

*An Occult View of
Health & Disease*

Godfrey Hodson

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By

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Preface by the Reverend Oscar Kollerstrom



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DEDICATION

*In gratitude to Mary de S. A. Middleton, who first
instructed me in spiritual healing*

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PREFACE

I HAVE always had the profoundest interest in all methods of attaining health, because the curative process is a process by which things are restored to the condition which was planned for them by the Grand Geometrician of the Universe—a process in which His plan or pattern for a body is projected more truly into the lower worlds. It is thus part of God's evolutionary scheme, and the condition of the body is some indication of the degree of harmony and perfection of the ego and its development and capacity of projecting itself into the physical plane—in short, of its development as measured by its practical creative ability. A bad, or a weak, physical body is therefore just as much an expression of backwardness in development as are moral or mental defects. This fact is seen to be the logical outcome of the law of Cause and Effect, when we remember that the bad actions which produced the undesirable Karma resulting in ill-health are themselves the outcome of some unpleasant motive or quality within us; hence the

resultant physical condition is a direct manifestation of the state of the individual himself. This consideration shows us the great wisdom of the Lord Buddha—who has truly been called the wisest man who ever lived—in laying it down that the first step towards the “Path of Holiness” was a healthy physical body.

But the whole point is not just that the body should have good animal health, but that it should accurately reflect the man's inner condition and become a perfect instrument for the expression of the Self. And here we see the value of occult methods of healing, for they work primarily from the inner planes and induce a better outflow of the egoic life, thus assisting the manifestation and development of the Soul. Thus, even more than other cures, an occult cure is primarily a real growth of the patient on the higher planes, and only secondarily a means to physical health.

Viewing spiritual healing in this light—as a means of occult training for progress towards one's Master—I was naturally much interested in meeting Mr. Hodson, and was keen to study his methods, both by personally undergoing his treatment, and by co-operating with him in psychic investigation of some of his cases and

various other matters. In the very first treatment, I was deeply impressed by the fine outpouring of power from one of the Masters of the Wisdom, which flowed through Mr. Hodson. His treatment was very helpful, and since then I have heard of many who have been greatly helped by it, both in physical and many other ways ; for not only does he do remarkable cures of all sorts, but there are numbers who have received valuable spiritual help and guidance from him.

His success is due, not only to his own high character, which renders him a pure and efficient channel for his Master's force, but also in a large measure to his apparently lucid and accurate powers of clairvoyance which enable him to make correct diagnoses and to keep a careful watch on the progress of his patients.

It seems to me that all our half-baked psychics are the bane of the Theosophical Society. They believe what they see!!! And this entirely without the years of rigid training needed for this sort of work. For this reason, I am always extremely sceptical about any sort of psychism—my own particularly.

It was in this attitude that I approached the work of Mr. Hodson, but in spite of my *à priori*

prejudice, I was much impressed by his painstaking scientific methods and apparently entirely accurate results. I say "apparently," simply because of my principle never to assert anything to be definitely so, simply because I have seen it. It is because of this scepticism of my own powers, and not because I doubt the accuracy of Mr. Hodson's work, which on the etheric and astral levels, where I have checked many of his results, I regard as particularly accurate.

It is possible that certain psychics might not entirely agree with all he sees. But this might happen to any of us who are clairvoyant, for not all see in the same way. This is because we sometimes interpret the vision recorded on the organs of sight differently—the Self explains the vision in various terms to suit our various brains ; it is like expressing the same truth in a number of languages. You see, egos express themselves in very different ways—through very different *media*—on to the physical plane.

Now this fact lights very clearly the position of spiritual or magnetic healing in their relations with other and more physical methods. Although it shows the necessity of *all* schemes for curing—to provide a scheme for every type—

yet the laws by which the egos are able to express themselves on the physical plane show the increasingly important position of the occult methods.

The sort of curative means suited to any particular case is decided by three factors :—

(1) The evolutionary standing of the individual and

(2) That of the race in which he lives, and

(3) The relation of these two.

At each stage in evolution and with each change of his Karma, an ego expresses himself in different degrees of completeness and through different methods. Also, each race develops one particular side of the character and has its own methods for bringing it out. Hence the Ego is expressing various sides of itself in many ways, which continually change with his development, and that of the race in which he happens at a given moment to be incarnated. These continually varying modes of, and channels for, the outflowing egoic life result in the necessity of great numbers of different physical techniques for its reception. Thus we see the necessity of all sorts of cures, and the need for unlimited gradations and variations and blends of all these is made apparent by a consideration

of the relation between the development of the individual and that of his race. For example, as the soul evolves, it needs more spiritual and more refined methods of healing. It needs perfect poise within, and very pure diet with refined physical surroundings. But this makes it terribly sensitive, and if the civilisation in which the man lives is disharmonious, its coarser vibrations might be so disruptive as to quite break his physical health. Therefore a balanced compromise must be attained and the individual must be put right with the world in which he lives. There are all sorts of complicated considerations in this relationship, such as ray, plane, chakram, on which the consciousness usually resides, etc., etc. Thus it will be seen that infinite numbers of healing methods are necessary, if all types are to be suited.

Many doctors and healers dispute this point and think their own methods the only really good ones. This is perhaps not unnatural, because, as a rule, a doctor or a healer gets the sort of people who come prepared to believe in and accept his methods, who are therefore cured by them. For example, as a rule, a man will not come to a spiritual healer if he be a rank materialist, or go to an osteopath, unless he

thinks that the osteopath may do him some good. The fact that the methods of any particular doctor or healer appeal to him sufficiently to induce him to take that kind of treatment, generally indicates that that is a method through which the patient's ego can express his idea of health. The fact that all established methods are necessary is borne out by their survival, for if they produced no results, naturally no one would continue with them. But although all methods are in this way necessary, yet the facts of the coming into dominance of a new ray, of the evolution of the race, and the birth of a new sub-race, are necessarily making certain types of healing more applicable to the needs of the time, while certain others are getting out of date. These changing conditions are making for more sensitive bodies, more sensitive people altogether, so that it is easier to cure this type by more spiritual methods, combined with refining and purifying processes, such as simpler diet and a life more closely in touch with Nature.

From this brief consideration of the ways in which an ego projects its pattern of an ideally healthy physical body on to the physical plane, we have learned that, although it is necessary that every type of healing method be employed,

yet more and more will people—and particularly those who are trying to take special advantage of the present great forward impulse in the evolutionary life—find it essential to adopt means of spiritual healing, combined with simplification in the life, especially in the way of diet—in short, those methods adopted by Mr. Hodson.

I regard it as one of my chiefest functions in life to bring beauty and harmony right down into people's physical plane lives, and by such means as these, we shall attain a physical health which renders the body sufficiently sensitive, or a really beautiful expression of the true man. Hence it is with the very greatest pleasure that I associate my name with that of my good friend Geoffrey Hodson in this fine work which he is doing as a forerunner of the "New Age."

OSCAR KOLLERSTROM.

AN OCCULT VIEW OF HEALTH AND DISEASE

I

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE SUBJECT

THE theories presented here have been reached by clairvoyant study of a large number of cases, which have come under my care during the last two years ; I have observed, so far as my powers permit, the condition of the subtle and physical bodies of the patients, from the time of their first arrival, through the various stages of treatment, down to recovery or failure, as the case may be.

A much longer period of study and a more highly trained and more scientifically applied clairvoyance are necessary before final conclusions can be reached ; therefore, as we are still at the stage when we are formulating and testing hypotheses, all that I say must be regarded as merely suggestive, brought forward in order that others may compare their results with

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mine, and that a greater number of students may be moved to apply the profound and illuminating teachings of theosophy to problems of health and disease.

Perfect health is a state to which all who aspire to the service of their fellows will surely wish to come. Those still more ardent souls, whose dreams include the scaling of the short, steep and rugged path up to the lofty summit of the mountain of evolution, around which the slowly rising spiral road of ordinary life pursues its winding way, will find that sound physical health is one of the essential factors in the success of their endeavour.

As loyal followers of the true Founders of the Theosophical Society and their noble servants, to whom we owe all the modern teaching, theosophical students must embrace the ideal of service ; there are many, indeed an ever increasing army of pilgrims, who, by striving to live the occult life, hope to attain to greater powers of service and to ever widening spheres of usefulness.

My hope is that this little book may be a starting point from which we may add to our knowledge of ourselves, and therefore to our usefulness to mankind.

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Those who are watching the trend of human endeavour and research, in its various fields of activity, will perhaps agree that progress in many directions of scientific thought is characterised by a change of method.

In medicine all that wide range of therapy known as *Nature Cure*, psycho-analysis, sun and coloured light treatments, may be instanced as examples of the adoption of new methods.

Speaking generally, one might say that in medicine the change is in the direction of attempting to discover and treat the real causes of ill-health, which are found to lie much deeper than has hitherto been supposed. Schools of thought are arising which claim to have pursued ill-health past the confines of the physical body into the realms of the so-called "subconscious." The change shows, too, in a tendency to apply Nature's own methods and forces in the healing of disease, and to get away from drugs, serums, and surgery, and especially from forms of treatment which merely suppress the symptoms of disease.

Health and disease cannot be truly understood by a study of the physical body alone, we must probe much deeper if we are to discover the real causes. We are being driven to the conclusion that the roots of disease lie deep in the mental

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and emotional nature of man, and there are those who think that this is true not only of those diseases which, in spite of advances in medical science, continue to take a heavy toll of human life and to baffle our wisest scientists, but also of every departure from perfect health, however slight it may be.

How shall we define health, in order that the boundaries of our study may be known and their direction indicated ?

I suggest that we may regard health as that condition in which there is an unhindered flow of the life force through the whole nature, the state in which the processes of absorption, assimilation and elimination are in perfect manifestation on other planes as well as on the physical.

By this definition I wish to emphasise the idea that there exists in Nature a plentiful supply of life force, or vitality ; and that, if the whole human microcosm is to be maintained in health and efficiency, this abundant energy must be absorbed, assimilated, expressed as function, and finally eliminated, after it has done its work of vitalising the whole system. This vitalising energy exists on all planes, and, if health is to be maintained, the processes referred to above must take place in full measure, according to the

degree of evolution, in all those bodies in which the consciousness is functioning. If this be true, then ill-health may be ascribed to an interference with the flow of the life through the subtle as well as the physical bodies.

Experience along the lines referred to is tending to confirm this theory of health, and endeavours to treat ill-health by methods based upon that experience are meeting with considerable success.

The method employed in diagnosis has been to examine carefully the condition of the etheric, astral and mental bodies (after the physical symptoms and history have been studied), with a view to discovering in which of these the obstruction is seated. The results of such diagnosis, and a description of the conditions which, so far as I can see, accompany ill-health, are dealt with in Part II.

Broadly speaking, mental and emotional states may be divided into two classes; those which result in expansion, expression and happiness, and those which produce limitation, inhibition and unhappiness, these being the healthy and unhealthy states respectively.

In the first class may be placed complete open-mindedness, unselfishness and love, and in the

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second, prejudice, selfishness, and all the negative qualities of mind and emotion which spring therefrom. Varying periods of time may elapse before the psychological state manifests in the physical body, but where the first-named qualities reign, you will find good health ; where the second prevail, you will find ill-health ; and there are those who believe that each type has its correspondence in a particular form of disease and a particular organ. Tables of such correspondences have been drawn up, and one may be studied in Mrs. E. A. Gardner's pamphlet, "Healing Methods, Old and New."

First let us take the mental states. Experiments have recently been carried out by a group of students, in which one member placed himself in different mental states, by a deliberate effort of will (an ability acquired by the practice of meditation). Two clairvoyants observed the results and made separate notes.

One mood chosen for experiment was that of profound depression, a type of thought which quickly affected the astral body and shortly afterwards the physical etheric ; as the mood deepened the health aura was seen to droop, and the circulation of *prana* to be impeded. This thought was followed by one of normal equani-

mity ; then by humour—some one telling a funny story—and, at last, by an endeavour to exalt the mind and expand the consciousness. The effect upon the etheric body was most marked, the health aura recovered rapidly and was raised to a condition of greater activity, while the circulation of *prana* was increased, particularly in the flow to the brain.

If this result can be obtained by a mere temporary exercise of thought power used experimentally, it would appear obvious that mental states, prolonged until they become a habit, may produce effects of a definite character upon the dense physical body in course of time.

Experience has shown us that mental inconsistencies, strong prejudices and mental myopia, errors in thought which place the thinker out of harmony with truth, marked divergence between mentally conceived ideals and the daily habits of thought and life, are all found to accompany different forms of physical ill-health, and, in many cases, to appear as active causes of disease.

In the realm of emotion the same principles apply ; repressed emotions are already recognised as causes of ill-health. This recognition fits in with the definition of health, which I have suggested. Repression of any kind means a

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block in the flow of the life force, and that means ill-health. Similarly, negative emotions, such as fear, depression, worry, anxiety, jealousy, hatred, are fruitful sources of trouble at the physical level; while excessive indulgence in quite permissible emotions may also produce ill-health.

In olden days the healer, the priest and the teacher were one and the same person, and it is unfortunate that men can no longer be trusted to combine these functions. The healer's task frequently bears a close resemblance to that of the priest or confessor, for all these mental and emotional defects have got to be put right, and they must be admitted and faced before this can be done. The error in thought must be corrected, the thinker brought into harmony with truth, prejudices must be made objective so that they may be seen and cleared away; repressed emotions must be released, and, if they cannot be expressed, a method of sublimation or transmutation must be discovered; fear, worry and depression must go, and the whole inner nature be brought into harmony with truth and with the law of life, which is love.

From this point of view the purpose of ill-health and of pain is to teach us to avoid error;

pain may be regarded as subjective error made objective in order that it may be recognised and corrected. If this be true, then to drug the nerves into insensibility is to do a disservice to the soul which is evolving by their use. This does not mean that every effort must not be made to relieve pain and to save from suffering, but it does suggest a method of doing so which is likely to be permanent, rather than that of continually drugging a disease or a pain until the symptoms are temporarily suppressed.

As every effect must have a cause, so the health or ill-health of the body is *karmic* whether the cause be only one minute old, or belongs to a former life. Obviously all hereditary complaints and congenital diseases are the result of actions performed in past lives, and, for a complete understanding of our subject, we should require the power of studying the former incarnations of the sufferers. While this is not yet quite within the power of the average student, yet glimpses and even detailed visions of past lives, can be obtained by earnest meditation. Many interesting and suggestive ideas emerge from such an effort, but, with our present very limited knowledge, it is wiser not to say too much about them.

Many of the mental and emotional difficulties, to which I referred earlier, are problems left unsolved in a previous life and brought over to be dealt with once more in this life. These are means by which the soul progresses, and that progress can be helped or hindered to a marked degree, by the treatment meted out to the physical body, in health and disease, by those in whose care it is placed.

II

THE SUBTLE BODIES IN HEALTH AND DISEASE

THE subtle bodies with which we are chiefly concerned are the mental, the astral and the etheric ; descriptions of them may be obtained from the manuals of Theosophy, and from the book : " Man, Visible and Invisible." In the pictures given in that book no attempt is made to portray the force centres, or *chakrams*, in the subtler bodies ; these, however, play a prominent part in the health of the physical body, especially those particular centres in the etheric double which correspond to the spleen and solar plexus.

These bodies are built during the descent of the consciousness from the causal level into the physical ; the type of matter employed and its arrangement in the body are governed largely by *karma*. When the impulse is given by the ego, which vivifies the permanent atom of each plane in turn, series of vibrations are emitted ; these have lain dormant in the permanent atom,

implanted therein by the multifarious experiences of past lives. The vehicle, at each level, is composed exclusively of such matter as responds to the vibrations emitted, so that the body is one which exactly fits the *karma* of the individual.

We begin the new cycle of birth with a set of vehicles which is the product of our own past ; the correct materials are attracted into the subtler bodies, and the dense physical body is adjusted to fit, as nearly as may be, our karmic and evolutionary needs. This is achieved by the wisdom of the Lords of Karma, Who select for us the parents who will provide exactly such a body as is requisite for our further development.

The functions of the various bodies are well known to theosophical students, and I need only refer here to the etheric double of the physical body. This acts as a vehicle for *prana*, conserving it, and providing the means whereby it is conducted throughout the whole body, in its work of vitalisation.

This *prana* is absorbed through the spleen centre, where it is specialised to suit the personal vibration, split up into its seven constituents, each of its own distinctive colour, and

despatched to vitalise the different parts of the body ; it is also taken in with the breath and with the food. After being used it is released through the skin in several streams. These discharges form what is called the health aura.

On the physical plane, vitality is probably the most important factor in health ; a deficiency in the supply of vitality tends to set up a vicious circle of cause and effect, which it is difficult to break.

As an example of this may be cited that form of nervous debility in which indigestion is a factor. The vitality is lowered over the whole body by some cause or other ; this means an insufficient flow of the green ray to the digestive organs. Deprived of their full measure of *prana*, those organs are unable to perform their functions, and do not extract the full measure of nutriment and vitality from the food, with the result that the whole system is further debilitated, and consequently cannot absorb and assimilate the vitality which would normally be received through the other channels.

That vicious circle must be broken before the body can be restored to health.

The four factors which appear to be of primary

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importance to the health of the physical body are :—

- (1) The condition of each of the subtle bodies.
- (2) The relation of these between themselves, and also between them and the physical body.
- (3) The relation of the ego to the vehicles.
- (4) The relation of each to its environment on its own plane.

I shall deal later with the second and third factors, and begin by considering the first and fourth.

Taking, first, the condition of the mental body, we find that one of the chief causes of physical ill-health is an inelastic condition of the mind. The fixed, set mentality, which has become firmly established in a rigidly conservative state, resistant to new ideas and new presentments, limits the downflow of the life force from the ego to its vehicles, and will probably result in some such disease as rheumatoid arthritis, in which the physical body will tend to become as firmly set and ossified as the mind.

Prejudice is another source of mental ill-health. Areas within the mental body tend to stagnate, ceasing to participate in the general circulation of the matter of the body. These show as darker coloured patches, varying in the

degree of density, darkness and size. Sometimes the hardening process is such as to produce a protuberance like a large wart. If the type of thought which, becoming fixed to the extent of a mental obsession, has a correspondence at the emotional level, a similar condition will gradually be set up in the astral body, as we shall see when we turn to that vehicle.

Habits of thought which are out of harmony with truth, (as recognisable by the ego, according to his development) produce ill-health in the mental body; a continual friction seems to be caused by wrong thinking, if persisted in through a number of years.

A fundamental part of the healing process is to get the patient to leave old habits or ruts of thought, and to face the truth as he knows it, and to bring his life into conformity with his knowledge.

This principle may be applied to all types of mental ill-health, from wrong mental habits of minor importance, through all stages of fixity and orthodoxy, up to real lunacy—where the mental body may have ceased to function as a vehicle for the expression of consciousness.

At our present stage of development, the

astral body is more frequently found to be the seat of disorder than the mental, as the consciousness of the greater number of people is still focussed in the emotions. Here the same principle applies as that which we found in the mental body, *i.e.*, that fixity, in a habit contrary to truth, is a potent cause of trouble.

The astral body is subject, also, to injury due to repression and to injury due to excess. Under these two heads may be classified many of the emotional disorders of man.

Negative emotion, indulged in continually, will produce serious astral and physical results. Worry, depression and fear are the three examples most commonly found, and they show themselves as patches of dull brownish grey in the astral body ; if the depression, for example, is related to the condition of any particular part of the physical body, then the patch will appear in that region of the aura. Not unusually the whole body is enclosed in a shroud of dull brownish grey, and the effect of this upon the physical health is very serious ; the physical body is then almost entirely deprived of those vitalising currents of force, which should pour into it through the mental and astral bodies.

In considering emotional abnormalities in

relation to physical health, their effect upon the various *chakrams* or centres of force must be borne in mind.

As all students are aware, these are seven in number, and are situated as follows :—

Chakras.	Petals.	Planets and Signs.
(1) Muladhara (sacral) .	4	♄ ♄
(2) Svadhisthana (spleen) .	6	♃ ♃
(3) Manipura (navel) .	10	♂ ♀
(4) Anahita (cardiac) .	12	♀ ♀
(5) Vishuddha (throat) .	16	♄ ♄
(6-7) Âjña (pituitary body and pineal gland) .	48 + 48	♄ ♄ ; ☉ ☉
(7) Brahmarandhra (anterior fontanelle) .	960 (+ 12)	♄ or ♄ (?)

The number of petals and the planetary signs are given for those who may be interested.

Where there is abnormality in the use of the creative force, whether it takes the form of repression, excess or malpractice, the *Muladhara chakram* is generally affected, and, through it, the nerves and the spinal cord in the sacral and lumbar regions. The astral body then displays conditions, in that area, which differ according to which of the three types of abnormality is present. In nearly all cases there is a

patch of lurid red of varying degrees of density and size ; the aura is sometimes enlarged by a band of this colour, and, where malpractices and sexual abnormalities are actually occurring, the whole of the lower half of the astral body may be affected ; the general circulation of the matter of the body is disturbed by a secondary circulation in the lower half, which may set up a separate " life " of its own. Very unpleasant thought-forms are frequently present, as well as certain elementals, both of which tend to intensify the condition and to increase the difficulty.

In cases where the physical expression has been denied, but the mind and emotions have been active, the forces of the astral body appear to be turned in upon themselves, as if the direction of the flow, which should be outwards, were changed. By these conditions the life force from above is impeded in its flow, and the etheric double is starved of the higher *prana* in the whole of the pelvic region ; the nerves, therefore, are affected, and it is from the *Muladhara chakram* in the astro-etheric, and the sacral nerves in the physical, that the effect seems to spring. Further trouble is sometimes caused by the unusual activity of the *Muladhara chakram* itself ; its force, flowing into the physical

generative centres, acts as a continual stimulant to the nerves concerned.

I am not especially concerned in this book with the question of cure, but this difficulty is so prevalent, and students, who endeavour to purify and perfect their emotional life, so frequently apply methods which are calculated to set up, instead of removing, some of the conditions referred to, that I may perhaps usefully make a suggestion for self-help in cases of the kind. In my opinion repression alone is not only the wrong method of self-purification, but also, may be followed by serious astral and physical results.

The creative power is a mighty force, a reflection in man of the creative power of the Logos, and can be dealt with in one of three ways: it may be expressed in normal or abnormal ways; it may be repressed; or it may be transmuted and sublimated.

If expressed in normal and legitimate ways, it will not affect the health. If repressed, without any attempt to transmute, it will affect the health in time. If sublimated, it will supply a mighty and potent force to the individual which will increase his power of service to an almost limitless degree, and will provide him

with one of the means whereby he may enter upon the Path and find his way to adeptship.

The student must be perfectly sure that he is ready for the attempt, and is prepared to forego the ordinary happinesses of the man of the world, for those of the occult life. This decision must be whole-hearted and unshakable; half measures or an indecisive attitude will result in failure, if not in disaster. The ideal of perfect purity must be built into his consciousness and made the supreme purpose of his endeavours. He must exercise a rigid and continual control over both mind and emotions, until a tendency towards purity and celibacy, and away from physical generation, is definitely established—then he has a fair chance of succeeding in the difficult task of sublimation.

If the surging creative energy in man is to be sublimated, it must be turned upwards. This appears to me to be the key to the whole problem. The force, which may be regarded as centred in the *Muladhara chakram*, must play straight up the spine and out at the top of the head.

Definite meditation must be undertaken and steadily persevered in, with the object of using the will to draw all force away from the creative organs, and to drive it up the spinal column.

Further, whenever the creative urge is felt, the will must be immediately and instantly applied in the direction suggested ; this must be kept up, with unflinching determination, until the natural direction of the flow is upwards instead of downwards, after which it will come more and more within the conscious control of the will, and will begin to be used for the purposes of occult work and development.

To return to the consideration of abnormal causes of ill-health, the practice of magic, of the grey or black variety, in past lives, frequently appears to be responsible for *karmic* ill-health in the present. This generally manifests itself in spinal troubles—possibly because in magic certain forces employed, reside in the spine.

Where cruelty has been inflicted on others in the past, to a serious extent, the effect appears to be upon the bones and joints, and in cases where it was allied to magic, the spinal column is often the seat of the *karmic* reaction.

An interesting example of the *karma* of magic was observed, in which music of a certain character invariably produced claustrophobia.

The subject felt a powerful disturbance in the region of the solar plexus, an intense craving to get out into the open, and an indescribable fear

of disaster. Investigation showed a very badly disordered condition of the astral solar plexus, and hinted at the misuse of the forces embodied in sound, particularly music of a *mantric* character ; probably in a previous life music had been employed in the attempt to raise the consciousness, with a motive which was not pure ; a sudden success in this practice had released the consciousness, whereupon it became a prey to the difficulties and dangers of the astral plane, while the body perished as a result. Claustrophobia was the *karmic* result of the disaster.

In order to follow the suggestion which I am about to make, it is necessary that one of the differences between the astral and the physical body should be made clear.

In the physical body there are at least three systems of circulation already discovered, *i.e.*, those of the blood, the lymph, and the vitality. In the astral, all the matter of which it consists circulates over the whole body, being vitalised and specialised by each of the force centres in turn, as it passes through them.

Epilepsy, too, appears to be a disease, which has its roots in the mento-astral region, and its causes in magico-sexual practices in the far-off past.

An endeavour to study it has shown, in some cases, the presence of an unhealthy area in the astral body, due to the presence of what might be described as a large scar ; this is sometimes about six inches in diameter, and consists of " dead " astral matter. When, in the course of circulation, this patch enters the region of, or just above, the brain, it seems to cut the line of connection between the consciousness and the brain ; one is reminded of a sunspot in watching it. This process may be sudden or gradual, and the nature of the epileptic seizure will correspond. Probably the physical elemental, feeling the sudden break, makes violent endeavours to hold on, and so causes the convulsions which usually accompany the attacks.

The effect of repeated negative thought and emotion has been found to be that of producing growths in the physical body. Cases of growths, suspected of being cancerous, when examined clairvoyantly, showed the condition of the astral body in the neighbourhood of the growth to be very similar to that described in reference to epilepsy, but with the difference that it was not in circulation.

The peculiarities observed in two particular astral " growths," was that they were not par-

ticipating in the general circulation, but remained relatively stationary over the physical breast, which was the part affected.

The process by which the physical growth was formed, and which I wish to describe in closer detail, seems to have been as follows :—

A sensation of pain was felt in the breast, possibly due to some glandular inflammation. As the patient had had the other breast operated on for cancer, her thoughts immediately turned in that direction, and fear of a repetition of this entered her mind, together with general anxiety, nervousness and depression—all centred upon the breast.

The primary effect of this was at the astro-mental level, where it produced a dull grey patch in the aura over the breast ; gradually this became more concentrated and definite, till what may be described as an island was formed on the astral body, consisting of astral matter vibrating at a much lower rate than the rest of the body, its slowness being due to the haunting fear and depression. In one of the cases, this condition was further complicated by anger and bitterness at the affliction. The rest of the matter of the astral body circulated round the “ shores ” of this “ island,” which became denser

and more unhealthy day by day ; a stage was then reached when the etheric double of the breast was sympathetically affected, and it, too, began to densify. This continued till it ceased to act as a vehicle for *prana*, which flowed round, instead of through it, and, consequently, the nerves and tissues were deprived of vitality, and conditions favourable to a morbid growth were set up.

Naturally this all increased the pain, so that a vicious circle was induced, in which pain caused fear, and fear increased the astral and etheric "islands," they, again, increasing the pain.

It seems likely that if the operation which was ordered had been performed, the condition would have recurred ; it was essential that in this, as in the epileptic case, the astral and etheric bodies should be cleansed, and, as a matter of fact, as soon as this was done the physical symptoms entirely disappeared.

Endeavours have also been made to study arteriosclerosis, and frequently there has been a very cloudy, not to say muddy, condition of the astral body. It is possible that as the life force descends through the astral into the physical, it becomes contaminated by this con-

dition, and carries on with it deleterious vibrations which clog the system, and that this may affect the arteries in a corresponding manner, causing them to be reduced in size by the deposit on the inner walls.

It is within the realm of possibility that conditions similar to those described may be caused by influences extraneous to the person concerned ; environment is a powerful factor in health and disease, and, though it would seem that the *karmic* possibility must first be present, I myself have no doubt that one person can contribute very materially to the ill-health of another. One is reminded, in this connection, of the old story of the man who was suffering from neurasthenia with suicidal tendencies ; the doctor examined him, and was asked by the anxious wife if anything could be done. " Yes, of course," said the physician ; " I'll send round a strong sleeping draught at once." " When shall I give it to him ? " asked the wife. " Don't give it to him," said the doctor ; " take it yourself."

This story, though a little brutal, is an excellent instance of the fact which every medical man soon recognises in the course of his practice, viz., that very often the people who are doing the

most harm in this respect do so from the highest motives. In their intense desire to shield and to protect a loved one they continually surround him or her with a heavy cloud of thoughts of fear and anxiety. In some cases they seem to project a shell of their own physical magnetism around the patient, holding him or her as it were in a prison ; a prison of love it may be, but none the less a prison. I have sometimes come to the conclusion that quite grown-up sons and daughters are, to all intents and purposes, still within their mother's womb.

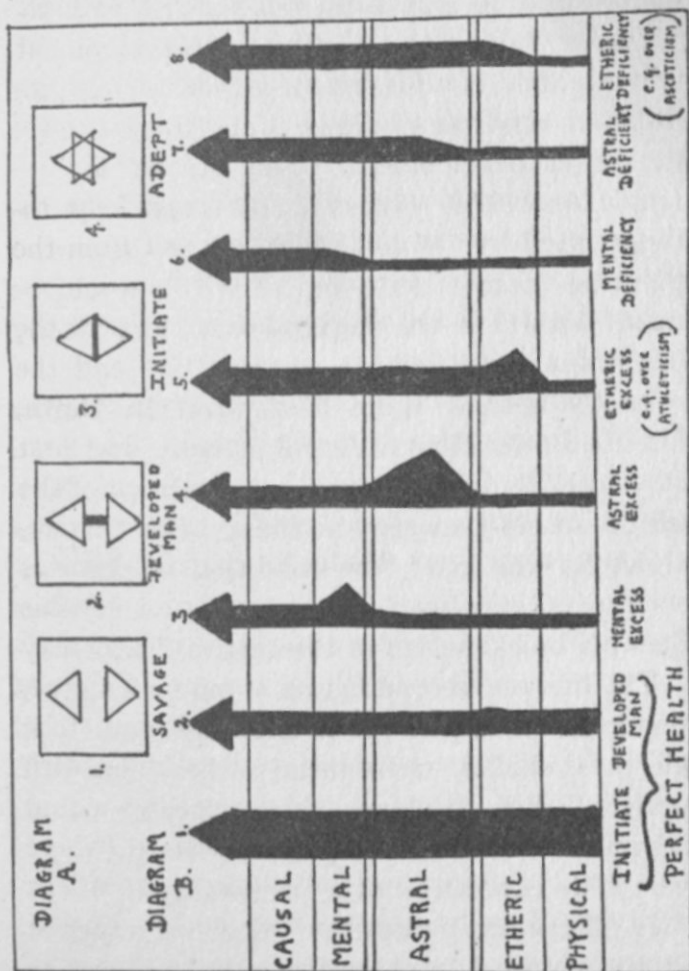
III

MENTAL DISORDERS

THE accompanying diagrams may help towards an understanding of our subject from the theosophical point of view.

In Diagram A the two triangles represent the ego and the personality respectively, and the different relationships in which they are drawn, refer to four stages of development. The first figure may be taken to show the condition of the savage, in which the relationship is not active, but only exists symbolically, in that the lower is a reflection of the higher. In spite of this apparent separation, however, the savage may be perfectly healthy, if the lower self is a true, and not a distorted reflection of the higher. The second figure represents the spiritual man, with a link already formed between the higher and the lower self. The third, the Initiate (where the bases are united), and the fourth, the Adept (where the two triangles are perfectly adjusted and interlaced).

Conditions of perfect health would be present



in the last three because the lower shows no distortion, and is in right relationship with the higher according to the degree of development. One might add that if distortion were present, the ill-health resulting would be proportionate to the degree of development. The savage, for example, may safely over-express his astral nature, represented by the left angle of the downward pointing triangle, to a degree which would be most harmful in the spiritual man, and utterly disastrous in the Initiate.

In the second series of figures the Higher Mental, Lower Mental, Astral, Etheric, and Solid Physical Planes are represented by the horizontal spaces between the lines. The triangles stand for the ego; the condition of the consciousness expressed through the vehicles is denoted by the width of the vertical bands.

The first and second figures stand for a state of perfect health; the ego is expressed equally in all the vehicles, consequently the "flow" is perfect. Fig. 1 shows perfect health at an advanced stage of development, when the ego is very fully expressed in the personality.

In all the other cases the "flow" is imperfect at the physical level, owing either to over-expression or under-expression on one or other of

the planes. The width of the band, on leaving the base of the triangle representing the ego, denotes the normal amount of expression according to the degree of development ; its narrowness lower down represents the effect of the distortion.

Figs. 3 and 6 represent excessive and deficient mental expression.

Figs. 4 and 7 represent excessive and deficient astral expression. Figures might also be drawn to represent excessive and deficient mento-astral development.

Fig. 8 represents an etheric difficulty only, such as very low vitality, and is included as a possible condition, though it is one which I have not yet met ; there is nearly always, in my experience, a contributory cause in the higher bodies. These figures represent all possible forms of ill-health, and can be applied to every condition.

We shall now proceed to examine certain mental disorders by their aid.

A very common form of mental trouble is that known as hallucinations, which may take the form of auditory, visual or mental delusions.

In the case of auditory hallucinations the subject hears voices, sometimes only one, sometimes many. This may be due to the presence of

obsessing entities—a condition which will be considered later—but often there have been cases where clairvoyant examination could not detect any external agencies whatever. Observation of the subtler bodies in such cases shows a break in the flow of the consciousness, either at the astral level or between the astral and the mental. In both these conditions the impulses from the consciousness reach the brain by an indirect route; sometimes it is through an extruded astral body; sometimes there may be an imperfectly working line of connection between the consciousness and the brain, just sufficient to “run” the body, but not enough to give it normal intelligence.

The impulses from the ego may miss out the astral, if its condition is such as to make it incapable of transmitting them, or there may be intermittent flashes, which do reach the brain *viâ* the astral. In either case this vehicle is so much out of alignment, and out of the ego's control, that the impulses appear, to the affected brain, to come from *without*, and may even be heard as sound.

The cause of such a condition would be found in a past life, or several past lives, of the character expressed by Fig. 4. For example, excessive

sexuality, drunkenness, gluttony or other emotional indulgence, would produce undue development of certain parts and characteristics of the astral body, with a corresponding under-development of the mental ; the etheric and the dense physical would also be affected, as the expression of the excess would be through one or other of the physical senses.

The total result would be a set of bodies in bad relationship with each other ; an undeveloped mental body ; an uneven and distorted development of the astral, with a strong astral elemental very much "in charge" ; a poor etheric, deficient in vitality ; and, finally, a weak brain. Unless such a condition is cured, softening of the brain is likely to occur, for want of the vitalising currents of *prana* from the ego.

An interesting case was that of a man of sixty, who believed himself to be entirely alone in the vastness of space, and who was convinced that the whole world, revealed to him by his senses, was a gigantic fraud, of which he was the victim. Even his own body seemed at times not to belong to him, not to be real, and he endured a profound psychic suffering in consequence. In his case the ego was clearly unable to reach any

lower than the mental body, in which the man had concentrated most of his energies; his astral body was out of control, and, in his repugnance to it, he deliberately lived in his mind. Overwork and worry had brought on acute neurasthenia, whereupon ensued the symptoms I have described, and which he called "de-personalisation."

This case would fall under Fig. 3, but the classification would need to be modified, because the astral body was very strong and had not been mastered, in its lower aspects, in past lives; the method had always been to ignore it and to live in the mind—it was primitive compared to the mental. Impulses from the ego came through the mental and probably took the short cut through the atomic astral and physical, as long as the physical body was in good health and the cerebro-spinal system well supplied with *prana*; but when bad conditions arose, the brain was deliberately deprived of the *feeling* aspect of consciousness. Only purely mental concepts, in all their cold clarity, could reach the patient, and they produced a sense of utter isolation in vast cosmic space.

The egoic impulses could be seen striking the astral body, but they could not penetrate it;

they were split up and "sprayed" round the outer edges, portions of them getting through and producing the auditory hallucinations, which were also present in this case.

Cases of abnormal dullness and stupidity must be classed under mental disorders, though the cause need not necessarily be in the mental body. One case (where the evil was of pre-natal origin, due to severe shock to the mother in the eighth month of pregnancy), showed the unhealthy symptoms to be almost entirely etheric. The etheric double of the brain was thrown out of adjustment with its dense counterpart, and, as the etheric double is the last link in the chain of vehicles by which the consciousness uses the brain, the ego had great difficulty in getting any intelligence through. Had this been discovered and dealt with during the first seven years, or even the first fourteen years, a cure might have been effected; unfortunately, nothing radical was done until the patient was twenty-five. By this time the astral and physical elementals had grown used to considerable freedom of action on their own account, and the resulting conduct was very strange indeed. The brain in this case was not properly developed owing, again, to the absence of egoic *prana*.

Another case of very backward development was traced to astro-etheric causes. There had been terrible excesses, both of drunkenness and sensuality, in more than one past life, and in this present life the mother was more or less intoxicated during the whole period of pregnancy; she was completely intoxicated when birth occurred, and continued in that state for the next fortnight, at the end of which she died. The child, of course, started with a very serious handicap, a thoroughly poisoned body and a dislocated etheric brain. This had one good effect, in that the astral nature could not be expressed to any greater degree than the mental; the astral body was extremely coarse and turbid, and one of the difficulties which was expected to occur as the etheric conditions were gradually improved, and more of the inner man got through, was a violent expression of this astral body. The epileptic seizures, which were among the symptoms, were found to be due to the condition of the astral body previously described.

Delusions and irrational emotional disturbances present interesting features; delusions are generally due to a break in the line of consciousness at the astro-etheric, so that all im-

pulses are received in a distorted condition and, consequently, are misinterpreted.

A case of unreasoning fear showed an abnormal activity of the astral solar plexus, and inquiry brought to light the fact that, earlier in life, the subject had practised certain forms of yoga, discovered in an Eastern book, which advised meditation on the solar plexus as a means of producing clairvoyance ; this had been carried on until a measure of contact with certain levels of the astral plane had been obtained. The centre through which sub-conscious emotions reach the physical consciousness is the solar plexus, and these are, not infrequently, actually " felt " in that region. Fear, for example, is sometimes accompanied by a sinking feeling in the physical solar plexus. In the case referred to, the meditation—or rather concentration—had undoubtedly stimulated the astral centre, but in an entirely improper way ; the result was that its activities gradually passed out of the control of the will, and abnormal astral experiences occurred. These generally came just as the consciousness was leaving the body, when there was an inrush of astral vibrations, made possible by the absence of the controlling consciousness and the active condition of the solar

plexus. These lower astral contacts are frequently of a terrifying nature, so long, that is, as one is subject to them and has not yet become their master. Various denizens of these unpleasant regions sought an entry through the thinned veil, in the case described, and consciousness rushed back into the body in a state of terror.

Conditions such as these may occur as a result of similar mal-practices in former lives, and, no doubt, many inmates of our mental homes are in a case not unlike the one described.

Sometimes delusions and hallucinations are actually due to the presence of obsessing entities. This is a subject about which little can be said at present. Obsessions are so various in character, and due to so many different causes, that a long study would be required before one could give an adequate explanation of them.

Obsessing entities fall into two classes, elemental and human. Each class is capable of further subdivision. The elementals may be natural denizens of the lower astral or etheric levels, members of the elemental kingdom of Nature; or they may be artificial thought-forms, created by magical practices, used by the obsessed person in a former or in the present

life—or by members of the dark Brotherhood. Human obsessing entities may be earth-bound spirits, suicides or victims of sudden death, or again, members of the dark forces, incarnate or excarnate, seeking a subject on whom to practise their nefarious activities. In all cases the sufferer must have something in his nature which corresponds to that of the obsessor ; there must be a portion of the aura, generally in the astral body, which is vibrating at a much coarser rate than the rest, and which forms a focus through which the obsessing entity can work.

Many people, upon taking up the occult life again in a fresh incarnation, find themselves faced with elementals representing the more murky aspects of their own past ; many white magicians have dabbled in black magic in some life or other, and before certain steps forward can be taken, *karma* must be adjusted and these skeletons in the occult cupboard must be taken out, “dusted,” and decently interred.

There is usually not much difficulty in taking them out. They rush out with considerable violence, and, knowing that their hour approaches, they fasten fiercely and venomously upon their hapless creator.

Again, it is probably very often from such

visitations that many inmates of asylums suffer, and many apparently hopeless cases might be cured if the proper means of exorcism could be applied.

The entity must be detached from the aura and, if it will not listen to reason, either be broken up, if that is possible, or, if not, imprisoned. The patient's aura must be sealed up while the cure is proceeding; the offending matter in the aura must be "washed out," and finally, the ego must be persuaded to take charge of his vehicles once more, and must make a determined effort to maintain control.

The shock of obsession is very severe, and if the ego comes safely through it and regains control, very valuable lessons are learned, particularly the one most obvious and most needed, *i.e.*, "not to do it again."

IV

THE EGO AND HIS VEHICLES

IN order that the ego may make the very most of any cycle of incarnation, it is important that he should achieve as complete possession of his three vehicles as possible.

Now the maximum of control can only be achieved if the individual bodies are in good health, and if they are co-ordinated and aligned.

For perfect health, the rhythmic tidal pulse of the boundless ocean of the One Life must beat regularly through the whole being; each vehicle must be attuned to that rhythm so far as the evolutionary condition will permit; through each, the energising force of the higher self must flow freely and continuously right down into the physical body, there to be expressed in modes of life and conduct which correspond, as far as possible, to the dictates of the conscience. The conscience of man may be regarded as the representative of the ego in physical consciousness.

Ill-health means that the rhythm is broken, that disharmony with the One Life has been set up, and the resultant friction causes pain ; pain tells us of the disharmony, and bids us correct it.

The ideal for the three lower vehicles is that they should act as a unit ; the three must be one, co-ordinated and aligned, so that they become a perfect instrument in the hands of the ego and offer no obstruction to the flow of his radiant life.

To help us to gain a deeper comprehension of the problem of health and disease, we will now make an attempt to realise, in some degree, the point of view of the ego.

✓ The higher self of a developed human being, dwelling in the causal body, the principle which was formed when he individualised millions of years ago, is a being of radiant splendour.

The causal body of an earnest student of the deeper spiritual truths would more than fill an ordinary room ; it is much larger, in proportion to the physical, than the astral and mental bodies, and beyond it there extends a radiance, flashing with power, which considerably increases both the sphere of its influence and the beauty of its appearance.

The consciousness within it is powerful and wise, at its own level, to a degree beyond the capacity of the physical brain to conceive.

Bishop Leadbeater likens the ego of the ordinary man to a spiritualised squire of the best type ; that of the cultured man to the highest type of dignified ambassador—a serene, wise and powerful representative of the monad which is beyond.

The condition of the ego of an Arhat is brought a little more nearly within our comprehension by that wonderful picture in "Man, Visible and Invisible," of the causal body of an Initiate of the fourth degree.

Can we obtain any understanding of the life of the ego upon his own plane ?

First we must remember that he dwells at the higher mental level where consciousness no longer requires a limiting form ; our physical divisions of manifestation into past, present and future, far, near and distant, with all the limitations which they impose upon our comprehension of ideas and situations, are almost entirely transcended. Further, the ego may be said to know without the necessity for analytical thinking. Situations are understood at a glance ; intricate systems of philosophy are expressed

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and comprehended in one flash of consciousness at the causal level ; great symphonies exist in their totality and can be grasped by the synthetic power of the causal consciousness, as a complete and perfect whole.

How different this is from the tedious methods of the physical plane, where a composition must be expressed note by note before the dull ears of the ordinary person can convey it to the mind, and the mind translate it into terms of understanding !

The ego is free and powerful beyond anything we can conceive ; the limitations of time and space are practically unknown to him, and he is almost omnipotent within his own sphere of influence. His companions—sharing with him the light and splendour of the causal level, where the great archetypal ideas exist as syntheses—are his brother egos, his peers. He will, if that is the line of his evolutionary progress, have the privilege of constant contact with the Great Ones and Their initiated disciples ; and the *arupa devas*, the lords of the formless worlds, are normal features of his environment.

The personality begins gradually to share in that life. As the lower vehicles are purified and the powers of perception extended, we transcend

the limitations of these lower worlds, and their fetters fall away one by one.

Already, in our moments of exaltation and inspiration, we feel the touch of the immortal self upon us, producing a consciousness of power, of wisdom and of strong rhythmic vibration playing through all our bodies; one day, we shall enter into full possession of that world, and our consciousness will be seated there, maintaining only such contact with the brain as is needed to "run" the physical body, and to keep the physical elemental efficiently at work, for, by this time, he will have become trained to act with a minimum of supervision. Then we shall not be limited to one piece of work at a time; we shall be able to operate in all the three lower worlds simultaneously, even though the work may be of different kinds and in different places, while, at the same time, an almost limitless number of activities will be maintained by us at the Causal level.

I have heard it said of a well-known Theosophical leader that he is able to give one of his lucid addresses upon an abstruse subject to a physical plane audience; at the same time he will give another to an entirely different audience, upon an entirely different subject, on the astral

plane ; at the causal level he is working at all the great schemes upon which he is engaged for the Masters, and watching those particular people whom he is endeavouring to help—these numbering probably some hundreds ; while the full battery of his consciousness is at work, at a much higher level, where a continuous twenty-four hour meditation for the helping of the world is maintained.

I am aware that to the normal consciousness of most of us such a condition sounds impossibly far advanced ; to the brain consciousness that is probably true, but to the egoic consciousness it is not only possible, but, by practically all very earnest students, is already being achieved in some measure ; it is within the reach of all of us. This world of unlimited service is ours to enter, and Theosophy is the key which will unlock the door. It is into this world that the Masters invite us, saying always : “ Come out of your world into Ours.”

The great thing is to *begin*. We may start with the assumption that these methods are possible to us, and practise helping the world and our fellows from the egoic level as well as from the mental, astral and physical levels. Even if our physical limitations are too great to

permit of our achieving much just at present, let us endeavour to reach a working arrangement with our ego, so that he may include us more and more in his activities, and may take on, at his level, the work which we wish to do, and which, as done by him, in conjunction with his personal self, will be far more effective than anything possible to that personal self alone.

Let us take one concrete example, so that we may get a clear idea as to how we should set about this method of occult work.

Supposing there is an individual whom we decide to help—and there ought to be an ever-increasing number of them—we must first fix our mind upon him with all our mental strength and concentration, registering a firm decision that he shall be healed, helped and inspired in the way which is best for him ; it is not good to fix too rigidly what is to be the concrete results of our efforts—we may safely leave that to the Good Law and to the wider vision of his higher self and our own. The next step is to raise the consciousness as near to the egoic level as possible, and to decide “ up there ” that the ego shall take the case on. After that act, which, with practice, can be performed in an instant—even while conversation is taking place—all that

is necessary is to refer occasionally to the person down here, to wish ardently for his progress and to aspire powerfully to work for his well-being. Having done that we may leave it to the ego ; there is no need to be anxious or to have any doubts ; the result is *certain*.

If this practice is continued, an increasing measure of co-operation between the ego and personality will be established, and a growing sense of the reality of occult work will be attained.

The ego of each one of us is a powerful being and we need not, must not, make the mistake of attributing to him the limitations of which we are so painfully conscious in the flesh ; they do not exist at the egoic level. Humility is only becoming at the personal level.

Such is the life, and such may be the work, of the ego—a life of joy and splendour and of continued service rendered from a most fundamental *point d'appui*—that of causation instead of effect.

We must assume that it is from these levels, as well as from more lofty planes still, that the Masters perform Their ceaseless labours for the uplifting of the world.

One is reminded of the statement that the

Lord Buddha used to make a practice of looking out over the whole world, every morning, in order to see those people who were most in need of His help ; such an outlook would only be possible when the consciousness of the levels above the mental plane (generally called " cosmic " or " Buddhic ") was employed.

If we choose to exercise it, the privilege of joining in the mighty activities of the Masters is ours, and probably one of the best ways of entering Their world is to imitate Them, so far as possible, and to lose ourselves in the service of mankind.

Gradually we shall each begin to live and to work as an ego and not as a personality. This will increase our efficiency enormously and give to all our activities the mark of greatness and permanency, while our physical health will certainly be maintained at the highest possible perfection, as the egoic life pours more and more freely through us. Then, having healed ourselves, we can begin to heal others, and thus take a place, however humble, in the ranks of those who are the healers, teachers and saviours of men.

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