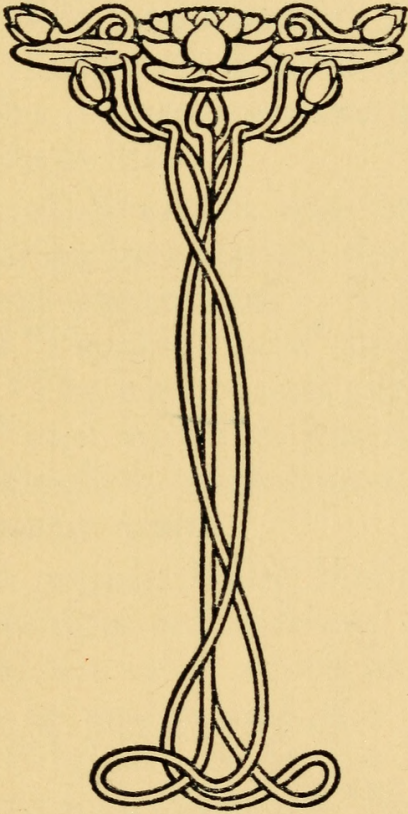


236002

ESSENTIALS OF PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT

Being Number Two Of
LESSONS OF PROGRESS

BY
WILL J. ERWOOD



717 EAST TWENTY-SECOND STREET
Baltimore, Maryland

BF1272
.E75

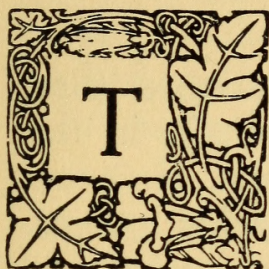
COPYRIGHT 1909
BY WILL J. ERWOOD
All Rights Reserved

©CLA253516



ESSENTIALS OF PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT.

"What Man has done Man can do!"



THIS is an old adage, but it is as vitally true today as when first uttered. It conveys a sentiment—a conception, which should be a source of strength and assurance to every person who desires to accomplish things worth while in life.

Particularly is this true of those who desire to bring into activity the forces with which these pages deal. Too often the student of "Psychic Force" is given to the assertion: "There is not a bit of Psychic Power in me," and, with this statement voiced, folds the hands in helplessness; for such the spirit of inertia waits.

It is a popular belief that but few of nature's children are endowed with Psychic Power. It is a belief which has its rise in the failure to understand the meaning of the word "Physic;" or in the confounding of this term with the word "Medium."

That there may be no misunderstanding let it be said that the word "Psychic" is taken from a Greek word meaning Soul.

That stripped of all occult—or ambiguous meaning, the use of the term "Psychic Power" simply signifies one who is making use of the Soul, or Spiritual force which is as much a part of selfhood as is any one of the faculties, attributes or functions with which we have been endowed.

And further, let it be understood that, since the same general laws obtain in the being of each, every person must, of necessity, be the possessor of Psychic power. And that the greater, or lesser success in its use is simply a matter of unfoldment or use.

Unfoldment is to a great degree nothing more than the rational and consistent, as well as continued use of any given faculty—or number of faculties. This is just as true of the mental, or soul side of the man, as it is of the physical muscles.

Individuals find themselves apparently devoid of active Psychic perceptions simply because they have ignored this side of their being. Thus the majority have only themselves to blame for the dullness of these finer senses.

It is no more than just to say, in addition to the above, that much of the dullness of perception, Psychically, is due to the ingrained fear of, and prejudice against all forms of spiritual manifestations.

This prejudice and fear comes from the too general ignorance concerning human possibilities. It is born of a general fear of forces that are not fully understood—a fear fostered by those who have been subservient to a blind faith which sees in everything, which does not come within its limited philosophy or scope, the working of a Satanic agency.

Such people have not learned that there is no force in nature which is not beneficent when rightly used; that there is nothing which is not malevolent when misused. That the evil comes in company with the ignorance of the underlying principle; and the good comes in the right application, or use, through the knowledge thereof.

Ignorance has given rise to the tendency to fall down in fear and trembling whenever some cloud, which has not before been observed, appears on the horizon of human consciousness.

From this fear has come the too generally prevalent practice of starting in alarm whenever we come within range of the cloud of Psychic Manifestations. And this without knowing that this wave of Psychism is but the shadow of the Superman and the Superwoman.

With one half the human undeveloped we cannot expect to see the quality, of

human consciousness desired. When the man is all physical and no spiritual, he is not what he should be. If all spiritual and no physical, the same is true. Hence the assertion: The Superman and the Superwoman is that one who is fully rounded out; i. e. who is developed physically, mentally, spiritually—Psychically!

It may be safely asserted that the day dawns in which the study of Psychic law will form a part of every school curriculum. Every Teacher of Humans will be man or woman whose knowledge and experience covers both physical and psychical phenomena.

This because Education means unfoldment! And how can the uneducated human assist in the rational education of others? Yet the system of the day is such that those with the most superficial knowledge, and the most limited experience, are intrusted with the care of growing human beings whose consistent unfoldment would add so much to the weal of the commonwealth—to the sum of human achievement and happiness.

Back of every oppression will be found one of three things: Ignorance; Prejudicial Superstition; or Cupidity. Behind every effort to stem the tide of human knowledge is found the lurking, skulking form of one or the other of these inquisitorial demons, sometimes all of them.

This demoniac trio has ever stood opposed to whatsoever would add to the sum of human knowledge or power. To add to the sum of knowledge means to weaken the hold of this trinity upon the human family; hence the opposition to each step in progress.

We enslave a people and end by being ourselves enslaved—it is the meed of the oppressor. We set people free, and lo! the Angel of Progress stands ready to place the laurel of freedom upon our own brow.

Thus the minions of the above mentioned diabolic, triune obstacle to human advancement, have fought every effort to make for progress; have contested the cognition of every slumbering energy which has knocked at the door of human consciousness. True to the action of the law they have been enslaved by their own superstitions and fears. And they are the last to know the freedom of the Soul's awakening.

Everything which tended to take the human out of the clutches of Priestcraft has been fought with greater violence than aught else. This because of the attempt to foster the idea that but few are the recipients of Divine favor—but few able to interpret the will of the Infinite.

Let the force be such as would awaken the soul perceptions to a comparatively un-

common degree—it must, forsooth, be condemned as dangerous. Let it bring about a receptivity to Cosmic Energy, greater than is enjoyed by the average individual, and it must perforce be condemned as vicious. So says the human fossil who is wedded to the days and customs of the by-gone.

This then explains the antagonism towards, and fear of all Psychic phenomena. And strangely enough, the most virulent opposition has come from those who have builded the entire superstructure of their faith, their hope and joy, upon more or less uncertain accounts of the Psychic experiences of men long since numbered with the yesterdays which have fled.

The theologian has been preaching of the soul. Yet he fears the Soul in action! He trembles in the presence of the majesty of Spiritual Selfhood—of Cosmic Energy manifesting in human Consciousness.

Coadjutor of the Infinite—interpreter of the will of the Divine, as he has declared himself to be, he, nevertheless, falls upon his knees in fear and trembling, before the vision of the larger life! He quakes in the presence of the illumined consciousness, and, forthwith, prays to the Heavenly Father to be delivered from the wiles of the Devil.

Server of the Over-soul, though he asserts himself to be, he fears his Master's

intonations when speaking through the voice of Progress! Blindly he attempts to stem the tide; and would put to nought the machinations of the Divine Creative Energy of which he, himself, is but a Creature.

Hast thou forgotten, oh, erstwhile server of the Infinite! that back of, within, and throughout every force in the Universe lies that Potency designated, variously, as God; Allah; Brahma or Over-Soul?

Go where we will its evolutionary processes are in action. Fight them, as we—in our ignorance—sometimes do, they still march forward, drawing the human family resistlessly toward the goal of a larger and clearer degree of Consciousness.

And whatever the Infinite may be, its forces are always bivouacked upon the plains of human existence; unencumbered, they are ever ready to spring into every breach in the wall of ignorance and bring manumission—liberty, to the souls that hunger for progress—who are athirst for knowledge.

Fear is born of ignorance! Keep the masses in ignorance and you keep them fearful; keep them fearful and you have made slaves of them—they are yours to do with as you will. This is a psychological law.

Knowing this, wily and subtle minions of the old school have sought to engender fear in the minds of the people. The reasons are obvious!

True to the instinct, of the "genus theologia," which has ever inspired warfare against each innovation in the way of advancement, these devotees have turned their ecclesiastical guns upon what they are pleased to term: "the evils of Psychism." And vigorously have they denounced all Psychic manifestations as being of Satanic origin.

Steadfastly they have asserted that the unfoldment of the psychic side of one's nature "contravenes the will of God." Then, when brought face to face with insurmountable evidence of the reality of such phenomena, they have followed the precedent established by their kind, ages ago, and have said:

"To be sure these phenomena are true; and sometimes are beneficial, but: all phenomena must be within the bounds of our organization—under our dominion, for then they are of Divine origin. And all such as occur outside the pale of our institution are superinduced by the Devil."

"Consistency, thou art a jewel!" Let us examine the statement that these Psychic powers of ours contravene the will of God.

The Fable runs: "God made the Heavens and Earth; and all therein. He is Omnipresent; Omniscient; Omnipotent. Nothing can obtain without his will—unless he creates it. He has the power to stop in-

stantly whatsoever he listeth. God breathed into the nostrils of man, and he became a Living Soul, etc."

The above being true everything in existence must be in accord with the Infinite will—else it could not exist. And, the foregoing being true, everything—every force in nature is beneficent when used rationally—wisely. Psychic force then is also, and of necessity, beneficent, when properly used.

"There," say some, we object to its use because it is sometimes abused! To be sure it is sometimes abused! But, we are more prone to abuse any force when ignorant of its proper sphere, than we are when we have knowledge thereof.

And to refuse to make use of any force because it had been abused would mean to bar out everything. For ignorant human nature has misapplied nearly every force and element in life.

Bibles have been misused; priest-craft has been misused. The abuse of these two things have given rise to as much of misery and horror as anything that has ever fallen to man's lot to use or abuse. Indeed, their misuse has given rise to such inquisitorial horrors, as to make the heart tremble with wrath and indignation when contemplating them.

Yet both have been used by some, judicially and well. Political privileges have been abused. Love, life, liberty have each been abused.

Hence, to decry a thing because someone has abused it is poor policy. The better way is to carefully investigate, and with the acquisition of knowledge, make proper application of the principles involved.

And, let it be said right here, it is folly to look upon psychic force as supernatural. A supernatural thing cannot exist in a natural universe. To admit that which is "supernatural"—i. e. above the natural—is to make of this universe a thing of caprice, without one single fraction of stability in it.

Every force is a natural force back of which there is a closely related antecedent cause. Every phenomenon is a natural phenomenon, connected with, and behind which there is a more or less clearly defined antecedent cause. And the ability to trace the relationship between the phenomena of nature, and their more immediate causes, measures the sum of human knowledge and power of which the individual is possessed.

And this because that knowledge measures the ability of the individual to apply principles, and to be of use to humanity.

To repeat, then Psychic Force is natural; and the "Psychic" is simply one using natural—but more keen than ordinarily in use—sense perceptions. Contrary to the popular theory, the "Psychic" is not of necessity one who is abnormal. Nor is he an individual who is a victim of either hallucination or neuresthenia. In truth, there are many persons who make active and rational use of the Psychic sense, who are decidedly the reverse of the victim of nerve depletion.

In order to avoid confusion we are dispensing with the numerous metaphysical terms and distinctions used by Occultists in dealing with Spirit, Soul, Matter, and the various degrees of mind.

Because of this we are using the term "Psychic" in a broad sense; we use it to convey this meaning: a person—a Soul who is sufficiently awakened to use the finer Soul sense perceptions to the extent that he acquires information, knowledge and understanding, quite beyond the range of the ordinary senses.

And while understanding the differentiations made by Theosophist, Buddhist and others, relative to Soul, Spirit, and Mind, we are using the term Soul to designate the whole man, whether functioning through material bodies, or immaterial forms. In short, we are using the terms "Psychic and Soul" as synonyms.

meaning the same thing by each.

And using the word "Soul" to mean the Eternal, real, Spiritual man—the man who, in moments of illumination, reveals himself and sets at naught the limitations of the flesh.

As everything in nature is subject to vibratory activity; and as these vibratory waves are the means whereby we are made cognizant of the nature of that with which we come in contact, let us say that "The Psychic" is one able to enregister vibratory activities greatly beyond the range of ordinary sense perception.

Let us get firmly fixed in the mind the fact that the Psychic is not necessarily the Medium—in the sense in which the term Medium is used. While recognizing the fact that all Mediums are, naturally, gifted with Psychic power, we are not confounding the two. By Psychic we mean the person who is consciously, and individually awakened, and using his or her inherent power.

The Medium, as the general understanding of the term goes, is always an instrument in the hands of, or under the control of an intelligence, or power, extraneous to the medium. In other words under the hypnotic dominion of another mind, either incarnate or discarnate.

And let us also get firmly fixed in the mind the realization that we have nothing to fear from Psychic Power; that it is simply keying the being up to "concert pitch" so to speak, that we may catch the music of the spheres.

The reason why some people have experienced unpleasant results in their search is found in two causes, mainly. They are, first: the fear entertained of the psychic manifestations; second: the attempt to force the development of psychic sensitiveness, either by hypnosis, or otherwise.

Remember: "That which we fear is always our Master." Also: forced development is never conducive of the best results. Moral: Eliminate fear from your being entirely; and be natural, normal, consistent in your development—giving nature time enough to do the work well, instead of forcing that unfoldment.

Remember: Each human soul is a musician—a Master Musician striving to manifest to the highest degree of perfection. That no musician can render his best, by playing upon or through an imperfect instrument.

Remember: That the well developed Psychic is the Soul who has adjusted his physical organism in such a way as to be enabled to manifest through that organism more perfectly. Or, to be more exact, is

so much the Master of that physical organism as to be, practically, the conqueror of its limitations.

Remember: You must not try to pass from the state of insensibility to psychic vibrations to one of complete sensibility thereto in a moment—or a week or month. Be willing to give adequate time; time consistent with the compensation desired.

Remember: That your object should be personal illumination—unfoldment, poise, harmony, rather than the ability to tell fortunes. Should be the enjoyment of the larger life, rather than the serving of a mercenary purpose.

Remember: Emerson—in his Essay on Compensation—says: "What will you have, quoth God, pay the price and take it." And this is as true here as elsewhere.

It is the use that is made of this force, as of every other, which determines the value it is to the individual.

The person who would develop Psychic power must learn Concentration—concentration is the art of eliminating every discordant sound, and every condition other than the one desired.

And that person must acquire poise—balance. And also must acquire the art of listening to the soul self when it speaks. In other words must retire within the selfhood; or, must close the consciousness to the impressions of the coarser sense objects.

The unspoken thought must become audible; the vibratory emanations from other souls must be enregistered, at desired intervals, within the Soul's consciousness. These are, virtually, impinged upon the spiritual sensorium.

All of this will seem difficult enough—and it is not play for the superficially minded to engage in. It means honest, earnest and constant effort on the part of the student, before desired results may be attained.

One of the first essentials in Psychic development is self control—the elimination of the destroying passion of anger. Indeed we will put this first, for without self control there can be no concentration; and without concentration there can be no satisfactory Psychic unfoldment.

So we place self control at the head of the list. And that must be the first step on the part of the student. A thing to be remembered—one which will no doubt help is: every thought, passionate or otherwise, makes an impression on everything about us, whether animate or inanimate, and can be read inerrantly by those who have Soul development.

Note the impression made upon you when in the presence of an angry person—the sensation which steals, rapidly, or slowly, over you. Be sure then that the same impression is made by you, in your angry moments, upon others.

It is also essential that a time be set aside for silent communion with the Soul self—for systematic concentration for psychic development. And when that time—a period of thirty minutes daily—has been set, let punctuality and regularity be the watchword.

Do not forget that *system* is the keynote to every success. A good way to develop not only system, but concentration of a high degree, is to determinedly arrange the routine of the day to make time for this thirty minute period required.

If possible let there be someone who is congenial to participate in this period. Then let each one bring to the lesson hour, small objects that have been carried, or worn—let the article be slipped in an envelop, or small box to conceal it from the ordinary vision. Then let each person take the object brought by the other, and note the impression received while holding it in the hand.

This practice can be carried out in connection with letters received; particularly by noting the impressions received when meeting others—strangers or otherwise. And remember it is by continued effort that success is achieved.

It is like developing the muscle of the arm, or any portion of the body—constant and consistent effort is required. Let us

say, for the sake of illustration, that we are seeking to develop Psychic Muscle—strength.

Every person has experience with intuition—"the still small voice" of song and story. But, nearly every person ignores utterly the impressions thus received. To do so dulls the spiritual sense perceptions. As this is read the student will remember personal experiences of this character; and will realize more than one time when loss, in some way, was the result of not heeding.

It must not be forgotten that this effort to unfold the psychic nature is not an effort to become an abnormal being. On the contrary it is simply to become a fully rounded out individual—to make use of all the powers with which the human has been endowed.

Men rebuild their lungs—they reconstruct the brain, adding cell after cell by right mentation; why should they not develop a degree of sensitiveness far superior to that ordinarily possessed? There can be no reason why it may not be done. Nor is there anything illegitimate about it.

Let it be forever understood that: Forces, Powers, and Functions are never, of themselves, illegitimate! It is only when misused that reprehensible results accrue; and even then it is not the principle itself which merits reproach—it is the use to which it is put.

We are creatures of habit! And all habits are, in the last analysis, mental habits,—i. e. mind processes which have evolved concrete action. And any change in sensibility necessarily involves mental processes; for this reason have we urged regularity in thought and act.

The human is wonderfully constructed, but only—in the main—partially developed. With two brains in which to develop, to a wonderful degree, speech centers, cells etc., we use but one. With a marvelously intricate network of tiny nerves—with which to telegraph our acquisitions to the storage cells, or center of consciousness—pervading the entire anatomy, we fail utterly to comprehend their usefulness.

These nerves connecting with the brain—or brains—spread out, from the base thereof, in every direction until every portion of the body is provided with its quota. Indeed, we might almost say that the nerve system is an elongation of the brain. Further: that when man is wholly developed he will be, so to speak, all brain; i. e. :

He will have developed such perfect concord between the mental self and every atom of the body that he will, to all intents and purposes, be all consciousness.

And this is what the wholly developed Psychic is. He is, so to speak, all eyes—all ears; without seeing he sees, without hear-

ing he hears. Without being present he knows what transpires.

And without the least hesitation the writer asserts this to be a degree of unfoldment quite within the province and possibility of each Soul. It will take time and practice—so does everything else acquired whether in music, art or literature.

And what are the Essentials in this development? How shall we proceed?

First: Cultivate Poise; Concentration; recognize the fact that every potentiality in the universe is encompassed by the human Soul. Make up your mind that "What man has done, man can do."

Second: Have a purpose in seeking development; let that purpose be the high resolve to unfold all there is in you for the good of humanity. Decide that there shall be nothing but spiritual mindedness in the seeking.

Third: Cultivate the mental habit of heeding the intuitions; make up your mind that the Cosmic Forces are for your benefit that they wait to serve you if you will but conform to them.

Fourth: Make it a practice to note the impressions received when coming in contact with persons; articles, letters and places. Make it a practice to note, before it is spoken, what a conversationalist is about to say.

Fifth : Set aside thirty minutes each day for concentration. If impossible every day, make it every other day; daily periods are better. Be punctual, regular and earnest. Then carry out the suggestions given previously in these pages.

Get these suggestions firmly fixed in the mind that they may become working forces in your development. And remember, whatever you do, do not allow any one to hypnotize you in order to accentuate the psychic sensitiveness. You do not want to be an automaton—you want to be your own consciously active, and individualized, self.

Remember that order is nature's first law! And what is desired most of all is to become an orderly thinker, that order in all phases of life's expression may be the rule.

To be an illumined Soul—one to whom the world looks for Emancipation and Progress; to be an awakened Being in tune with the Soul of things; to be in touch with the comparatively untapped reservoirs of universal power—all of this should be the object of every seeker after Psychic—Soul—development.

Enough has been said to show the student that Psychic power is worthy of consideration—and is beneficial. More fully however, shall it be dealt with in our

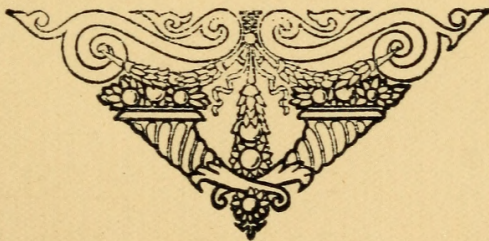
next lesson: "Mediumship: Its Use and Abuse," at which time we shall point out other phases of the question.

For the present suffice it to say that when the Soul man so determines nothing can stand between him and Cosmic Consciousness—between him and the very Heart of this great, pulsing Universe.

He can so awaken as to be a reservoir of Conscious energy—of dynamic force; literally he may come into possession of his Kingship—one with the Universal purpose.

In consonance with this thought, then, when going into the concentration period let this sentiment be uppermost in the mind:

"I AM ONE WITH COSMIC LIFE!
EVERY POTENCY IS MINE! SCION OF
THE HOUSE OF INFINITY, I KNOCK AT
THE DOOR OF COSMIC ENERGY AND
DEMAND MINE OWN, AND LO! I AM
BECOME A SOUL AWAKENED—'MASTER
OF MINE OWN DESTINY,' FREE, AND
FILLED WITH POWER."



DEC 27 1909

Hay

MILTON ART PRESS
2023 ORLEANS ST.
BALTIMORE, MD