

WILLIAM ATKINSON

MIND AND BODY; OR,
MENTAL STATES AND
PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

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FOREWORD

Mind and Body – Mental States and Physical Conditions! To the mind of those who have contented themselves with merely the superficial aspects of things, these two things – mind and body; and mental states and physical conditions – seem to be as far apart as the two poles; seem to be opposites and contradictories impossible of reconciliation. But to those who have penetrated beneath the surface of things, these two apparent opposites are seen to be so closely related and inter-related – so blended and mingled together in manifestation – that it is practically impossible to scientifically determine where the one leaves off and the other begins. And so constant and close is their mutual action and reaction, that it often becomes impossible to state positively *which* is the cause and which the effect.

In the first place, Science now informs us that in all living substance, from cell to mammoth, there is and must be Mind. There can be no Life without Mind. Mind, indeed, is held to be the very “livingness” of Life – the greater the degree of manifestation of Mind, the higher the degree of Life. Moreover, the New Psychology informs us that upon the activities of the Subconscious Mind depend all the processes of physical life – that the Subconscious Mind is the essence of what was formerly called the Vital Force – and is embodied in every cell, cell-group or organ of the body. And, that this Subconscious Mind is amenable to suggestion, good and evil, from the conscious mind of its owner, as well as from outside. When the subject of the influence of Mental States upon Physical Conditions is studied, one sees that the Physical Condition is merely the reflection of the Mental State, and the problem seems to be solved, the mystery of Health and Disease solved. But in this, as in everything else, there is seen to be an opposing phase – the other side of the shield. Let us look at the other side of the question:

Just as we find that wherever there is living substance there is Mind, so do we find that we are unable to intelligently consider Mind unless as *embodied* in living substance. The idea of Mind, independent of its substantial embodiment, becomes a mere abstraction impossible of mental imaging – something like color independent of the colored substance, or light without the illuminated substance. And just as we find that Mental States influence Physical Conditions, so do we find that Physical Conditions influence Mental States. And, so the problem of Life, Health and Disease once more loses its simplicity, and the mystery again deepens. The deeper we dig into the subject, the more do we become impressed with the idea of the universal principle of Action and Reaction so apparent in all phenomena. The Mind acts upon the Body; the Body reacts upon the Mind; cause and effect become confused; the reasoning becomes circular – like a ring it has no beginning, no end; its beginning may be any place we may prefer, its ending likewise.

The only reconciliation is to be found in the fundamental working hypothesis which holds that both Mind and Body – both Mental States and Physical Conditions – are *the two aspects of something greater than either – the opposing poles of the same Reality*. The radical Materialist asserts that the Body is the only reality, and that Mind is merely its “by-product.” The Mentalist asserts that the Mind is the only reality, and that the Body is merely its grosser form of manifestation. The unprejudiced philosopher is apt to stand aside and say: “You are both right, yet both wrong – each is stating the truth, but only the half-truth.” With the working hypothesis that Mind and Body are but varying

aspects of the Truth – that Mind is the inner essence of the Body, and Body the outward manifestation of the Mind – we find ourselves on safe ground.

We mention this fundamental principle here, for in the body of this book we shall not invade the province of metaphysics or philosophy, but shall hold ourselves firmly to our own field, that of psychology. Of course, the very nature of the subject renders it necessary that we consider the influence of psychology upon physiology, but we have remembered that this book belongs to the general subject of the New Psychology, and we have accordingly emphasized the psychological side of the subject. But the same material could have been used by a writer upon physiology, by changing the emphasis from the psychological phase to the physiological.

We have written this book to reach not only those who refuse to see the wonderful influence of the Mental States over the Physical Conditions, but also for our “metaphysical” friends who have become so enamored with the power of the Mind that they practically ignore the existence of the Body, indeed, in some cases, actually denying the existence of the latter. We believe that there is a sane middle-ground in “metaphysical healing,” as there is in the material treatment of disease. In this case, not only does Truth lie between the two extremes, but it is composed of the blending and assimilation of the two opposing ideas and theories. But, even if the reader does not fully agree with us in our general theories and conclusions, he will find within the covers of this book a mass of *facts* which he may use in building up a new theory of his own. And, after all, what are theories but the threads upon which are strung the beads of *facts*– if our string does not meet with your approval, break it and string the beads of fact upon a thread of your own. Theories come, and theories go – but *facts* remain.

CHAPTER I

THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

In order to understand the nature of the influence of the mind upon the body – the effect of mental states upon physical functions – we must know something of that wonderful field of mental activity which in the New Psychology is known as “The Subconscious Mind,” and which by some writers has been styled the “Subjective Mind;” the “Involuntary Mind;” the “Subliminal Mind;” the “Unconscious Mind,” etc., the difference in names arising because of the comparative newness of the investigation and classification.

Among the various functions of the Subconscious Mind, one of the most important is that of the charge and control of the involuntary activities and functions of the human body through the agency of the sympathetic nervous system, the cells, and cell-groups. As all students of physiology know, the greater part of the activities of the body are involuntary – that is, are independent (or partly so) of the control of the conscious will. As Dr. Schofield says: “The unconscious mind, in addition to the three qualities which it shares in common with the conscious —*viz.*, will, intellect and emotion – has undoubtedly another very important one – nutrition, or the general maintenance of the body.” And as Hudson states: “The subjective mind has absolute control of the functions, conditions and sensations of the body.” Notwithstanding the dispute which is still raging concerning *what* the Subconscious mind *is*, the authorities all agree upon the fact that, whatever else it may be, it may be considered as that phase, aspect, part, or field of the mind which has charge and control of the greater part of the physical functioning of the body.

Von Hartmann says: “The explanation that unconscious psychical activity itself appropriately forms and maintains the body has not only nothing to be said against it, but has all possible analogies from the most different departments of physical and animal life in its favor, and appears to be as scientifically certain as is possible in the inferences from effect to cause.” Maudsley says: “The connection of mind and body is such that a given state of mind tends to echo itself at once in the body.” Carpenter says: “If a psychosis or mental state is produced by a neurosis or material nerve state, as pain by a prick, so also is a neurosis produced by a psychosis. That mental antecedents call forth physical consequents is just as certain as that physical antecedents call forth mental consequents.” Tuke says: “Mind, through sensory, motor, vaso-motor and trophic nerves, causes changes in sensation, muscular contraction, nutrition and secretion... If the brain is an outgrowth from a body corpuscle and is in immediate relation with the structures and tissues that preceded it, then, though these continue to have their own action, the brain must be expected to act upon the muscular tissue, the organic functions and upon the nervous system itself.”

Von Hartmann also says: “In willing any conscious act, the unconscious will is evoked to institute means to bring about the effect. Thus, if I will a stronger salivary secretion, the conscious willing of this effect excites the unconscious will to institute the necessary means. Mothers are said to be able to provide through the will a more copious secretion, if the sight of the child arouses in them the will to suckle. There are people who perspire voluntarily. I now possess the power of instantaneously reducing the severest hiccoughs to silence by my own will, while it was formerly a source of great inconvenience to me... An irritation to cough, which has no mechanical cause, may be permanently suppressed by the will. I believe we might possess a far greater voluntary power over our bodily functions if we were only accustomed from childhood to institute experiments and to practice ourselves therein... We have arrived at the conclusion that every action of the mind on the body, without exception, is only possible by means of an unconscious will; that such an unconscious will can be called forth partly by means of a conscious will, partly also through the conscious idea of the effect, without conscious will, and even in opposition to the conscious will.”

Henry Wood says of the Subconscious Mind: “It acts automatically upon the physical organism. It cognizes external facts, conditions, limitations, and even contagions, quite independent of its active counterpart. One may, therefore, ‘take’ a disease and be unaware of any exposure. The subconsciousness has been unwittingly trained to fear, and accept it; and it is this quality, rather than the mere inert matter of the body, that succumbs. Matter is never the actor, but is always acted upon. This silent, mental partner, in operation, seems to be a living, thinking personality, conducting affairs on its own account. It is a compound of almost unimaginable variety, including wisdom and foolishness, logic and nonsense, and yet having a working unitary economy. It is a hidden force to be dealt with and educated, for it is often found insubordinate and unruly. It refuses co-operation with its lesser but more active and wiser counterpart. It is very ‘set’ in its views, and only changes its qualities and opinions by slow degrees. But, like a pair of horses, not until these two mental factors can be trained together can there be harmony and efficiency.”

In order to understand the important part played in the physical economy by the Subconscious Mind, it is only necessary to understand the various processes of the human system which are out of the ordinary field of the voluntary or conscious mind. We then realize that the entire process of nutrition, including digestion, assimilation, etc., the processes of elimination, the processes of circulation, the processes of growth, in fact the entire processes manifested in the work of the cells, cell-groups, ganglia, physical organs, etc., are in charge of and controlled by the Subconscious Mind. Our food is digested and transformed into the nourishing substances of the blood; then carried through the arteries to all parts of the body, where it is absorbed by the cells and used to replace the worn-out material, the latter then being carried back through the veins to the lungs where the waste matter is burned up, and the balance again sent on its journey through the arteries re-charged with the life-giving oxygen. All of these processes, and many others of almost equal importance, are out of the field of the conscious or voluntary mind, and are governed by the Subconscious Mind. As we shall see when we consider the Sympathetic Nervous System, the greater part of the body is dominated by the Subconscious Mind, and that the welfare of the major physical functions depends entirely, or almost so, upon this great area or field of the mind.

The best authorities now generally agree that there is no part of the body which may be considered as devoid of mind. The Subconscious Mind is not confined to the brain, or even the greater plexuses of the nervous system, but extends to all parts of the body, to every nerve, muscle, and even to every cell and cell-group of the body. The functions and processes of the body are no longer considered as purely mechanical, or chemical, but are now seen to be the result of mental action of some kind or degree. Therefore, in considering the Subconscious Mind, one must not think of it as resident in the brain alone, but rather as being *distributed over the entire physical body*. There is mind in every cell, every organ, every muscle, every nerve – in every part of the body.

The importance of the above statements regarding the power and importance of the Subconscious Mind may be realized when one remembers the dictum of the New Psychology, to wit: *The Subconscious Mind is amenable to Suggestion*. When it is realized that this great controller of the physical organism is so constituted that it accepts as truth the suggestions from the conscious mind of its owner, as well as those emanating from the conscious minds of other people, it may be understood why Faith, Belief, and Expectant Attention manifest such marked effects upon the physical body and the general health, for good or for evil, as indicated in the preceding chapters. All of the many instances and examples recited in the preceding chapters may be understood when it is realized that the Subconscious Mind, which is in control of the physical functions and vital processes, will accept the suggestions from the conscious mind of its owner, and also suggestions from outside which the conscious mind of its owner allows to pass down to it. If, as Henry Wood has said in the paragraph previously quoted, it “acts automatically upon the physical organism,” and “seems to be a living, thinking personality, conducting affairs on its own account,” and at the same time, *accepts and takes on’ suggested conditions*, it may be readily understood how the wonderful and almost incredible

statements of the authorities mentioned in the preceding chapters have had real and substantial basis in truth.

This understanding of the part played by the Subjective Mind in controlling and affecting physical conditions and activities, together with its suggestible qualities and nature, gives us a key to the whole question of the “Why?” of Mental Healing. Suggestion is the connecting link between Mind and Body, and an understanding of its laws and principles enables one to see the moving cause of the strange phenomena of the Faith Cures, under whatever name they may pass, and under whatever guise they may present themselves. “Suggestion” is the explanation offered by the New Psychology for the almost miraculous phenomena which other schools seek to explain upon some hypothesis based either upon religious beliefs, or upon some metaphysical or philosophical doctrine. The New Psychology holds that it is not necessary to go outside of the realms of psychology and physiology in studying Mental Healing or Psycho-Therapy; and that the theories of the semi-religious and metaphysical cults are merely strange guises or masks which serve to conceal the real operative principle of cure.

The following quotation from Dr. Schofield will serve to call the attention to the important part played by the Subconscious Mind in the physical activities, a fact which is not generally recognized: “It has often been a mystery how the body thrives so well with so little oversight or care on the part of its owner. No machine could be constructed, nor could any combination of solids or liquids in organic compounds, regulate, control, counteract, help, hinder or arrange for the continual succession of differing events, foods, surroundings and conditions which are constantly affecting the body. And yet, in the midst of this ever-changing and varying succession of influences, the body holds on its course of growth, health, nutrition and self-maintenance with the most marvelous constancy. We perceive, of course, clearly, that the best of qualities – regulation, control, etc., etc. – are all mental qualities, and at the same time we are equally clear that by no self-examination can we say we consciously exercise any of these mental powers over the organic processes of our bodies. One would think, then, that the conclusion is sufficiently simple and obvious – that they must be used unconsciously; in other words, it is, and can be nothing else than *unconscious mental powers* that control, guide and govern the functions and organs of the body.

“Our ordinary text-books on physiology give but little idea of what I may call the intelligence that presides over the various systems of the body, showing itself in the bones, as we have seen, in distributing the available but insufficient amount of lime salts in disease; not equally, but for the protection of the most vital parts, leaving those of lesser value disproportionally deficient. In the muscular system nearly all contractions are involuntary. Even in the voluntary (so-called) muscles, the most we can do is to will results. We do not will the contractions that carry out these results. Muscles, striped and unstriped, are ceaselessly acting without the slightest consciousness in maintaining the balance of the body, the expression of the face, the general attributes corresponding to mental states, the carrying on of digestion and other processes with a purposiveness, and adaptation of means to new ends and new conditions, ceaselessly arising, that are beyond all material mechanism. Consider, for instance, the marvelous increase of smooth muscle in the uterus at term, and also its no less marvelous subsequent involution; observe, too, the compensating muscular increase of a damaged heart until the balance is restored and the necessity for it ceases, as does growth at a fixed period; consider in detail the repair of a broken bone. These actions are not mere properties of matter; they demand, and are the result of, a controlling mind.

“The circulation does not go round as most text-books would lead us to believe, as the result merely of the action of a system of elastic tubes, connected with a self-acting force-pump. It is such views as these that degrade physiology and obscure the marvels of the body. The circulation never flows for two minutes in the same manner. In an instant, miles of capillaries are closed or opened up, according to the ever-varying body needs, of which, consciously, we are entirely unaware. The blood supply of each organ is not mechanical, but is carefully regulated from minute to minute in health, exactly according to its needs and activities, and when this ever fails, we at once recognize it

as disease, and call it congestion and so forth. The very heart-beat itself is never constant, but varies *pro rata* with the amount of exercise, activity of vital functions, of conditions of temperature, etc., and even of emotions and other direct mental feelings. The whole reproductive system is obviously under the sway and guidance of more than blind material forces. In short, when thoroughly analyzed, the action and regulation of no system of the body can be satisfactorily explained, without postulating an unconscious mental element, which *does*, if allowed, satisfactorily explain all the phenomena.”

CHAPTER II

THE SYMPATHETIC SYSTEM

The average person has a general understanding of what is meant by “the nervous system,” but inquiry will show that by this term he usually includes only that part of the nervous system which is known as the “cerebro-spinal system,” or the system of nerves consisting of the brain and spinal cord, and the nerves extending therefrom throughout the body, the offices of which are to control the voluntary movements of the body. The average person is almost entirely ignorant of the existence of the Great Sympathetic System which controls the involuntary movements and processes, such as the processes and functions of nutrition, secretion, reproduction, excretion, the vaso-motor action, etc. In physiology, the term “sympathetic” is used in the sense of: “Reciprocal action of the different parts of the body on each other; an affection of one part of the body in consequence of something taking place in another. Thus when there is a local injury, the whole frame after a time suffers with it. A wound anywhere will tend to create feverishness everywhere; derangement of the stomach will tend to produce headache, liver complaint to produce pain in the shoulder, etc.”

An old authority thus describes the Sympathetic Nerves: “A system of nerves, running from the base of the skull to the coccyx, along both sides of the body, and consisting of a series of ganglia along the spinal column by the side of the vertebræ. With this trunk of the sympathetic there are communicating branches which connect the ganglia, or the intermediate cord, with all the spinal and several of the cranial nerves proceeding to primary branches on the neighboring organs or other ganglia, and finally numerous flexures of nerves running to the viscera. Various fibers from the sympathetic communicate with those of the cerebro-spinal system. The term ‘sympathetic’ has been applied on the supposition that it is the agent in producing sympathy between different parts of the body. It more certainly affects the secretions.” In the New Psychology the Sympathetic Nervous System is recognized as that directly under the control of the Subconscious Mind.

The Cerebro-Spinal Nervous System is concerned with the activities arising from the conscious activities of the mind, including those of the five senses. It controls the muscles by which we speak, walk, move our limbs, and pursue the ordinary activities of outer life. But, while these are very important to the individual, there is another set of activities – inner activities – which are none the less important. The Sympathetic System controls the involuntary muscles by means of which the heart throbs, the arteries pulsate, the air is conveyed to the lungs, the blood moves to and from the heart, the various glands and tubes of the body operate, and the entire work of nutrition, repair, and body-building is performed. While the Cerebro-Spinal System, and the Conscious Mind are able to rest a considerable portion of the twenty-four hours of the day, the Sympathetic System and the Subconscious Mind must needs work every minute of the twenty-four hours, without rest or vacation, during the life of their owner.

Dr. E. H. Pratt, in his valuable “Series of Impersonations” published in the medical magazines several years ago, and since reproduced in book form, makes “The Sympathetic Man” speak as follows: “The entire body can do nothing without me; and my occupation of supplying the inspiration for our entire family is so constant and engaging that I am compelled to attend strictly to business night and day from one end of life to the other, and have no time whatever for observation, education, or amusement outside of my daily tasks. As a rule, I perform my work so noiselessly that the rest of the family are scarcely conscious of my existence, for when I am well everything works all right, each organ plays its part as usual, and the entire machinery of life is operated noiselessly and without friction. When I am not well, however, and am not quite equal to the demands made upon me, I have two ways of making it known to the family. One is by appealing to self-consciousness through the assistance of my cerebro-spinal brother, with whom I am closely associated, thereby causing some

disturbance of sensation or locomotion (the most frequent disturbance in this direction being the instituting of some form of pain); or I sometimes take it into my head to say nothing to my cerebro-spinal brother about my affairs, but simply shirk my duties, and my inefficiency becomes manifest only when some one or all of the organs suffer from some function poorly performed.”

The nerve-centres of the Cerebro-Spinal System are grouped closely together, while those of the Sympathetic System are scattered about the body, each organ having its appropriate centre or tiny-brain. The heart, the liver, the kidneys, the spleen, the brain, the intestinal tract, the bladder, the generative organs, have each its own particular nerve-centre of the Sympathetic System – each its tiny-brain – each, however, connected with all the others. And more than this – in addition to the tiny-brains in each of the important vital organs, there are found scattered through the trunk a number of *ganglia*, or knots of gray nervous matter, arranged longitudinally in two lines extending from just in front of the spinal column from the base of the skull to the end of the spinal column, each vertebra having its appropriate ganglia. In some cases several of these ganglia are grouped together, the number ranging from two to three. Each ganglion is a distinct centre giving off branches in four directions.

There is also one place in which are grouped together several very large ganglia, forming what is known as the Solar Plexus, or Abdominal Brain, which is situated at the upper part of the abdomen, behind the stomach and in front of the aorta and the pillars of the diaphragm, and from which issue nerves extending in all directions. By some authorities the Solar Plexus is regarded as the great centre of the Sympathetic System, and the main seat of the Subconscious Mind. Dr. Byron Robinson bestowed upon this centre the name “The Abdominal Brain,” saying of the use of the term: “I mean to convey the idea that it is endowed with the high powers and phenomena of a great nervous centre; that it can organize, multiply, and diminish forces.”

One of the most interesting and significant features of the ganglia is that of their connection with the nerve centres of the Cerebro-Spinal System, indicating the reciprocal action existing between the two great nervous systems. From each one of the ganglia in the two great lines forming the system, issues a tiny filament which connects with the spinal cord; and at the same time it receives from the spinal cord a tiny filament in return, thus establishing a double line of communication. It is held by some authorities that one of these filaments acts as a sending wire, and the other as a receiving wire between the two systems. Be this as it may, the inter-communication between the two systems is clearly indicated.

It must be remembered that the involuntary muscles which move the heart, as well as the tiny muscles which form the middle-coat of the arteries and the veins, are controlled by the Sympathetic System, and thus the important work of the circulation, which goes on day and night, year in and year out, during life, is directly under the charge of the Sympathetic System and the Subconscious Mind. Also, the involuntary muscles which are concerned with the activities of the liver, the kidneys and the spleen, are under the same direct control.

Dr. E. H. Pratt, in the “Series of Impersonations” above referred to, makes the “Subconscious Man” tell the following wonderful truth, which we suggest each reader read carefully and fix in his mind: “My brother the Sympathetic Man has told you that I am the animating spirit of his construction; and as he is the great body builder, having furnished the emotions under which our entire family has been put into form, you can understand by what right I pose before you as the human form of forms. All the rest of the family are because I am. Even my Conscious brother, who claims superiority to his fellow-shapes because he bosses them around a little and makes use of them, is a subject of my own creation... I am the life of the Sympathetic Man, whose existence as a human shape has already sufficiently been well established, and as there is no part of him which is not alive, the conclusion is very evident that his shape and mine are identical. *There is no part of the sympathetic system which is not animated by my own principle of vitality.* Indeed, he is but a cup of life, though I can assure you that his cup is full, and he would not be good for much if it was not. So, if you are

able to conceive the shape of the Sympathetic Man, you can regard this form as identical with my own. This is really a very modest claim on my part, and does not quite do justice to myself, for in reality the Sympathetic Man does not contain all there is of me by any means, for I am not only in him, but all around him, and he is not by any means capable of containing my full self.”

When it is seen that the vital activities of the physical body are ruled, governed and controlled by the Sympathetic System, animated by the Subconscious Mind, and that the latter is amenable to Suggestion from the Conscious Mind and from outside, we may begin to get a glimmer of the great light which illuminates the principle of Mental Healing. If the Subconscious Mind, *the builder*, is influenced by Suggestion to neglect his work, or to build wrongly, it is likewise possible for him to heed proper Suggestion and to repair his mistakes and to rebuild properly. This principle being grasped, the rest will seem to be merely an understanding of the best methods of reaching the Subconscious Mind by Suggestion or Auto-Suggestion. We may now begin to understand the truth of the old axiom: “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” – physically. And as Thought is based largely upon Belief, can we not see the dynamic force of Faith? Is there not a real psychological basis for so-called “miracles?” Is not the wonder-working of the cults now understandable?

CHAPTER III

THE CELL-MINDS

Modern science has demonstrated that the human body is composed of a multitude of microscopic cells, that is, that the muscles, nerves, tissues, blood, bones, hair and nails are made up of minute cells, and groups of cells. Virchow says: "It is of the cells that the tissues are built up and the nerves formed. There is no part of the human body in which the cell is not seen. All these cells are neucledated – have in them a central life-spot like the yolk of an egg. Each cell is born, reproduces itself, dies and is absorbed. The maintenance of life and health depends upon the constant regeneration of the cells. When man can control the life and death of the cell he becomes the creator." Medical science now practically asserts that disease of the body is really disease of the cells of which the body is composed, and that all healing of the body must consist of the healing of the cells – that is, of restoring the cells to normal activity and functioning.

The following quotation from Hudson, following Stephens, is interesting: "An aggregation of cells became a confederation, with its differentiation of cell functions and still further division of labor. As a result of a long process of such differentiation, the organisms of the larger animals and of man came to be composed, as we find them, of thirty or more different species of cells. For example, we have the muscle cells, whose vital energies are devoted to the office of contraction, or vigorous shortening of length; connective-tissue cells, whose office is mainly to produce and conserve a tough fibre for binding together and covering in the organism; bone cells, whose life work is to select and collocate salts of lime for the organic framework, levers and joints; hair, nail, horn and feather cells, which work in silicates for the protection, defense, and ornamentation of the organism; gland cells, whose *motif* in living has come to be the abstraction from the blood of substances which are recombined to produce juices needed to aid the various processes or steps of digestion; blood cells, which have assumed the laborious function of general carriers, scavengers, and repairers of the organism; eye, ear, nasal and palate cells, which have become the special artificers of complicated apparatus for transmitting light, sound, odors, and flavors to the highly sentient brain cells; pulmonary cells, which elaborate a tissue for the introduction of oxygen and the elimination of carbon dioxide and other waste products; hepatic (liver) cells, which have, in response to the needs of the organism, descended to the menial office of living on the waste products and converting them into chemical reagents to facilitate digestion – these and numerous other species of cells; and lastly, most important and of greatest interest, brain and nerve cells."

The various cells of the body are constantly busy, each performing its particular task, either singly or in connection with other cells in the cell-group. Like a great arm, the cells are divided into classes, some being engaged in the active daily work, while others are held back on the reserve line. Some are engaged in building up the tissues, muscles and bones, while others are busy manufacturing the juices, secretions, fluids and chemical compounds required in the great laboratory of the body. Some remain at their posts, stationary during their entire life, while others remain stationary only until the call comes for their services, while a third class are in constant motion from place to place either following regular routes or else travelling under a roving commission. Some of the moving cells act as carriers of material – the hod-carriers of the body, while others move about doing special repair work such as the healing of wounds, etc., while others still are the scavengers and street cleaners of system, and others form the cell army and cell police force. The body has been compared to a vast communistic or socialistic colony, each member of which cheerfully devotes his life-work, and often his life itself, to the common good. The brain cells are of course the most highly organized, and the most highly differentiated of the cells. The nerve cells constitute a living telegraph system over which is carried the messages from the several parts of the body, each cell being in close contact

with its neighbor on each side – the nerve cells practically clasp hands and form a living chain of communication.

The blood cells are important members of the cell-community, and are exceedingly numerous, there being over 75,000,000,000 of the red-blood cells alone. These red-blood cells move in the blood currents, carrying through the arteries each its little load of oxygen which it transports to the distant tissues that they may be invigorated and vitalized anew; and, returning, carrying through the veins the debris and waste products of the system to the great crematory of the lungs where the waste is burnt and thrown off from the body. Like the ships that sail the sea, each cell carries its outgoing cargo, and returns with another one. Some of these cells perform the office of special repairers, forcing their way through the walls of the blood-vessels and penetrating the tissues in order to perform their special tasks. There are several other kinds of cells in the blood besides the carriers just mentioned. There are the wonderful soldier and police cells which maintain order and fight battles when necessary. The police cells are on the constant lookout for germs, bacteria and other microscopic disturbers of the peace of the body. When these tiny policemen discover vagrant germs, or criminal bacteria, they rush upon the intruder and tying him up in a mesh, proceed to devour him. If the intruder be too large or vigorous, a call for assistance is sent out, and the reserve police rush to the assistance of their brothers and overpower the disturber of the peace. Sometimes when the vagrants are too numerous, the policemen throw them out from the body, by means of pimples, boils and similar eruptions. In case of infectious diseases, an army corps is ordered out in full strength and a royal fight is waged between the invading army and the defenders of home and country.

Some of the blood cells take a part in the process of extracting from the food its nourishing particles, and then carrying the same through the blood-channels to all parts of the body, where it is used to feed and nourish the stationary cells there located. These cells manufacture the chemical juices of the body, such as bile, gastric juice, pancreatic juices, milk, etc., in short the entire physical process is carried on by these indefatigable tiny cells. The body of each of us is simply a great community of cells of various kinds. The cells are born by the form of reproduction common to all cells, that of subdivision. Each cell grows until a certain size is reached, when it assumes a “dumb-bell” shape, with a tiny waist line, which waist is afterward dissolved and the two cells move away from each other. In this way, and this way alone, does the body grow, the material required for the enlargement of the cell being supplied from the food and nourishment partaken by the individual. Cells die after having performed their life-work, and their corpses are carried through the veins by the carrier cells, and cast into the crematory of the lungs where they are consumed.

The body is constantly undergoing a process of change and regeneration. Old cells are being cast off every second, and new cells are taking their places. Our muscles, tissues, hair, nails, nerves, brain substance, and even our bones are constantly being made over and rebuilt. Our bodies to-day do not contain a single particle of the material which composed them a few years back. A few weeks suffices to replace our entire skin, and a few months to replace other parts of the body. If a sufficiently large microscope could be placed over our bodies, we would see each part of it as active as a hive of bees, each cell being in action and motion, and the entire domestic work of the human hive being performed according to law and order. Verily, “we are fearfully and wonderfully made.”

A number of the best authorities have used the illustration of the process of the cells in healing an ordinary wound, in order to show the activity and “mind” of the tiny cells. We have become so accustomed to the natural healing of a wound, scratch or broken skin, that we have grown to regard it as an almost mechanical process. But, science shows us that there is manifested in the healing process a marvellous degree of life and mind in the cells. Let us consider the process of healing an ordinary wound, that we may see the cells at work. Let us imagine that we are gazing at the wounded part through a marvellously strong microscope which enables us to see every cell at work. If such a glass were provided we should witness a scene similar to that now to be described.

In the first place, through our glass, we should see the gaping wound enlarged to gigantic proportions. We should see the torn skin, tissues, lymphatic and blood vessels, glands, muscles and nerves. We would see the blood pouring forth washing away the dirt and foreign substances that have entered the wound. We would then see the messages calling for help flashing over the living telegraph wires of the nerves, each nerve-cell rapidly passing the word to its neighbor until the great sympathetic centres received the call and sounded the alarm and sent out a “hurry up” call to the cells needed for the repair work. In the meantime the cells of the blood, coming in contact with the outside air have begun to coagulate into a sticky substance, which is the beginning of the scab, the purpose being to close the wound and to hold the severed parts together. The repair cells having now arrived at the scene of the accident begin to mend the break. The tissue, nerve, and muscle cells, on each side of the wound begin to multiply rapidly, receiving their nourishment from the blood cells, and quickly a cell bridge is built up until the two severed edges of the wound are reunited. This bridging is no haphazard process, for the presence of directing law and order is apparent. The newly-born cells of the blood-vessels unite with their brothers on the other side, evenly and in an orderly manner, new tubular channels being formed skillfully. The cells of the connective tissues likewise grow toward each other, and unite in the same orderly manner. The nerve-cells repair their broken lines, just as do a gang of linemen repair the interrupted telegraph system. The muscles are united in the same way. But mark you this, there is no mistake in this connecting process – muscle does not connect with nerve, nor blood-vessel with connective tissue. Finally, the inner repairs and connections having been completed, the scab disappears and the cells of the outer skin rebuild the outer covering, and the wound is healed. This process may occupy a few hours, or many days, depending upon the character of the wound, but the process is the same in all cases. The surgeon merely disinfects and cleans the wound, and placing the parts together allows the cells to perform their healing work, for no other power can perform the task. The knitting together of a broken bone proceeds along the same lines – the surgeon places the parts in juxtaposition, binds the limb together to prevent slipping, and the cells do the rest.

When the body is well nourished, the general system well toned up, and the mind cheerful and active, the repair work proceeds rapidly. But when the physical system is run down, the body poorly nourished, and the mind depressed and full of fear, the work is retarded and interfered with. It is this healing power inherent in the cells that physicians speak of as the *vis vita* or *vis medicatrix naturae*, or “the healing power of nature.” Of it Dr. Patton says: “By the term ‘efforts of nature’ we mean a certain curative or restorative principle, or *vis vita*, implanted in every living or organized body, constantly operative for its repair, preservation and health. This instinctive endeavor to repair the human organism is signally shown in the event of a severed or lost part, as a finger, for instance; for nature unaided will repair and fashion a stump equal to one from the hands of an eminent surgeon... Nature, unaided, may be equally potent in ordinary illness. Many individuals, even when severely ill, either from motives of economy, prejudice, or skepticism, remain at rest in bed, under favorable hygiene, regimen, etc., and speedily get well without a physician or medicine.”

Dr. Schofield says: “The *vis medicatrix naturae* is a very potent factor in the amelioration of disease, if it only be allowed fair play. An exercise of faith, as a rule, suspends the operation of adverse influences, and appeals strongly through the consciousness, to the inner and underlying faculty of vital force (*i. e.*, unconscious mind).” Dr. Bruce says: “We are compelled to acknowledge a power of natural recovery inherent in the body – a similar statement has been made by writers on the principle of medicine in all ages... The body does possess a means and mechanism for modifying or neutralizing influences which it cannot directly overcome.” Oliver Wendell Holmes says: “Whatever other theories we hold we must recognize the ‘*vis medicatrix naturae*’ in some shape or other.” Bruce says: “A natural power of the prevention and repair of disorders and disease has as real and as active an existence within us, as have the ordinary functions of the organs themselves.” Hippocrates said: “Nature is the physician of diseases.” And Ambrose Pare wrote on the walls of the great medical school, the Ecole

de Medicine of Paris, these words: “*Je le poncez et Dieu le guarit*,” which translated is: “I dressed the wound, and God healed it.”

It is of course true that the life and mind in the cells is derived from the Subconscious Mind, in fact the cells themselves may be said to *embody* the Subconscious Mind, just as the cells of the brain *embody* the Conscious Mind. In every cell there is to be found intelligence in a degree required for the successful performance of the particular task of that cell. Hudson says: “All organic tissue is made up of microscopic cells, each one of which *is a living, intelligent entity*.” And, again, “The subordinate intelligences are the cells of which the whole body is composed, *each of which is an intelligent entity, endowed with powers commensurate with its functions*.” In short, *the cells of the body are living organs for the expression and manifestation of the Subconscious Mind*. There is not a single cell, group, or part of the party which is devoid of mind. Mind is imminent in the entire body, and in its every part, down to the smallest cell.

The following quotation from Dr. Thomson J. Hudson’s “Mental Medicine” clearly expresses a truth conceded by modern science. Dr. Hudson says:

“It follows *a priori*, that every cell in the body is endowed with intelligence; and this is precisely what all biological science tells us is true. Beginning with the lowest form of animal life, the humblest cytoide, every living cell is endowed with a wonderful intelligence. There is, in fact, no line to be drawn between life and mind; that is to say, every living organism is a mind organism, from the monera, crawling upon the bed of the ocean, to the most highly differentiated cell in the cerebral cortex of man. Volumes have been written to demonstrate that ‘psychological phenomena begin among the very lowest class of beings; they are met with in every form of life, from the simplest cellule to the most complicated organism. It is they that are the essential phenomena of life, inherent in all protoplasm.’ (Binet.) It is, in fact, an axiom of science that the lowest unicellular organism is endowed with the potentialities of manhood. I have remarked that each living cell is endowed with a wonderful intelligence. This is emphatically true, whether it is a unicellular organism or a constituent element of a multicellular organism. Its wonderful character consists not so much in the amount of intelligence possessed by each individual cell, as it does in the quality of that intelligence. That is to say, each cell is endowed with an instinctive, or intuitive, knowledge of all that is essential to the preservation of its own life, the conservation of its energies, and the perpetuation of its species. In other words, it is endowed with an intuitive knowledge of the laws of its own being, which knowledge is proportioned to its stage of development and adapted to its environment.”

The cell has the intelligence sufficient to enable it to seek nourishment, and to move from one place to another in search for food or for other purposes. It holds to its food when secured, and envelops it until it is absorbed and digested. It exercises the power of choice, accepting and selecting one portion of food in preference to another. It has the power of discriminating between nourishing food and the reverse. The authorities show that it has a rudimentary memory, and avoids the repetition of an unpleasant or painful experience, and also returns to the locality in which it has previously secured food. Biological experiments have shown that the cells are capable of experiencing surprise, pleasure and fear, and that they experience different degrees of feeling, and react accordingly in response to stimuli. Verworn, a biologist, even goes so far as to assert that they habitually adapt means to ends, near and remote. In his remarkable work on cell-life, “The Psychic Life of Micro-organisms,” Binet says: “We shall not regard it as strange, perhaps, to find so complete a psychology in the history of the lower organisms, when we call to mind that, agreeably to the ideas of evolution now accepted, a higher animal is nothing more than a colony of protozoans. Every one of the cells composing such an animal has retained its primitive properties, giving them a higher degree of perfection by division of labor and by selection. The epithelial cells that secrete the nails and hair are organisms perfected with reference to the secretion of protective parts. Similarly, the cells of the brain are organisms that have been perfected with reference to psychical attributes.”

Dr. Schofield says: "That life involves mind has, of course, like all else, been vigorously disputed and equally vigorously affirmed. 'Life,' says Prof. Bascom, 'is not force; it is combining power. *It is the product and presence of mind.*' ... The extent to which the word mind may be employed as the inherent cause of purposive movements in organisms is a very difficult question to solve. There can be no doubt that the actual agents in such movements are the natural forces, but behind these the directing and starting power seems to be psychic... There being an indwelling power, not only for purposive action in each cell, but for endless combinations of cell activities for common ends not at all connected with the mere nutrition of the single cell, but for the good of the completed organism." Dr. R. Dunn says: "From the first movement when the primordial cell-germ of a human organism comes into being, the entire individual is present, fitted for human destiny. From the same moment, matter, life and mind are never for an instant separated, their union constituting the essential work of our present existence." Carpenter says: "The convertibility of physical forces and correlation of these with the vital and the intricacy of that nexus between mental and bodily activity which cannot be analyzed, all lead upwards towards one and the same conclusion —*the source of all power is mind.* And that physical conclusion is the apex of the pyramid which has its foundation in the primitive instincts of humanity."

Having seen the evidences of life and mind in the single cell, let us now proceed to a consideration of the intelligence or mind inherent and manifest in the groups of cells, large and small, including the largest groups which compose the several organs of the body. This line of investigation will lead us to a fuller understanding of the influence of the mental states upon the health or disease of the organs and parts. It will be seen that Mental Healing has a sound biological as well as a psychological basis of truth, and that it is not necessary to invade the fields of metaphysics or theology in order to find an explanation of the effect of mind over body.

CHAPTER IV

THE MENTAL BASIS OF CURE

We have seen that in each cell in the human body is embodied a part of the Subconscious Mind, sufficient in quantity and quality to enable the cell to perform its particular work in the physical community of cells. In the same manner each group of cells, large or small, is possessed of the quantity and quality of mind adapted to the successful performance of its particular function. And, rising in the scale, we find that each of the physical organs is possessed of a “composite cell-soul” or “organ-mind.” As Hudson says: “Each organ of the body is composed of a group of cells which are differentiated with special reference to the functions to be performed by that organ. In other words, every function of life is performed by groups of co-operative cells, so that the body as a whole is simply a confederation of the various groups.”

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