

## PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY.

### THOUGHT FORCE.

An experience familiar to many is when, while reading a book already read several times, there suddenly flashes into the inner vision an arresting idea, which they had never noticed before, as if the sentence holding it was illuminated by a searchlight. The effect is as though another window was opened in the soul, revealing to it an entirely new vista. This condition of *awareness*, the instant conception of a Truth, may result from a single vibration, or a combination of vibrations playing on us, to which we respond because of our mental evolution up to that point; or the vibrations may have awakened a long slumbering memory of an ancient, well-learned lesson.

A state of awareness concerning the Force of Thought is only now becoming general throughout the Western world, though for thirty years past a body of earnest students have been working on the lines of this ages-old truth, as did previously our seers and sages—Emerson, Berkeley, Kant, and the noble succession of mystics. Always this mighty power of thought has been operating, though the great masses of the people have been blind to it. The war, by shattering much materialism, has assisted in their awakening. Many leaders of progress to-day have grasped the fact that all effective education must begin with Thought, the most subtle, the most irresistible force. Hitherto, money, human life and energy have been poured out like water in the attempt to stem the current of evil deeds, instead of concentrating energy on the production of right thought, which by leading to right action automatically excludes evil action.

"A man's thoughts are his own," we used to be told. But, in the sense implied, that is just what they are not. Our thoughts are, for weal or woe, influencing all those with whom we come in contact. We contribute by them to the field of thought in which we all dwell—hence crowd and mob-psychology. We even scatter them in quiet country roads as we go along, to be picked up by the mind of another who passes. *For Thoughts are Things.*

The human mind is a powerful dynamo; thoughts which are invisible can be sent forth into the ether like an electric current; another human mind acts as a receiver, registering the impressions, and his subsequent thoughts, feelings and actions are more or less influenced by them. We all know how communicable are feelings of irritation, placidity, or enthusiasm.

Our own thought atmosphere is created by the *trend* of our thoughts, and this individual atmosphere attracts from the world of thought the power to produce results *according to its quality*. Other minds in unison with our own lend them invisible aid, bringing us strength, courage and support. Pure and beneficent thoughts attract pure and exalted powers to us. Impure and evil thoughts draw into our lives the "Powers of Darkness."

Some people are exceedingly sensitive and receptive to the thoughts they encounter; they are what is known as being *mediumistic*, easily psychologised by other minds, or personal magnetism. Such persons should shun all associations which present temptations, or inferior ideals, until they have nurtured or have acquired a considerable measure of control over their own thoughts. Otherwise there is danger of coming in contact with those who will lead them into difficulties. It is a type frequently to be met in nurse-training schools, since it includes the material which goes to the making of some of the best nurses. For it, discretion should ever be the better part of valour; though the source of action is often far superior to the appearance of its fount, this type is apt to judge others too tenderly, to its own undoing.

In that degree of *thought* in which we hold others we suggest to them health or disease, righteousness or evil. Suspicion tends to call evil into activity; to assume that others are trustworthy will call up latent honourableness. By imputing courage to another we may strengthen the little stock of that quality he already possesses. All the virtues may be suggested in the same manner, if the thought be sufficiently powerful, except to those at a very low stage of evolution.

The response in our own minds to a thought projected by another depends entirely on the nature of the thought and the quality of the matter of which our mental bodies consist. The rapid vibrations of a pure and lofty thought can only awaken response in the subtle and rare grades of mind-stuff. Coarse grades cannot respond because they are unable to vibrate at the necessary speed. If we have built the finer material into our mental bodies, coarse and evil thoughts cannot injure us, as they meet with no answering vibrations. But a mental body built of gross materials will be affected by every evil thought it encounters, and will be unable to benefit by good thoughts. Hour by hour we are building into our mental bodies that which will allow us to respond to uplifting external thought, or that which will

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