

**PSYCHO-THERAPY IN THE
PRACTICE OF
MEDICINE AND SURGERY**

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Psycho-therapy in the practice of medicine and surgery by Sheldon Leavitt

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SHELDON LEAVITT

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MEDICINE AND SURGERY**

Psycho-Therapy

in the Practice of Medicine
and Surgery, by SHELDON
LEAVITT, M. D.

The laws of thought are the laws of the universe.—*Bachner.*

He who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot, is a fool; he who dares not, is a slave.—*Byron.*

"I have always thought (and not without reason) that to have published for the benefit of afflicted mortals any certain method of soothing even the slightest disease was a matter of greater felicity than the riches of a Tantalus or a Cræsus. I have called it a matter of 'greater felicity'; I now call it a matter of greater goodness and of greater wisdom."
—*Sydenham.*

I will listen to any one's convictions, but pray keep your doubts to yourself. I have plenty of my own.—*Goethe.*



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TO THOSE OF
THE MEDICAL PROFESSION WHO LOVE TRUTH
AND
DO NOT FEAR TO STAND FOR IT
THIS WORK IS
DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR

"I touched the garment-hem of truth,
Yet saw not all its splendor."

Preface.

When a student launches on the Sea of Mind he soon finds himself in deep water. His sounding line will not reach bottom. The trouble is that the depths are infinite. There are "the heavens above and the earth beneath and the waters under the earth," as the Universe is aptly described by the sacred writer.

In truth he does not launch at all, for he himself, in essence, is a part of the sea. It is a sea of vibrations in which he is immersed and of which his thinking self is an integral part.

I have hesitated to venture a public opinion concerning even those phases of psychology that most interest me as a physician and surgeon. My main object now is not edification and finality, but stimulation to inquiry, realizing that convictions of value are not gained from mere reading, but from soaking one's mind in a subject, "by continually thinking unto it," as Newton said.

I have been compelled to speak of the "conscious" and the "unconscious" or "subconscious," the "objective" and the "subjective," the "supraliminal" and the "subliminal." The exact significance of these terms I do not pretend to understand: the designated powers I do not undertake to define. The dual mind is hypothetical. It is probably only two phases of a much "greater self," as Myers has suggested. I beg not to be held to strict account.

This needs to be said: The "subliminal" contains no reference to what is beneath, except in the sense of foundation. In every other respect the subliminal, the subjective, the unconscious, is the more real, the more noble, the more comprehensive and the more intelligent self. The "supraliminal," the "conscious," the "objective" is a healthy, a natural manifestation.

I am satisfied that there are vast possibilities for Suggestive Therapeutics. I have not hesitated to express an opinion concerning details whenever I have found myself in full possession of one. Some of these opinions will doubtless be modified by future developments; but such of them as rest upon well-recognized laws of psychic action will be stable. I have been led along step by step, my powers of perception gradually developing, my experience widening, the possibilities opening before me, until I find myself measurably ripe in both experience and conviction.

The certainty of being misunderstood confronts me. I shall doubtless be dubbed a "Christian Scientist," a "charlatan," an "ignoramus," a "trimmer." That matters little. Those who know me well, while they may not wholly agree with me, will at least concede me sincerity. *I have herein spoken only the thoughts that long have pressed for utterance.* He only is the growing man who gives himself repeated opportunity to change and then to declare in no uncertain language his most sacred convictions. The worst that can in justice be said is that I am a *nonconformist*; and this title I shall not resent. Says Max Muller:

"Scholars welcome everybody who in the open tourna-

ment of science will take his chance, dealing blows and receiving or parrying blows; but the man who himself does not fight, but simply stands by to jeer and sneer when two good knights have been unseated in breaking a lance in the cause of truth, does nothing but mischief, and might, indeed, find better and worthier employment."

The well-known English scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge, says:

"Remember that the term 'science' was not always respectable. To early ears it sounded almost as the term witchcraft or magic sounded; it was a thing from which to warn young people; it led to atheism and to many other abominations. It was an unholy prying into the secrets of Nature which were meant to be hid from our eyes; it was a thing against which the Church resolutely set its face, a thing for which it was ready, if need were, to torture or to burn those unlucky men of scientific genius who were born before their time. . . . Pioneers must expect hard knocks; the mind of a people can change only slowly; and until the mind of a people is changed, new truths born before their time must suffer the fate of other untimely births; and the prophet who preaches them must expect to be mistaken for a useless fanatic, of whom every age has always had too many, and must be content to be literally or metaphorically put to death, as part of the protest of the regeneration of the world."

I trust that there is no arrogance in my saying that the conclusions herein expressed are attributable neither to inexperience with disease in its various phases nor to lack of knowledge of what orthodox medicine, as practiced by either, or both, of the prominent schools, is capable of doing. Had my opportunities for observation been more restricted I should have hesitated to express pronounced views. The new methods of treatment have been utilized by me in a discriminating and tentative manner for years and the observations have been carefully noted.