

Mysticism, Freudianism and Scientific Psychology

By Knight Dunlap

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UNIVERSITY, BALTIMORE

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TO
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PREFACE

The past decade has witnessed a remarkable revival of popular interest in philosophical mysticism and in spiritualism. Along with this revival has gone a spread of the so-called "newer psychology" of Freud and his satellites, which, beginning in the medical field, now claims the whole arena of human activities. The spiritualistic developments have been, by various authors, attributed to the war; and perhaps the war, with its profound mental and spiritual upheavals, may have contributed to them. The simultaneous developments in the hoary cult of philosophical mysticism, and the newer cult of Freudianism nevertheless indicate that the movements have derived their impetus only in small part from the events of the last few years, but are the expressions of forces which have been much longer in their releasing, and depend on deeply implanted principles of human nature.

To show that it is no mere curious accident which leads booksellers to shelve together books on these three topics, is in part the purpose of the present volume. The fact that patrons who look over the stock on one of these subjects are apt to be interested in the others, has its foundation in the real

unity of the three, which runs through their diversities. And all three involve an assault on the very life of the biological sciences; an assault which scientific psychology alone is capable of warding off. In implicit recognition of this fact, each makes its immediate attack on the methods and results of scientific psychology. Hence it is the duty of the psychologist to enlighten the public concerning the real nature of this siren trinity.

I had projected the inclusion in this volume of a study of spiritualism, along with that of mysticism and psychoanalysis. But the adequate treatment of spiritualism really requires a volume to itself, and is not essential to the discussion of Freudianism, although it illuminates the latter. Moreover, spiritualism makes its maximal appeal to a part of the public which differs from that to which psychoanalysis is most attractive; its antagonism to science is more open and undisguised. Psychoanalysis, which attempts to creep in wearing the uniform of science, and to strangle it from the inside, is the more immediate danger, and spiritualism may be allowed to wait.

I hope in a later volume to analyze the phenomena on which spiritualism is built, and point out the commonplace psychological principles on which they may be explained. In the same volume also, I plan to give a full exposition of the phenomena and causes of dreams.

I may here record my opinion that the final result of the Freudian movement may be beneficial, although the immediate effects are the deluding of many persons, and the temporary checking of psychological research. Just as Christian Science has tremendously accelerated the progress of Scientific Medicine, so psychoanalysis, by compelling psychology to put its own house in order, will eventually help in the development of the Scientific Psychology it aims to thrust aside.

The constructive third part, on the Foundations of Scientific Psychology, was included at the suggestion of Dr. Buford Johnson, to whose critical assistance is due in great measure such coherence as this volume may have. I am very much indebted also to Professor W. D. Furry for his careful and capable revision of the proof.

KNIGHT DUNLAP.

Baltimore, August, 1920.

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MYSTICISM, FREUDIANISM AND SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY

CHAPTER I

MYSTICISM

The term *mysticism* and its cognate terms *mystical* and *mystic* have in popular usage a range of somewhat confusing meanings. In the technical language of philosophy, however, these terms have a definite application to a specific doctrine of knowledge: and it is with this narrow and proper significance of the terms that we are here concerned. The words themselves are derived from the Greek word *mysterion* which means a "secret religious ceremony." "Mysterion" in turn is derived from the word *myo* which means "to be mysterious or secret;" literally, "to keep one's mouth shut." "Mysterious" and "mystery" are from the same word from which these other terms are derived. Originally a "mystery" was something which should be kept secret, which one could not reveal. In modern usage, however, a "mystery" is merely something about which one cannot learn the truth. "Mysterious" is the adjective cognate with "mys-

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