

**PSYCHO-ANALYSIS: A  
BRIEF ACCOUNT OF  
THE FREUDIAN THEORY**

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Psycho-Analysis: A Brief Account of the Freudian Theory by Barbara Low & Ernest Jones

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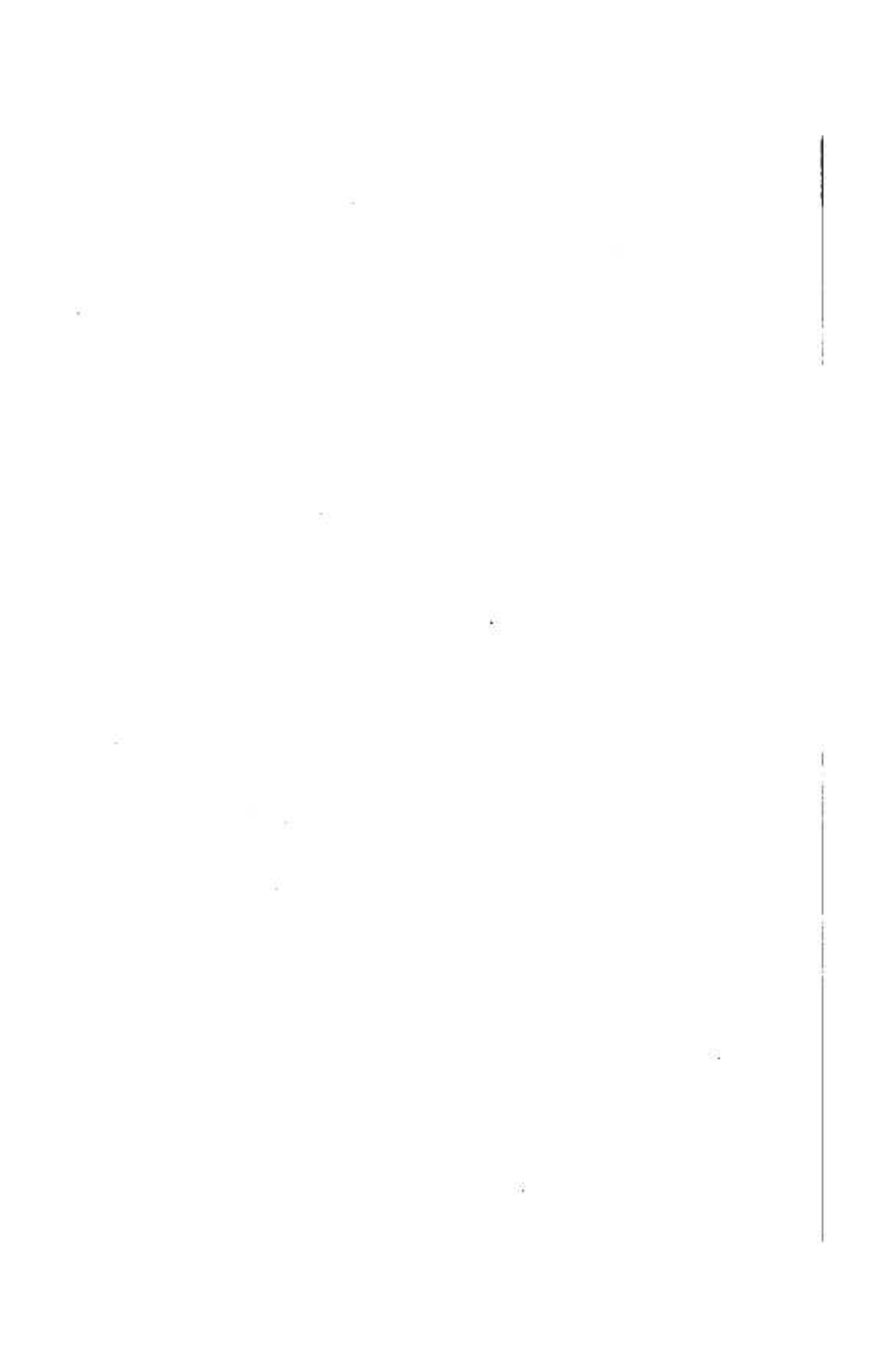
**BARBARA LOW & ERNEST JONES**

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FREUDIAN THEORY

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## PREFACE

IN addition to the deeper and more permanent sources of opposition to Psycho-Analysis, there have been two practical reasons why knowledge of it has spread slowly in England in particular. One of these has been the relative inaccessibility of the standard works on the subject, a difficulty which will soon be removed by the activity of the International Psycho-Analytical Press. The other has been the lack of any work giving a clear and simple account of the elements of the subject. This gap in the literature the present work is intended to fill. Miss Low is not the first to make the attempt, but she has the great advantage of having beforehand made an immediate study of the subject with the purpose of adequately qualifying herself for such a task.

Properly to appreciate Miss Low's success in accomplishing this task one should realize that it is one with peculiar difficulties. It is never an easy matter to present

a complex science in outline, but with Psycho-Analysis several special circumstances make the task of simple and satisfactory exposition an almost insuperable one. To begin with, it is a new and growing science, and it is always found that the ease of popular presentation depends on the extent to which a given sphere of knowledge is relatively complete and finished. When fairly stable conclusions have been clearly defined from many angles it is possible to formulate them in simple language, even though the implications of them may be complex and elaborate enough. During the earlier stages of development, however, when the conclusions are more fluid and less sharply defined, it is very hard to reduce them to an easily intelligible form and to assimilate them to common knowledge, since the bearings of partial generalization are only evident to those who have already made some study of the subject. This is especially true when, as in the case of Psycho-Analysis, the conclusions reached are strange and startling; the more foreign they are to familiar knowledge, and the more repellent to preconceived opinions or prejudices,

the harder it is to make them either acceptable or readily comprehensible.

That the deductions made from psycho-analytical investigations are both novel and not easily acceptable, Miss Low makes plain in her book, and she has not adopted the easier way of concealing these attributes of them. She has chosen the loftier aim of attempting to present all aspects of the psycho-analytical theory fairly and straightforwardly, and yet to bring them within reach of those who have made no previous study of the subject. I can answer for it that she has performed the first part of this task successfully, and can only hope that her readers will find she has performed the second part with equal success.

ERNEST JONES.

*August 30, 1919.*