power is concentration, that is, thought controlled by will. In silent meditation (during which you affirm every noble and helpful thought) you master your powers, and by increasing mental force, you acquire greater magnetic attraction; you increase your vibrations and draw those things and persons to you that are

in tune with you. "Raise your thought to the plane of opulence, and in the same way opulence *must* come to you to the same extent you recognise it and claim it for your own. This law is *so* simple when you know it and can get out of the old thought life.

"Of course you need to keep firmly in mind the different processes of the *Law*. Do not imagine you can grow success if you neglect your daily concentration. You would neglect your dinner for fear of starving your body, yet when you neglect the daily concentration you deliberately *starve your Soul*—the living part of you—that which makes your life success or failure. When you concentrate, affirm your success; suggest '*Success*' to the Soul. Claim your relationship with the Divine Mind where all is opulence, ALL IS YOURS; that is your mental attitude. It is not any use at all making your affirmations of success and opulence if you grudge that which you pay out. Bless every farthing that goes out, and spend it gladly and without thought for the morrow."

Here, then, is the secret of business prosperity: we have to keep all ordinary rules of commercial prudence, plus a peculiar kind of concentration that looks like saying prayers to yourself: let us do this, never doubting, and wealth is ours.

Before proceeding to criticise the theory just outlined, we should like to refer to one point which shows to what extravagances some writers are prepared to go. In the pamphlet called *Dollars Want Me*, the author, a Mr. H. Harrison Brown, advances the surprising plea that to say "I want

dollars" is quite the wrong point of view for a business man to take. What he ought to say is, "Dollars want me." Either Mr. Brown is one of those unconscious humorists, whose fancies add to the gaiety of otherwise sober readers, or else he is a wag of the first order. How does he explain himself? Listen.

"Change your attitude towards business. Do not seek it. SEE IT ALREADY YOURS, and LET it come. Attend yourself to details as they come to the surface. Consider business a Principle that will run, as runs a mountain stream, when you remove your conscious will from it. All your concern is to be ready to use it as the ranchman uses the water as it comes to his ditch."

And again. "Change your attitude toward the dollars you have. Tell them they are of no use until they are expended. As you see them lying about, say to them: 'Idle dollars, go to work. Go out and circulate about. Each one of you go and pay a million in wages and debts. When I need you come back again. You are useless and have no value until you go to work.' Then LET them go to work, knowing that, *when you send this thought with them*, they or their fellows will come to you to be set at work. . . . Poverty, like consumption, cold, or rheumatism, is a mental condition. It can be cured only by the same means, i.e., Affirmation of the power to cure: *I am part of the One and, in the One, possess all. I possess all!* Affirm this and patiently wait for the manifestation. You have sown the thought-seed, now, like the ranchman, wait for the sprouting and

the harvest. It can never fail you when, like him, you trust."

It would be difficult to find anything more exaggerated than these statements. The man who is in the mail-order business, and has just put a new, cheap fountain-pen on the market, must not hunger for half-crown postal orders; nor even *will* them to come. The fact is, they are waiting for him. He is just what they want. He is their employer. Therefore a certain number are already his, and if he can only realise 500, mentally, they will feel the attraction and come. As base coins are sometimes in circulation, it may be presumed these also feel the attraction as well as the good ones, for we all have to take the risks of a bad half-crown. But if like attracts like, and the New Thought thinker in business gets more than his share of base silver across the counter—well, perhaps it would be unkind to pursue the thought further.

V.

In the previous chapters of this book we arrived at the conclusion that although the nature of thought was still a mystery, some of its manifestations could be understood in their method of working and used for therapeutic purposes, both medical and educational. Beyond this, our knowledge does not allow us to go. We know as little about the ether as we do about thought, and whatever science says about vibration, there is no justification for the confident assertions quoted from the author under review. The science in New Thought literature is an amalgamation of

Oriental philosophy with such selected bits of accepted Western truth as are required to give an appearance of systematised knowledge.

What proof have we that a business man can economise his advertising expenditure by mental concentration on his financial needs? How can he attract dollars when dollars do not possess the same rate of vibration as himself? And even if telepathy be regarded as proved, where are the evidences that concentration on the part of a seller of fountain-pens will arouse the minds of those who want them, and bring them to his shop to buy? The fact is this success by thought and will-power is the most arrant nonsense ever put before an intelligent public. Of course, its apostles and devotees at once say, "Why, then, do so many people readily accept it?" Because it is optimistic. The world naturally follows the positive man. Nothing was ever built up on pure negations. Bring forward a doctrine of hope and conquest, and men will follow you to the ends of the earth. Besides, this notion of success by mental methods appeals to human greed. Dangle unlimited wealth before the eyes of the populace, and they will go through any course of training to make them "fit." They are always ready to listen to the secrets of a money-maker.

But perhaps the most potent reason why people are carried away with the ideas of the author of *The Road to Success*, and all writers of that ilk, great and small, is that will-power, as we have seen already, can do things that appear semi-marvellous. A man who has cured himself of

serious and incapacitating nervous troubles by thought-force, may well say that such an energy, properly controlled, can bring him wealth. This is true, so far as will-power enables him to be keen-witted, industrious, honest, and progressive: beyond that it is the veriest dream. He may "concentrate" till Doomsday, and "vibrate" until he drops from exhaustion; not a dollar will he see, unless, like any other man, he works on accredited lines. One sometimes wonders what Rockefeller thinks of all these "spiritual" roads to vast wealth. The Oil King knows how to "concentrate" as well as anybody: but there is no moonshine in it, no vibratory puerilities, no nonsense about attraction and "waiting" until the dollars come.

VI.

What are the results of New Thought methods? The only case we ever inquired into was one where disastrous failure ensued. He used to say, "Look at my business, and how it has grown. I started with nothing but confidence in my soul and its magnetic powers. I knew the dollars were waiting for me." They came. So did the landlord, if our information is correct, for bad seasons happen even to the man with an attractive soul. Dissolution followed, and for a long time that household knew what it was to be "hard up." Now, scientifically, poverty ought to have been impossible with such people; what good is a law of opulence if it lets you down at a most inconvenient time? Doubtless this story could be matched with

many others which go to show that these magic workers have business ups and downs like the rest of us, from which we may conclude there is no essential difference between their money-making and our own.

The Success Clubs of America reach the height of absurdity. If your business is going down, and you want to give it a fillip—join a Success Club and pay your dollar. The advantages of membership are that at certain times the officials and members together “concentrate” on the affairs of the whole number, and “will” prosperity all round. Sometimes the concentration is done individually, with an alleged greater benefit. Brought down to its narrowest issue, the Success Club is really a business prayer-meeting where, instead of asking for virtues of character, petitions are made for more dollars, more orders, and more dividends. It is a suitable climax for a doctrine of will-power so perverted. The ordinary man of to-day must, therefore, rely on the old and simple virtues, remembering that the only accredited law of opulence is that a man must have brains and use them; must be keen and progressive; must love his work, and stick to it with a determination that can only come from a disciplined will.

We cannot, however, close this chapter without admitting that the law of suggestion is applicable to business just as it is to health and education. An ambitious man—and the chief difference between success and failure can be measured by the presence or absence of that quality—may reasonably suggest the moral characteristics he

desires to have; just as he may unreasonably suggest an income of £1,000 a year. Dr. Quackenbos, speaking of his experience in dealing with commercial men by hypnotic suggestion, says, "The ability to handle people may be imparted, to 'talk them round' without giving offence; the power to remain uniformly good-natured at interviews, no matter how exasperating conditions may be; horse sense in forming judgments and impressing the same upon others whom it is desirable to influence; consummate tact that reads the interlocutor, bends to his moods, talks to the point without antagonising, seals the lips where silence is golden; that anticipates objections and disposes of them, not bluntly, but in a manner bland and winning, so turning indifference into interest; that makes a man wear well with his clientele without becoming their dupe; calmness of action that is never importunate, yet never allows interest to flag; intelligent persistence; concentration that fixes attention on the subject under discussion to the exclusion of petty worries and irrelevancies; honest shrewdness; initiative, coupled with push, self-assertiveness, and decision; persuasiveness and impelling power."¹ Dr. Quackenbos is a man of standing, and although he seems to me to claim too much, there can be no doubt that even by auto-suggestion a considerable development can be assured in the direction of the qualities enumerated.

To recapitulate. We first of all contrasted the old view of success in business with the new one,

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics.*

and found a certain likeness and difference. The likeness consisted of emphasis on the ordinary habits of business; the difference lay chiefly in the use of the law of suggestion through the exercise of will; and after analysing these claims we were obliged to confess they could not be substantiated by science, whilst experience proved them to be false. We had to confess, however, that although suggestion in none of its forms could influence hard money, or telepathically compel an increase in the number of customers, the development of business habits was a sphere in which the will could work with evidences of marked success.

CHAPTER X.

WILL-POWER AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER.

“ People do not lack strength : they lack will.”—
VICTOR HUGO.

“ Character is a perfectly educated will.”—NOVALIS.

I.

WE are accustomed to regard heredity, environment, and will as the sole arbiters of our moral destiny. And it is difficult, in the absence of other factors, to avoid yielding them our homage, so all-embracing are they, and so freely do they seem to explain every phenomenon of character. A departure from the moral standard must be particularly obscure if it cannot be traced to its origin in some transmitted, but hitherto dormant malady, or in a subtle influence emanating from the general surroundings of life. True, there are actions which appear suddenly and mysteriously in lives that have been strongly marked by a rigid adhesion to social rules—actions like those pictured in Mr. Coulson Kernahan's *Book of Strange Sins*—and of these we can offer only a lame explanation. The advocates of the eternal distinction between right and wrong are not slow to observe our hesitation. They point out that in the story of the Garden of Eden, there was a fall into transgression on the

part of two human beings who had no heredity to confuse them, and no environment except Paradise itself; the truth symbolised being the liability to sin even when every advantage is placed at our disposal. But an old-world story is not a safe guide to right conclusions in moral science. Besides, there are very obvious retorts if we, in our turn, are to treat the story as history. The heredity of Adam and Eve may have been as perfect as it could be, but, according to the narrative, they both fell a victim to their environment, which allowed free range to a talking-devil-serpent. Furthermore, the "fall" was a benefit, and Adam passed from his none too arduous labour of naming animals into the dignity of a gardener; in addition to which, he assumed a moral outlook on life. As Newman says, "Man fell and gained a conscience."

But, in addition to heredity, environment, and will, we are now in possession of another factor: suggestion. Strictly speaking, it is not altogether a new factor; it exists already in environment, and is a form of will-power, but the systematic use to which it is put in psychical science all but gives it the quality of a new force. And in order the better to display its working in connection with the will, we propose to discuss briefly the elements of character formation.

II.

There are primarily but two elements in character: (1) the perception of ideals, and (2) efforts towards their realisation. Ideals are largely a matter of nationality and geography. There is a

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vast difference between that of a French artist and a Bashi-Bazouk, or an English artisan and a Kaffir labourer, but each has his vision of what he calls the right, and each moves forward in the quest of its attainment. And yet the differences are so accentuated in some cases that it is almost a wrong use of words to speak of ideals at all. How should we describe the ideal of a Calmuc Tartar, or a low-grade Hottentot? To simplify matters, we will therefore confine our attention to the people we know.

A study of men and women as we find them quickly reveals how far, as individuals, they are moved by conceptions of a good still unattained, and how far they are creatures of habit determined by their environment. As a rule people are actuated by the ideas and customs of the class to which they belong. The East End coster thinks and dreams of vegetable produce, of mokes and money, Bank holidays and races—seldom rising out of the limitations of his particular sphere. These earthly things in their totality are his ideal, if one may use the word in that association. As a matter of fact, it is no ideal at all. The coster's life is in the main a determined imitation of the life around him, without a spark of originality. It may be a better life than many people think it is; but in the long run it is as much a vegetable, in the human sense, as the cabbages on his barrow.

Should, perchance, a real ideal enter his life—say a sudden liking for religious worship, or an awakening to the value of an advanced education for his children—he finds his environment rather a

difficulty; his friends chaff him unmercifully; others tell him he is getting "prard" or "'oly," and that his educated children will turn their backs on him when they have risen in the world. The birth of an ideal is a critical time for those with an unsympathetic environment, so susceptible is human nature to the opinions of people with whom daily contact is inevitable. Go with the mass and you are left alone; strike out a new line, and one which by implication raises you higher than others, and you become the butt of ridicule. The advent of a piano in one of a group of cottages has been known to sow the seeds of a discord among neighbours, in strange contrast to the music the instrument was intended to bring. The desire of one labourer thus to raise his children above the children of others, was regarded as a direct affront—by families who paid the same half-crown a week as rent.

The like principle holds good in every class of society, although not in the same degree. Of course ideals are of divers types, and some are undoubtedly appreciated where no attempt whatever is made to embody them in actual life. Here we come face to face with silent tragedies. The bitter disappointment of men and women who have hoped and desired "something better," without an effort to accomplish a single aim, for fear of criticism, is only known to those who have experienced it. When the best of all opportunities are gone, and we have to be content with "might have beens," there can be no surprise that a teacher of pessimism can gather a multitude of eager disciples.

By these people the sympathy of the successful and the virtuous is looked upon as pity; whilst the professor of the Vanity of Vanities idea is believed to be a brother in distress. The warmth of fellow feeling is sought for by everybody—somewhere.

III.

It will be found that there are three possible conditions among men as to the character ideal: first, there are those who have no ideal at all, and live according to personal habit and social custom; next we have those who take a section of life and convert it into a whole—like the fame-seeker and the fortune-hunter; lastly, there are the people who lay hold on one great principle which influences every action in favour of itself. This principle may be religion, or some other form of other-worldliness; altruism, the service of humanity, or just the simple desire to think and do the best of which human nature is capable. Whatever it may be, it is the only true kind of idealism.

A considerable number of people take business success as their ideal: nothing else. They aim at creating wealth; and a big business, a huge estate, or a vast holding of dividend-paying securities mean more than anything else in the world. Others, again, take a different section of life, and live for it alone. These sectional ideals are condemned by their very origin. To turn business, or sport, or anything else that is secondary into a primary principle, is to treat a part of life as if it were the whole. And yet to have a defective ideal is better than to be utterly destitute of the least

semblance of one. As for the great mass of people, they follow habit and custom. They learn more from the spectacle of retribution than from contemplation of the good. A trial for murder freely reported in the press does more to teach the rudiments of ethics to the community than a score of sermons in refined English.

Mankind, as a whole, is no longer regarded as perfectible: our moral Utopias are in ashes, and instead of expecting absolutely good conduct, in the exact sense, statesmen legislate in order to bring out that which is relatively good; instead of aiming at making people just what they ought to be, they aim at producing the best character that is possible.

IV.

But let us grant that an ideal exists in some form or other: it may be crude in quality and dim in outline, or it may be vividly conceived and religiously adored. So long as it is there, effort will be made, and made continually, to reach it. On every summit there sits a spirit, and he who sees her will make "the Spirit of the Summit" his one purpose in life.

The difficulties met with in the formation of character are internal and external: weakness within and strength without. One of the first experiences we pass through is a course of civil war in the centre of our being; St. Paul, in describing the struggle between *sarx* and *pneuma*—the flesh and the spirit—was echoing an earlier Pagan idea, for Plato referred to the two steeds which drew the chariot of life, one steed plunging downwards, and

the other trying to rise heavenwards to the sky. In normal life the inward struggle between the good self and the evil self, is not necessarily tragic in character, although often the conflict is marked by strenuous fighting; but in certain impulsive natures, when reflection takes place *after action*, and not before it, there is danger of a sudden collapse of moral principle. Such a collapse explains the presence in the dock of an otherwise upright man. But for all people the inward struggle is severe enough to require the strongest of moral dynamics. Foremost among these is religion—the religion of early training. Christianity has one supreme advantage: all virtue is regarded as being embodied in one Person whose divine attraction is such that His commandments carry the compulsion of love. Nowhere has the world seen such evidence of the expulsive power of a great affection: for the Christian, if he be true to his responsibilities, is promised a loving mystic communion with his Master, whereby the righteously inclined ego will receive an accession of strength; and, if he be true to his privileges, he will find that when evil presents itself for entertainment, there is no response to its overtures. But religion seems to be losing its hold on the imagination. We are told that criticism has claimed the field, and that along with new theology, it has crowded out the positive literature which delights more to affirm than to analyse and deny. Perhaps one of these days a new Lammenais or Chateaubriand will appear, and call us back to behold the genius of a system which we were persuaded had lost its power.

But the man with an ideal, and a determined will, has other sources of help. They may be less powerful than religion; but if religion makes no appeal, and carries no confidence, it is just possible that a method more open to observation and experiment will be equally effective. There is, for instance, the method of diversion: which means the expelling of an evil by contemplating a good; the suppression of a base passion by beholding a beautiful picture; the foiling of a promised outbreak of temper by avoiding the society which gives rise to it. But where great principles are absent, methods are usually applied in groups, and a man produces good character from motives of self-respect, the respect of others, and the fear of retribution.

V.

The new moral dynamic, as we have said, is that of suggestion. In no sphere are its results more promising than in the realm of conduct, and nowhere are its possibilities greater. Conduct offers unlimited scope. Life in a simple village community is not so radically different from life in the city as to present no moral problems; indeed, life anywhere in these times is more or less a struggle against a number of small, but irritating evils which pester us like so many mosquitoes. The slips of speech that are wilfully whispered into lies; the temptation to dishonesty for immediate gain; the sudden onslaught of feeling which may damn a whole career; the despair—after years of effort; the ennui which prompts us to wrongdoing for the sake of distraction; the little crimes which

engender big results; bad temper, anger, jealousy, and a host of others, all conspire to make us ride for a fall. How, amid this multitude of foes is the man with an ideal to become a conqueror? The answer of religion is "By prayer." It would take us too far afield to examine the claims of so large a subject—although we observe prayer for fine weather is going out of fashion—but we may as well confess at once, that in our view, prayer is a form of auto-suggestion. Consider a case of "conversion." Here is a man who was captured by a band of Evangelists working in the slums. He has undergone a "change." What happens? He wishes to leave the slums and live in a district where the facts of evil are less evident, and where his new principles will enjoy a kindlier atmosphere. Scientifically, having been "born again," he desires the environment which will enable him to conform to his type: actually he wishes to be free from the indirect suggestions of slum life. And what do his mentors tell him? They tell him he can only live by prayer. Enemies within and without assail him daily, and although he is assured that in time he will become a sort of Christian Sandow, he is also informed that the Devil is a resourceful adversary, and may "jiu-jitzu" him into sin when such a *contretemps* is least expected. Therefore he must pray—*often*. And how does he pray? If he does the thing properly, he will ask for strength and believe he gets it. What is that but a form of auto-suggestion? There is no difference between saying "I have power," and praying for it, and then believing the answer comes

at once. Of course, the Deity is appealed to, but, theology apart, the results are identical. Why wonder then that prayer is credited with astonishing powers? Tyndall's sporting offer to test its effectiveness was rightly ignored, because its chief function is subjective, not objective. It develops the spirit of faith and confidence: instead of teaching "I cannot," it teaches "I can."

VI.

Now that is what the man with the ideal should aim at, especially if religion makes no appeal to him. In order to come safely past the island of the syrens he need not resist temptation by binding himself to the mast as did Ulysses, nor even by playing superior music to that which comes from those seductive shores, as did Orpheus; let him say "I can," and trust in the strength of his will. Of course, it must be admitted there is a preliminary duty, namely, the extinction of *desire*. To use will-power for the abolition of a habit which produces stronger desires than the will can produce inhibitions, is not an intelligent proceeding. Take over-indulgence in cigarette smoking. When the doctor has given suitable warning as to the results of further excess, the smoker is probably convinced it is time to give up the practice altogether, or reduce the quantity consumed. Suppose he elects the latter alternative: ninety-nine men out of a hundred find it impossible to keep to a prescribed number: the feeling that "one more" will make no difference always prevails. And, if he elects to dispense with smoking altogether, he

is by no means free from worry because he has eliminated the subtle danger of "one more." However strong his will, he is reminded every hour that he has broken a habit; and habit, to personify a physical fact, does not like it. The situation is really a conflict between will-power, mental desire, and physical habit.¹ The last-mentioned never forgets to assert itself. You may starve it down ultimately, but it will take care you have a bad time of it during the process. A long standing physical habit is not the empty nothing some people imagine it to be. Let the very moderate smoker of twenty years' standing try the experiment of renunciation for a week. He will find out his mistake. He will succeed, no doubt, in his self-imposed abstinence, but the nervous unhappiness of self-denial, will open his eyes to the reason why cigarette maniacs, and inebriates, would rather face the inevitable than endure the miseries of enforced prohibition.

It is therefore no easy problem to extinguish desire, in fact, there are only two ways open to the inebriate, and only one to the cigarette maniac. The inebriate can be plied with the drugs of a "cure," or he may try suggestion in one of its forms; the smoker can do nothing except submit to suggestion. Opinions differ as to the lasting merit of a "cure," but let us for a moment confine our

¹ "The psychology of this mental state is illustrated by the following experience of a friend, who last summer met a farmer acquaintance on the highway, trudging along to a near-by village. 'Where are you bound for, Uncle Billy?' he inquired in a spirit of neighbourly *bonhomie*. 'I am going into Bardstown,' was the reply, 'to get drunk, and, O Lord! how I dread it!'"—Quackenbos, *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p. 224.

attention to the over-indulgent smoker. He gets to loathe his habit, intellectually and morally, but as a man who has set up a physical appetite in his own body, he can loathe such an appetite as much as he likes;—the appetite goes on asserting itself with the utmost impertinence. Clergymen of all Churches know this fact only too well, and have long felt the need of some agency which would help them in the work of morally reconstructing the individual. They can get the “soul” into position; but the body presents a difficulty, because it is composed of physical substance, the broken laws of which will brook no interference from anybody. Prayer has been found of little permanent benefit, mainly because its work has been addressed to the strengthening of will-power, leaving desire comparatively untouched. One is not therefore surprised to hear of a movement among American divines, headed by Dr. McComb, the object of which is to get the body into position first, through the instrumentality of the mind. For desire is the greatest enemy, and Buddha laid the Western world under a great obligation when he placed its extinction in the forefront of his creed.

VII.

Take De Quincy as a case in point. He was an opium smoker, and longed to give up the wretched habit, but could not do so for years, despite every effort. He mentally desired to renounce the practice: he mentally willed to be free; but his bodily desires prevailed.

“The opium eater loses none of his moral

sensibilities or aspirations; he wishes and longs, as earnestly as ever, to realise what he believes possible and feels to be exacted by his duty; but his intellectual apprehensions of what is possible infinitely outruns his power, not of execution only, but of power to attempt. He lies under the weight of incubus and nightmare; he lies in sight of all he would fain perform just as a man forcibly confined to his bed by the mortal languor of a relaxing disease, who is compelled to witness injury or outrage offered to some object of his tenderest love—he curses the spell which chains him down from motion—he would lay down his life if he might but get up and walk; but he is powerless as an infant, and cannot even attempt to rise.”¹

In a modified sense the cigarette maniac passes through similar feelings; he renounces usually for a day, then becomes worse than ever the next. Now we have seen the effort of mind on body through auto-suggestion, and it is just here where that agency contributes a real service in the development of character. The fundamental mischief, as we have shown, is in the physical basis of habit. The remedy is to suggest the habit out of the body, just as you would a neuralgia, or a headache. Here is the record of a case treated by Dr. Quackenbos. “J. L., aged eighteen, a nervous wreck from cigarette addiction—suffering from tobacco heart, fugitive pains, trembling of the fingers and hands, inactive liver, mental torpor—had persistently tried to break off the habit, but without success. Various advertised cures had

† *Confessions of an Opium Eater.*

failed. The young man was hypnotised and the suggestion was given to him to reduce the number of cigarettes gradually from thirty a day, his average when not flush of money. This the patient did, having smoked only four cigarettes per diem during the whole week following the suggestion. A week later he was again hypnotised and told very emphatically that he had given up smoking and had no further use for tobacco—that cigarette smoking would nauseate him, keep up the irregular action of his heart, destroy his nervous equilibrium, and interfere with his business prospects. The reward of abandoning the habit was then pictured to him—restored health, the approbation of his own conscience, the securing of a position in which he would win the respect of his employer by honesty and faithfulness, business success, and social rise. He was told to awaken with a feeling of encouragement and manly self-dependence, which he did. After the lapse of another week he came to my office and reported that he had not smoked once in the interval, nor felt the slightest inclination to do so. His general health was good, the rhythm of his heart perfect, his skin clear of an erythematous eruption that covered his body. A third treatment was given, and he was discharged cured.”¹

But hypnotic suggestion is not absolutely the only effective force: Dr. Lévy has given instances of cure by auto-suggestion.

“Having suffered from several consecutive attacks of sore throat, I tried to rid myself of the habit of smoking, but without success. By

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p. 233.

disciplining my will through the regular practice of auto-suggestion, I made rapid progress in my endeavour, and the result obtained has lasted several months. I have actually lost all idea of smoking, even when in pain.”¹

Now what is true of the excessive and injurious smoking of tobacco, is true of the ungovernable and health destroying indulgence in intoxicants. “The following case of a gentleman who drank whisky is representative both of the alcoholic disease and its causation, and of the method pursued: Four years ago Mr. A., who had vainly resorted to the popular drink cures, was induced by his friends to make a trial of psychic treatment. Beginning as a college boy to carouse with his mates, engaging in contests to see who could drink the most beer in the shortest time, he passed successively through the stages of occasional use for convivial reasons, frequent indulgences to brace him for task or pastime, periodical paroxysms of alcoholic debauchery, until at forty he found himself a continuous drinker impelled by an irresistible and insatiable craving, with marked stigmata of degeneration and a growing incapacity for professional duty. His wife and daughters for years subjected to constant humiliation at his hands, had come to feel the pinch of want, and smarted under the construction placed upon his actions by a merciless society. Affection had died in his heart, and with it both self-respect and religious sense. In such a case, at least a year is usually required of forced feeding and restricted activity to repair the damaged brain cells and so

¹ *Volonté*, p. 197.

restore the patient to normal efficiency. But within a week the mental attitude may be permanently changed and the craving for stimulants obliterated, without experience of the nervous exhaustion and unrest that usually accompany discontinuance of the habit. Since his first séance (now five years ago) Mr. A. has experienced no desire of alcohol. The suggestion was given that he could safely take one drink and then stop, but that it was impossible for him ever to want a drink or ever to take a drink for any conceivable reason. He has abstained, not through conscious effort, but spontaneously because of an ingrained disinclination to drink conditioned by subpersonal control. In this instance it was further necessary to forbid the use of tobacco, the inhalation of which in the form of smoke, by depressing the nerve centres and thus creating an imperious demand for its antidote (whisky), explains seventy-five per cent. of all cases of dipsomania. The chain of cause and effect was broken at a blow. The patient neither smokes nor drinks. And he has made amends for the suffering he inflicted on his family by exalted action meriting their respect and love. His pastor writes of him: 'His face is all but transfigured. I have never seen a man so happy or more grateful.'"¹

VIII.

A little reflection bestowed on the narratives just given, suggests the close intimacy between character and bodily condition. A good percentage of what is classed as moral evil is really, at bottom,

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, pp. 217-18.

physical in its origin. The degenerate type of individual presents an almost insoluble problem; the taint in body passes from one stage to another in regular descent, and carries with it mental limitation and a moral squint. Societies which endeavour to uplift the submerged life demand every sympathy and help, because, although they work in the hope of effecting a radical change for the better, we know they are doomed to disappointment; inasmuch as in the degenerate there is nothing morally substantial to work upon. Evil desire is in the blood: ideals are out of the question; spiritual vision cannot be focused. To approach them from the religious and ethical standpoint is a work that speaks more for the goodness of heart which marks the worker than for his keenness of mental perception and knowledge of the world. Still, it is a happy circumstance that such missions are generally well supported, because apart from undertaking the practical relief of suffering, and the ray of sympathy they cast into dull and hard lives, they are there to bring the stray prodigal back to wholesome existence—the man or woman who has some good memories on which to base an appeal to the better self.

But since degeneracy is primarily physical, and since the physical is under the dominance of the mental, the only hope for the degenerate is to hypnotise him, even against his will. Auto-suggestion is useless because he has no interest in living a life different from the one in which we find him. Dr. Osgood Mason once recorded some striking cases of reformation accomplished by this means :

one might almost call them regenerations, so radical are the changes effected.

“ In the summer of 1884, there was at the Salpêtrière a young woman of a deplorable type, Jeanne S——, who was a criminal lunatic, filthy, violent, and with a life history of impurity and crime. M. Auguste Voisin, one of the physicians of the staff, undertook to hypnotise her, May 31. At that time she was so violent that she could only be kept quiet by a straight-jacket and the constant cold douche to her head. She would not look at M. Voisin, but raved and spat at him. He persisted, kept his face near and opposite to hers, and his eyes following hers constantly. In ten minutes she was in a sound sleep, and soon passed into a somnambulistic condition. The process was renewed many days, and she gradually became sane while in the hypnotic condition, but still raved when she woke.

Gradually then she began to accept hypnotic suggestion, and would obey trivial orders given while asleep, such as to sweep her room, then suggestions regarding her general behaviour; then, in her hypnotic condition, she began to express regret for her past life, and form resolutions of amendment to which she finally adhered when she awoke. Two years later she was a nurse in one of the Paris hospitals, and her conduct was irreproachable. M. Voisin has followed up this case by others equally striking.”¹

In the years to come it may transpire that the curricula of education in Reformatory Schools will

¹ *Hypnotism and Suggestion.*

be reinforced by the presence of a hypnotic physician; that the criminal will not be allowed to return to society without some effort to rebuild his character on these lines; and that parents whose families are dishonoured by particularly wayward children will not be too sensitive to consult an expert in moral pathology: for in this way they may decrease their own sorrows and have the joy of seeing that most modern of miracles: an old character created anew.

IX.

But the real downright sinner is not the only man in the world who needs a moral dynamic. What about those of us who go to church on Sundays and say we are miserable sinners—without attaching any serious meaning to the expression? Do we mean what we say, or is it merely a form of words to keep us from becoming proud? The Bible, at any rate, does not allow us to flatter our self-satisfaction, inasmuch as a central element in worship is the prostration of the self before a great ideal. Of course it is frequently overdone. We remember hearing an extempore series of petitions prefaced by a statement that both preacher and congregation were very sinful: “from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot we are full of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores of sin.” There is a pitiful want of balance in these emotional outpourings which has done much to create a dislike for church ministrations.

The point is, however, that the average man, whoever he may be, needs sources of moral

elevation : whilst the man who is "out of average" because of some inequality in his constitution has special needs; and if he cannot find help in one quarter, he will turn to another. For instance, there is the man who suffers from *temperament*. One could draw a whole gallery of portraits to illustrate this remark. The Hamlet type springs into memory at once. He suffered from a disproportion between the ideal and the practical faculties. He was a student, and the tragedy in his life came when he was called upon to take up the rôle of a man of action. Shakespeare seems to have had in mind the notion of a normal man whose love of the ideal was naturally too strong, and whose education, instead of being modelled on a corrective plan, only accentuated the ill-balance of Nature. Hamlet might have been made a man of action, but his training confirmed his temperament instead of modifying it. He did not suffer from native weakness of will so much as from too much University. Robert Chambers, in his essay entitled "Knowing Better—Doing Worse," thus delineates the victims of temperament. "One man is the best poet of the age, and yet, from a mixture of childish weakness and recklessness, he becomes the worst character. Another man can write with feeling, sense, and taste, upon almost any subject; and yet so careless is he of his gains, so regardless of his debts, so prodigal in his expenditure, that he is only saved from a life of perpetual imprisonment by a sense on the part of his creditors of the utter hopelessness of legal proceedings against him. A third writer, whose compositions are characterised by a

peculiarly sickly degree of fine sentiment, and who would appear from them to be a man almost too gentle and refined for this world, is noted in private life for many degraded habits, and a way of speaking with rude contempt of every other man who is not at the moment in his presence. Take another, whose information is almost encyclopædic, and whose readiness and power in composition are alike remarkable, and you find that, in private conversation, he wants the power of speaking with fidelity upon any subject which in the least degree interests his feelings or his imagination. Philosophers are found without temper; poets without feeling; moralists without principle; philanthropists are detected in the most cruel and selfish acts; and keen scientific inquirers, who bend the most stubborn powers of nature to their will, are found to talk like children."¹

X.

But it is idle to suppose that men of distinction are alone in this matter. The man who rattles his cans in the morning, shouting "milkoo," and the taxi-driver who is so easily angered, are just as likely to have a distortion somewhere. Nowhere do we find perfect symmetry: in fact, some writers think it an undesirable quantity.² Just as Charles Lamb's imperfect sympathies enabled him to write an essay on that topic, which is classic in quality, so, it is argued, our moral inequalities of temperament add interest to a life that would otherwise be

¹ *Essays: Moral and Economic.*

² *Paradoxes*, by Max Nordau.

unenviably dull. Yes, life's secondary evils have fortunately some compensating values, but whilst a man's inordinate temper may provide an amusing diversion for onlookers, and give them something to talk about, it is to that man's own interest that he should seek self-control; he cannot afford to entertain outsiders at the cost of his own dignity and without injury to his private affairs. What then is the programme? First, is there a keen perception of the ideal? Can he visualise the life he desires? If he can, and is prepared to use all the force of his will, he may assure himself at once that the victory is won. For no man can use auto-suggestion and will-power to overcome minor faults without realising its masterly efficiency. Should explosive bad temper be the seat of mischief, or that little stream of bad temper called irritability, all he has to do is to affirm quietly and confidently, before falling asleep, that to-morrow the physical and moral causes giving rise to this evil shall no longer be operative. Even though the first experiments are not quite successful, the later ones will more than atone for their partial failure. It will be found that "an action tends to recur and become easier with each performance." This is true for good and for evil alike. Make the effort towards symmetry of character, and every repetition makes the next easier, until the abnormal feature disappears. You can build a character just as you build a brain.

XI.

A general review of the ground we have covered confirms the statement that heredity, environment,

and will are the three agencies at work. They are neatly illustrated by Prof. Halleck in the following passage: "Shakespeare was born of parents who could neither read nor write. There was something more in the boy than in either of them. A part of that additional something was due to his will, which, by always acting in a definite way, often in the line of the greatest resistance, gave him stability when others were wavering like reeds in a wind. Unlike Marlowe, Shakespeare was not killed in an alehouse, although he must have felt promptings to waste his time and nervous force there, as did so many of his fellow dramatists. In resisting these tendencies, in putting the best of himself, not into revels, but into his dramatic work, he acquired character. That heredity was not all in his case is shown by the fact that he had brothers and sisters, who never climbed the heights with him. His limited early opportunities show that environment was not all that made him. Besides, environment did not make Shakespeares out of others born in that age. There was will-power in him that rose above heredity and environment, and gave him a character that breathes forth in every play."¹

There is, however, a decided element of fate in one's hereditary line, although—in the case of a good heredity—we are pleased to call it fortune. We cannot choose the time of our birth, neither the place, nor the attendant circumstances; we may first see the light in the slums, or in the pure air of the country; our early years may bring associations that are horrible, with the additional tragedy

¹ Halleck: *Psychology and Psychic Culture*, p. 339.

of an ignorance of their true nature; or they may be memories of blue skies, green pastures, and murmuring brooks. We are in the hands of circumstance for the first decade; after that, life begins to be, in a small way, something we can map out for ourselves. Still, if our fathers have eaten the sour grapes, our teeth will be set on edge. We can only accept the legacy they have left us, and make the best of it. Heredity and early environment are life's compulsory gifts to us: there is no refusal. But the later environment is more a matter of choice. We can assert our individual preferences. The element that is lacking we are able to supply. Surroundings that are not congenial are substituted for others more to the taste; at any rate, the disposition to make the change is generally converted into action.

Nevertheless, even environment is not all-sufficing, for the man in the country is often dead to its subtle charms; hard work, long hours, and the absence of curiosity have kept back the growth of intelligence, and he lives the life of dull contentment. So with the city dweller: the history of its monuments, the story of its churches, the growth of its industries, the value of its museums, may be as a sealed book to him; he is superficially quick, as becomes an inhabitant of a fast moving civilisation, but in regard to his surroundings, he may be as deficient as the countryman.

We therefore fall back upon *will*. The man whose strength is in himself may have had a fated childhood; and even early youth may not have seen much improvement; but if in the years approaching

mental manhood he can realise the power of will, then the misfortunes of the past can be wiped out. He is able to begin the work of character-building on new lines. Slowly but surely the foundations are laid in rigorous discipline, and stone by stone the structure rises to completion. But it is a hard and serious work. Some men lose heart, and having stepped out of the crowd, they step back again—to lose their identity. Truly did Victor Hugo say : “ They lack will.”

Now what is the most helpful notion to offer to a character builder? It is this: When you *will* to perform certain actions in order to approach your ideal, and those actions are repeated time after time, they tend to become easier, and they also tend to become habitual. Good character is good habit. That is just what Novalis said. You have seen your ideal : your repeated efforts, once so strenuous, are now easy of accomplishment; and whereas character was once a struggle, it is now a habit, “ a completely fashioned will.”

CHAPTER XI.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING SURVEY.

“Will it: and set to work briskly.”—SCHILLER.

I.

THE object of this discussion of principles and experiments was to throw some light on the best methods of training the will; and in order to accomplish our aim we devoted some space to the psychological aspect of the subject, to a study of the relationship between mind and body, and to an investigation of the theory of suggestion. We also inquired into the effect of will-power on health, education, imagination, business, and conduct.

The result can be stated in few words. Since the mind is a unity, and holds a supremacy over the body, it can both create and cure functional disorders; it can, in some cases, cure organic diseases; and it can develop and modify its own powers. Even though there are definite limits to will-power, as, for instance, its failure to set a broken bone, or supply a lost limb, its intensive and extensive effect is most considerable. We were persuaded that health is largely a matter of determination, provided we keep the known laws of the body. In memory training, in education, and the higher ranges of intellectual activity, we discovered a beneficent action of will through suggestion, enabling a student or a business man to accomplish hitherto impossible tasks, and bringing out to the full those latent mental possibilities which otherwise

diffidence, or illness, or craven fear would all but destroy. And, although there is no magic in business, will-power is the one virtue that is predominant, whilst in conduct it is the first of all factors for good, even crushing the taint of a bad heredity, and counterbalancing the weight of an unfortunate environment. It will be seen, then, that we have claimed the highest of all achievements for Will: what do the critics say?

II.

We do not see what they *can* say. They cannot deny the facts, they can only disagree with our interpretation of them. There are a few people to-day whose one nightmare is the terminology of religion. They bristle when they hear the words "God" and "Soul," and are mortally afraid the new movement will give them a fresh lease of life. They want to believe that the ego is a function of the brain: nothing more, nothing less. Well they are welcome to believe in it, if the theory can account for all the phenomena of mental life. But why do they not confess their difficulties, frankly, as we have done, instead of trying to squeeze amazing occurrences into the puny limits of a narrow theory? Whether the ego is wholly a brain product or not, is a secondary matter, from the practical point of view. The chief question is, "What can *will* do?" and we have answered it as fully as we can, without resorting to any theological terms, and without calling in any supernatural aid. Our language has been naturalistic throughout.

But the critics urge one objection to which the spirit of fairness compels close attention. They say in substance: "Granting that will-power can do all you claim, how long does its influence last? If a man is cured of paralysis by will-power, cannot a season of unbelief and fear bring back the infirmity? Is it not logical to reason that the faith which heals may be followed by the doubt which causes the disease to return? The fact is, your chief authorities are almost criminally silent on the subject of *relapses*." The objection is well taken. But, first of all, let us hasten to assure the critics that they are quite right when they say that loss of will may undo the work that will has done; and that doubt may shatter the effects of faith. Why not? In a philosophic sense we walk by faith, and not by sight. Let a man believe himself to be well, and he is on the high road to health; let him doubt it, and his mind immediately acts to the detriment of his body. To say "I can" may be followed by "I can't."

On the subject of relapses we have, ourselves, observed a comparative silence on the part of most writers, but we have explained it in this way. Here is a physician who believes firmly in cure by suggestion, and his books are crowded with authentic cases to prove it. We will suppose, however, he has failed in forty per cent. of his experiments. Ought he to publish that fact and discourse on his sorrows accordingly? We think he would not, for several reasons. No man is keen on recounting his failures. Are you? Besides, the physician has good reason for thinking that his remedies have not

had fair play in every case, and, unless a man exercises the necessary will-power, how can will-power cure him of a disorder, or assist him in other way? A failure in this sense is not a failure at all.

Now the physician may argue, in a similar way, with regard to relapses. The original cure was as real as a cure could be: the falling away afterwards only illustrated the primary truth that as a man thinketh, so is he. Why, therefore, devote a number of pages to describing the obvious? Again, the physician may claim that such a course would be in contradiction of the theory of suggestion. To recount sad cases of relapse would be to fill the hopeful mind with fear, and prevent the law of suggestion from doing what it could when unhindered. This is only following the practice of parents whose policy is to keep evil away from their children: they do not deny the existence of evil, any more than the doctor denies the possibility of a relapse; but both believe unpleasant facts exercise suggestion, and that it is better to avoid them.

III.

These contentions cannot be lightly set aside. They have a reasonableness about them which indicates that it is not fear which causes doctors and professors to say so little about relapses. And yet we could wish that they had treated us more like men. We want to know the full truth, not half the truth. Some people are so constituted mentally, that they will never be able to deal with ill-health from the mental point of view. Heine's mind kept him sane for the most part, whilst lying on his

mattress grave; but it was not altogether a conscious effort of will. He was a cynic, and the cynical disposition is hardly one that could bring itself to the practice of auto-suggestion. It is too proud. And yet the torments of bodily pain might induce even a cynic to give suggestion a trial. Now if the failures and relapses, as tabulated in the doctor's schedules, prove that such men are not good subjects for a course of mental treatment, would it not be better for us to know beforehand? Than failure and relapse, there is nothing in the world more disheartening; and any result of systematised experience which would save a patient from unnecessary suffering is of the highest value. We do not complain of the mere absence of information about relapses: that can be explained on the lines laid down; what we complain of is the loss to science, in its broadest sense, of the analysed results of cases where suggestion has failed; and where it has succeeded, but was followed by relapse. What were the circumstances? With what kind of man does suggestion generally fail? And who most commonly have a relapse? How soon after the cure? And why? These are specimens of the questions to which we should like to have an answer. Dr. Quackenbos, however, incidentally gives us a gleam of light. He is speaking of relapse from the hypnotic cure of inebriety. "Various reasons are advanced by backsliders to explain their relapses, and some of them are most trivial, as the death of a favourite dog, dull times, inharmony in the family. Some drink when they feel best, others when they feel worst, other some because they deem

it a satisfaction to 'go off on a tear and tank up.' One man used the argument that he had gone sober so long he was justified in spreeing till he became 'mulled'—which implied the ingestion of a quart of whisky before breakfast and twenty-five bottles of beer in the afternoon. A lady admitted her motive to be the delight she experienced in drinking with her admirers and listening to their flattery and compliments. A very intelligent inventor offered four reasons for indulgence, viz., requirement of the system in consequence of physical depression, sociability, business purposes, and cold blood or 'pure cussedness.' Sometimes the drinker has no object in view, but seems to be actuated by a sense of obligation to a long-standing habit, periodical conformity to which is fraught with discomfort and misery."¹

He adds that in all, he has treated seven hundred cases extending over a period of eight years. "Of these about eighty per cent. have been permanently cured. Of the remaining twenty per cent., a number cannot be traced; a number indifferently submitted to one or two treatments out of deference to the entreaties of friends, and hence there was no objective self-surrender; a few had become parietic before the treatment was begun; a small fraction were society women who, in my experience, are almost without the pale of hope."²

Now this is the kind of information we want. Of course it is not pleasant to know that anybody, even society women, are almost without the pale of hope,

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, pp. 223-4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 225.

but our feelings are not to guide us in a matter of this kind. We want the teachings of experience. That eighty per cent. were permanently cured is a success calculated to inspire any ordinary sufferer with hope.

IV.

We referred to the cynic a moment ago, and cynicism is the worst enemy the practical use of auto-suggestion has to deal with. Modern cynicism is devoid of the wit and mentality of Diogenes, in fact, analysed to its final element, it resolves itself into fear—the fear of what other people will think and say. It is an assumption of the cynic's cloak to cover the heart of a coward. A great many people cannot bring themselves to commence the practice of suggestion. They either think it silly, or they doubt its efficacy. There are certain well defined stages through which the mind passes ere suggestion becomes an accomplished fact. The first stage is that in which one is almost overcome by a sense of absurdity. I begin to repeat aloud, and afterwards to say mentally, and then aloud again, certain statements respecting some physical or mental trouble. The trouble is very real, but I persist in telling myself it is not real. I have an idea that perhaps it will disappear shortly. When it does not disappear, the sense of absurdity comes upon me, as I realise the fact that I am telling myself the trouble has vanished, when it has not. So I say to myself, "What a fool you are! Why humbug yourself in this manner?"

Then, if I persist, I enter upon an argumentative

stage. I remember that these practices, called suggestion, are quite authoritative; that they are practised by medical professors and physicians of high repute. I resolve to go on, and thus I enter the third stage, which is one of stubborn determination. I feel I must give this method a fair trial, partly because I have a suspicion it is a true method, or I should not have tried it, and partly because, being introduced by medical authorities, it would not be fair if I were to throw up the sponge when half-way through the fight with my difficulties. The fifth stage is usually one of conquest; my will-power has asserted itself victoriously, and theory has been proved by experiment.

It may be assumed that where there is a deep sense of the need of help, in any direction, men and women will not hesitate to use auto-suggestion, although even then there is a curious sense of fear, as seen in their desire that nobody shall know what they were doing. The only explanation of this secrecy is that of the tyranny of custom. A man who has had medicine in bottles, cannot imagine any efficacy in homeopathic powders; and we have been told more than once that mental medicine is such an impalpable thing, it requires a lot of time to get used to the idea, whilst the practical part demands a good deal of courage; and in addition, it is not possible, as yet, to talk socially about such efforts to cure bodily ailments: people are shy; they are afraid of being laughed at. We can only say that those who know most about will-power, in a general way, are speedy in applying it when they have grasped its scientific value.

V.

Suggestion is used in three different forms: hypnotic, which means suggestion in hypnotic sleep; hetero-suggestion, that is when given to a patient by a second person; and auto-suggestion. What are the respective values of these methods? It must have occurred to the reader, by this time, that auto-suggestion, although not so powerful as either of the other two, is the method which appeals to the normal man as possessing an essential dignity which the others lack. Let us, however, examine each method separately. Hypnosis is apparently the method for the worst cases. What cannot be done by the will, in the ordinary waking intelligence, can be done by the will when impressed by the physician who induces hypnotic trance. Thus, on the face of it, the resort to this kind of suggestion is brought about because the end sought for can be attained by no other means. As to whether it injures mind or brain, in any way, there are conflicting opinions. We ourselves do not see any reason why it should. Our objection is purely ethical, that is to say, no one ought to seek such aid unless everything else has failed. Not that there is an unworthy element in it, any more than there is in consulting a specialist where the family physician feels he would like to have an expert opinion. But we cannot resist the feeling that so complete a renunciation of the self to the will and control of another, despite the benevolent aim which inspires it, is not without a tincture of humiliation, and a surrender of the personality highly objectionable to a strong man. That is why

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we have called it a method for the worst cases.

To some extent the same criticism applies to hetero-suggestion: it is the proper method of the schoolroom, and, where it is used for adults, it can only mean that for some reason or other the patient is unable to use suggestion for himself. Here, again, we would remark on the absence of any unworthy element; our contention is simply that where it is necessary to employ the services of a second person to assist the will to do its work, we infer the presence of a weakness which is not normal.

Auto-suggestion compels a man to rely on himself. "Trust thyself," says Emerson, "every heart vibrates to that iron string." Here there is no leaning on methods usually employed in moments of weakness, or as a last resource: every man stands squarely on his feet, and, looking the world in the face, bids it do its worst. That is one side. The other side is positive: we see him moving forwards, planting his feet down firmly, confidence in every movement, and hope reigning in his heart. These are not empty rhetorical phrases. They stand for the exact truth. We make no supernatural claims for will-power. A man of eighty, suddenly overtaken with dire misfortune, cannot expect to stand the shock; and a man with a weak brain through over-indulgence in alcoholic liquors, will probably succumb to profound grief, even though his years be comparatively few; but the young man with few ambitions, and a tendency to despair, can, if he likes, modify circumstances in a way that will surprise him, not by

magic, but by will-power and hard work. "There are three kinds of people in the world," it is said, "the will's, the won't's, and the can't's. The first accomplish everything; the second oppose everything; and the third fail in everything."¹

VI.

Now what is the true relation between auto-suggestion and will? Auto-suggestion is a scientific means of accomplishing the desires of the will. We do not say that every little purpose, every side line of intention, demands the use of such a means; a man who wished to save himself the trouble of thinking out a new design for a book cover by resorting to auto-suggestion would be defeating his own ends; he can only increase his subconscious powers by increasing his normal powers. Auto-suggestion is not found to be necessary at all, by men of natural will-power. Why? Because when they say "I will," it always includes "I can." Does the truth now dawn upon you? Even the use of auto-suggestion implies a certain weakness, just as the other methods do in a more intense degree; but we need it because none of us is allowed to go through life scathless. In health and strength the course of life runs smoothly, and the events which put us to the test are few and far between. But they come at their appointed time. Then the battle begins, and the strong man feels his need of every help which the laws of mind can give him. He tells himself he is winning all along the line; his eyes are not blinded to facts, but he stares them into

¹ Quoted in *An Iron Will*, by O. S. Marden, p. 10.

insignificance : the logic of analogy affirms plainly that the usual result is for men to go under ; he affirms, on the contrary, he will rise higher than ever before. Baden Powell says that a scout has sometimes only two courses open to him : if he retreats he will die, if he goes forward he will also die. It is then better to advance—even though it be to die.

Observation of men during the last fifteen years, has convinced us that the lack of will-power is at the root of many of our evils. There is plenty of enlightened thought in the world, and no one can say we exist in intellectual darkness : the way to success in every sphere is pointed out by competent authorities in popular journals, and equally popular books ; and yet, although we *see* and *know*, we appear to lack the will to *act*. Probably the reader, when he has finished these pages, will determine to put some of the proffered advice into practice, but an invitation to a series of Bridge parties will sweep all his intentions off their feet, to perish utterly in a flood of social pleasures. Do not complain that we are confining our concluding survey to the moral uses of will. They are all moral. We have not forgotten our remarks on health culture, on memory-training, and all the rest of the topics dealt with : they are before us as we write. But why go into details again ? The supreme power is will-power, and how can you use auto-suggestion if you cannot conquer the feeling of lassitude which tempts you to forego the exercise ; or the disposition to finish a novel in preference to performing a duty that has already been postponed a week ?

VII.

The education of the will should be begun, contradictory as it may seem, by assuring yourself you can do what you wish to do, and assuring yourself on the principles of auto-suggestion as outlined in the foregoing pages. Of course, no amount of will-power can accomplish impossible aims. Set yourself to paint an Academy picture, and you attempt something that is utterly impracticable, unless you have the required gift and training. By "what you wish to do" we mean the ambitions proper to your intelligence and place in life. Not to set yourself an impossible task is half the battle. "The greatest man," says Seneca, "is he who chooses right with the most invincible determination." A mighty will with no intelligence behind it is foiled everywhere; and without scruple it becomes a menace to the world's peace. So "choose right," and move forwards.

But let us come down to specific cases. You are a martyr to neuralgia, and you wish to be free from it, with a desire that only fellow sufferers can understand. You begin to practise auto-suggestion. For a time the pain is, probably, only diminished in the slightest degree. Why? Because your will is only partly developed. It is as if a youth who had never touched a piano, sat down to play the last movement of the Waldstein sonata. His fingers are stiff, and, although he understands the score, the executive ability is absent; in time, with constant practice, he will succeed—not before. You may be a most resolute individual in other things, but that does not make any difference.

You have to train the nerves to pass a different kind of thought-force, and they need time to get accustomed to the change. Hitherto you have sent confirming messages of pain to the affected parts; *now* you have to send messages of denial, and although the first may miscarry, or suffer a leakage on the way, later ones will be more effective, and you will obtain a trained will. Each effort makes the next one easier.

It is evident, therefore, that you can only prove the truth of auto-suggestion by continued experiment, and you cannot continue experimenting without a determined exercise of will-power. Consequently the only conclusion we can arrive at is the pre-eminently unoriginal one embodied in the old saying, "Practice makes perfect." It holds good in playing golf as it does in music; in billiards as in athletics; and in chess as in speaking at the Bar. Practice! How prosaic it sounds as the finale of all that has gone before—these mysteries of mind in its effect on body, these marvels of memory-training, these flights of the creative intelligence, and these miracles of a changed character. Yes, it is prosaic, but it is better to have a fact clothed in fustian than a lie dressed in purple. So now to the hum-drum of daily life with its uninspiring environment; look things straight in the face, and by imagination see yourself transformed from sickness into health, from diffidence into confidence, and from partial failure into whole success. Then generate the will-power to realise your vision in all its attractive actuality. For you there is only one verb in the grammar of

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life: the verb "To be." You once learned to conjugate it—on paper—in every mood and tense, but the time for conjugation is past and gone. "*I will*" is waiting to be translated into action.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I.

A DISCUSSION ON THE FORMULÆ OF AUTO-SUGGESTION.

ONE of the practical difficulties of auto-suggestion is the finding of a right form of words. In self-treatment it is important to know the best methods; when to speak words aloud, and when they should be used mentally. A formula has some relation to the directions on the medicine bottle as to teaspoonfuls: it tells us what to do, and when to do it. We therefore, in this appendix, provide some of these formulæ, selected from competent authorities, not necessarily for use as they stand, but as a means of enabling a sufferer to draw up his own formula—the one which experience teaches him is best.

The first is a specimen from Ebbard, based on Lévy.

FORMULÆ OF SUGGESTION.

TABLE I.—FOR INSOMNIA.

ANTICIPATORY SELF-SUGGESTION.

In the morning upon awakening in the state of quiescence:

Once, mentally:	To-night I shall sleep soundly and peacefully!
Six times, softly:	To-night I shall get some sleep!
Four times, half-aloud:	To-night I shall sleep soundly!
Twice, aloud:	I shall sleep to-night!
Emotive Re-enforcement:	I imagine myself in the delightful feeling produced by a refreshing sleep; the pleasant awakening from a sound sleep, with the sense of renewed strength and vigour.

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Active re-enforcement :

I shut my eyes, pass the palm of my hand over my forehead and eyes, and lie down for a moment in the most comfortable posture I can assume, viz., that in which I am wont to fall asleep; I also pretend to yawn several times.

EXTRANEOUS PRE-SUGGESTION :

Once, aloud :

Yes, you shall sleep soundly to-night.

Once, aloud :

You shall sleep very soundly indeed.

Once, aloud :

Just think how differently you feel from what you did a little while ago! That Herb Tea *has* done you good, you have never slept better in your life!

At 6 o'clock, or at the very latest 7 p.m., all brain work must be discontinued. The evening should be spent in light, cheering converse, merry amusements, and gentle out-door exercise. Exciting games are to be avoided. Supper should be taken between the hours of 7 and 7.30 p.m. A foot-bath in lukewarm water, with plenty of soap, is recommended.

CONTEMPORANEOUS SELF-SUGGESTION :

At night, after getting into bed, in the state of quiescence :

Once, mentally :

To-night I sleep soundly and peacefully!

Once, softly :

Now, then, I am going off to sleep!

Twice, softly :

I am asleep.

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Once, half-aloud :	Yes, I am asleep !
Twice, half-aloud :	I am asleep !
Once, aloud :	Yes, I am asleep !
Once, aloud :	I am asleep !
Emotive Re-enforcement :	The same as in the morning.
Active Re-enforcement :	The same as in the morning.

CONTEMPORANEOUS SUGGESTION BY ANOTHER :

Once, aloud :	You shall sleep ; yes, you are asleep already !
Twice, aloud :	You shall sleep soundly to-night ; do you hear ?
Once, aloud :	Good night ; you are asleep.

Should the patient wake up during the night and find he cannot go off to sleep again at once, he should use the same formula of Suggestion as on going to bed.

In most cases, however, a brief period of Suggestion will prove sufficient, especially if begun immediately upon awaking. On no account should such a phrase as "I wish I could go to sleep again" be used. For Suggestion the present tense only should be used :

Once, mentally :

Three times, softly :

Twice, half-aloud :

Persons waking several times during the night need only repeat each time the formulæ as above.

Should EXTRANEEOUS SUGGESTION be feasible, the formula should also be in the present tense :

Once, aloud :

I am now falling asleep again.

I sleep !

I sleep !

You are falling asleep again !

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Twice, aloud :

You are asleep !

In a short time Self-suggestion will give the patient such control over sleep that he will presently be able to go to sleep and awake at his pleasure two or three times in an hour.

II.

The next outline deals with over-indulgence in cigarette smoking. That there are men, otherwise estimable in every way, who become cigarette maniacs, is only too true; and when the doctor steps in with peremptory orders to discontinue the habit, compliance with his request is a matter of the utmost difficulty, even though the penalties of further indulgence are painted in no uncertain terms. The following form of suggestion was used hypnotically by Dr. Quackenbos, in the case of a man who sincerely desired to be free from the cigarette mania. This sincerity is an important item, because there are men who want to be free from the *effects* of over-indulgence, but not from the over-indulgence itself; although they persuade themselves they *are* sincere.

CIGARETTE MANIA.

Form for Auto-Suggestion.

“ As a cigarette smoker I am not at my best. The habit of inhaling the volatile poisons of tobacco in the form of smoke, whereby they are brought into immediate contact with many hundred square feet of absorbing lung tissue, is creating degenerative changes in vital organs, especially the nerve centres. It is degrading the brain-cell, so that moral propensity cannot be expressed. It is destroying my mentality, and disqualifying me for business. I do not need the cigarette; I abhor it, I loathe it, I fear it. I shall no longer use it at the instigation of habit, to stimulate me

quickly for task and pastime, nor at the solicitation of friend to promote conviviality. The pleasure is doubtful; the penalty exacted by an inexorable nature, unescapable. I will not take the risk of dyspepsia, bronchitis, nervous depression, irregular heart action, eye defect, and premature paralysis which are the legitimate results of the abuse of the cigarette. I am done with it, and all it stands for, for ever. The craving for it is killed in my nature by the force of my own decree. The odour of tobacco is nauseating to me; the attempt to inhale it henceforth shall strangle me. I shall not miss the cigarette nor suffer the usual consequences attendant upon its discontinuance. I am free! ”¹

III.

DIPSOMANIA.

A dipsomaniac “ actuated by a sincere desire to break the shackles of the despotism and go forth with capacity for the higher joys of life, is urged to think persistently as he is falling asleep on lines like these : Whisky is unnecessary to my physical well-being ; it is creating structural changes in vital organs ; it is destroying my mentality and blunting my moral sensibility. I do not need it, and shall no longer use it either in mere bravado or to hide from my vision conditions that are insufferable. I shall depend absolutely on the units of energy legitimately manufactured out of nutritious food, good air, exercise, and sleep. I am done with alcohol once and for ever. The appetite for it is destroyed in my being, and I no longer admit capacity for temptation. From this hour it shall be impossible for me either to desire or take a drink for any conceivable reason. I do not want it. I do not need it. I shall not miss it.”²

Dr. Osgood Mason spoke as follows to a dipsomaniac whom he had hypnotised :

“ You still possess those higher qualities which seemed to be lost, and which you were careless of

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p. 82.

² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

possessing; you never knew before how valuable and how beautiful they are, and how divine, but you begin to see now, and to feel how even the thought of them is putting you on a vantage ground. . . . Now the power of your enemy is broken; you are the master, for you have found out your own strength. Manhood, self-respect, thoughtfulness, and care for others . . . you know and feel that never again must they be degraded. . . . Your course is no longer downward toward degradation, but upward toward light and beauty and usefulness.”¹

IV.

STAGE FRIGHT.

(1) Actors, actresses, singers, and public speakers are all liable to fits of paralysing nervousness, especially when unusual demands are made upon them. The following is a form of hypnotic suggestion used by Dr. Quackenbos, in treating an actress who suffered from extreme trepidation and self-consciousness, in view of the necessity of taking an important part in a play, for which impersonation she had no taste.

““ You are now in a position to recognise your dramatic gifts, and you are going to express them forthwith, free from diffidence and nervousness. You have grasped in full the dramatic idea of the play of ———. You have confidence in your own interpretation of the character of ———. Your acting will be consistent with this interpretation, sincere and natural in tone, intuitive and free. Realising the efficiency within you, you will unconstrainedly throw into your art all that magic which fascinates and spells and sways an audience from first to last—your self-possession retained, but your self-consciousness submerged in the spirit of your performance. So will you impress without effort all who witness your acting with your artistic felicity in the portraiture of passion, with the superior quality of your impersonation, your truthfulness to

¹ *Hypnotism and Suggestion*, pp. 191-3, by Dr. R. Osgood Mason, M.A., M.D.

nature, your heavy-handed realism. Moreover, you will not depend for encouragement upon the expressed sympathy or approbation of your audience. You dominate your audience; not your audience, you. For the time being it is yours, to do with what you will. You are now your own best critic. You are convinced that you can make no mistake. Your judgment is satisfied by your loyalty to a carefully studied and deliberately formed conception of ——. There will be no self-depreciation, no under-valuation of your powers, no tacit admission of inadequacy. For henceforth you realise yourself in your higher relationships, you are fearless, you are sustained by a moral and an intellectual courage that will never fail you, you are without misgivings, and you are going before the footlights on the night of ————— with the same assurance of triumph that steadied Alexander the Great on the field of Arbela, and Napoleon at Austerlitz.' And she did it. Two treatments evoked the realistic touch of Bernhardt. It was in her. She was only inspired to express it on the instant; and the people of New York for months gave singular evidence of their wonder and delight. To quote the *Dramatic Mirror*, 'She placed herself like a meteor among the stars.'"¹

(2) Singers with morbid expectations of failure at the time of trial, but who had been assured by throat specialists that they were free from all organic trouble, were treated as follows: "You have a finely developed chest and a perfect instrument of voice expression, so that the tone-producing blast forced up by the diaphragm will determine a sufficient amplitude of vibration in the vocal chords. Your voice will be responsive to the demands made upon it by your genius. It will never hereafter be interfered with by expressions of physical nervousness. You will not be annoyed, when you sing, by sensations of pressure, suffocation, throbbing at the stomach, tumultuous heart action, tremors, constriction, or smarting in the throat. The vocal organs—diaphragm, chords, palate, tongue, cheek muscles, lips—will respond promptly and accurately to

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, p. 259.

your volition, so that you will sing without vocal stiffness or awkwardness, and with no lack of breath control, but with perfect physical relaxation and composure. You will be passive in throat and mouth, but active in diaphragm. Thus your voice will be velvety through the whole register—even, clear, soft, round, full, free, vibrant, luscious, in tone, strong and sustained, never tremulous or faltering, flexible, resonant, with great carrying power and range, exquisite sweetness and pathos, and versatile expression. You have faith in your voice and its culture, in its volume, quality, and temperament. You possess a musical brain with fine interpretative faculty, and a perfect sense of rhythm, and henceforth you will sing with force and feeling and dramatic ardour, always detecting and projecting the spiritual interpretation of the masters whose compositions you may render.”¹

V.

LITERARY INSPIRATION.

Writers desirous of developing their latent talents, are treated as follows : “ You are now going to express all your inborn resources. You apprehend your mental faculties in all their strength and beauty, and your power to use them to the highest advantage. You are creative along the lines of dramatic (or other) composition. You apprehend the value of the literary material at your command, and will recognise and appropriate whatever is adapted to your purpose, whether you find it in slum or drawing-room, or highway or byway. So did Ben Johnson, Dickens, Balzac, Emerson. Thus you will retain and assimilate the best of the good you hear, read, or observe, so that you can exploit it in conversation and writing.”²

The study of these formulæ will not be received by readers without criticism. Some of the suggestions will be regarded as too long, some as overcharged with optimism; others as impossible to any man with a sense

¹ *Hypnotic Therapeutics*, pp. 261-2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 289.

of humour. But let it be remembered that such formulæ are to be used only by those who feel they need them. The man who can smoke five cigarettes a day, and never feel the want of a sixth, will smile cynically on the wordy efforts of a brother trying to break himself free from the practice of whiffing away sixty a day; the actress who never feels a tremor, and can "stare out" any audience in the world without so much as blinking, laughs superciliously at the notion of imparting courage medically, or by auto-suggestion; whilst the literary man, with so many ideas that he does not know what to do with them, will pooh-pooh the notion that any system can develop ideas in the mind of a second-rate writer. But after all, the methods outlined have enabled men and women to do infinitely more than they would have done by any other means. Why then object? Thought-force is capable of control and direction by the will, and in auto-suggestion is found the simplest and most practicable method of application. The reader is therefore advised to draw up his own formulæ in the words he knows best, and which are, therefore, more charged with meaning than the words of others.

APPENDIX II.

THE PERMANENCE OF ACQUIRED MORAL CHARACTER.

IN the concluding chapter of this book we touched upon the question of physical relapse. We complained that investigators were not always so candid as they might be, and that the interests of truth are best served by the disclosure of all the facts. It may therefore be fitting to supplement the chapter on conduct by a brief discussion of relapses other than those which are physical. We propose first to examine the history of the idea of permanency as set forth in various sections of the Christian Church. The two most representative names are John Calvin and John Wesley.

Calvin taught his followers that the elect of God were for ever secure from the complete control of evil; they might have to struggle hard against it sometimes, but, if Christ died to save them, He could not have died in vain; therefore their ultimate salvation was fully assured. This, of course, is not an ethical doctrine; it is theological pure and simple, albeit based with some degree of probability on words to be found in the Bible. But a moral character or a spiritual advantage, which accrues through the death of Christ is a quality which the majority of men can neither accept nor reject: it is altogether dependent upon a Trinitarian conception of the world, and where that conception is absent, the notion of obtaining a character by proxy is without appeal. Besides, it does not, in the least, lessen the need for working out our own salvation—another proof that the idea of an elect is purely one of revelation.

John Wesley, in combating Calvinism, struck a line of thought which resulted in his doctrine of entire sanctification or Christian perfection. The spiritual egoism of this doctrine has in late years begotten a

disposition, among his followers, to "side-step" its principles. Undoubtedly the phraseology in which the teaching is embodied, and the instructions given to the faithful, are open to serious objection. We consider the act of publicly testifying to the possession of any kind of moral wealth is highly reprehensible.

But what was Wesley's teaching? It was the complete extermination of evil desire by the all-powerful love of God as embodied in a Divine-Human Person. He believed in "the completely fashioned will." Up to his time the making of character had been regarded—ecclesiastically at least—as a battle, not as a building operation which had a possible date for completion. Of course, a battle can be won, but the Christian warrior was never supposed to sheathe his sword until the last enemy—Death—had been slain. Too much scope was given to a resourceful and peripatetic Devil; too little was allowed for the security due to years of continued development. Putting the position in extremely popular language, Wesley seemed to say to his contemporaries: You are mistaken in supposing it is the hardest thing in the world to be a good man, a morally perfect man. It is not easy, truly, but it is not difficult when you once know the secret. I read my Bible to the effect that it is the Divine intention we should, here and now, attain both perfection and permanency of character, not in some future state of which we know nothing, except as it is revealed to us. And the secret is Love. Get rid of all evil desire, and evil action becomes impossible.

Now divest this teaching of its theological trappings, and it becomes a real contribution to ethics. The modern psychologist is teaching the same idea. ✓ Professor James argues for helpful associations, and shows how habit becomes permanent. "The great thing in all education is to make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy. For this we must make automatic and habitual, as easily as possible, as many useful actions as we can."

Automatic and habitual: those are the key-words. Everybody believes that "practice makes perfect," and

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plenty of practice in "good character" action tends to make character relatively perfect : the *ego* is in complete control of itself and its surroundings. There should come a time when a man has fought and won the chief battles of life : to be continually fighting them suggests that previous victories were not victories at all. Moral relapses, therefore, of a serious kind, are not natural. They point to weak habits, to hesitating principles, defective training. The man who sees his ideal and works towards its realisation, need have no fear of falling back provided his will is strong enough for the task. And to make his will his ally, he should *suggest* persistently that he is becoming like his ideal. He should cultivate that discreet self-confidence which makes a man too proud to be the plaything of heredity and the sport of circumstances. And this will occur when character has assumed permanent form by the force of habit.

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