

SYMBOLICAL METHODS OF STUDY

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649716982

Symbolical Methods of Study by Mary Boole

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MARY BOOLE

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OF STUDY**

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(Present)
MRS MARY BOOLE

AUTHOR OF "HOME SIDE OF A SCIENTIFIC MIND,"

AND

"MESSAGE OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE TO MOTHERS AND NURSES"



"In the Image of God created He him."

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1884

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DEDICATION.



TO SOME FORMER PUPILS OF QUEEN'S
COLLEGE, LONDON.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

In days when the Universities were not open to women, Queen's College, under the presidency of Dr. Trench, was considered the pioneer of female education. By the time I made the acquaintance of "dear old Queen's" it was beginning to seem somewhat behind the age. Our doors had not yet been opened to the Examiner. We learned contentedly whatever our own professors saw fit to put before us, and never thought of going up for matriculation or degrees. Yet our teachers, the list of whom still contained such names as F. D. Maurice and Stopford Brooke, did somehow contrive to keep your young minds very full of not altogether uninteresting or profitless thought. The questions which you brought to me would have puzzled a wiser head than mine; and when I could not find answers for you, either in published books, in the suggestive sermons on National Religion preached at the West London Synagogue,

or in the buried stores of the writings of members of my own family, I was obliged to apply for help either to the professors, or to my friend James Hinton. This little volume will, I hope, remind some of you of our happy Sunday evenings.

Yours affectionately,

MARY BOOLE.

PREFACE.

THIS little volume is a humble attempt to reproduce in a form intelligible to young people, the thoughts of some teachers of Symbolic Method of our time, as expressed in their conversation and letters.

Mr. Betts's theory of counterpart-forms, alluded to on p. 49, connects itself naturally with G. Boole's idea that the perfect friendship is that which exists between two persons of exactly opposite tastes, opinions, and habits of thought *harmonised by similar aims and views of life*. In Boole's logical equation, the $1 - x$ (or *not- x* , or *polar-opposite of x*) must belong to, and be included in, the same "Universe of Thought," as the x itself. The pair of friends* who "stood back to back," stood, of course, on the same level and were in danger from the same foes. Mr. Betts seems to recognize that

* See p. 12.

the highest union of opposites possible at our present stage of development may be but a partial one; a fuller union than any we can conceive of now is to be entered into with the "counterpart hereafter:" with the person who seems the incarnation of all that now we most hate, the thought which seems the denial of all that we believe.

Many philosophers have arrived, in different ways, at a perception of the truth that zero may have two totally different meanings; it may mean either negation or completion. Stillness may result either from the absence of force, or from a balance of compensating vibrations. Peace may come either from not being stimulated to think and feel at all, or from being stimulated to the intensest mental and moral activity by the presence of one's counterpart. Quiescence may be either death or a blissful Nirvana of activity in rest. The equation $0 = x(1 - x)$, or *zero equals anything fused with its polar-opposite*, might be called the equation of Nirvana, as opposed to *zero equals no specialization, no idiosyncrasy, no "wrongness,"* which is the equation of death.

The former is essentially equivalent to Oken's formula, that "the Eternal is the No thing of Nature . . . is one and the same with the zero of mathematics." And this zero of completed or

compensated activity is to be always the starting-point of a new partial-activity, which must be again unified with its new polar-opposite.

One-sided activity, if at all intense, is felt by us as "evil." As the pessimists say, any form of activity or life is necessarily "evil;" any *one* form of activity must be so. Then comes the question—How shall we destroy "evilness"? By the destruction of that which is evil, so substituting for activity negation and death? Or by completing it with its polar-opposite "evil"? Is our fight with evilness to be carried on by the destruction of individual evils, or by finding the true counterpart of each and placing that counterpart in suitable juxtaposition with it? Is the result of our efforts after goodness to be the diminution of life, or development to a higher life; death, or a Nirvana of intenser activity? This appears to be the great question of Religion, of Medicine, of Education, of Government, of Art.

It seems to me advisable that those who will have to fight their way through the difficulties which beset the application of the scientific solution in particular cases should early learn to understand the general solution, as theoretically expressed, and to see how the great Masters of the Art of Thinking applied it in detail.