

THE WILL

THE WILL

WRITINGS

Thought Force in Business and Everyday Life
The Law of the New Thought
Nuggets of the New Thought
Memory Culture: The Science of Observing, Remembering and Recalling
Dynamic Thought or The Law of Vibrant Energy
Thought Vibration or the Law of Attraction in the Thought World
Practical Mind-Reading
Practical Psychomancy and Crystal Gazing
The Mind Building of a Child
The Secret of Mental Magic
Mental Fascination
Self-Healing by Thought Force
Mind-Power: The Law of Dynamic Mentation (The Secret of Mental Magic)
Practical Mental Influence
Reincarnation and the Law of Karma
The Inner Consciousness
The Secret of Success
The New Psychology of Healing
Memory: How to Develop, Train and Use It
Subconscious and the Superconscious Planes of Mind
Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion
The Art of Logical Thinking or the Laws of Reasoning
The Will: It's Nature, Power and Development
Thought-Culture or Practical Mental Training
The New Psychology: Its Message, Principles and Practice
Human Nature: Its Inner States and Outer Forms
Mind and Body or Mental States and Physical Conditions
The Art of Expression and the Principles of Discourse
The Psychology of Salesmanship
The Psychology of Success or Mental Paths to Power
Telepathy: Its Theory, Facts and Proof
The Crucible of Modern Thought: A Study of the Prevailing Mental Unrest
Scientific Parenthood
The Message of the New Thought (New Thought: Its History and Principles)
Your Mind and How to Use It: A Manual of Practical Psychology
The Mastery of Being: A Study of the Ultimate Principle of Reality

THE WILL
ITS NATURE, POWER AND DEVELOPMENT
1909

WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON
1862–1932

信
YOGEBOOKS: HOLLISTER, MO
2013:09:06:14:17:40

COPYRIGHT

YOGeBooks by Roger L. Cole, Hollister, MO 65672

© 2012 YOGeBooks by Roger L. Cole

All rights reserved. Electronic edition published 2012

ISBN: 978-1-61183-224-2 (PDF)

ISBN: 978-1-61183-225-9 (EPUB)

www.yogebooks.com

CONTENTS

Part I..... The Will.

- Chapter I.....What is the Will?
- Chapter II.....Desire-Will.
- Chapter III..... Decisive-Will.
- Chapter IV..... Action-Will.
- Chapter V..... The Ultimate Will.

Part II..... The Power of Will.

- Chapter VI..... Will Power.
- Chapter VII..... The Resolute Will.
- Chapter VIII..... The Persistent Will.
- Chapter IX..... Will vs. Circumstance.
- Chapter X..... Will in Personality.
- Chapter XI..... Will and Health.
- Chapter XII..... The Subconscious Will.

Part III..... The Development of Will.

- Chapter XIII..... Will Development.

THE WILL

Chapter XIV.....Phases of Will Development.
Chapter XV.....How to Develop Perception.
Chapter XVI..... How to Control the Emotions.
Chapter XVII..... How to Develop the Imagination.
Chapter XVIII..... How to Develop Decision.
Chapter XIX.....How to Develop Volition.
Chapter XX..... The Marks of the Negative Will.

THE WILL

THE WILL

PART I.
THE WILL.

THE WILL

CHAPTER I.

WHAT IS THE WILL?

THERE IS no form of mental activity so universal in its visible manifestations as that which we call the Will. And, likewise, there is none so generally misunderstood and so little understood as the Will. When we come to consider the *nature* of the Will we find ourselves confronting a score of definitions, theories and beliefs. In fact, it almost may be said that to each and every individual the word “Will” has a different meaning, or a different shade of meaning. Ask yourself what you mean when you say “the Will;” then ask a few of your friends and associates, and see how widely varying are the answers and definitions. While we shall ever try to avoid philosophical hair-splitting, in this series of books on The New Psychology, nevertheless we find from time to time that we must come to some sort of clear understanding with our readers regarding the meaning of certain terms; and in order to do so we must analyze those terms and consider the views of the best authorities regarding them. And this course is especially needed in the case of the term before us—The Will. What is The Will?

Passing by the philosophical conceptions of Will, in the sense of a universal acting mind, as postulated by Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, Nietzsche and others, and confining ourselves

THE WILL

closely to the psychological acceptance of the term, let us consult the various authorities. A leading American dictionary defines "Will" as follows: "The determination or choice of one possessing authority; discretionary pleasure, command, decree;" also "Arbitrary power, disposal, or authority, absolute power to control determine or dispose;" also "Strong wish or inclination, desire, intention, disposition, pleasure;" also: "That which is strongly desired or wished for as 'He had his *will*.'" The same authority gives the following note regarding the philosophical meaning of the term: "Though the word *will* has often been used, as it popularly is, in two senses—(I) the power of the mind which enables a person to choose between two courses of action; and (II) the actual exercise of that power—strict reasoners separate these meanings, calling the former *will* and the latter *volition*. *Will* in this limited sense is that mental power or faculty by which, of two or more objects of desire or courses of action presented to it, it chooses one, rejecting the other or others. To what extent this power of selection is arbitrary, or is the result of necessity, has been for ages a subject of controversy. The division of the mental powers which came down from antiquity, and was most generally adopted by the philosophers, were the powers belonging to the understanding, and those belonging to the *will*. Reid adopted it, although considering it not quite logical. "Under the will" he says, "we comprehend our active powers and all that lead to action or influence the mind to act, such as appetite, passions, affections." Brown considered this classification as very illogical, considering that the will was not in any way opposed to the intellect, but exercised in the intellectual department an empire almost as wide as that which was allotted to itself. "We reason" he says, "and plan and invent, at least as voluntarily as we esteem or hate, or hope or fear. The term Active Powers used by Reid is a synonym for the Will."

In order to see still further the confusing uses of this word, consider the definitions of the same authority of the term used as a verb: "To determine by an act of choice; to form a wish or

WHAT IS THE WILL

volition; to exercise an act of the will; to desire, to wish; to be willing, to consent; to decide, to ordain; to form a volition of; to have an intention, purpose or desire of; to intend; to convey or express a command or authoritative instructions to; to direct; to order; to desire or wish to produce or cause; to be anxious for." There are other special definitions which we have omitted, but we think that those quoted will enable you to form an idea of the confusion naturally resulting from the many and varied uses of the term, all of which usages are backed by good authority.

Baldwin's "Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology" says of the Will: "The use of the term 'Will' is so varied that it is impossible to get from the history any exclusive meaning. Three usages hold their own for the reason that they are associated with the different points of view from which the subject is approached." The same authority, accordingly, proceeds to consider the term from the viewpoint of these three respective usages, as follows: (I) The viewpoint of Conation, which term is defined as: "The theoretical elements of consciousness showing itself in tendencies, impulses, desires, and acts of Volition. Stated in its most general form, Conation is unrest. It exists when and so far as a present state of consciousness tends by its intrinsic nature to develop into something else." (II) The viewpoint of an Intermediate State beginning with Conation and ending with Volition; or, "That Conative organization of which Volition is the terminus and end" (the word "end" being used in the sense of "completion"). (III) The viewpoint of Volition, which term is defined as: "The settlement by the mind of a psychic issue, the adoption of an end (or completion) leading to an act or action."

After wandering around and about in the philosophical and psychological of attempts to define and analyze Will, the careful thinker manages to make his escape, and then, after considering that which he finds within himself answering to the name of Will, he comes to the conclusion that Will, as he finds it within himself, is composed of three phases or stages;

THE WILL

viz. (1) The stage of “wanting to,” or “wishing to,” have a thing or do a thing; (2) The weighing of the “want to” and “not want to” regarding the thing; the balancing of that “want to” with other “want tos” which he also finds within himself; the deliberation of whether he is willing to “pay the price;” and the final decision resulting from this weighing and balancing; and finally (3) The Action arising from such “wanting to,” “weighing and balancing” and deciding. These three stages may be called (1) Desire-will; (2) Decisive Will; and (3) Action-Will. These terms are crude, but they express the three stages which are found in all manifestations of that which we call Will. We ask you to remember this classification.

The new school of philosophy, as represented by William James and others holding similar ideas, lays special stress upon the phases of will which we have called Action-Will. In their text-books the feature or phase of “Action” is emphasized. James says: “Desire, wish, will, are states of mind which everyone knows, and which no definition can make plainer. We desire to feel, to have, to do, all sorts of things which at the moment are not felt, had or done. If with the desire there goes a sense that attainment is not possible, we simply *wish*; but if we believe that the end is in our power, we *will* that the desired feeling, having, or doing, shall be real; and real it presently becomes, either immediately upon the willing or after certain preliminaries have been fulfilled.... We know what it is to get out of bed on a freezing morning in a room without a fire, and how the very vital principle within us protests against the ordeal. Probably most persons have lain on certain mornings for an hour at a time unable to brace themselves to the resolve. We think how late we shall be, how the duties of the day will suffer; we say, ‘I *must* get up; this is ignominious’ etc., but still the warm couch feels too delicious, the cold outside too cruel, and the resolution faints away and postpones itself again and again just as it seemed on the verge of bursting the resistance and passing over into the decisive act. Now how do we *ever* get up under

WHAT IS THE WILL

such circumstances? If I may generalize from my experience, we more often than not get up without any struggle or decision at all. We suddenly find that we *have* got up. A fortunate lapse of consciousness occurs; we forget both the warmth and the cold; we fall into some reverie connected with the day's life, in the course of which the idea flashes across us, 'Hello! I must lie here no longer'—an idea which at that lucky instant awakens no contradictory or paralyzing suggestions, and consequently produces immediately its appropriate motor effect. It was our acute consciousness of both the warmth and the cold during the period of struggle, which paralyzed our activity then and kept our idea of rising in the condition of *wish* and not of *will*. The moment these inhibitory ideas ceased, the original idea exerted its effects."

Halleck, following the same trend of thought, says: "Will concerns itself with action. The student must keep that fact before him, no matter how complex the process seems.... We shall see that the will is restricted to certain kinds of action. From the cradle to the grave, we are never passive recipients of anything; in other words we are never without the activity of will in the broadest sense of the term. How shall we distinguish between feeling and will? There is no more precise line of demarkation than exists between the Atlantic Ocean and Davis Strait. We saw, while studying sensation and perception, that the various mental powers worked in such unison that it was hard to separate them exactly from each other. The difficulty is especially great in separating feeling from will, because there so often seems to be no break between the two processes. We are aided in marking off these powers by two sets of experiences. (1) We sometimes experience feelings from which no marked action results. They evaporate, leaving no trace in the world of action. (2) We feel sorry for the poor or the sick, and leave our comfortable homes, perhaps on a stormy day, to go to help them. It is plain that there is an added element in the second experience. That element is Will, which was not obtrusively

THE WILL

present in the first experience. The germ may have been there, but not the full flower. Whenever there is in emotion a motor element which tends to go out in action, that element is Will. When I feel angry and strike, or grateful and assist some one, the striking and assisting are the result of a peculiar, active power which we call Will. In some emotions the voluntary element may be so small as to baffle detection, but the germ is there.”

The New Psychology is an agreement with the above quoted school of academic psychology which holds that the essence of Will is in the Acting and Doing. Action is the *reason* for Will—it is its Ultimate Explanation.

CHAPTER II.

DESIRE-WILL.

WE HAVE seen that the first meaning of the term “the Will”—or the first phase of the manifestation of the Will—according to the viewpoint, is that which we have called Desire-Will. In one sense Desire is one of the *meanings* of Will; in another, it is one of the three phases or manifestations of the Will. Desire, like Will has many definitions. In the popular usage Desire means: “An emotion, eagerness, or excitement of the mind directed toward the attainment, enjoyment, or possession of some object from which pleasure, profit, or gratification is expected; an earnest wish, longing, or aspiration for a thing; lust, appetite, craving; wish, will or aspiration; etc.” Crabbe gives the following various shades of meanings of the synonyms of Desire: “The *desire* is imperious, it demands a gratification; the *wish* is less vehement, it consists of a strong inclination; *longing* is an impatient and continued species of desire; *hankering* is a *desire* for that which is set out of one’s reach; *coveting* is a desire for that which belongs to another, or what is in his power to grant; we *desire* or *long for* that which is near at hand, or within view; we *wish for* and *covet* that which is more remote, or less distinctly seen; we *hanker after* that which has been once enjoyed; a discontented person

THE WILL

wishes for more than he has; he who is in a strange land *longs* to see his native country; vicious men *hanker after* the pleasures which are denied them; ambitious men *covet* honors, avaricious men *covet* riches." These shades of meaning are but various phases of the "want to" feeling which is the essence of Desire. The word will is sometimes used to express Desire in its phase of wish, pleasure, etc., it being said that "he wills" to do or have a thing in the sense of "he wishes" to have or do the thing; or in the sense that "it pleases him" to have or do the thing. Likewise a very strong desire is often called "will," probably because of its intensity and because the action of the will follows so closely upon the desire that the two seem to blend and become one. To outward appearances there is indeed very little distinction between a strong, ardent, active desire and the manifestation of the will, because the latter flows out in response to the former and seems to be a part of it rather than a resulting effect. It is often said of a person that "he has had his will," meaning he has gratified his desire or "want to."

But a close analysis will always distinguish the two phases of Desire-Will and Action-Will in all manifestations of Will, even if the intermediate phase, or Decisive-Will be not apparent. There must be always a "want to," conscious, subconscious, or superconscious, before there is the response of Action. Desire and Will cannot be divorced in active manifestations of Will. It is true that one may feel Desire and not manifest the Action-Will, but one never releases the Action-Will without the existence of precedent Desire in some form or phase, direct or indirect, close or remote. This being so, we may see the importance of an understanding of, and control of, our Desires. If Desire is the great inciter of the Will, then if we control, rouse or restrain Desire, we have in our hands the mastery of Will.

Desire is precedent to every act of the Will; that is, Desire along either conscious, subconscious, or superconscious lines. Desire contains within itself two phases or stages, i. e., (1) the stage of feeling; and (2) the manifestation of the call upon the

DESIRE-WILL

Will. In many cases Desire does not advance beyond the feeling stage—it contents itself with a more or less vague feeling or attraction toward the thing or object which aroused it, and it manifests little or no call upon the Will. In other cases the feeling excited blazes up so fiercely that the second phase, the phase of calling upon the Will to respond and bring about gratification and accomplishment, is vigorously manifested. This “feeling,” of course, is in the direction of “the attainment, enjoyment, or possession of some object from which pleasure, profit, or gratification is expected,” or else the reverse phase of “escape from, getting rid of, or striving away from, some object thought to be the possible, probable, or existing source of pain, discomfort, or dissatisfaction.” There must always be an object precedent to this feeling stage of Desire; that is, either an object calling forth the “want to” of possession, act, or attainment; or else an object from which one wishes to escape.

It is a paradox of psychology that while Desire arouses Will, yet Will may arouse Desire. That is, while the Desire-Will may and does call into activity the Action-Will, nevertheless the Decisive-Will may employ the Action-Will to direct and hold the attention upon some object until interest and consequent Desire is aroused in the mind. But, of course, even in this case there must be some form of precedent Desire inspiring the Intellect or Decisive-Will to so act. Interest and attention have a tendency to arouse Desire, and in that sense these mental acts may be considered as precedent conditions to desire, inasmuch as they hold up to Desire the objects calculated to arouse the feeling phase of the latter. Interest and attention may be aroused without the use of the Will of the individual, by the presentation of outside objects. But the Will may inhibit or destroy the attraction of the outer object; or, on the other hand, may encourage and develop it by directing the attention and thus arousing interest. There exist numerous instances of this action and reaction in the phenomena of Will.

THE WILL

We have spoken of subconscious and superconscious Desires. Subconscious Desire has several possible causes. Many of our subconscious desires are the result of heredity and race experience. We find many feelings arising from the depth of the subconsciousness which startle us by their unsuspecting presence and unexpected appearance. We have countless seed-desires in the great storehouse of the subconscious, which lie latent there awaiting the appearance of some object or circumstances which will revive the latent vigor within them, and which will start them forward toward the field of consciousness in their attempt to manifest the second stage of Desire—the stage of the call upon the Action-Will. Likewise we have many subconscious desires which have been placed in the subconscious storehouse by reason of our own experiences, and the suggestions we have received from others or from ourselves, as we have explained in the volume upon “Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion.” These desires also move forward toward possible manifestation, upon the appearance of some exciting object of circumstances. The greater portion of our desires arises below the field of consciousness, having lain latent in that great storehouse of desires, instinct, inclination and tendencies—the subconsciousness. The only conscious desires we have are those which are in the field of consciousness by reason of the attraction and exciting influence of objects or circumstances which either cause us to “want to,” or else to “get-away-from.” In what has been called the superconscious region of the mind—that higher and greater field of mentation toward the unfoldment of whose faculties we are evolving—there are also many seeds of Desire, some of which occasionally drop down into the field of consciousness and there arouse strange feelings, and “want-to” or “get-away-from” calls upon the Will. We call these Intuitional Promptings and similar names, or even imagine that we are receiving suggestions from beings on a higher plane—but they really come from our own higher regions. We hesitate to speak regarding these things in

DESIRE-WILL

this book, lest we be accused of trying to lead you into the field of transcendentalism, but a mention of them is necessary. These desires from the “above” regions of our minds are usually in the direction of a get-away-from or a let-it-alone feeling more or less strong. In many cases we will avoid dangerous actions and doings by heeding these warnings from the superconscious regions of our minds. When these feelings are of the “want-to” kind, it will be found, always that they are desires or inclinations toward objects or things high up in the scale and *never in a downward direction*. Desires from “above” always lead “up” *never “down”*—let this ever be the test by which you may know them; the touchstone to apply to intuitional promptings.

Desire being the first stage of Will, and precedent to the activities of the Will it is of importance that one should learn to encourage or discourage desires, according to their nature. Desires not conducive to the highest satisfaction, duty and attainment should be repressed. Desires conducive to that which is best should be encouraged. Desires may be encouraged by directing attention and interest upon the proper object, employing the imagination in this task. By dwelling upon the proper ideal holding the attention and interest firmly upon it, and aiding this by employing the imagination in the direction of furnishing the appropriate Mental Images, the appropriate desire may be kindled in activity and vigor; and if the process be continued it will pass readily into its second phase—that of the call upon the Action-Will. Desires may be discouraged or inhibited by directing the attention and interest (aided by the imagination) upon ideals diametrically opposed to those which you desire to restrain or kill out. *Concentrate on the opposite*—this is the rule of The New Psychology where it is found expedient to restrain, or inhibit mental states of any kind.

If you desire to increase and develop the Will along any particular lines, the first thing you should do is to build up your Desire for the attainment of the thing. You should use every possible effort to cultivate the appropriate Desire—to fan

THE WILL

into a fierce blaze its spark which you find within yourself. You should dwell upon it, and encourage it in every way. To get the benefit of the Will, you must “want-to” and “want-to” earnestly, actively, vigorously, constantly, persistently—“want-to” in a degree that will demand a response of the Will, and which will brook no refusal. Such Desire is the heat which produces the steam of the Action-Will. Turn on your drafts and keep the fires of Desire fiercely burning, if you wish to keep on “a full head of steam” of Will.

CHAPTER III.

DECISIVE-WILL.

PASSING FROM the consideration of the first phase of Will—the phase which we have called Desire-Will—let us now turn our attention to the second phase—the phase which we have called Decisive-Will. It is this second phase of Will which is included in that definition of Will which states that Will is: “The determination or choice of one possessing authority; discretionary pleasure; command decree; the power of mind which enables a person to choose between two courses of action; the faculty by which one determines by act of choice; the faculty by which one decides; the settlement by the mind of a psychic issue; the adoption of an end.” As we have seen in a preceding chapter, this phase of Will may be considered in two aspects: (1) Latent Will, which consists of the power to choose or decide between conflicting motives or desires; and (2) Volition, which consists of the actual exercise of that power. The one is the possibility, the other the actuality—the one latency; the other activity.

While this definition, usage and conception of the term is not the popular one, it is the one to which philosophy has held firmly, and around which has ever raged the conflict regarding the “Freedom of the Will.” And if we consider the matter

carefully, we may see that the philosophers had good reason to assume that in this phase of the Will—this intermediate phase—there was vested the secret of the Will of man. In fact it is through the gateway of this phase that we may hope to come to some sort of an understanding of the Ultimate Will—if at all.

All this may seem somewhat tedious to those who have picked up this book hoping to arrive at what is to them the essence of the subject of Will—how to develop a Strong Will and how to use it. But such persons will find that which they seek only through a consideration of this phase of the Will. Not through the metaphysical or philosophical subtleties shall we find that for which we seek—we shall have little to do with such. But through the insight which this phase gives us regarding the Ego or “I,” we shall finally find the path to Power of Will.

Decisive-Will! What is meant by this term? The authorities define the word, “decisive” as follows: “Having the power or attribute of deciding or determining; conclusive, final; irrevocable, unalterable; characterized by firmness decision or resolution;—that which *decides*.” The word “decide” in its original meaning implied the act of “cutting off” or separation. In its ordinary sense it means: “To determine; settle; or *to make up one’s mind*.” The terms are generally in the sense of a mental settlement or conclusion of something under consideration—a “setting aside” of one thing as the proper one apart from the rejected ones. And in the power of the individual to intelligently set aside, select and determine, and then to maintain the decision, lies the strength of that individual’s Decisive-Will.

In the lower forms of life, and in the cases of many men, there is but a limited use of this Decisive-Will. The mind of such a creature or person has but little place for this faculty, if such it may be called. Desire usurps its place and the decision is made immediately, and on the spot, by the stronger or more pressing desire conquering the weaker ones—the survival in consciousness of the strongest desire. Intellect or reason plays but a small part in such decisions. The nearest and strongest

DECISIVE-WILL

desire always wins the day. The psychological axiom is that the degree of desire depends upon the amount of pleasure or pain connected with the idea. The lesser pleasure is sacrificed for the greater—the greater pain is discarded in favor of the lesser, according to the law which impels us “of two evils to choose the lesser.” But the perspective of space and time distorts the relative importance of these desire motives. Nearness in time and space of the object of the desire causes that desire to seem larger than something of equal value further removed in space or time—and the desire takes its degree of strength from the apparent importance of its object. There is always the tendency to sell the birthright inheritance of the future, for the mess of pottage of the present—particularly if we happen to be very hungry. One dollar to-day seems much more attractive than two dollars a year hence. The so-called “pleasures” of youth are purchased at an exorbitant price, bearing usurious interest, to be paid at some time in the future—but many gladly pay the price, the nearness of the present desire dimming the larger value so far distant. A penny held close to the eye will seem larger than the full moon. And so while it is true, as a general proposition, that the strongest desire wins—still the element of perspective and experience has much to do with the element of strength of desires. And here is one of the ways in which the Decisive-Will operates.

But, you may object is not this Decisive-Will only the faculty of Intellectual Deliberation, instead of a phase of Will? The question is proper—the distinction a nice one. It is true that the Intellect does play an important part in the decision—*the Will uses it for that purpose*. The Will experiences the feeling of need to decide, and it summons the Intellect to assist in the deliberation. The Will calls upon the Imagination, and Memory as well, and summons from the latter the record of past impressions stored away in its depths, using the Imagination to picture the possible application of these experiences in the present and future. But by the use of the Attention (the

THE WILL

chief instrument of the Decisive-Will) the Will holds these images and memories in the field of consciousness while the Intellect weighs and compares their values; or else sends them back into the subconsciousness, as not needed further, often accompanied with a demand for further data. If Decisive-Will be absent, the Desire-Will passes at once into Action-Will, according to the desire of the moment—the whole operation is that which we style “Impulse.”

The variety of the objects that may be summoned before the Intellect in times of deliberation depends, of course, upon the entire intellectual equipment of the individual. His decision depends upon his ability to weigh, measure and compare. But the final *decision* is vested in the Decisive-Will—the judge upon the mental bench, representing His Majesty Yourself, or the “I.” Many men of fine intellectual equipment and fine sense of discrimination, lack that peculiar *something* which enables others to “make up their minds.” This “making up of the mind” is the final step of deliberation, and often the most difficult one. *It is distinctively an act of the Will.* It is accomplished by fixing the Attention firmly upon that which the judgment has reported as the best in sight, and then holding the attention upon it, *and dismissing the conflicting objects of desire and attention* which stay to torment the man lacking this Decisive-Will. Many people have the Decisive-Will but feebly developed, and find it almost impossible to make up their minds—they prefer to delegate to others the performance of that important task. The other objectionable pole is decision without due deliberation. The middle course is the wise one—deliberate carefully, and then use the Will to decide firmly.

Hoffding gives us an illustration of the vacillating will in his well-known character of Jeppe. Jeppe feels the desire to take a drink of spirits. He has money enough to pay for it, but his wife has bidden him purchase a supply of soap with it, and she will beat him if he spends it otherwise. Thereupon arises the deliberation. His stomach wants the liquor—his back fears the

DECISIVE-WILL

beating. "My stomach says you shall—my back says you shall not," says Jeppe. The stomach and the back fight it out for some time, but finally Jeppe asserts himself, and fastening his attention upon his stomach, and driving his back out of the field of consciousness, he reasons thus: "Is not my stomach more to me than my back? 'Yes!' say I—therefore 'Yes' it is!" And the stomach wins the day. Akin to this is the old philosophical puzzle of the donkey, who while quite hungry, suddenly espied two equally attractive, equally large and equally near, stacks of hay. The desire for each being equal, the poor donkey was unable to decide upon the one towards which to move—and consequently died from starvation and indecision. Had the donkey possessed Decision, he would have said: "Each seems attractive—the two are equally large and equally near—I must choose one or the other, and then forget the remaining one," and accordingly he would have fixed his attention upon one arbitrarily selected, and moved toward it. This does not prove the freedom of the will, but merely illustrates the actual working of the Decisive-Will. In Jeppe's case the drink seemed less remote than the beating. Had he seen his wife in the distance, or another woman with a club in her hand, the perspective would have changed, and the back would have won the day.

The Decisive-Will uses the faculty of attention as its important instrument. In the same way it is able to *withdraw* the attention from objects and ideas calculated to interfere with the chosen course. This latter is called Inhibition and is distinctly an act of the Will. Combining Voluntary Attention and Voluntary Inhibition, we have that process of the mind which we call Concentration, which is a mark of the man of the Strong Will, in all walks of life. Concentration is a focusing of the mental energies, under the Will—a direction of the forces of one's character upon a fixed object or thing. Genius is made up largely of Concentration.

So we have seen the part played by the Decisive-Will, which is the Intermediate Stage of Will—which comes in between

THE WILL

Desire-Will and Action Will. We shall have much to do with Decisive Will and its attributes, in this book, so we may dismiss it for the present and pass on to the consideration of Will in Action.

CHAPTER IV.

ACTION-WILL.

HAVING CONSIDERED the first two phases of Will, known as Desire-Will and Decisive-Will, respectively, let us proceed to a consideration of the third phase which we have called Action-Will. This phase of Will may be called the dynamic phase or aspect. The authorities tell us that "Will concerns itself with action," first, last and all the time—in Action lies the "willness" of Will. We may *desire* to have or to do a thing very much; we may even *decide* to have or to do the thing, and to perform the acts leading to the having or doing—but unless the desire and decision spring into action, or unless the spring of the Action-Will is released, there is lacking the full manifestation of Will. The essence of Will lies in the actual *doing*. The mental attitude of the man of Will is represented by his conscious fooling of "I Do!" Not alone that he *desires* to do; or that he has *decided* to do; but that he actually *does*.

The text-books on psychology devote much space and attention to the subject of "reflex actions," "impulsive actions," "instinctive actions" and other non-deliberative actions of the Will. These phases of the general subject are very interesting to the scientific student of psychology, but we feel that they may be passed over with bare mention in this book which is chiefly

THE WILL

devoted to the development and scientific use of the will by the individual in his every-day life. It is interesting to know why we are violently moved by reflex action when we are tickled in the ribs; and why the headless frog raises its hind-foot to brush the needle pricking its side; and why we act instinctively or impulsively in certain cases—but these things have very little to do with the training, exercise and development of that which men call Will-Power and the intelligent and purposeful use of the Will. About the only practical thing about these subjects is the fact that by an act of the will the individual may restrain or inhibit these reflex, impulsive, or instinctive movements and acts of the Will—and that he may establish other and new reflexes, impulses and instincts by an effort of will.

The manifestation of Action-Will with which we are chiefly concerned is that which may be called the result of deliberative reasoning, and which is first aroused by Desire, then weighed, tested, considered and balanced by reason and judgment; then acted upon by the Decision-Will, and then released into action by that peculiar quality of Will which “lets go” the stored up energy of the Action-Will.

It is true that all desire-ideas have a motor aspect; that is, that all ideas at all akin to desire or “want” exert a “pull” upon the Action-Will, the degree and strength varying according to circumstances, past experience, character, etc. And it is likewise true, and this is a most important fact, that the majority of these pulls are hindered, restricted or annulled by the exercise of the restraining powers of the Decisive-Will. In the lower animal and in young children, there is at first a quick passage from the desire to the pull upon the Action-Will, and the resulting act. As the animal or the child gains in experience, it learns that his unrestrained exercise of the pull upon the Action-Will is often followed by unpleasant and undesirable consequences, and a new set of desires—negative desires—arise, and what is called prudence, caution or fear arises. Thenceforth the Deliberative-Will in some slight degree is brought into play,

ACTION-WILL

for there are two sets of desires struggling for precedence and manifestation. The Decisive Will acts as a restrainer of impulsive action.

This inhibitive action of the Decisive-Will manifests in advanced individuals in what is called Self-Control. The more advanced the individual, the greater the amount of Self-Control, as a rule. Strong Will evidences not only in the power to exert strong Will Action, but also in the power to strongly inhibit action along undesirable lines. In fact, Self-control and Self-restraint are the ear-marks of the individual of the Strong Will. If every desire and impulse were carried to completion in action, the individual would soon perish from the result of his folly and lack of self-control. The strong-willed person is able to restrain an impulse toward immediate pleasure, in favor of some greater satisfaction removed by distance in space or time. He restrains the lesser satisfaction to gain the greater—he suffers the lesser pain in order to escape the greater. Inhibition has been called “the brakes of the Will.” It is most desirable to acquire the control of those brakes.

James says of inhibition of motor impulses: “As mental evolution goes on, the complexity of human consciousness grows ever greater, and with it the multiplication of the inhibitions to which every impulse is exposed... Inhibition has a bad as well as a good side; and if a man’s impulses are in the main orderly as well as prompt, if he has the courage to accept their consequences, and intellect to lead them to a successful end, he is all the better for his hair-trigger organization, and for not being ‘sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.’ Many of the most successful military and revolutionary characters in history have belonged to this simple but quick-witted impulsive type. Problems come harder to reflective and inhibitive minds. They can, it is true, solve much vaster problems; and they can avoid many a mistake to which the men of impulse are exposed. But when the latter do not make mistakes, or when they are always able to retrieve them, theirs is one of the most engaging

and indispensable of human types." It would seem that a happy mean between the two extremes mentioned would be the desirable course to follow. Halleck says regarding inhibition: "Inhibition makes its appearance only with education and experience. Animals, young children, and savages restrain few actions. If the tail of a cat is pinched, the customary action will follow. If the feelings of a cultivated person are hurt, there will often be no outward sign. If food is placed before an animal, it will gorge what it can and trample the rest. In the same way many young people cannot inhibit the tendency to waste time and trample on their golden opportunities. The effort of a developed will is nowhere more marked than in inhibition."

Action-Will manifests in a number of ways, which may be classed roughly as follows:

I. *Action in Physical Movement.* You feel a desire to move across the room; you may, and probably will, deliberate a moment as to the advisability of taking the step to accomplish the desire or to satisfy the "want to;" then you decide to take the step; then you release that mysterious something which sets into activity the Action-Will; then you move across the room. You raise your arm in the same way—you want to raise it; you decide to raise it; you release the spring of action and—the arm raises. Likewise you may, and often do, inhibit physical movements. You decide not to strike; not to move; not to speak.

II. *Action in the Direction of Thought.* You set into operation the mental activities called thought; or as some prefer, you direct and control the direction of the stream of thought, keeping it to its proper channels and preventing its running away from the course you have laid down for it. In the same way, you may and do inhibit thoughts along certain lines, keeping the mental gaze away from the forbidden subjects, and preventing all tendencies in that direction from manifesting. Under the head of Thought may be included the various processes of reasoning, deliberation, judging, comparing, etc.

ACTION-WILL

III. *Action in the Exercise of Attention.* You use the will in turning the Attention upon any object either in the mind or in the outside world, and in holding it there. This is one of the most important manifestations of the Action-Will. In a high degree it is called Concentration, which is possessed in a high degree by all successful men.

IV. *Action in the Exercise of Memory,* or in recalling the stored away records of past impressions. This manifestation sets into motion various subconscious mental activities, such as Association, etc., which are described in, our work on the Memory, and need not be dwelt upon here.

V. *Action upon the Subconscious Mentative Faculties.* This class of activity of the Action-Will is scarcely recognized by the orthodox psychologists, but forms an important part of the practical instruction of The New Psychology. It opens out an entirely new field of mentation, the limits of which have not been defined as yet.

VI. *Action in the Direction of Exciting or Repressing Desire,* the emotions, feelings, etc. This is a phase of Action-Will which is employed by successful men. While the untrained nature allows desire, feelings, and emotions to run away with it, the trained individual masters them, and either arouses them in order to fan the flame of action, or restrains or inhibits them in order to give freer and broader play to the more advantageous ones.

VII. *Action in the Direction of Exerting that peculiar influence of the "Will-Power" upon persons, things, circumstances and conditions,* which "power" is recognized by all persons as existing and being in full operation, but which is studiously ignored by the orthodox teachers of psychology in their text-books. While ignored in the academic schools, this phase of Will is taught forcibly in the great School of Experience, and post-graduate courses are given in the University of Hard-Knocks.

While many of the manifestations of the Action-Will may seem to be outside the above classification, still a little analysis will usually show that even these manifestations are composed

THE WILL

of variations, or combinations of the above classes or phases in varying degree.

CHAPTER V.

THE ULTIMATE WILL.

WHILE WE have determined to avoid leading the student of this series of books into the deeper waters of metaphysics or philosophy, nevertheless we cannot resist the temptation to call your attention at this point of our consideration of Will, to the fact that there is a school of philosophy which departs from the more orthodox schools in its conception of Will as the underlying principle of mind or life. The more orthodox schools of philosophy (if such a term may be used in this connection) postulate the existence of Reason or Intelligence as the fundamental and basic Something under and behind the phenomena of Being. These schools imply that that which is called Will is subordinate to Reason by reason of its nature, and that accordingly the Ego is rational in its highest nature and volitional only in a secondary manifestation. The heterodox school of philosophy referred to, is known as the school of Voluntarism and holds that Being is, in its inmost nature, Will—that Reason and Intellect have been evolved from Will in order to enable it to manifest and act. Consequently, that the Ego is *volitional* in its inner nature, and Reason and Intellect are used by it in order that its will may manifest itself. This school offers as proof of the idea, the

THE WILL

fact that Will precedes Intellect in the scale of Life and is found in full force in Life from its beginning—that while Intellect and Reason decrease and become weaker as we descend the scale of Life, Will maintains its strength and importance, and is therefore the basic and fundamental reality. This school holds that the purpose of Intellect and Reason in Life is simply to fill its place in that phase of Will which we have called Decisive-Will,—that is to enable the Will to discriminate between its different desires, objects of desire, etc. We shall not pursue the argument further—we simply desire to acquaint you with the existence of this philosophic idea.

Leaving the philosophers to wrangle and decide to their own satisfaction their conflicting views regarding the respective supremacy of Intellect or Will—a conflict in which we have no occasion to participate, at this place at any rate—we are nevertheless forced to admit that Will occupies a place very near indeed to the Throne of Being within the Ego. We find persons of very limited intellect exercising a great degree of desire and will—that is Desire-Will and the Action-Will in response thereto. We find this in infants and very young children, as well—they know what they want, and they want it when they want it. And they strive in every way to exert the phase of Action-Will in the direction of getting that which they want. The only thing that is absent is that discriminating, weighing, balancing, something that we have called Decisive-Will which is an attribute of Intellect. Not that the unreasoning child or adult does not “choose” in some sense of the term—not that there is an entire absence of Decisive-Will—not at all. On the contrary, in such cases there is but little hesitation between the choice of motives, desires or objects—the choice is almost automatic in nature—almost a “reflex.” This is because the choice and its objects happen to be simple. It is only the reasoning mind which is able to perceive the complexity of choice which does not exist for the unreasoning mind. With the latter it is a matter of instinct—the Will wants what it wants most of two or more

things, and proceeds to do or get that which is in accordance therewith. The Intellect weighs the consequences, and indirect benefits or harm, and accordingly bases its action upon these things, with the result that it inhibits action upon the desire or wish. But in any and all of these cases, it may be seen that Will is present and in operation, even though Intellect be absent or almost so. Will lies very close indeed to the centre of Self—it does not need any particular philosophical theory to prove this to us.

In fact, a little close self-analysis shows us that in each of us—in *us* who are considering this question as writer and readers—Will is so closely bound up with the Ego that it is most difficult (some say impossible) for us to divorce the two, or to distinguish between them. Let us see whether this be true. Let us enter into a little self-analysis, or mental exploration.

In the first place, we find that we can divorce the “I” from the feeling of Desire, or the stage of Desire-Will. That is, we are able to make a distinction between the feeling and the “I.” We may see, realize and say that “I feel; I desire; I want;” etc. We will find that this desire or feeling is something happening to us, but is not exactly the Self. In fact, we can repress the feeling or cause it to appear, by the use of the will upon the Imagination. So, if we take the trouble we are able to distinguish between the feeling and the Feeler—the two may be divorced. Then, proceeding to the Decisive-Will stage, when the Reason is used, we can likewise distinguish between the “I” and the thought or idea—between the thought and the thinker. We realize that by an act of will we may turn our attention this way and that way; may use our intellect in this direction and that; may summon up ideas, thoughts, reasons, etc. The distinction and divorce is possible in this second phase, as in the first. But when we come to the third phase, we experience a new difficulty. We find that we *cannot* employ the Action-Will in any way whatsoever without involving the “I.” We cannot act and stand apart—we—the “I” of us—*must be there in the act*. This is true whether it be the act

THE WILL

of final action of decision upon the things of the Decisive-Will or reason, or upon the doing of something in response to desire or choice. The “I” is the something involved in the *act*. See if this is not so with *you*. The action may be involuntary—along unconscious lines, if you will—but it is *you* who are involved in it, nevertheless.

And, so we may see that the Will in its final phase is something very close indeed to the Ego. Desire or objects of desire from without; Desire or objects of feeling from within; Reason and Intellect operating as Decisive-Will—all these may and do influence the Acting-Will, but they are not the same as itself. When Desire or Reason, or both, incite the Will into action, we are conscious of something “letting go”—some spring of the Self being released—and Action results. This is the final act of Willing and of Will, and it defies explanation, definition and analysis. It is an ultimate thing, it would seem. At times we are conscious of not being willing to release this spring of Action-Will—not being willing to let go of this part of ourselves. And this in spite of the strongest “want to” of Desire, accompanied by the “ought to,” or “you may” of the Reason. Why don’t we “let go” and “do” in these cases? Ah, friends, there is no other answer than this: Because we do not WILL to! And that answer is something above definitions and above analysis. It is akin to a woman’s “because!” This final Will—this Ultimate Will is a something bound up very close with the inmost nature of our Self—the Ego. And what the Ego *is*, psychology fails to tell us—it belong to a field of thought beyond psychology. Psychology merely assumes an Ego, without feeling called upon to tell what the Ego is in reality. And as it is not able to tell what the Ego is, it cannot tell “just what” is this Ultimate Will. The Real Ego, and the Ultimate Will—these are things beyond psychology, although only the most advanced psychologists will admit this fact.

The New Psychology is much concerned with this Ultimate Will—this thing that lets go or won’t let go. Without attempting

THE ULTIMATE WILL

to explain it, beyond postulating it as one of the highest qualities of the Ego, it endeavors to lead us to use and employ it. And it teaches us that it may be taught to let go along subconscious lines, and do great work for us in that immense field of mentation. There are many of the older school of psychologists who “pooh-pooh” at this idea of the Ultimate Will—but it is a fact nevertheless, as the experience of individuals prove satisfactorily to themselves.

THE WILL

PART II.

THE POWER OF WILL.

THE WILL

CHAPTER VI.

WILL POWER.

WE ARE sure that the reader, as well as the writer of this book, will now be glad to descend from the cold, rarified atmosphere of the high altitudes of philosophical speculation and psychological explanation, into the less elevated regions of the practical every day use of the Will—from the regions in which the practical is seen only from afar, into those in which we are brought face to face with it. The writer, at any rate, welcomes the transition from the region of words to the region of acts. Theoretical mountain climbing is useful and develops the mental muscles, but after all we are generally glad to return once more to the *terra firma* of every-day practice.

These philosophical speculations regarding the Will, with the accompanying psychological analysis, always remind us of the old story of the man who in middle age was made acquainted with the distinctions existing between poetry and prose. "Isn't it wonderful!" he exclaimed, "just to think, here I have been writing and speaking *prose* all my life and never knew it. Surely education is a great thing." Here we have been using Will all of our lives, and witnessing its manifestation in others, and only when we are made acquainted with the theories and discussion

THE WILL

of the philosophers and the explanations of the psychologists, do we realize what we have been doing, and how it all happened.

As Fothergill once wrote: "What the Will *is* is a matter upon which the metaphysicians have not been able to make up their minds, after all the attention bestowed upon the subject; and when they have come to some conclusion, either of agreement or fixity of disagreement, the result will have no practical value. 'She has a will, she has!' will say the mother or nurse of some child then; as they have done, and do now, and will do after the learned word-weighters have arrived at their decision. Will is one of the 'little men who stand behind us,' mind, soul, spirit, will, intangible somethings, revealed to us,—how?... We never hesitate to use the words, nor is there any difficulty about their being comprehended by others. When each word falls upon the ear, it has neither an unknown nor doubtful sound. A man may possess a 'sound mind;' be a 'good soul,' in both senses; be a 'loving spirit;' and yet not be remarkable for 'Will Power.' Like Dr. Brooke in 'Middlemarch,' he may be poured into any mould, and yet keep shape in none. A man may be possessed of much ability, and yet be a practical failure, because he is irresolute, or lacking in Will Power. On the other hand, a man may have but moderate abilities, and yet attain great success because he possesses a 'firm will.' George Eliot has brought out this contrast of character in bold outline, in the difference between Tom Tulliver and his sister Maggie, in the 'Mill on the Floss.' Tom is certainly narrow, as destitute of imagination as ever a Dodson could be, but he is inflexible. Maggie has warm sympathies, an active imagination, intellectual capacity; but she lacks Will. It may be impossible to define this Will; but we understand what we mean by it when we speak of its presence or its absence."

The majority of us will agree with the above authority in his assertion that although Will Power may be most difficult to explain or define, yet it undoubtedly exists in different degrees of manifestation, and is readily recognized and its effects understood. It is a strange and curious fact that this popular

WILL POWER

understanding and usage of the terms Will and Will Power are not recognized by the dictionary makers, who adhere to the academic usages and definitions. One may search the dictionary in vain for a definition or explanation of this popular conception and use of the term Will. One is compelled to search under other headings for the definition for which he seeks,—the definition of a “thing” which he knows to be actually existent and common in the experience of the race.

Not only is this popular conception of Will employed in current use in conversation, but many writers have used it, and others use it today, frequently and without apology. While many use the term itself, others content themselves with describing the characteristics of Will in this sense, without mentioning the word. For instance, the well-known and frequently-used passage of Buxton: “The longer I live the more certain I am that the great difference between men, between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant, is energy—invincible determination—a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. That quality will do anything in this world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a two-legged creature a man without it.” What is this but our old and popular friend, Will Power? Ik Marvel both describes the manifestation and uses the term, when he says: “Resolve is what makes a man manifest; not puny resolve, nor crude determination, nor errant purpose—but that strong and indefatigable Will which treads down difficulties and danger, as a boy treads down the heaving frost lands of winter; which kindles his eye and brain with a proud pulse-beat toward the unattainable. Will makes men giants.” Where is the dictionary definition for this writer’s use of the term “Will?”—and yet who fails to understand his meaning?

Disraeli, who not only wrote of Will but also manifested it fully, once said: “I have brought myself by long meditation to the conviction that a human being with a settled purpose must accomplish it, and that nothing can resist a Will which will stake

THE WILL

even existence upon its fulfillment." Simpson said: "A passionate Desire and an unwearied Will can perform impossibilities, or what may seem to be such to the cold and feeble." Foster says: "It is wonderful how even the casualties of life seem to bow to a spirit that will not bow to them; and yield to subserve a design which they may, in their first apparent tendency, threaten to frustrate. When a firm, decisive spirit is recognized, it is curious to see how the space clears around a man and leaves him room and freedom." Foster here uses the word "spirit" in the same sense as others use the word "Will." Substitute Will for spirit, and re-read the sentence, and you will see the point.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RESOLUTE WILL.

WHAT IS called Resolution, or Determination is a prominent characteristic of the Positive Will. This quality is clearly expressed in the word, "Resolute," which means: "Having a fixed, unalterable purpose; determined; firm; constant; absolute direction to a certain end."

This quality was one possessed and appreciated by Napoleon, one of whose favorite sayings was: "The truest wisdom is a resolute determination." It was a marked characteristic of this man, and it showed forth in many of his utterances. He fixed his mind and attention upon the desired goal, and then went straight to his mark. When told that the Alps were unsurmountable obstacles to the passage of his armies, he replied, "There shall be no Alps,"—and he proceeded to make good his words. "Impossible," said he, "is a word only to be found in the dictionary of fools."

As a well-known writer has said: "He who resolves upon doing a thing, by that very resolution often scales the barriers to it, and secures its achievement. To think we are able, is almost to be so—to determine upon attainment, is frequently attainment itself. Thus, earnest resolution has often seemed to have about it almost a savor of omnipotence. Suwarrow was

THE WILL

a notable instance of this quality of will. His power of resolute determination and achievement thereby was remarkable. "He who fails, only half wills," was one of his maxims. A French writer once wrote these words to a young man in whom he was interested: "You are now at an age at which a decision must be formed by you; a little later and you may have to groan within the tomb which you yourself have dug, without the power of rolling away the stone. That which the easiest becomes a habit in us, is the Will. Learn then to will strongly and decisively; thus fix your floating life, and leave it no longer to be carried hither and thither, like a withered leaf, by every wind that blows."

The Resolute Will is well expressed in the scriptural injunction: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." As a writer says: "Man owes his growth chiefly to that active striving of the Will, that encounter with difficulty which we call effort; and it is astonishing to find how often results apparently impracticable are thus made possible. An intense application itself transforms possibility into reality; our desires being often but the precursors of the things which we are capable of performing. On the contrary, the timid and hesitating find everything impossible, chiefly because it seems so....It is Will—force of purpose—that enables a man to do or be whatever he sets his mind upon being or doing."

The life of Bernard Palissy gives us a remarkable instance of the Resolute Will. He was a poor boy—too poor to obtain an education. Said he in after years: "I had no other books than heaven and earth, which are open to all." He managed to pick up a knowledge of glass painting; then drawing; then elementary reading and writing. He was miserably poor, and found it hard to provide for his family of a wife and three children from the meagre pay of a glass painter. He became interested in the subject of enameling earthenware. He acquainted himself with what was known on the subject, by much work and inquiry. He saw a beautiful Italian vase, which set him to work endeavoring to discover a plan of reproducing it. He experimented and

THE RESOLUTE WILL

invented new methods, hampered as he was by poverty and lack of materials with which to work. Support his family he must, and he could experiment only in his spare time. He wasted more than prudence would dictate, in building ovens and buying earthenware with which to experiment. His family often went in rags, owing to his mania for experimentation. But every experiment was a failure. This went on for years. Then one day he met with a partial success, which only whetted his appetite. Let the balance of the story be told in the words of an English biographer:

“In order that he might complete the invention, which he now believed to be at hand, he resolved to build for himself a glass-furnace near his dwelling, where he might carry on his operations in secret. He proceeded to build the furnace with his own hands, carrying the bricks from the brick-fields upon his back. He was bricklayer, laborer and all. From seven to eight more months passed. At last the furnace was built and ready for use. Palissy had in the meantime fashioned a number of vessels of clay in readiness for laying on of the enamel. After being subjected to a preliminary process of baking, they were covered with the enamel compound, and again placed in the furnace for the grand, crucial experiment. Although his means were nearly exhausted, Palissy had been for some time accumulating a great store of fuel for the final effort, and he thought it was enough.

“At last the fire was lit, and the operation proceeded. All day he sat by the furnace, feeding it with fuel. He sat there watching and feeding all through the long night. But the enamel did not melt. The sun rose upon his labors. His wife brought him a portion of the scanty morning meal—for he would not stir from the furnace, into which he continued from time to time to heave more fuel. The second day passed, and still the enamel did not melt. The sun set, and another night passed. The pale, haggard, unshorn, baffled yet not beaten Palissy sat by his furnace eagerly looking for the melting of the enamel. A third day and night passed—a fourth, a fifth, and even a sixth—yes, for six long days and

THE WILL

nights did the unconquerable Palissy watch and toil, fighting against hope; and still the enamel would not melt.

“It then occurred to him that there might be some defect in the materials for the enamel—perhaps something wanting in the flux; so he set to work to pound and compound fresh materials for a new experiment. Thus two or three more weeks passed. But how to buy more pots?—for those which he had made with his own hands for the purpose of the first experiment were by long baking irretrievably spoiled for the purpose of a second. His money was now all spent; but he could borrow. His character was still good, though his wife and neighbors thought him foolishly wasting his means in futile experiments. Nevertheless he succeeded. He borrowed sufficient from a friend to enable him to buy more fuel and more pots, and he was again ready for a further experiment. The pots were covered with the new compound, placed in the furnace, and the fire was again lit. It was the last and most desperate experiment of the whole.

“The fire blazed up; the heat became intense; but still the enamel did not melt. The fuel began to run short! How to keep up the fire? There were the garden palings; these would burn. They must be sacrificed rather than that the great experiment should fail. The garden palings were pulled up and cast into the furnace. They were burnt in vain! The enamel had not yet melted. Ten minutes more heat might do it. Fuel must be had at whatever cost. There remained the household furniture and shelving. A crashing noise was heard in the house, and amid the screams of his wife and children, who feared that Palissy’s reason was giving way, the tables were seized, broken up, and heaved into the furnace. The enamel had not melted yet! There remained the shelving. Another noise of the wrenching of timber was heard Within the house, and the shelves were torn down and hurled after the furniture into the fire. Wife and children then rushed from the house, and went frantically through the town, calling out that poor Palissy had gone mad, and was breaking up the very furniture for firewood.

“For an entire month his shirt had not been off his back, and he was utterly worn out—wasted with toil, anxiety, watching and want of food. He was in debt and seemed on the verge of ruin. But he had at

THE RESOLUTE WILL

length mastered the secret; for the last great burst of heat had melted the enamel. The common brown household jars, when taken out of the furnace after it had become cool, were found covered with a white glaze! For this he could endure reproach, contumely and scorn, and wait patiently for the opportunity of putting his discovery into practice as better days came around."

But this ended but one period of struggle—another was before him. Having discovered the enamel, he must now perfect plans to make the ware. He had no money. On one occasion he had to take clothes from his back to pay a helping potter. His new furnaces cracked, and years were spent in perfecting new ones. His family and friends continued their reproaches. He grew thin and haggard—his calves shrunk so that his garters would no longer hold up his stockings, but would slip down around his ankles. Often he was compelled to relinquish his labors, in order to provide bread for his family. Though it had cost him ten years' time to discover the enamel, it cost him eight years more to perfect plans for making his new ware. In after years he told the tale in these words: "Nevertheless hope continued to inspire me, and I held on manfully; sometimes when visitors called, I entertained them pleasantly, while I was really sad at heart. Worst of all the sufferings I had to endure were the mockeries and persecutions of those of my own household, who were so unreasonable as to expect me to execute work without the means of doing so. For years my furnaces were without any covering or protection, and while attending them I have been for nights at the mercy of the wind and rain, without help or consolation, save it might be the wailing of cats on the one side and the howling of dogs on the other. Sometimes the tempest would beat so furiously against the furnaces that I was compelled to leave them and seek shelter within doors. Drenched by rain, and in no better plight than if I had been dragged through mire, I have gone to lie down at midnight or at daybreak, stumbling into the

THE WILL

house without a light and reeling from one side to another as if I had been drunken, but really weary with watching and filled with sorrow at the loss of my labor after such long toiling. But alas! my house proved no refuge; for drenched and besmeared as I was, I found in my chamber a second persecution worse than the first, which makes me even now marvel that I was not utterly consumed by my many sorrows.”

But this man—this embodied Resolute Will—finally won success and wealth. Specimens of his ware now command fabulous prices, and are regarded as akin to gems. He became Royal Potter of France, and was lodged in the Tuilleries. Fate could not dominate a Will like his—his was the Will which makes its own Fate. When you wish a symbol of the Resolute Will, think of Bernard Palissy.

The poet sings:

“The star of the unconquered Will
He rises in my breast,
Serene and resolute and still,
And calm and self-possessed.”

John Stuart Mill said: “A Character is a completely fashioned Will.” Sherman said: “It is impossible to look into the conditions under which the battle of life is being fought, without perceiving how much really depends upon the extent to which the Will Power is cultivated, strengthened and made operative in right directions.” Another writer has said: “He who is silent is forgotten; he who does not advance falls back; he who stops is overwhelmed, distanced, crushed; he who ceases to become greater, becomes smaller; he who leaves off gives up; the stationary is the beginning of the end—it precedes death; to live is to achieve, to Will without ceasing.”

Munger has written: “A strong defiant purpose is many-handed and lays hold of whatever is near that can serve it; it has a magnetic power that draws to itself whatever is

THE RESOLUTE WILL

kindred." What is this strong, defiant purpose, but that which we call Will? And what is this next admonition but a call to Will." Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw; that there is some iron in you."

Marden says: "Energy of Will, self-originating force, is the soul of every great character. Where it is, there is life; where it is not, there is faintness, helplessness and despondency....The achievements of Will Power are almost beyond computation. Scarcely anything seems impossible to the man who can will strongly enough and long enough. One talent with a Will behind it will accomplish more than ten without it, as a thimbleful of powder in a rifle, the bore of whose barrel will give it direction, will do greater execution than a carload burned in the open air."

Tennyson wrote: "O well for him whose Will is strong!" Emerson said: "We go forth austere, dedicated, believing in the iron links of Destiny, and will not turn on our heels to save our lives. A book, a bust, or only the sound of a name shoots a spark through the nerves, and we suddenly believe in Will. We cannot hear of personal vigor of any kind, great power of performance, without fresh resolution." Fothergill says: "Will Power is one of the greatest natural endowments—as it is one of the finest outcomes of self-culture. The man who succeeds in climbing step by step, finds his Will Power expanding with his energies, with the demands upon him; if not, his limit is sooner or later reached. Whether a leader in parliament, a general, or an employer of labor, the will must dominate colleagues and subordinates alike, else supremacy is forbidden. There is a Will to rule, when opposition or conflict has to be met. Strength of Will is gameness—the power to 'stay.' Englishmen have always prided themselves on their game qualities; whether the tenacity of their bull-dogs, the endurance of their race-horses, the unflinching courage of their game-fowls, or their own indomitable purpose. 'When there is a Will there is a way.' The way may be long hidden from sight, hard to find, thorny to travel, beset with quagmires or boulders, long and wearisome,

THE WILL

seemingly endless; but on it the traveler goes with unshaken resolution—to success at last. The Will may not endow a man with talents or capacities; but it does one very important matter, it enables him to make the best, the very best of his powers.”

So much for the “Will” which is not defined in the dictionaries, nor mentioned in the text-books. It exists in spite of the dictionary and text-book makers. It may be urged that this Will is but Determination, Persistence, Courage, Doggedness, etc. But, indeed, may we not rejoin with the question: Pray what are those qualities but *the manifestations of Will*? Take Will away from them, and there is nothing left. Will is the essence of all the Positive Qualities.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERSISTENT WILL.

ONE OF the characteristics of the Positive Will is its quality of persistence—that quality which manifests in steadfastness, firmness, and constancy in carrying out and pursuing the design, business, or course commenced or undertaken; perseverance in the face of obstacles and discouragements; steadfastness and determination in the face of opposition or hindrance. Stability; decision; perseverance; fixedness of purpose; tenacity;—these are the terms applied to the Persistent Will. Persistency combines the qualities of continuity and firmness—steadfastness and “stick-to-it-iveness.” The Will presses up close to the task—holds itself there firmly—and stays there until victory is won.

Success in many cases depends upon the capacity for holding on. Many a man has fought a brave fight, but lacking Persistency has relinquished his efforts just before the turn of the tide, and has fallen back, defeated not by his rivals, not by circumstances, but by himself. The persistent individual has for his motto: “When you feel that you *must* let go—then hang on the harder, for victory is near.” As Harriet Beecher Stowe once said: “When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you until it seems you cannot hold on a minute longer,

THE WILL

never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn." An old proverb says: "Success is endurance for one moment more." George Kennan says: "In this world, the human spirit, with its dominating force, the Will, may be and ought to be superior to all bodily sensations and all accidents of environment. We should not only feel but we should teach, by our conversation and our literature, that in the struggle of life, it is a noble thing and a heroic thing to die fighting." But he might have added that death does not necessarily accompany such fighting—by one of the strange paradoxes of Life, he who is willing to die fighting in a worthy cause, often wins Life instead. The willingness to die rather than to surrender, often brings living success. Fate is feminine; maintain a "Never take No! for an answer" attitude toward her, and her frowns turn to smiles; she gives in to get rid of your importunities. As D'Alembert once wrote: "Go on, sir, go on. The difficulties you meet with will resolve themselves as you advance. Proceed; and light will dawn, and shine with increasing clearness on your path."

History is filled with examples of men who persisted, and won victory from apparent defeat. Persistent application is one of the prominent characteristics of all successful men. Carlyle possessed it. He had finished his great work on "The French Revolution" after many years of hard labor and careful research. Just before the time to take it to the printers, he left the manuscript on a table. It fell to the floor and a servant girl threw it into the fire as waste-paper. This man did not give up in discouragement—instead he recommenced his task, and rewrote the work, which now stands as a monument to his genius—and his persistency. Audubon, the great naturalist, had a similar experience. After having spent several years in the forest, carefully drawing and coloring about two hundred plates picturing rare birds, the mice destroyed his work in a night. He writes regarding it: "A poignant flame pierced my brain like an arrow of fire, and for several weeks I was prostrated with fever. At length physical and moral strength awoke within

THE PERSISTENT WILL

me. Again I took my gun, my game-bag, my portfolio and my pencils, and plunged once more into the depths of the forest." The result of his Persistent Will was that he was enabled to produce his great work, "Audubon's Birds" copies of which now bring thousands of dollars. Napoleon at one time, while in Paris awaiting an army appointment, was so overcome by despair and poverty, that he walked to the river intending to drown himself as a failure. However his Will manifested a reserve store of Persistency, and he walked away filled with a new desire—a desire to Live and Conquer, rather than die a failure. A few days later his appointment was granted him—the world knows the rest of the story.

Nearly all great authors, artists and musicians have won success only through the power of the Persistent Will. The account of the privations and struggles of some of the world's greatest geniuses is one continuous tale of Persistent Will pitted against apparent failure. As Henry Ward Beecher once said: "It is defeat that turns bone to flint, and gristle to muscle, and makes men invincible, and formed those heroic natures that are now in ascendancy in the world. Do not then, be afraid of defeat. You are never so near to victory as when defeated in a good cause." As Dr. Cuyler says: "It is astonishing how many men lack the power of 'holding on' until they reach the goal. They can make a sudden dash, but they lack grit. They are easily discouraged. They get on as long as everything moves smoothly, but when there is friction they lose heart. They depend upon stronger personalities for their spirit and strength. They lack independence or originality. They only dare to do what others do. They do not step boldly from the crowd and act fearlessly."

Disraeli, afterward Lord Beaconsfield and Prime Minister of England, had to manifest the Persistent Will from the beginning. He was a Jew, and had to fight against the prejudice against his people, as well as the usual opposition to a young newcomer. His first speech in Parliament was a failure; he was hooted and hissed, and compelled to take his seat. Turning and facing his

THE WILL

opponents, he cried bitterly and defiantly: "You may silence me now, and refuse to listen to me. But the time will come when *I will make you* hear me, and listen well to what I have to say to you." And he did, for he afterward ruled the very men who had hissed him—he bent them to his Will.

Balzac, struggling with poverty, wrote forty novels before he attracted success. His friends remonstrated with him, telling him that in literature a man must be either a beggar or a king. "Very well," said he, "I will be a king." Today he stands at the head of the list of French writers. Zola, his fellow-countryman, also fought a hard fight with poverty and public indifference. He lived in a garret, and often lacked sufficient food to maintain health and strength. He says of this period of his life: "Often I went hungry for so long, that it seemed as if I must die. I scarcely tasted meat from one month's end to another, and for two days I lived on three apples. Fire, even on the coldest nights, was an undreamed-of luxury; and I was the happiest man in Paris when I could get a candle, by the light of which I might study at night."

Emerson once was compelled to forego the reading of the second volume of a desired book, because the five cents necessary to take it from the circulating library, was not forthcoming. But he lived to be "Emerson!" Experiences like these, and he had many of them, fixed upon his mind the value of persistency, and years afterward he wrote: "I know no such unquestionable badge and ensign of a sovereign mind as that of tenacity of purpose, which, through all changes of companions or parties or fortunes, changes never, bates no jot of heart or hope, but wearies out opposition and arrives at its port."

John Hunter the famous anatomist, could not read or write until after he attained the age of manhood—in spite of this handicap, he persisted, educated himself, and struggled to his place in his profession, in middle-age. Stephenson, the engineer, taught himself to read and write after he had attained manhood. Drew was an ignorant youth, and was compelled to educate

THE PERSISTENT WILL

himself, but as he said: "It appeared to be a thorny path, but I determined, nevertheless, to enter, and accordingly began to tread it." "Genius is Patience," said Sir Humphrey Davis. "What I am I have made myself by Persistency." Many a successful man has attained the coveted prize only when middle-age has been attained, or even after. The weaklings drop out of the race—the persistent ones stay in till the finish. Many a successful man is a "winter apple." John Hunter said: "Is there one whom difficulties dishearten, who bend to the storm? He will do little. Is there one who *will* conquer? That kind of man never fails."

Fothergill tells the following story of a successful man: "The story of Richard Arkwright, the cotton spinner, is a most instructive one. He never went to school, and was apprenticed to a barber and wig-maker. Wig-making went out of fashion, and shaving alone was a poor affair. But Arkwright, while he shaved, toiled away at the idea of a spinning machine until he was in great poverty. Nevertheless he held on to his idea, and turned his mind to clock-making. At last he got the invention patented, and after unending toil he perfected it, only to find the mob rise against him as the inventor of a labor-saving machine. Then the manufacturers turned against him, and would not buy his machines, after that using his invention but refusing to pay the patent-right. Nevertheless, Arkwright persevered, and beat every combination against him. At fifty years he studied the English grammar in order to speak more correctly; became high sheriff for Derbyshire, and was knighted before he died. Nothing could stop him; but the difficulties he had to surmount would have been too great, too numerous, for a man of less resolute will."

"It's *dogged* as does it" as the Yorkshire man said. It is this determinant, persistent, relentless, steadfast holding on and sticking-to-it that wins the day in many a hard fought battle. It was said of a famous general that he was "a fool who never knew he was licked," and who consequently held on until he wore out the enemy and won the final victory. It is the final victory that

THE WILL

counts. A thousand failures are forgiven and forgotten to him who wins the final decisive struggle. Read the lives of the “Men and Women who have Made Good,” and see how they have held on against overwhelming odds, and in face of repeated apparent defeats. Run over the list: Cyrus Field, Thomas A. Edison; Richard Burton; S. F. B. Morse; Frances Willard, and the rest. In every instance you will find the marked manifestation of the Persistent Will. Persistency is one of the essential qualities of the Positive Will. Without Persistency, one may possess all the virtues and all the talents—but still will be and must be a failure—a mere “flash in the pan” of Life.

CHAPTER IX.

WILL VS. CIRCUMSTANCE.

MANY PEOPLE go through life believing that they are victims of Circumstance—that they are but puppets moved here and there by the operation of forces outside of themselves. This is but a one-sided view of the operation of the laws of Life. While it is true that circumstances do play an important part in the complicated activities of Life, yet it must never be forgotten that each individual has that within himself which enables him to counteract and neutralize that which we call Circumstance, to a greater or lesser degree. Life is not merely the effect of outside causes operating to determine our activities. Instead it may be thought of as the inward Something ever pressing forward for expression, and modifying, as well as being modified by the outside circumstance. There is always this two-fold operation in the activities of Life. While it is fanatical to hold that Circumstance plays no part at all in our lives, it is just as fanatical to hold that we are absolutely ruled by Circumstance.

This Something Within which modifies, neutralizes and transmutes Circumstances in accordance with our desires and aims, is the Positive Will. Men of the Positive Will do not fold their hands and bow their heads in submission to the every

THE WILL

effect and manifestation of Circumstance. On the contrary they endeavor to counteract its effects, and even to turn them to account. The Negative Will throws up its hands in defeat, when Circumstance opposes it and blocks its way. The Positive Will, after finding that it cannot move the obstacle of Circumstance from its path, then endeavors to go around, over, or under the obstruction—and usually succeeds. Positive Will does not manifest in the beating of one's head against the stone-wall of Circumstance, but instead it manifests its pliability in adjusting itself to the new conditions, and in overcoming them by a change of detail, while adhering to the one general plan of campaign.

Napoleon was once confronted by an apparently insurmountable obstacle in the shape of a swollen river on the other side of which rested the Austrian army. It was impossible to cross the raging stream in the face of the enemy's fire and an ordinary commander would have given up the attempt. But to postpone the attack would mean to give the enemy time to gain strength by reinforcements, which would have been fatal to Napoleon's plans. So the Corsican followed the idea of the Steel Will, instead of the Iron Will. Iron breaks when it meets sufficient resistance—while steel bends for the moment, only to spring back into its original shape after the pressure is removed. And so Napoleon showed that his character was as fine steel as that of the Damascus blade.

At nightfall both armies rested, the campfires of each burning on the two sides of the river. The Austrians knew that Napoleon would never attempt to cross the stream during the night, but to make sure they posted guards, and had their guns well trained in the river bank. All night long the Austrians slept and the guards saw no movement in Napoleon's camp—his camp fires burned brightly, and his army was also apparently asleep.

But about the break of dawn the Austrians heard the boom of cannon on both sides of them, and in their rear—their bugles

WILL VS. CIRCUMSTANCE

sounded the alarm,—but too late, for they were overwhelmed by the rush of the French army. They were sent in a panic of retreat down the river pursued by the victorious Frenchmen. Napoleon had silently marched his men all night, up his side of the river until he reached a good fording-place; then he crossed over to the Austrians' side, and marched down toward them. Notwithstanding the all-night forced march of many miles, the French knew that they had the Austrians at a disadvantage, and inspired by the genius of their leader they became irresistible. This is the difference between the Cast-Iron Will which breaks before it will bend; and the Damascus Steel Will, which bends in order to conquer.

The old saying, "What can't be cured, must be endured" is all very well as far as it goes—but it doesn't go far enough. Far better is the revised edition of the saying which runs as follows: "What can't be cured must be turned to advantage." It is this use of the Positive Will in the direction of "getting around" difficult circumstances that marks the genius in any line of human work. This was the true inner meaning of Napoleon's celebrated, though much misunderstood saying: "Circumstances! I *make* circumstances!" Make them indeed he did—but out of the materials before him—the materials of the opposing circumstances. He used the enemy's material with which to fashion his own Circumstances. He lived on the enemy's rations. He took the enemy's material before him, and shaped it to his own ends.

"There is no chance, no destiny, no fate,
Can circumvent, or hinder, or control
The firm resolve of a determined soul.
Gifts count for nothing. Will alone is great;
All things give way before it soon or late.
What obstacle can stay the mighty force
Of the sea-seeking river in its course,
Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait?

THE WILL

Each well-born soul must win what it deserves,
Let the fools prate of luck. The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
Whose slightest action, or inaction
Serves the one great aim. Why, even Death itself
Stands still and waits an hour sometimes
For such a Will."

Many obstacles may be overcome by battering them down—but he who understands only this mode of attack is but half-armed. One conception of will would glorify the militant billy-goat who butts down what he can, but beats out his brains when he comes to the stone-wall. There are other animals who show far more Will than does the goat, by recognizing the futility of the "butting-down" when applied to stone-walls, but who get on the other side of the wall by burrowing under; jumping over; going around it; or else searching until a hole or weak place is found, through which they force their way. And, friends, every stone-wall has its apertures or weak places, if we have the will to search for them instead of lying down in despair, or else beating out our brains against the stones. Do not think for a moment that this is weakness, or surrender of Will—it is the use of Damascus Steel quality of Will. Fothergill says: 'The line of least resistance.' What is that? asks the youthful reader. It is often the line of conduct, my young friend! All action takes the line of least resistance; even to the action of dynamite upon rock, where the cleavage will take the line of least resistance. This does not necessarily involve degraded action by any means. The line of least resistance may go upwards among higher motives, as well as downwards amidst lower motives."

It would be but repeating an oft-told tale were I to attempt to run over the list of the men who have *made* Circumstances by converting the obstacles into helpful things—by transmuting the difficulty into aids. The men of the Steel Will are full of "bounce"—you can't "throw them down" and make them

WILL VS. CIRCUMSTANCE

stay down. The harder they are “thrown down” the higher they rise on the rebound. They are like the rubber-ball, which rises in proportion to the force of the throw down. Or like the steel spring they fly back in proportion to the strength used in brushing them out of the way. The Steel Will masters circumstances. A Steel Will opposed to an Iron Will is like the case of a skilled fencer armed with a fine blade, opposed to a lout with a bludgeon. The Steel wins the day.

Read the lives of the successful people of the world, and you will find that from first to last theirs was a struggle against Circumstance. Sometimes they broke down the opposing obstruction, but when they met with an obstacle too big and too strong to be brushed out of the way, then they got around it, or over it, or through its weak points in some way. The old problem of “What will be the result if an irresistible force comes in contact with an immovable body?” may be answered by the statement that the force gets under, over, or around the immovable body, instead of resting for Eternity confronting it and waiting until the paradox of the two absolutes be adjusted. This is the line of the least resistance for the Force,—and it would save valuable time.

“The line of least resistance” does not mean doing the easiest thing in sight—but, rather *doing the best thing in the easiest manner*. Do not let the idea of “following line of the least resistance” cause you to give up your desires and ambitions, and hunt the easiest thing in sight in its place. That is not “the least resistance”—that is “laying down” and “quitting.” Instead, look around for the weak places in the stone-wall, and then work your way through, or get around, over, or under it. That is the “line of the least resistance.” Fighting, and battering down stone-walls is glorious and all that—but *getting on the other side of the wall* is the aim of your endeavors—your final goal—and whatever accomplishes this end in the quickest and most expeditious manner is “the line of least resistance.” In the words of the old song of several generations ago, it should be

THE WILL

a case of “get there Eli!” and, if Eli is wise, he will keep the “get there” before his mind, first, last and all the time, and leave to the child-minds of the race the glory of the shouting, hurraing and flag-waving. As the story of the firm’s letter to the traveling salesman runs, it is a case of “We don’t want to know how you are doing it; or what you are saying or what a good impression you are making; or how you are cutting in on your rival’s choice territory—*what we want is ORDERS!*” That is what the world wants of you—that is what you must want of yourself ORDERS! The “Orders” are on the other side of that stone-wall of Circumstance—what are you going to do about it? Will you be a get-around-under-over-or-through Fox—or the one-idea, butt-your-brains-out Goat?

CHAPTER X.

WILL IN PERSONALITY.

ONE OF the most startling, and at the same time most puzzling, manifestations of the Will is that which may be called the Will in Personality. We are most familiar with the manifestation, and yet the underlying principle escapes the explanation of the psychologist. The New Psychology with its ideas regarding the Subconscious Mind is the only branch of psychology which even attempts to offer a partial explanation of this most interesting manifestation. Fothergill says regarding it: "The conflict of Will, the power to command others, has been spoken of frequently. Yet, what is this Will-Power which influences others? What is it that makes us accept, and adopt too, the advice of one person, while precisely the same advice from another has been rejected? It is the weight or force of Will which insensibly influences us; the force of Will behind the advice. That is what it is! The person who thus forces his or her advice upon us has no more power to enforce it than others; but all the same we do as requested. We accept from one what we reject from another. One person says of something contemplated, 'Oh, but you must not,' yet we do it all the same, though that person may be in a position to make us regret the rejection of that counsel. Another person says, 'Oh, but you

THE WILL

musn't,' and we desist, though we may, if so disposed, set this latter person's opinion at defiance with impunity. It is not the fear of consequences, nor of giving offense, which determines the adoption of the latter person's advice, while it has been rejected when given by the first. It depends upon the character or Will-Power of the individual advising whether we accept the advice, or reject it. This character often depends little if at all in some cases, upon the intellect, or even on the moral qualities, the goodness or badness, of the individual. It is itself an imponderable something; yet it carries weight with it. This Will is seen in the nursery, where one child is master, nobody exactly knows how. It is not particularly combative, nor is it stubborn in conflict; it may be even more than ordinarily obedient to those in authority over it; but it is master of its peers, and lords it over its brothers and sisters. It possesses its character in fact. It holds its place by the possession of that Will-Power which brings men to the front in emergencies. There may be abler men, cleverer men; but it is the one possessed of Will who rises to the surface at these times—the one who can by some subtle power make other men obey him."

Even among the animals this quality has been noticed by those who have made a study of them. A writer in a magazine, in an article entitled "The Taming of Animals," expresses the idea in these words: "Put two male baboons in the same cage, and they will open their mouths, show all their teeth, and 'blow' at each other. But one of them, even though he may possess the uglier dentition, will blow with a difference, with an inward shakiness that marks him for the under dog at once. No test of battle is needed at all. It is the same with the big cats. Put two, or four, or a dozen lions in together, and they also probably without a single contest, will soon discover which one of them possesses the mettle of the master. Thereafter he takes the choice of the meat; if he chooses, the rest shall not even begin to eat until he has finished; he goes first to the fresh pan of water. In short he is the 'king of the cage,' Now, then, when a

WILL IN PERSONALITY

tamer goes into a den with a big cat that has taken a notion to act 'funny,' his attitude is almost exactly like that of the 'king beast' above mentioned would be toward a subject rash and ill-advised enough to challenge his kingship."

The conflict of the Will, silent and subtle, but active and vigorous, goes on between persons who meet and whose interests clash. When two such persons meet there is manifested that silent Will struggle between them, from which one emerges a victor, and the other defeated for the moment. Coleridge has pictured this condition in his verse:

"He holds him with his glittering eye,
The marriage guest stood still,
And listens like a three-year child;
The mariner hath his Will."

Fothergill says of this Will of Personality: "The Will-struggle goes on universally. In the young aristocrat, who gets his tailor to make another advance in defiance of his conviction that he will never get his money back. It goes on between lawyer and client; betwixt doctor and patient; between banker and borrower; betwixt buyer and seller. It is not tact which enables the person behind the counter to induce customers to buy what they did not intend to buy, and which when bought gives them no satisfaction, though it is linked therewith for the effort to be successful. Whenever two persons meet in business, or in any other relation in life up to love-making, there is this Will-Fight going on, commonly enough without any consciousness of the struggle. There is a dim consciousness of the result, but none of the processes. It often takes years of the intimacy of married life to find out with whom of the pair the mastery really lies. Often the far stronger character, to all appearance, has to yield; it is this Will element which underlies the statement, 'The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.' In 'Middlemarch' we find in Lydgate a grand aggregation of

THE WILL

qualities, yet shallow, hard, selfish Rosamond masters him thoroughly in the end. He was not deficient in Will-Power, possessed more than an average share of character; but in the fight he went down at last under the onslaught of the intense stubborn will of his narrow-minded spouse. Their will-contest was the collision of a large, warm nature, like a capable human hand, with a hard, narrow, selfish nature, like a steel button; the hand only bruised itself while the button remained unaffected."

Oliver Wendell Holmes gives the following description of an instance of the Will-struggle between two men: "The Koh-i-noor's face turned so white with rage that his blue-black mustache and beard looked fearful seen against it. He grinned with wrath, and caught at a tumbler, as if he would have thrown its contents at the speaker. The young Marylander fixed his clear, steady eye upon him, and laid his hand on his arm, carelessly almost, but the Jewel felt that he could not move it. It was no use. The youth was his master, and in that deadly Indian hug in which men wrestle with their eyes, over in five seconds, but which breaks one of their two backs, and is good for three score years and ten, one trial enough—settles the whole matter—just as when two feathered songsters of the barnyard game and dunghill, come together. After a jump or two at each other, and a few sharp kicks, there is an end of it; and it is 'After you, monsieur,' with the beaten party in all the social relations for all the rest of his days."

It is a well-known fact among horsemen, that certain horses possess a subtle quality called "class" which is recognized as existent, but which defies definition or explanation. Its power may be imagined when it is realized that when two horses of equal speed contest with each other, the thoroughbred horse will always intimidate and discourage his opponent so that he will drop to the rear. It is not a matter of brute strength or show of violence that accomplishes this result, for the classy horse may be very gentle—it is a subtle manifestation of Will, which

the other horse recognizes as superior to his own, and he gives up the struggle.

This Will-Power of Personality does not always manifest itself in a show of force, and a challenge to combat. On the contrary it often bides its time, and maintains a quiet demeanor until the time comes to strike. As Fothergill says: "This Will-Power is seen in the man who abides his time, who knows how to wait—which involves the 'when' and the 'why.' Circumstances may stand in his way, and he must wait; but the Will is neither bent, broken, nor snapped by that fact, and is all along as assertive as ever—even when apparently in abeyance. Yet it is not mere perseverance—it is something more....It is a great mistake to suppose that this Will is disposed to air itself on all occasions; far from it. It often has a tendency to conceal itself, and is not rarely found under an exterior of much pleasantness. There are men, and women too, who present an appearance of such politeness that they seem to have no will of their own; they apparently exist merely to do what is agreeable to others; but just wait till the time comes, and then the latent Will-Power is revealed, and we find under this velvet glove the iron hand—and no mistake about it. It is the secret of the diplomatist. Tallyrand possessed it to a remarkable degree, and was a cool, bold, successful diplomat; Cavour also possessed this power and used it wisely. The blusterer and bragger are devoid of it.... The blusterer is not possessed of much Will-Power, and it is simply amusing as well as psychologically interesting, to see a blusterer in authority disposing of a matter finally, as he vainly imagines, when really the matter is but being opened up, not settled at all. But the blusterer likes to cherish the idea that the battle is over, the matter disposed of, and he is victorious. Indeed, he feels rather injured when he discovers the actual state of affairs, and is inclined to think that he has been misled by others when he has only deceived himself....Real power disdains the protection of formality. The consciousness of strength is sufficient in itself. The owner of Will-Force is not afraid to let another come

THE WILL

close to him, in his confidence in his capacity to hold his own. Feebleness builds around it its fence of formality.”

The roots of this Will in Personality must be imbedded deep down in the Subconscious regions of our mental being, for in the majority of cases it is manifested unconsciously. “We are greater than we know,” and in the deep recesses of our being are concealed latent powers of whose existence we do not dream. Men, under pressure, have developed this Will-Power of Personality. It is open to any and all of us, if we but demand its appearance into consciousness and activity. It is worth the effort and trial and patient development.

CHAPTER XI.

WILL AND HEALTH.

THE INFLUENCE of the Will in the direction of resisting the influence of disease is well recognized by the best authorities. In the volume of this series, entitled "Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion" we have called your attention to the powerful effect of the mind over physical states, and to the fact that mental states manifest in physical conditions. But the part played by the Will in Suggestion is not generally recognized. It is the element of Will which exerts the positive effect in the application of the mind upon the body. Not necessarily Will in the phase of conscious, determined direction and concentration, but more often Will aroused subconsciously. Will is the active operative force underlying the manifestations of suggestion and all forms of mental healing. The Will is called into action by faith, suggestion or imagination, just as it is called into effect by desire. Will, in this general sense, is the active, operative dynamic quality of the mind.

We shall not attempt to recount the many instances of the effect of the mind upon physical conditions—we have stated them in our previous work, to which we must refer you. But here at this place, we wish to call your attention to the effect of the use of the Will, in its ordinary and popular

THE WILL

sense of resolute determination, in counteracting disease. Dr. Fothergill gives us the case of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. He states it as follows: "You must have a blister on, or you will die,' said her physician to the redoubtable Sarah, first Duchess of Marlborough, when suffering from pleurisy. 'I will not have a blister on, and I will not die,' said the redoubtable Sarah. And she did neither. The woman who mastered John Churchill and Anne Stuart was not going to succumb to a pleurisy. And in disease the influence of the Will is as potent as elsewhere. It cannot rescue a person from the clutch of a mortal malady; but if the disease is compatible with recovery, the Will makes the difference often betwixt life and death. When Douglas Jerrold was once at Death's door, and the physician told him he must die, his answer was: 'What, and leave a family of helpless children? I *won't* die.' And die he did not, at that time at least. A strong motive to live positively keeps some people alive, as it did with Douglas Jerrold. The Will stands in some curious relations to health, or rather disturbances of health....Whether persistent attention directed to any one part and long maintained ever ends in actual disease of the said part, may not be affirmed. It is a matter to which systematic attention has not yet been paid. On the contrary, many cures can only be explained by the mental impression the material agent employed has made, and through the mind the body is reached. 'Conceit can kill, and conceit can cure,' is an old North Country saying as to the effect of faith in remedies in some morbid conditions."

All practicing physicians have met with numerous cases in which the Will was the prime element in the recovery of patients, from severe illnesses, and likewise, cases in which letting go and giving up undoubtedly caused the patient to take a turn for the worse. If a very sick person gives up and becomes reconciled to the fact that death is inevitable, the end usually comes rapidly. On the contrary the dogged refusal to surrender has kept many a patient alive for a long time, and has often carried them over the crisis. We have known of sick people who fought their way

back to life and health, simply because they felt that they had to perform some life work.

We know of the case of an old lady who lived to the age of eighty-five years, simply because she felt that her duty required her to minister to the wants of an unmarried son—the last born of a large brood—who was never very vigorous. The good lady fought her way through many a spell of sickness, simply because she “had James to attend to.” Finally James died at the age of fifty years, and the old lady mourned him greatly, saying “I always knew that I would lose him—he never was a strong child.” From that time she relaxed her Will-to-Live, having nothing left to hold her to life, and shortly after she went to sleep one night and death came to her in her slumber, and she “went to meet James,” an idea that had taken possession of her mind. You may call this Love instead of Will, if you like—but to our idea it was Will called into effect by Love.

We have a personal knowledge of another case in which the Will was inspired to vigorous action by love—and jealousy. A lady who had a little two weeks’ old infant in its cradle near her bedside, was very close to death from the complications sometimes occurring in childbirth. She had about given up hope and was gradually growing weaker. About this time the nurse very foolishly admitted to the bed-room a neighborhood gossip and “Job’s Comforter.” The visitor condoled with the dying woman, telling her how sorry all her friends were for her, and how the neighborhood was talking about the plans of “Widow Perkins,” whom they said would probably be called in to care for the infant so soon to be motherless. “And, then you know,” continued the good gossip, “they say that she always did have an eye on your husband before you married him. And you know how men are—it’s just dreadful to think of her getting him after all, and being a stepmother for your dear little baby.” The sick woman raised herself up in bed by a supreme effort, and with staring eyes and gasping breath she cried out “She shan’t have my husband and dear little baby—she shan’t,

she shan't!" and then sank back exhausted and panting. The physician was hurriedly called in, and his practiced eye saw at once that some remarkable change had occurred. "She will get well now, if she is left alone, and kept quiet." And chasing the visitor from the room he placed in the sick woman's arms the little baby which she pressed closely to her breast. She recovered, and lived to have grandchildren as well as children. The Widow Perkins quarry escaped her. Another victory for Will.

Fothergill says: "Where there is a strong motive to live, no matter whether selfish or unselfish a successful struggle is often the result. Aaron Burr, when a young man, laid aside a wasting disease like a garment, in order to join Arnold on his raid against Quebec, and a very arduous undertaking it was. The question of Will in relation to the progress of disease is constantly met with in medical practice. Give a woman of ardent temperament sufficient motive to live, and nothing but mortal disease can kill her. The same may be said of the hardy folks of the north. Joe, in 'Joe and the Jolly Gist' (geologist) said of his father 'Fadder deed! He's none o't deing mak'. We's hev to worry fadder when his tim's come; he'll never dee of his sel' so lang as there's to hound yan on till.'

Dr. William C. Prime, in his book entitled "Among the Northern Hills," makes one of his characters, an old lawyer, tell a story of an experience in his practice. He had been summoned in a hurry to see an old woman who had managed her farm for forty years since her husband's death. She had two sons, and a stepson, John, who was not an admirable person. After a long drive on a stormy night, he found the old lady apparently just alive, and was told by the physician in charge that he must hurry if he wished to have her make and sign her will, for she was very weak and sinking rapidly. He tells the rest of the story as follows: "I had brought paper and pen and ink with me. I found a stand and a candle, placed them at the head of the bed, and after saying a few words to the woman, told her that I was ready to prepare the will if she would go on and tell me what

she wanted me to do. I wrote the introductory phrase rapidly, and leaning over her said, 'Now go on, Mrs. Norton.' Her voice was quite faint, and she seemed to speak with an effort. She said: 'First" of all I want to give the farm to my sons, Harry and James. Just put that down.' 'But,' said I, 'you can't do that, Mrs. Norton. The farm isn't yours to give away.' 'The farm isn't *mine*?' she said in a voice decidedly stronger than before. 'No, the farm isn't yours. You have only a life interest in it.' 'This farm that I've run for goin' on forty-three years next spring, isn't *mine* to do what I *please* with it! Why not, judge? I'd like to know what you mean!" Why, Mrs. Norton, your husband gave you a life estate in all his property, and on your death the farm goes to his son John, and your children get the village houses. I have explained this to you very often before.' 'And when I die, *John Norton* is to have this house and farm whether I will or not?' 'Just so, it will be his.' '*Then I ain't going to die!*' said the old woman, in a clear and decidedly ringing and healthy voice. And so saying, she threw her feet over the front of the bed, sat up, gathered a blanket and coverlet about her, straightened her gaunt form, walked across the room, and sat down in the great chair before the fire. The doctor and I went home. That was fifteen years ago. The old lady is alive to-day. And she accomplished her intent. She beat John after all. He died four years ago."

The best authorities in the medical profession agree in stating that two persons may be exposed to the same contagion, or infection—one will contract the disease, the other will escape it. Post-mortem examinations show that the lungs of nearly every person examined bear the scars of tuberculosis, contracted at some time during the person's life, but usually fought off by the resistant powers of the system. There is a certain resistant power in persons varying in degree which enables them to fight off disease. What this resistant power is the authorities do not know positively. Is it not possible that in this resistant power of the organism, we have our old friend the Will masquerading in a new guise? Surely it seems reasonable to so believe, when

THE WILL

we consider cases like those related in this chapter. Is not the resistant power the Will operating along subconscious lines, in response to the general mental attitude and Will positivity of the individual? It surely is a “positive” degree of *something*. From what we know of the Will, are we not justified in assuming that it, the Will, is that *something*?

CHAPTER XII.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS WILL.

TO THE old-time orthodox psychologist, the mention of “unconscious” Will was a particularly annoying heresy, and one which merited and received severe condemnation. Will was regarded as so essentially a conscious mental operation, that the term “unconscious” as applied to it was regarded as contradictory and meaningless. But the advance in the science of psychology has uncovered many unsuspected regions of the mind, and many unsuspected qualities residing therein, and so to-day the term “unconscious Will” is understood and accepted as designating a well-established phase of mental activity. In fact, many leading psychologists now claim, that the greater part of the activities of Will among living creatures are performed in the subconscious regions of the mind. Among the lower forms of life, there is little consciousness, but very much Will activity; and even in the higher animals and in man we find the various reflex and habitual movements occasioned by Will along unconscious, or rather subconscious lines. The importance attached to the Subconsciousness by the New Psychology, has led to an extensive investigation of the Will activities of this interesting area of the mind.

THE WILL

The important activities of the mind which are grouped under the head of Auto-Suggestion, and which we have described in another volume of this series, have for their active principle this subconscious Will. That is to say, the Auto-Suggestion impressed upon one's mind arouses the subconscious Will, which then holds the mind to its allotted tasks just as the conscious Will so holds it ordinarily. So far is this true that not only may the subconscious Will be aroused to exert a pressure to bear in the direction of character-building, establishing or neutralizing of habits, etc., but by practice the knack may be acquired whereby the intellectual processes may be urged to work along subconscious lines, to later present the field of consciousness with the finished product. The mind may be charged to work out certain perplexing problems, while its owner is engaged in other mental work, or during sleep. In fact, many of us do this without realizing it. We evince a strong desire to know or solve certain things, and then lay the matter aside, only to find that, later on, the answer will flash into our minds unannounced. Or, else, when we return to a consideration of the task, we find that the matter has been threshed out and rearranged in our minds along subconscious lines. In all of these subconscious activities, the subconscious Will plays the same important part that is performed by the conscious Will in the corresponding conscious mental activities.

Any mention of the subconscious Will would be incomplete without a reference to and quotations from the work of Charles Godfrey Leland who devoted much thought to this subject, which he had embodied in his well-known work entitled "Have You a Strong Will," which has been republished in America under the title of "The Mystic Will." Mr. Leland conducted a line of experiments tending to establish the fact that the Will could be set to work along subconscious lines by auto-suggestions given to oneself just before going to sleep. He seemed to be of the opinion that the ante-sleep auto-suggestion was an important feature of the process, but later investigators have

THE SUBCONSCIOUS WILL

established the fact that the same effect can be obtained by auto-suggestions given to oneself during any waking hour, provided that one quiets his mind from disturbing influences and assumes a state of mental quietude. More than this, some advanced experimenters have succeeded in obtaining very good results without even inducing this state of mental quietude—they have so trained their subconscious Will that it will act upon the orders, “do this or attend to that” given in moments of business rush and activity. We think that it will be advisable to quote from Mr. Leland at this point, in order to acquaint you with his fundamental conceptions.

He introduces the subject by saying that: “During the past few years the most serious part of the author’s study and reflection has been devoted to the subjects discussed in this book. These briefly stated are as follows: Firstly, that all mental or cerebral faculties can by direct scientific treatment be influenced to what would have once been regarded as miraculous action, and which is even yet very little known or considered. Secondly, in development of this theory, and as confirmed by much practical and personal experience, that the Will can by very easy processes of training, or by the aid of auto-suggestion, be strengthened to any extent, and states of mind soon induced, which can be made by practice habitual. Thus a man can by a very simple experiment—which I clearly described and which has been tested and verified beyond all denial—cause himself to remain during the following day in a perfectly calm or cheerful state of mind; and this condition may, by means of repetition and practice, be raised or varied to other states or conditions of a far more active or intelligent description....The man who can develop his Will has it in his power not only to control his moral nature to any extent, but also to call into action or realize very extraordinary states of mind—that is, faculties, talents, or abilities which he has never suspected to be within his reach. It is a stupendous thought; yet one so great that from the beginning of time to the present

day no sage or poet has ever grasped it to its full extent, and yet it is a very literal truth, that there lie hidden within us all, as in a sealed-up spiritual casket, or like the bottled-up *djinn* in the Arab tale, innumerable Powers or Intelligences, some capable of bestowing peace or calm, others of giving happiness, or inspiring creative genius, energy and perseverance. All that man has ever attributed to an Invisible World without, lies, in fact, within him, and the magic key which will confer the faculty of sight and the power to conquer is the Will."

Mr. Leland devotes much space in his book to establishing the virtues of auto-suggestion, which it is scarcely necessary to repeat at this late day when all even slightly acquainted with the teachings of the New Psychology recognize and realize the wonderful possibilities in, and the wonderful effects that may be obtained by that form of calling into activity the subconscious Will. One point, however, which Mr. Leland makes, is especially worthy of quotation here, although we have spoken of it elsewhere. It is one of those things which will bear much repetition, for it is highly important. Mr. Leland says: "For as I hope to clearly prove it, it is an easy matter to create strong Will, or strengthen that which we have, to a marvelous extent, yet he who would do this must first give his Attention firmly and fixedly to his intent or want, for which purpose it is absolutely necessary that he shall first *know his own mind regarding what he means to do*, and therefore meditate upon it, not dreamily, or vaguely, but earnestly. And this done, he must assure himself that he takes a real interest in the subject, since if such be the case I may declare that his success is well-nigh certain."

We shall not enter into a discussion of Mr. Leland's method of giving the auto-suggestion which arouses the subconscious Will for any good method of auto-suggestion will accomplish the same result. It may be described briefly in his own words as: "Not to will or resolve *too* vehemently, but simply and very gently, yet assiduously, to impress the idea on the mind *so as to*

THE SUBCONSCIOUS WILL

fall asleep while thinking of it as a thing to be.... Resolve before going to sleep that if there is anything for you to do which requires Will or Resolution—be it to undertake repulsive or hard work or duty, to face a disagreeable person, to fast, or make a speech—to say ‘No’ to anything; in short, to keep up to the mark or make *any* kind of effort that *you Will do it*—as calmly and unthinkingly as may be. Do not desire to do it sternly or forcibly, or in spite of obstacles—but simply and coolly make up your mind to *do it*—and it will much more likely be done. And it is absolutely true—*crede experto*—that if persevered in, this willing yourself to will by easy impulse unto impulse given, will lead to marvelous and most satisfactory results.”

Mr. Leland is particularly happy in his choice of illustrations with which he explains the action of this activity of the subconscious Will, aroused by auto-suggestion. We think that every person should impress upon his memory the following illustration, for it will serve him in good stead in his practice of the use of the Will. Mr. Leland says: “I have not assumed a high philosophical or metaphysical position in this work; my efforts have been confined to indicating how by a very simple and well-nigh mechanical process, perfectly intelligible to every human being with an intellect, one may induce certain states of mind and thereby create a Will. But I quite agree with Mr. Fletcher that Forethought is strong thought, and the point from which all projects must proceed. As I understand it, it is a kind of impulse or projection of Will into the coming work. I may here illustrate this with a curious fact in physics. If the reader wished to ring a door bell so as to produce as much sound as possible, he would probably pull it as far back as he could and then let it go. But if he would, in letting it go, *simply give it a tap with his forefinger*, he would actually redouble the noise. Or, to shoot an arrow as far as possible, it is not enough to merely draw the bow to its utmost span or tension. If just as it goes, you will *give the bow a quick push*, though the effort be trifling, the arrow will fly almost as far again as it would have

THE WILL

done without it. Or, as is well known, in wielding a very sharp saber, we make the *draw-cut*, that is if we add to the blow or chop, as with an axe, a certain slight pull and simultaneously we can cut through a silk handkerchief or a sheep. Forethought is the tap on the bell, the push on the bow, the draw on the saber. It is the deliberate yet rapid action of the mind when before falling to sleep or dismissing thought we *bid* the mind subsequently to respond. It is more than merely thinking we are to do it; it is the bidding or ordering self to fulfill a task before willing it....To make it of avail, one must...first write, as it were, or plan a preface, synopsis or epitome of his proposed work, to start it and combine it with a resolve or decree that it must be done, the latter being the tap on the bell knob. Now the habit of composing the plan as perfectly, yet as succinctly as possible...combined with the energetic impulse to send it off, will ere long give the operator a conception of what I mean by Forethought, which by description I cannot. And when grown familiar and really mastered, its possessor will find that his power to think and act promptly in all the emergencies of life has greatly increased....There is a curious and very illustrative instance of Forethought in the sense in which I am endeavoring to explain it, given in the novel, the 'Scalp Hunters' by Mayne Reid: 'His aim with the rifle is infallible, and it would seem as if the ball obeyed his Will. There must be a kind of *directing principle* in his mind, independent of strength of nerve and sight. He and one other are the only men in whom I have observed this singular power.' This simply means the exercise in a second, as it were, of 'the tap on the bell knob,' or the projection of the will into the proposed shot, and which may be applied to any act Gymnasts, leapers and the like are all familiar with it. It springs from resolute confidence and self-impulse enforced; but it also creates them, and the growth is very great and rapid when the idea is much kept before the mind. In this latter lies most of the problem."

THE SUBCONSCIOUS WILL

In the following part of this book, the part devoted to Will-Development, we shall combine methods of arousing the subconscious Will with the more familiar methods. To develop the Will, every phase of its activity should be considered and every efficacious method employed. The New Psychology is essentially *pragmatic*—it concerns itself more with the “how to do” side of the question, than that of “what is the theory regarding it?”

THE WILL

PART III.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WILL.

THE WILL

CHAPTER XIII.

WILL DEVELOPMENT.

WE HEAR much of the development of the Will, and we realize the importance of the process which is designated by the term. But we do not stop to consider that the Will, in its essential nature, is a form of mental energy which is already developed and which needs but the proper mental attitude on our part to bring it into manifestation. It is like the universal store of electricity which pervades all space, and which needs but the proper mechanism to apply it. We talk of generating electricity, but not a single particle of electricity is ever *manufactured*—the generation of electricity is simply the gathering together in one place of a portion of the store of the universally diffused electricity. Thus is it with Will. Will is closely connected with the innate power of the Ego, and, in all probability, is a something which is diffused universally, each Ego acting as a centre of Will. At any rate, the experience of the race has shown that each and every individual contains a sufficient supply of latent and dormant will which if aroused will accomplish all that is necessary for him to accomplish. And it is this training and cultivation of the *use of* the Will, that we mean when we speak of Will-Development. We do not need

to develop the Will—but we do need to develop our mental machinery that we may use the Will to the best advantage.

That the development of the Will is a task worthy of the best individuals of the race is acknowledged by the highest authorities. In fact, the best advice of the race has been based upon this fundamental idea. As Emerson said: “The education of the Will is the object of our existence.” John Stuart Mill said: “A character is a completely fashioned Will.” The best writers on the subject of psychology strongly urge upon all the importance of the cultivation of the Will. As one writer says: “Not infrequently a strong volitional power originally exists, but lies dormant for want of being called into exercise, and here it is that judicious training can work its greatest wonders.” And again: “It is of the utmost importance that attention should be directed to the improvement and strengthening of the Will; for without this there can be neither independence nor firmness, nor individuality of character. Without it we cannot give truth its proper force, nor morals their proper direction, nor save ourselves from being machines in the hands of worthless men. The education of the Will is really of far greater importance in shaping the destiny of the individual, than that of the intellect. Theory and doctrine, and inculcation of laws and propositions will never of themselves lead to the uniform habit of right action. It is by *doing* that we learn to do; by *overcoming*, that we learn to overcome; by obeying reason and conscience, that we learn to obey; and every right *action* which we cause to spring out of pure principles—whether by authority, precept or example—will have a greater weight in the formation of character than all the theory in the world.”

Emerson says: “The exercise of the Will, or the lesson of power, is taught in every event. From the child’s possession of his several senses up to the hour when he saith, ‘Thy will be done!’ he is learning the secret, that he can reduce under his Will, not only particular events, but great classes, nay the whole series of events, and so conform all facts to his

WILL DEVELOPMENT

character." William Wirt says: "The man who is perpetually hesitating which of two things he will do first, will do neither. The man who resolves, but suffers his resolution to be changed by the first counter-suggestion of a friend—who fluctuates from opinion to opinion, from plan to plan, and veers like a weather-cock to every point of the compass, with every breath of caprice that blows—can never accomplish anything real or useful. It is only the man who carries into his pursuits that great quality which Lucan ascribes to Caesar, *nescia virtus state loco*;—who first consults wisely, then resolves firmly, and then executes his purpose with inflexible perseverance, undismayed by those petty difficulties which daunt a weaker spirit—that man can advance to eminence in any line." Emerson said: "There can be no driving force, except through the conversion of the man into his Will, making him the Will, and the Will him." And again: "The lightning which explodes and fashions planets, maker of planets and suns is in him. On one side, elemental order, sandstone and granite, rock-ledges, peat-bog, forest, sea and shore; and, on the other part, thought, the spirit which composes and decomposes nature,—here they are, side by side, god and devil, mind and matter, king and conspirator, belt and spasm, riding peacefully together in the eye and brain of man."

Halleck says: "Persons of character always have well-cultivated Wills. Life's duties are certain to involve doing disagreeable things, and this takes Will-Power. An unstable man can never be a person of character. Stability is founded upon Will. Stability demands the following of a definite, and often difficult, consistent line of conduct, the swerving neither to the right nor to the left. The man who is honest or punctual or diligent by fits and starts will never occupy a high place among his fellow men, for they will soon see that he lacks character. The tremendous competition in life is felt less by men of character, for there are scarcely enough of these to fill positions that demand such men. Every avenue of life is thronged with these uncertain creatures, whose conduct and actions are a mere

reflection of their surroundings. Such persons waste time in drinking, card-playing, or some other form of dissipation. It was announced during the late financial depression, that a certain man had failed. 'No, that is impossible,' said the president of a large corporation; 'his character and will-power are worth a million dollars, and I shall gladly employ him if he will come to me.' Again, character demands that any desirable line of ideas should be kept before the mind until they dominate it. A person can have individuality only along some given line, which implies long continued study and much mental concentration. The self is a bundle of such mental states as persist, and recur again and again. Where there is no capacity for continuous, and continually recurring, mental states, there can be no individuality, no persistent self, no fixed character. Rattle-brained persons, gossips, and other fickle creatures cannot be properly said to have any individual self. Nor will anyone acquire individuality by now studying a little mathematics, or astronomy, or geology, now skimming over a few selections of English or French literature, now beginning the study of German or drawing, but stopping the moment it becomes hard, the moment it begins to build up real individuality. It is the function of a well-trained will to adhere to a given line of conduct or ideas, until they have become an integral part of the self. Only those ideas which are so absorbed become valuable elements of the character. We are coins, the metal of which has been dug from the mines of our inborn intellectual and moral faculties by Will-Power. If we properly work these mines, we may find metal enough in us to justify a stamp of very high value. On the other hand, though there is much unmined metal beneath the surface, we often form a character marked with a penny stamp. It may be true that circumstances stamp us to a certain extent, but it is also true that the way in which we use them stamps us indelibly."

Let us now proceed to a consideration of the methods whereby one may develop the mechanism of the mind so as to allow the current of the Will to flow freely through it, as the

WILL DEVELOPMENT

electric current flows along the wires overhead, and is taken up and applied through the trolley-pole and then the electrical mechanism of the car—always under the control of the man who drives the car. Men are giants in embryo. By the application of the proper methods they may awaken the dormant energies and latent forces, and thus make of themselves what they Will.

THE WILL

CHAPTER XIV.

PHASES OF WILL DEVELOPMENT.

IN CONSIDERING the subject of the Development of the Will, particularly in the phase of the selection of appropriate methods for the purpose of strengthening and exercising the Will-Power, we must first analyze the various stages or phases of the actual operation of the Will. By understanding the various processes concerned and operative in every complete act of the Will, we may select and intelligently apply the appropriate methods instead of attempting unnaturally to force the Will processes by some psychological hot-house process.

We find that there are five successive steps or stages manifested in every complete and completed act of Will. These steps are as follows:

1. The perception by the mind of some action to be performed. This perception may be caused in two ways, viz., (a) By the presentation to the attention of some object outside of the minds of the individual; (b) By the presentation to the attention of some object which has been impressed upon the memory from former experience with outside objects. This phase or stage of the operation of the Will involves the Attention, the Perception, and the Memory.

THE WILL

2. The operation of feelings, desire, or similar forms of emotional motive force, which sets into operation the process which, if uninterrupted, leads to volition. The word “emotive” well describes this mental activity. This phase of Will involves the feelings and emotions.

3. The forming of the mental picture by the Imagination, which gives the mind its pattern, mould or general working plan of action, which is followed by the Will in its subsequent stages or steps.

4. The operation of judgment, reason and thought, in the direction of weighing and deciding upon the merits of the proposed action—the striking of the balance between conflicting desires, memories and other motives. This is the *decisive* stage of Will.

5. The manifestation of actual volition or “will to will,” which is the final act of Will—the pulling of the trigger of action—the releasing of the spring of outward manifestation.

In any scientific plan or general method of Will-Development, all of these various stages or phases of the manifestation of the Will must be considered and taken into account in the detailed methods to be applied. If any one of these stages is ignored, the entire general plan will be weakened, for “a chain is no stronger than its weakest link;” and if the method be defective or lacking in strength in any of the stages mentioned, it follows that the entire method must lack strength and perfection. The average student of Will-Development is apt to be impatient when he is asked to develop and perfect himself in all the various stages of the Will. He seeks to begin with Volition and Action, and chafes at the preliminary stages. But we assure him that these first steps are necessary—and so far as volition is concerned he will have full opportunity to manifest it in mastering these preliminary stages. For in the mastery of the first steps of Will-Development, there is called for a manifestation of a strong Will in holding the mind down to its task, and in enforcing the application of firm control over the rebellious faculties. It is true, although

PHASES OF WILL DEVELOPMENT

apparently paradoxical, that in *acquiring* Will Power one must *use* Will Power. To him who hath shall be given. By Will, Will is developed.

The first stage of Will—that of perception—is a most important one, and upon its strength and general range depend much of the later activity of the Will. The world of action depends upon the perception of the outside world of the senses. Before one acts he must desire; and before he can desire, he must be aware of the things to desire; and before he may so become aware, he must use perception. The men of action and manifestation of volition are men who know what they want, because they have used their perceptive faculties to good effect. They know the outside world, because they have *perceived* it. Therefore all methods of Will-Development must begin with a consideration of the development of the perception. The subject of Memory is closely connected with this phase of perception, for as we have seen, the attention is frequently aroused by the memory of previous impressions from the outside world. But we shall not enter into the subject of memory in this volume, for we have considered it in detail in another volume of this series which is devoted exclusively to the subject—Memory.

The second stage of Will activity—the emotive phase—is a very important one, and one which requires much thought on the part of the student of Will-Development. The emotions and feelings must be trained and ruled—developed or restrained, as the case may be—in order that the motive power of this part of the mind may be applied to the best effect.

The third stage of Will-activity—the emotive phase of Imagination is also important, for upon the strength of the mental images depends much of the strength of the subsequent action. The Imagination is an important feature in the building of Character and the development of Will.

The fourth stage of Will-activity—the phase of judgment, reason and decision is vitally important, for upon the weighing

THE WILL

and deciding by this faculty of the mind depend the actual manifestation of the Will.

The fifth and final stage of Will-Activity—the phase of volition is the stage which comes nearer to meeting the requirements of the popular idea of Will than any of those just mentioned. Volition blends so closely into action that it is often mistaken for it. The control and culture of volition is the development of that which we most often think of as Will.

In addition to the chapters devoted to the consideration of the above-mentioned phases of the Will-action, we shall also ask you to consider the negative Will, or rather the characteristics of those who lack positivity in Will. While we prefer to have you fasten your attention upon the positive qualities of Will, rather than upon the negative side of the shield, still we have deemed it expedient to add the said chapter, for the purpose of giving a warning and teaching you the advantages of being different from the negative cases mentioned.

In passing on to the consideration of the various methods of development of the mental faculties concerned with the various stages of Will-action, we must remind the reader who wishes to develop a positive Will that there is no royal road to Will-Power. There is no magic wand which may be waved to produce the desired result. There is nothing that can be taken in spoonful doses from a bottle, which will change negative Wills into Positive ones. There is no real method other than that of careful, persistent, determined application and work. But when one remembers what he may accomplish in this way, the work seems as nothing in comparison.

Remember that in developing the Will, you develop the character—the Self in fact. In developing the faculties involved in the various stages of Will, you are really developing an all 'round, strong character, and by the culture and control of the important faculties of the mind—you are acquiring a Character.

The three general rules of application of the methods may be summed up in three words: Patience, Persistence and Practice.

PHASES OF WILL DEVELOPMENT

“Yes, to this thought I hold with firm persistence;

The last result of wisdom stamps it true:

He only earns his freedom and existence

Who daily conquers them anew.”—*Goethe*.

THE WILL

CHAPTER XV.

HOW TO DEVELOP PERCEPTION.

As we have seen, the phase of perception is a necessary precedent to all manifestations of volition. We must be *aware* of things before we can desire them or will to possess or accomplish them. And perception is essential to awareness. All authorities upon the subject of the development of the Will insist that the first step to be accomplished is that of the attainment of keen perception. The vital point in the use of the Will is the *doing* of things—the action toward something. And perception alone can supply the objects toward which we may move, act and do.

In developing perception one not only sharpens and renders effective the several senses employed, but he also trains his attention. Attention is purely an act of the Will, and by exercising and training the attention one does much in the direction of developing the use of the Will. The following exercises will give you practice in perception. You may modify, enlarge and improve these exercises to an endless extent. Do not go through the exercises in a mechanical, monotonous manner but put *interest* into the task.

Exercise 1. Place before you some object lying near to your hand, no matter how familiar it may be to you. Then examine

it in detail, acquainting yourself with its shape color, size and other characteristics. Analyze it so far as is possible. Take it up in sections and discover all you can regarding each section. Write down upon a piece of paper the various points that you notice in your examination. The following day take up the same object and re-examine it, and endeavor to discover new details regarding it. Then compare the new details with your previous list, and see how many new things you have discovered. Then repeat the process on the third day; and so on, until you find that you have discovered and noted every possible detail of the thing under consideration. Then pass on to another object, and treat it in the same way. You will be surprised at the number of little details of the things you will bring before the attention. You will find that your powers of concentration and perception will increase and develop rapidly, so much so that you will be able to perform your daily work to better advantage because of the practice and exercise. It will help you if you practice these exercises in connection with a friend maintaining a friendly rivalry and each endeavoring to excel the other in the number of details noted down.

Exercise II. This is an enlargement of the exercise just given. It is performed by examining and noting down the details of a room or building through which you have walked hastily. After noting mentally the details of the room or building, note down what you can remember, and then go back the next day and repeat the process. If you have a friend with you the mutual rivalry will aid both of you. Notice places of amusement that you visit, or in fact any and every place that you may enter into. You will be surprised at first to see how little you do remember and have noticed. But you will be equally surprised, as well as gratified, to note the steady and rapid improvement in this respect.

Exercise III. This exercise is the one which was such a favorite with Houdin, the French conjurer. It is performed by one or more persons passing leisurely before a shop window

HOW TO DEVELOP PERCEPTION

and endeavoring to note the details of the articles displayed therein. At first one will notice but very few things; but as the practice develops the perception, one will be able to perceive and remember very many articles and details by simply passing rapidly before any window. Houdin attained such perfection that he was able to pass at full speed before a large shop window and then recall nearly every article, large and small, that was visible to the sight therein.

Exercise IV. Take a number of cards, or dominoes—anything having numbers or spots upon them. Begin with two cards, or dominoes, and after taking a swift glance at them call out the numbers contained thereon. Then add another card or domino and do the same thing. Then add another, and so on until you reach your limit. Then put aside the game until the next day. Returning to it the following day, you will notice that you have attained proficiency in the interval—your subconscious mind will have been at work in the meantime. Then add another card or domino, and so on. After a few days' practice you will find that you have attained a wonderful degree of improvement in perception.

The above exercises should serve as a suggestion for a hundred variations in eye-perception. The world around you is full of objects which are worthy of being seen, but the majority of persons though having eyes, see them not. You have eyes to use—use them. Not only will you acquire much useful information, but you will also develop your perception in every-day matters, while developing this first phase of Will.

In the same manner the other senses may be exercised. Practice the art of hearing, just as you have the art of seeing. Learn to distinguish the various sounds reaching your ears. Learn to analyze, dissect and classify them. You will find that a new world will open up to you as the result of this exercise. You may also exercise the Will by determining to hear only such sounds as you may wish to hear, inhibiting or shutting out from the attention the undesirable sounds. If you would realize to

THE WILL

what a remarkable extent the hearing may be developed, think of the blind people who develop the sense of hearing to such a wonderful extent that it almost supplies the missing sense.

The sense of smell, and the sense of taste, also may be developed to a high degree by exercises modeled on those given above. It is all a matter of practice, practice, practice—exercise, exercise, exercise. The sense organs are there—the brain is there—the mind is there—all that is lacking is Use!

The sense of feeling may be developed to a remarkable degree by practice and exercise. The best way to practice the exercise for developing the sense of feeling is to place a number of objects before you, and after closing the eyes endeavor to distinguish between them solely by the sense of touch. Place before you a number of familiar objects, closely resembling each other, and then closing the eyes endeavor to distinguish each one from the others. A little practice will bring great results along these lines.

Do not allow the exercises to become monotonous. Put interest into them. Endeavor to inject the game element into them, and you will find them interesting. Exercises along these lines will become far more interesting than any game of solitaire ever invented. You will find it interesting to perform these exercises in competition With other persons. Do not tire yourself out in performing them, but instead lay them aside when the interest lags. When you return to them later, or the next day, you will find that they have a new interest for you.

The psychology of these exercises, so far as is concerned the development of the Will, lies in the fact that in the exercise of perception the faculty of attention is actively employed. Now, attention is preeminently an act of Will, and its exercise is that of the exercise of the Will. Voluntary attention is possible only to the extent that the Will has been trained for the task. Persons as a rule have very little voluntary attention, and find it most difficult to concentrate their attention upon a task for any considerable length of time. The man or woman of strong

HOW TO DEVELOP PERCEPTION

Will is able to direct or withhold the attention, as the case may be. And in this control of the attention is the control of the mind by the Will. The Will does not create thoughts, but by its control and direction of the attention it is able to determine just what objects shall be held before the conscious mind. Thus, indirectly, the Will is the master of thought. It is a task worthy of the strongest Will—this mastery and control of attention in the direction of perception. Prove it for yourself.

THE WILL

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW TO CONTROL THE EMOTIONS.

THE SECOND phase of the development of the Will is that of the mastery and control of the emotive faculties or activities of the mind. The emotive activities include all that we know as emotion, feeling, desire, etc., and as these activities are the inciters of the Will, he who masters and governs them is also master of the Will itself. In fact, as we have said in the first part of this book, these activities are often considered as phases of the Will itself.

While it is true that Will is incited to action by the emotive faculties, it is likewise true that by the Will we may master, control, direct and repress these emotive activities. To many persons—to the majority of persons, in fact—it seems ridiculous to talk of mastering feelings, emotions and desires. Such persons will admit that one may control the action resulting from desires and feelings, but that the feelings and emotions themselves are beyond control, and come and go as they will. But this is far from being correct. By the Will we may not only refuse to act upon a feeling, emotion or desire, but we may also cause these emotive activities to refrain from appearing in the field of consciousness. This may be accomplished by the control of the attention. By a firm control of the attention, one may

THE WILL

refuse to allow a feeling, desire or emotion to be recognized by the consciousness. One may refuse to allow the attention to be fastened upon an undesirable emotive state. This may be accomplished in two ways; viz., (1) By a positive refusal to allow the attention to dwell upon the feeling; or (2) By training the subconscious mind to restrain the feeling from appearing in consciousness.

In the first of these plans, one must have the Will well in hand, and able to turn the attention on and off an object, internal or external, just as he would direct and control the action of a searchlight. It is difficult to describe the exact process of so directing the attention by the Will, although every person must recognize his own ability to do it. It would be easy to describe the process by two words: Do It! The process is analogous to taking the attention from one outside object and turning it toward another. One may acquire this knack if he will practice upon himself along these lines. Take any feeling or emotion that you are experiencing this moment, and turn your attention resolutely away from it and on to something else. Concentrate on the other thing with all your Will, paying no attention to the troublesome feeling. You will find the attention inclined to be rebellious, and showing a decided tendency to fly back to the undesirable feeling, but keep your Will fixed firmly upon the task. Hold your attention upon the other thing, by the method given in our exercises on perception. Examine the other thing, in all of its phases, and before long the attention will grow interested and in a short time the objectionable feeling will have flown. The popular way of describing this process would be: Keep your mind off it. And you *can* keep your mind off it if you will. The Will is the master of the mental states, if it is only exerted in the proper manner. And Attention is the key to the process.

This process may be aided by auto-suggestion; that is, by direct and positive orders to your mind to concentrate upon the new object of thought. Mental images of the desirable

HOW TO CONTROL THE EMOTIONS

feeling or object will also help materially, for the Imagination exercises a powerful influence over the emotional faculties. Paint the proper mental pictures, and hold them before you, and you will find the work of concentrating will grow much easier by reason thereof. Also assume the physical expression of the desired state or feeling. We have explained in other volumes of this series that just as thought takes form in action, so does action react upon thought. By assuming the outward physical expression of the desired mental state, one does much to bring about a manifestation of the mental state itself. To quote the very familiar passage of Prof. William James:

“Refuse to express a passion and it dies. Count ten before venting your anger, and its occasion seems ridiculous. Whistling to keep up courage is no mere figure of speech. On the other hand sit all day in a moping posture, sigh and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers. There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know; if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the *outward movements* of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate....Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it does not gradually thaw.”

The emotive activities of the mind may also be controlled and directed by training the subconscious mind to refuse to admit undesirable emotions and feelings into the field of consciousness. By a carefully arranged system of auto-suggestion—along the lines suggested by Leland and others—the subconscious mind may be impressed with the idea that it must not admit the undesirable thoughts into consciousness. It must be impressed with the importance of inhibiting them before they reach the conscious plane of mentation. The auto-suggestion

must be directed forcibly, repeatedly and confidently, and the subconsciousness must be made to realize that it is expected to follow orders. In giving the auto-suggestion to the subconscious mind, it will be found well to address it as if it were an entity—a separate mind. Instead of using the ordinary form of auto-suggestion, along the lines of “I must not,” it will be well to address the auto-suggestion to it in the second person as: “You must not allow this feeling, thought or emotion to enter my consciousness; you must inhibit it; you must destroy and dissolve it before it reaches the conscious plane; I will not allow you to send such thoughts to my consciousness; I am master, and I give you your orders; do you hear? I *command* you to do as I say.” You will find that after a little practice along these lines the subconsciousness will begin to respond by obeying more and more faithfully your commands. The “I” is the master, if you will but assert its sovereignty. If you were the head of an enterprise you would insist upon your commands being carried out. What would you think of a head of an enterprise allowing his office-force not only to disobey him, but actually to overrule his authority and master him instead of obeying orders? The cases are identical. Your mental office-force has been allowed to run things for you too long—it is time that you were beginning to assert your authority as an executive.

Edward Carpenter says of this power to inhibit emotional states: “...We are perhaps almost equally unaccustomed to the idea of mastery over our own inner thoughts and feelings. That a man should be a prey to any thought that chances to take possession of his mind is commonly among us assumed to be unavoidable....Yet this is an absurd position—for man, the heir of all the ages, to be in; hag-ridden by the flimsy creatures of his own brain. If a pebble in our boot torments us, we expel it. We take off the boot and shake it out. And once the matter is fairly understood, it is just as easy to expel an intruding and obnoxious thought from the mind. About this there ought to be no mistake, no two opinions. The thing is obvious, clear

HOW TO CONTROL THE EMOTIONS

and unmistakable. It should be as easy to expel an obnoxious thought from your mind as it is to shake a stone out of your shoe; and till a man can do that, it is just nonsense to talk about his ascendancy over Nature, and all the rest of it. He is a mere slave, and a prey to the bat-winged phantoms that flit through the corridors of his own brain...The power of expelling thoughts, or, if need be, of killing them dead on the spot, *must* be attained. Naturally the art requires practice, but like other arts, when once acquired there is no mystery or difficulty about it. And it is worth practice."

And so say we all. Then let us get to work and manifest this power that is in us. Let us clear away these obstacles to the free operation of the Will. Let us make a good, straight, clean road over which the chariot of the Will may travel. Not until then are we worthy of the "I" within us.

THE WILL

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW TO DEVELOP THE IMAGINATION.

THOSE WHO regard Imagination as an unreal, fanciful phantom of the mind, lacking all attributes of power and actual manifestation, make a great mistake. The New Psychology teaches that the Imagination is the mould, pattern, or general working plan of the activities of the Will. Upon the character of one's mental images depends the character of his actions. It is an axiom of the New Psychology that "Thought takes form in Action," and in this statement is included the idea that mental images tend to reproduce themselves in material manifestation—that the ideal tends to become real. Every great creative work of man had its precedent existence in the imagination of its maker. Every bridge, house, railroad, painting, statue, poem, book, or battle existed first as a mental image in the mind of its projector. In a general sense, it may also be stated that every action of man has its precedent mental image. Even if the action be in response to some inherited reflex stimulus, nevertheless the precedent mental image must have existed in the mind of some ancestor. If we indulge in day dreams of certain actions, even though the action does not immediately follow the thought, still it is true that if occasion ever presents itself in which we are placed in a position in which we must

choose between two courses of action, we will then be very apt to choose that upon which the mind previously dwelt. These mental images make mental paths akin to those of habit, over which the Will travels in its effort to manifest and express itself. These mental images become our ideals which are constantly striving to manifest themselves as realities. This being so, it behooves us to cultivate the desirable mental images, and to restrain and inhibit the undesirable ones.

The Imagination, however, is dependent for its material upon the perceptive faculties, and it is under the law of the attention in so far as it may be encouraged or restrained by the direction or withdrawal of the attention. We can imagine only by using the materials received through the perceptive faculties. We have no other materials with which to work with the imagination. We may separate parts of objects previously perceived; for instance, we may form a mental image of a human head, or hand, separated from the rest of the body; or of a leaf separated from the rest of the tree. But unless we have perceived *some* head or leaf we cannot imagine any head or leaf. Or, we may make combinations of the parts of various things we have previously perceived; for instance, the centaur with the body of a horse and the trunk and head of a man; or a sphinx with the body of an animal and the head of a woman; or an unseen human face, combining the features of other faces. But the perceptive faculties must furnish us with the raw materials. The imagination may enlarge or diminish objects previously perceived. Or it may select from perceived objects, and then alter or construct new combinations of them—this is the inventive phase of the imagination.

And as we have said, the imagination may be encouraged or restrained by the direction or withdrawal of the attention. One may excite or encourage the imagination by placing the attention upon subjects or objects of the same general character as the mental images sought to be produced. As Moore said of Byron: "It was his practice, when engaged in the composition

of any work, to excite his vein by the perusal of others on the same subject or plan, from which the slightest hint caught by his imagination, as he read, was sufficient to kindle there such a train of thought as, but for that spark, had never been awakened." It is true, however, that one can never direct the attention to a mental image without at least the suggestion of that image had already entered the imagination or memory. As Upham says: "Whenever a person wills, or rather, professes to will to imagine, he has in fact already imagined; and consequently, there can be no such thing as imaginations which are exclusively the result of a direct act of the Will." But that the use of the imagination plays an important part in all acts of the Will, there can be no doubt. As Prof. William James says: "It may be said in general, that a great part of every deliberation consists in the turning over of all the possible modes of conceiving the doing or not doing the act in point."

Halleck says: "It was once thought that the imagination should be repressed, not cultivated, that it was in the human mind like weeds in a garden. We have already learned enough to know that the reverse is the truth. In this age there is no mental power that stands more in need of cultivation than the imagination. So practical are its results that a man without it cannot possibly be a good plumber. He must image short cuts for placing his pipe. The image of the direction to take to elude an obstacle must precede the actual laying of the pipe. If he fixes it before traversing the way with his imagination, he frequently gets into trouble and has to tear down his work. Someone has said that the more imagination a blacksmith has, the better will he shoe a horse. Every time he strikes the red-hot iron, he makes it approximate to the image in his mind. Nor is this image a literal copy of the horse's foot. If there is a depression in that, the imagination must build out a corresponding elevation in the image, and the blows will make the iron fit the image."

There are two general lines of training and developing the imagination as an adjunct of the Will—as an aid to powerful

THE WILL

Will action. These two lines may be stated as follows: (1) The deliberate choosing of appropriate subjects for the imagination; that is, subjects calculated to encourage the imagination to create similar images along the lines of association. This also includes the use of the Will in keeping the attention directed toward such subjects and objects, and away from objects and subjects of an opposite nature; (2) The training of the imagination to form clear-cut and distinct images of the things that we wish to do or obtain, for upon the clearness of our mental images depends the directness and effectiveness of the resultant action.

Considering the first of the foregoing lines of training the imagination, we would say that the subjects of association and suggestion are involved therein. The tendency of the mind to travel along the lines of association is well known, and forms an important part of the subject of memory training. Its influence in the case of the imagination is no less important. By selecting subjects and objects for thought, consideration and imagination, along the lines of the things upon which we wish to employ the Will, we give the benefit of the associative influence to the imagination. By dwelling upon things of courage, bravery, fearlessness and similar traits, the imagination acquires a tendency to create images of the same kind, which in turn give a direction to the whole mind, and make it easier for the Will to travel along the same path. The reverse is true, for if we allow the mind to dwell upon negative and undesirable objects and subjects we lend their associative influence to the imagination which then creates similar mental pictures, and which in turn tends to make a mental path for the Will in the same direction. In the same way, and from the same causes, we have the effect of the suggestive influence of objects and subjects. Association and suggestion are twins of the mind. Not only should we take advantage of them, but we should also use the Will to keep the attention on the proper kind of things, and to ignore or shut out subjects and objects of a negative or undesirable nature.

HOW TO DEVELOP THE IMAGINATION

The imagination takes its color from its environment—but *the selective power of the attention enables each one to choose and determine his own mental environment*. For in the end, the Will is supreme, through its instrument of attention.

The second of the above mentioned lines operates in the direction of the creation of clear and distinct mental images, which tend toward effective and direct Will action. This upon the idea that *if we see clearly what we want, we are enabled to act effectively and directly*. This being so, we may see why we should cultivate the art of using the imagination in the direction of creating mental images of the clearest possible type. Think of the things that you wish to do or become, and endeavor to see them as already existent in their smallest detail, so that you will become thoroughly familiar with every aspect of the ideal. By so doing you will set for yourself a pattern, or create a mould, after which your life will shape itself. You will thus create well-beaten mental paths along which your Will will travel in its search for expression. We are continually building mental paths, consciously or unconsciously, and over which paths our Will will travel, or at least will try to travel. According to the character and direction of the path, so will be the progress and direction of our life activities. This is an important thing which should be carefully considered by every person who reads these lines.

Halleck well expresses this idea when he says:

“The young take no more important step than when they frame an ideal which they will ever strive to attain. The first step consists in studying the lives of illustrious men, to ascertain what constitutes a noble and glorious life, to see how obstacles are surmounted, how eminence is gained. The next step is to select the most worthy attributes and to embody them in an ideal which is peculiarly fitted to the constructor. Each one may thus construct for himself a life chart as an ideal. Something may be learned from the life of every great man. Thus, an ideal may embody the energy of a Napoleon; the integrity and

THE WILL

patriotism of a Washington; the iron will of a Cromwell; the sympathy with humanity of a Howard, a Clarkson, or of a greater one; the ambition of a Newton or a Franklin to discover new laws; the inventive genius of a Watts, a Morse, or an Edison; the determination of a blind Milton to leave behind something worthy of himself, which posterity would not willingly let die. The youth who has not had his imagination fired by great deeds will not amount to much. Each must fashion for himself an ideal which he is determined to attain. Emerson's expression, 'Hitch your wagon to a star,' meant simply this. The imagination of the youthful Napoleon was animated by reading the deeds of great generals, and he early formed the ideal of doing more in the military field than had ever before been accomplished."

But, in conclusion, we must caution the reader against the too common fault of idle day-dreaming—this incomplete phase of the imagination. One may find his imagining so delightful that he will refuse to stir himself out into the world of action. Content with his lotus-eater dream of great things, he lets his soul dream on and on—but never *does* anything in the direction of manifesting the dream into action. Content with the fascinating work of mental pattern-making, he fails to make real things from the patterns—infatuated with making mental moulds, he fails to pour the molten Will into them and thus create real objects. Dreams must be made real, in order to be of any value. Patterns must be used to shape things to be cut from the material of real life. Mental moulds must be used to pour molten stuff into, and to take moulded stuff out of. Many persons live in the world of dreams—in their *hasheesh* inspired slumber they see beautiful things; think beautiful thoughts—but that is all there is to it. This is but mental or spiritual intoxication. Their talk is but the babblings of the mental drug of which they have partaken. One may fix his eyes on the stars—and allow his feet to stumble and carry him into the ditch. Be dreamers—but act out your dreams. Be planners but carry out your plans. Do not go through life wearing the

HOW TO DEVELOP THE IMAGINATION

vacuous, ecstatic smile of the mere dreamer of dreams, living in the fool's paradise of an unrealized ideal. Listen to the voice of the practical world around you which shouts in your ear "Wake up, man—wake up! You're still here on Earth! Wake up and get to work!"

THE WILL

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW TO DEVELOP DECISION.

THE PHASE of Decision is a most important stage or phase of the operation of the Will. This phase manifests in the weighing, judging and deciding upon a course of action, or manifestation of volition. In its field lies the striking of the balance between conflicting desires, feelings and emotions—between the conflicting mental images—between the several motives which present themselves and urge their claims upon the Will. In the lower animals, and indeed among the lower stages of human life there is very little deliberation, weighing, or judging. The strongest immediate desire or inclination wins the day, without regard to the future and without regard to the possibilities of the advantage of sacrificing the immediate desire for a greater one more remote. But as man advances and intellect begins to manifest itself, the matter of choice and decision becomes more complicated and the process more complex. The more one knows and has seen, the greater is his field of possible choice, and the greater degree of balancing and of judgment is required and exercised by him.

To choose intelligently, one must needs exercise the intellect. One must *think*. But thinking is not such an easy matter as it might seem at first consideration. People, as a rule, do not like to

think in earnest. They are mentally lazy. They prefer to let other people think and decide for them. They accept the opinions and decisions of others, and imagine that they themselves, are thinking. They only *think* that they think. To think properly requires the exercise of the attention under the direction of the Will. As a writer in a philosophical magazine once said: "Something more reliable than a mere impulse is needed to make a strong mind. Back of all must stand a strong Will, with the ability and disposition to use it. M. Marcel well says: 'The great secret of education lies in exciting and directing the Will.' Nothing takes its place until we discover that attention is under the control of the Will, and until, by perseverance, we acquire the power of thus controlling it."

One of the essential features of decision and judgment is what is called *deliberation*. Careful deliberation is necessary for the exercise of correct judgment. One must learn to marshal and array the opposing arguments for and against a course of action, and then to weigh them carefully as he would were he trying a case in court. Very few of us exercise the same amount and degree of deliberation in our own actions, that we do when we carefully consider a similar case in the life of a friend or relative who has consulted us for advice. In the latter case we think of all the arguments for and against; the possible consequences of the action; and a thousand-and-one other things; and then formulate a decision. But in our own case we do not take this trouble. We are very apt to be moved almost entirely by our own feelings, desires and emotions, rather than by our judgment. We are in the habit of *inventing reasons* for our actions, *after we have decided to act*. In other words, we use our reason to excuse and justify our actions, rather than to lead and guide them. Many persons rush into action either from their own desires, or from the suggestions of others, and then hatch out a goodly array of reasons for the action or decision, none of which reasons ever entered their minds *before* the decision or action.

HOW TO DEVELOP DECISION

Halleck says: "A habit of deliberation in cases of violent emotion is a difficult one to form. When one feels strongly, the motor idea is often followed immediately by motor action. A fit of anger has escaped us before we were aware. We have said something that we shall regret all our lives before we could seem to apply the brakes to speech. The only safeguard against these sudden motor outbreaks is to be continually on the lookout for the provoking causes, and to have the brakes of repression half applied before the cause is operative. The habit of being watchful and of applying motor inhibition will soon begin to form, and the task will grow constantly easier. In other cases, where the emotion is of slower growth, the attention must be drawn away from the emotion-provoking idea before it grows too strong. The truth is important, that one must learn to *think* in order to cultivate Will-Power correctly. Man has improved faster than the beasts, because his voluntary acts have been guided by progressive thought toward higher ends."

The first requisite for intelligent decision is found in the faculty of perception. In a previous chapter we have called your attention to the fact that one must have some material upon which to work before he will be able to think intelligently. Therefore one should develop his perceptive faculties that he may store up a collection of perceptions in his memory which will serve as the data of experience upon which to base future decisions. One must take notice as he goes through life, in order to acquire a set of impressions which will be of service to him. One-tenth of the time and attention that people bestow upon idle and silly works of fiction, would bring them rich harvests of impressions if devoted to intelligent observation of the world around them; the habits and actions of real men and women; and the facts of science and industry contained in text-books on the subjects. Much of the trashy, so-called literature of the day not only fails to teach true lessons of life, but what is even still worse, it teaches totally false ideas of life and action. The stage is open to the same criticism. The man or woman who

bases his or her ideas of life upon the sayings and doings of the characters in trashy novels and sensational plays is ill prepared for the real work of life. "The proper study of mankind is Man," has been truly said. "Man, know thyself" another has said. Look around you upon the living, acting, willing world of action, and gain your experience from what you see and hear. Read good books by all means, but avoid the trashy one as you would a pestilence. Good standard works of fiction add to one's store of experience, but the light, frothy, silly, sentimental stories which are so popular, serve only to sink one deeper in the rut of intellectual torpor, and to make it even more difficult to actually *think* and decide from the reason.

Ask yourselves questions about things you see and hear. Ask the never ending "Why?" This one word, if applied at the right time and place will serve to save one from many follies. Why—that is the great question, after all. It is the question of the child, which brings him his store of knowledge. If the grown-ups would persist in its use they would continue to absorb knowledge all their lives. How? Whence? Whither? these also are good questions to apply to things. Apply this set of questions to objects and subjects which may come before you for attention:

1. What is it?
2. Whence comes it?
3. What is its use and its purpose? What is it good for?
4. What are its associations? What is like it? What different from it? In what way is it better than similar or opposing things?
5. Where is it going? What will be its end? What consequences will arise from it? Where will it lead me to?

These are merely hints intended to establish habits of inquiry and analysis on your part. Do not be satisfied with the mere say-so of others. Manifest the Missouri instinct, and demand to "be shown." Use your own thinking apparatus. Make up your own mind, after hearing all that others have to say. Listen to others—and *then do as seems best to you*. Do the thing that

HOW TO DEVELOP DECISION

seems best at that particular time and place, and under the particular circumstances—no one can do more. “Look before you leap”—but when you leap throw your entire Will into the leap, and forget what lies behind you. “Be sure you’re right, then go ahead.”—But when you go ahead, *go ahead!* Do all your worrying before action—when you act, Act! The time for decision is before the act—when you get into the fight, Fight! Put your hand to the plow, and look not backward. Look forward, not backward; look upward, not downward, look outward, not inward—and put on a full head of the Steam of Will.

THE WILL

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW TO DEVELOP VOLITION.

THE PHASE of Volition is the final and conclusive stage of the manifestation of Will. It is the actual action of the Will—the pulling of the trigger of action—the releasing of the spring of outward manifestation of the Will. Volition blends so closely into the actual action that it is difficult to distinguish between them. One may *desire* to act, and yet may not act; even *decide* to act, and yet may not act; but one cannot *will the act* (in this final stage) and yet refrain from action, unless outside forces prevent the action. Volition is concerned with action, and is known only through action. In the same way it may be developed and exercised only through actual action and performance of some kind.

In the training of the Will, or the development of Will Power, one of the first things that the student should learn is that he should acquire the art of rising above the ordinary emotive plane and then “act from the head.” That is, he should acquire the art of setting aside the emotions, feelings and ordinary desires, and thus concentrate his attention upon the intellectual part of his nature, to the end that he may finally “will to will” from his reason rather than from his emotions and feelings. This is the distinguishing mark between the man of the trained

THE WILL

Will and the ordinary man of feeling and desire. The latter is moved to action by his feelings, emotions and desires, solely, his judgment playing but a small part in the manifestation. On the contrary, the man who wills from reason, steps aside from the emotional part of his nature as one would from an overcoat, and then reasons out the “to act or not to act,” and the why and wherefore of the matter from the standpoint of cold, steely reason—and *then* Will. Such a man *creates desire* which moves the Will, for he acquires the art of converting reason into desire—a feat possible only to one of advanced intellect and trained Will.

A consideration of this truth brings us to a realization of the fact that this inhibition of desire and emotion forms one of the highest and most effective manifestations and employments of the Will. This setting aside of the ordinary channels of the Will, in favor of those deliberately and rationally chosen; is the mark of the advanced man. Ordinary individuals do not possess this power, but yield to their desires and emotions, to a greater or lesser degree, and then invent reasons for the action, as we have said elsewhere. The developed man, however, creates his reasons *first* and then acts accordingly. It must not be supposed for a moment, though, that the desire and emotional part of one’s nature surrenders without a struggle. On the contrary, these mental states struggle hard for precedence and place, and although seemingly defeated, they return again and again to the charge. The most effective method of combatting them is through the exercise of habit—the cultivation of the habit of acting as the reason dictates, rather than according to the ordinary desires and feelings.

One of the best and quickest ways of establishing the habit of the control by the reason, is that of overriding the desires by performing actions repugnant and disagreeable to them—solely for the sake of exercise and training. Many eminent psychologists have agreed upon this point. Prof. William James repeatedly advises his students to acquire the ability to

HOW TO DEVELOP VOLITION

perform actions solely because they would “rather not,” for by so doing they will develop the muscles of the Will. He suggests that they should make a practice of this, not because of any special merit in the actions themselves, but because thereby one acquires the difficult art of being able to do things that his feeling phase of mentality “doesn’t want to do.” He suggests that such things as getting up and surrendering one’s seat in a street car is good practice, also speaking pleasantly when one feels otherwise. In short, any and everything that requires a decided effort of the Will in opposing the feelings and desires. Prof. James compares this practice to the placing of insurance upon one’s property—providing for a time when reserve force is needed. Another writer mentions the case of a man who had declared his aversion to the dry facts of political economy, and who was discovered by a friend to be poring over a volume of John Stuart Mill. His friend seeming surprised, the man said: “*I am reading this because I dislike it.*” That man had discovered the secret of developing his Will.

Halleck says: “Nothing schools the will, and renders it ready for effort in this complex world, better than accustoming it to face disagreeable things....A will schooled in this way is always ready to respond, no matter how great the emergency. While another would be still crying over spilled milk, the possessor of such a will has already begun to milk another cow....The only way to secure such a will is to practice doing disagreeable things. There are daily opportunities....On the other hand, the one who habitually avoids disagreeable action is training his will to be of no use to him at a time when supreme effort is demanded. Such a will can never elbow its way to the front in life....When Napoleon found the Alps in his way, he scaled them while another general would have been lamenting the obstruction. No general ever had a more energetic and better trained will. He had it under such control that he could enter on a line of disagreeable effort, involving great hardships, with no seeming struggle. Quick and severe effort is never easy

THE WILL

for anyone. Few have the will to undertake it, but Napoleon moved with such energy that he never failed to carry the war into the enemy's country...All other world-famous men have been the possessors of wills that acted in the line of the greatest resistance, with such seeming ease as if the action were agreeable." The last quoted authority in speaking of "the line of greatest resistance" uses the term in its application to the ordinary man. Napoleon, however, had so mastered the feeling side of himself that the doing of necessary disagreeable things was not the line of the greatest resistance, but was along the lines of the *least resistance*—for habit and practice had worn away the original resistance, and the doing of the necessary thing, however disagreeable, was *habitual*.

Another method of training the Will along similar lines is the practice of doing things *now*, instead of putting them off. This is often a most disagreeable task, for the mind seemingly prefers to procrastinate and defer the doing of uninteresting or disagreeable tasks. It requires real Will to force oneself to Do It Now in many cases. Training along these lines will result in developing the capacity for immediate and decisive action in critical moments. The exercise of voluntary attention upon dry or uninteresting objects, as a matter of pure will-training, is also useful. Anyone can devote attention to an interesting thing, but it takes a strong will to place and hold the attention upon an uninteresting one. Voluntary attention is a far more rare faculty than people think. There are but few people who can deliberately fasten the attention upon some dry subject, and then hold it there by force of Will. And yet such a quality is a requisite for the man who would "do things" in the world. The men who step out of the ranks and move a pace ahead, are generally those who have acquired this faculty, and who do the disagreeable and uninteresting things, while the majority of the race are amusing themselves with their interesting toys.

One may render easier the doing of the tasks set for him by his reason by using the imagination in the direction of setting up

HOW TO DEVELOP VOLITION

mental images of the accomplishment of great things by reason of the development of the Will along these lines. In this way a new and strong set of desires and emotions are set up, which supplant the old ones, and which operate in the direction of furnishing a new and powerful motive force toward drawing out the activities of the Will. The greatest desire will override the weaker ones, and as desire may be built up by the use of the attention and the imagination, it may be seen that one has the matter in his own hands—providing he will make the effort in earnest. And the force of habit may also be turned to the best account, by converting the “lines of greatest resistance” into those of the “least resistance,” simply by habituating the mind to the performance of the disagreeable and uninteresting tasks.

As for the exercise of Will Power upon things and persons outside of oneself, we would say that the old adage, which tells us that a man must conquer himself before he can hope to conquer the world, is in full operation and effect to-day as it was centuries ago. The man who has failed to master himself cannot hope to exert a strong and lasting effect upon others. If you will consider the lives of the great men of history of all times, you will find that in nearly every case the individual has risen above the usual plane of control by desire and feelings on to the plane of the “will to will” of the reason. The very fact that one has been able to accomplish the control of the self by the Self, is sufficient proof that he has developed a degree of Will Power which if turned outward would accomplish a like miracle.

If you acquire a strong Will by arousing it in the direction of self-control and self-development, the rest is a mere matter of turning the power outward as well as inward. In conquering the elements of your own nature you are conquering mental states just as strong and obstinate as those in other people. Think over this a moment. The average person is not a “will to will” individual, but one moved by his impulses, desires and feelings. And just as you mastered your own desire-self so, may you

THE WILL

master the desire-self of others if you exert the same power and persistency. As for the obstacles of life, you will find few harder to overcome or get around than have been the rebellious faculties of your own mind. You will find it largely a matter of determination, doggedness, persistency and singleness of purpose.

It is very difficult indeed to explain the principle of the development and training of the Volition. It is so much a matter of the peculiarities of each particular case, that generalities seem to fall short of filling the requirements. But this following rule will apply to all cases and is one that you should impress firmly upon your mind, for it contains the seed-thought of the whole idea. It is this:

LIVE IN YOUR HEAD! Do not allow the mind in the various parts of the body, or in the entire body, to run away with the mind in your brain. You, the "I," are the charioteer. Keep your horses under perfect control, and do not allow them to run away with you. Make your decisions from the inner chamber of your mind, without regard to the cries and demands of the lower and outer planes of your being. Retire to the council chamber of your Self in making your decisions, shutting the door against all comers. Dwell for the time being in the region of PURE WILL, and then come forth with mind made up, and decision firmly fixed. *And, always act according to your decision so made.* Do not allow yourself to be side-tracked. See your goal and move straight toward it. Act not because you "feel like it"—but because your Reason tells you that you SHOULD! Let the Should with you always merge into the MUST.

The above is no easy task—it is not for the weaklings of the race, but for the Strong Ones. To which class do you belong? To which class do you intend to belong in the future? What are you going to do about it? The choice is yours. As you answer, so shall you be. The Will is there awaiting your demand. Take it or leave it!

HOW TO DEVELOP VOLITION

“Tender handed grasp a nettle,
And it stings you for your pains.
Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as down remains.”

THE WILL

CHAPTER XX.

THE MARKS OF THE NEGATIVE WILL.

BY WAY of contrast and warning, we now call your attention to the characteristics of those possessing negative Will Power—that is those who lack positivity in Will.

Lack of Perception. This is one of the marks of the negative will. The person fails to see and know what is going on about him, and in the world. He lacks an awareness of things, and consequently his world is narrowed and petty. This being so, he fails to *see* things which would arouse his ambition and laudable desires, which in turn would lead to the activities of will. Lack of perception is practically akin to lack of the senses. Without the use of the perceptive faculties man lives a vegetative life. He does not know the world around him at all. He does not know things, people, occurrences, and all that go to make up an active life. Not seeing, he cannot think. Not seeing, he cannot use his imagination properly. Not seeing, his desires are simply the inherited desires of the race. Not desiring, he cannot Will. The world is filled with these human-vegetables,—cabbages in human form.

Lack of Aspiration. This is another mark of the negative will. The person fails to manifest the emotive activities which urge him upward and onward. His desires and emotions are all concerned

THE WILL

with the animal feelings and impulses. He is bovine—a cow-like creature in human form. Chewing the cud contemplatively, he dreams of—nothing at all. Such people cannot be said to *live* at all, in the true sense of the term. They are perfectly satisfied with their condition, and they neither desire nor deserve pity. Their content is not the result of philosophical thought; the weighing of advantages and disadvantages; the declining to pay the price—but from the inertia of the dull, inactive creatures, reproduced in human form.

Lack of Imagination. This is another mark of the negative will. The person lacks the creative mental faculty. He is not able to look ahead and see things as they might be made to be. He is unable to picture improved methods, and increased power. He cannot see further ahead than the end of his nose—and doesn't want to do so. He sees what is going on in front of him, but he cannot see the next step until it is manifested. He cannot make a mental image of that which he wishes to be, and wants to be—and therefore cannot Will it to be. He is not necessarily contented—but his is the discontent of vague unrest and uncertain discomfort. He is not able to picture himself as doing better; being better, or having a better environment. He is a human clam. No doubt the clam is spared much discomfort by reason of its lack of imagination—but who wants to be a clam? Who, indeed, excepting the clam.

Lack of Decision. This is another mark of the negative will. The person is unable to make up his mind. He may have desires, aspiration and imagination, but he cannot make up his mind what he wants to do, and whether he should do it even if he wants to. He is like the donkey which the philosophers held would starve to death between two equally attractive hay stacks, because he couldn't make up his mind which one he liked the better. Conflicting emotions, desires and feelings disturb such a person and he is like a human tennis-ball that is batted to and fro between the opposing motives. He is always in a state of the lover who cried, "How happy I'd be with

THE MARKS OF THE NEGATIVE WILL

either, were t'other fair charmer away." He wants his cake and the penny too. He is governed by impulses—and the impulses are—continually changing, so that he never knows "where he is at." He is a human automaton—driftwood on the sea of life. He avoids deciding as long as he can—and then gets some one else to decide for him. "The irresolute man is lifted from one place to another; so hatcheth nothing, but addles all his actions."

"For indecision brings its own delays,
And days are lost lamenting o'er lost days.
Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute.
What you can do, or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.
Only engage, and then the mind grows heated—
Begin, and then the work will be completed."

Lack of Volition. This is another mark of the negative will. The person wants to act, and is ready to act—but he never "wills to will." This is a most perplexing mental phenomenon, and one most difficult to explain or understand. Many very intelligent persons have this weakness, and it is essentially the mark of the negative will. Procrastination is one of its characteristic marks. "Do It Now" is a rule of action much needed by this class of people. De Quincy once said: "I seldom can prevail upon myself to write a letter; an answer of a few words, to say that I received, was the utmost that I could accomplish; and often that not until the letter had lain weeks, or even months on my writing-table." A writer on psychology comments as follows on the character of Coleridge: "There was probably no man of his time, or perhaps of any time, who surpassed Coleridge in the combination of the reasoning powers of the Philosopher with the imagination of the Poet and the inspiration of the Seer; and there was perhaps not one of the past generation who has left so strong an impress of himself in the subsequent course of reflective minds engaged in the highest subjects of human

THE WILL

contemplation. And yet there was probably never a man endowed with such remarkable gifts who accomplished so little that was worthy of them—the great defect in his character being the want of Will to turn his gifts to account; so that, with numerous gigantic projects constantly floating in the mind, he never brought himself even seriously to attempt to execute any one of them. It used to be said of him, that whenever either natural obligation or voluntary undertaking made it his duty to do anything, the fact seemed a sufficient reason for his not doing it.” Halleck has said: “The easiest way to ruin the will is to suffer emotions to evaporate without leading to action; to frame decisions and then not act on them. The will and the character are very speedily ruined in this way. From a moral point of view, those persons are exceedingly contemptible who are always ‘going to do’ something, but who never do it; so are those ‘who will with reasons answer you’ in regard to why they have done nothing. A remarkably successful business man said he had divided all persons into two classes: those who did what they had promised or were directed to do, and those who returned with some reason why they had not done it. When he employed persons, he always set them a certain hard task at the outset. If they returned with a reason why they had not done it, he dismissed them. In this way he surrounded himself with an unusually fine set of employees upon whom he could depend.”

Lack of Continuity. This is another mark of the negative Will. The person may be well endowed with other mental qualities, but without this stick-to-itiveness he will never be able to work his Will to the fullest degree. The quality of instability—fickleness—inconstancy—has ruined more bright men than perhaps any other negative quality. It causes the person to dissipate his energy in many directions, instead of concentrating it upon the chosen task. Concentration is power. Concentration is focused Will. Continuity is the holding of the keen edge of the Will up against the one object to be shaped.

THE MARKS OF THE NEGATIVE WILL

Lack of continuity is dissipation of energy. True Will includes the quality of dogged, persistent, determined Application. This may not constitute Genius—but it is a very good substitute for it, and accomplishes far more in the end. It may not be the Artistic Temperament—but it “makes good.” It is the quality that one can count on, and figure down to the last fraction of certainty. Beware of the Lack of Continuity. It is the rotten speck on many a peach.

Lack of Perseverance. This is another mark of the negative Will. To some it may seem synonymous with the quality of Lack of Continuity, just considered. But it is far different. Lack of continuity arises from the desire for change—that is, the desire to transfer the Will to some other thing, task, or object. Lack of perseverance, on the contrary, consists of a desire to relax and give up—the interest gets tired and the Will is not exerted to brace it up and hold it to the task until the end. It implies a lack of determination and persistence, rather than a fickle, changeable character. It denotes the lack of staying power. Lack of continuity arises largely from temperament, while lack of perseverance arises from lack of intelligent exercise of the Will. Consequently while the cure of the former negative quality necessitates a complete change of temperament, the cure of the latter simply needs exercise, practice and patient work.

Fear. This is the most negative of all the mental qualities, and is at the extreme negative pole of Will. Under the influence of extreme Fear, the Will becomes as if paralyzed—the Will becomes “non-will,” if the term may be used. Fear in its sense of *aversion*, is described as the negative pole of desire, and in the same way fear, in its effect upon volition, may be described as the negative pole of the “will to Will.” Fear is the great restrainer of Will Action, and its presence in a developed state in the mind of a person tends to inhibit many of his expressions of Will. The majority of things that we fear have no basis in fact or reason—our fears are largely inheritances and temperamental in character. This mental attitude may

THE WILL

be overcome by resolute determination, accompanied by the appropriate auto-suggestions and use of the imagination. Fear may be considered as a baleful *habit*, which like all habits may be overcome by developing the opposite qualities—by cultivating the habit of courage. There are really but few things to fear in life—that is, outside of the things actually produced by fear. As the saying goes: “There is nothing to fear, but Fear.” The development of the Will along its various lines has a tendency to counteract the effects of Fear, by imparting a new sense of inward power and confidence. The recognition of the presence of the Will gives to the individual a certain inner sense of security, strength and power, difficult to describe but easily recognized by those who have experienced it.

In conclusion, we would say that the best way to counteract and destroy the negative qualities is to develop the positive ones. This is the fixed rule in the New Psychology—counteract and destroy the negatives by fixing the attention upon and developing the positives. Always strive to develop the opposite of the thing of which you wish to be rid. Destroy Fear by developing Confidence and Courage. Develop Perseverance and destroy its opposite. In short, you may convert this chapter on the negative qualities into a lesson on the positive qualities by reversing the process. Instead of dwelling on the negative qualities—the *minus* items of Will, dwell upon the positive qualities—the *plus* items of Will. Read over this list of the negative qualities, and then concentrate on their opposites. Make the proper mental image of them; create an ardent desire to develop them; use auto-suggestion toward that end; determinedly *will* that you shall acquire them—then start to work to manifest them in actual practice, until you acquire the habit of manifesting them. Make them a part of yourself, and they will blend into your character and become a part of the machinery of your Will.

“The more difficulties one has to encounter, within and without, the more significant and the higher in inspiration his life will be.”

FINIS.

THE WILL

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Atkinson, William Walker. *The Will: Its Nature, Power and Development*.
Chicago, IL: The Progress Company, 1909.