

INTRODUCTION

by

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EVEN if I did not know, from my friendship with him, that William J. Macmillan possesses an original mind and an unusual outlook on life I would have found it out from reading only a few pages of this manuscript. This possession shows itself throughout the book, makes its reading exceptionally interesting and exceedingly profitable.

Too many writers, depending on the intellect's resources alone, rehash other men's work and really make no fresh contribution themselves. Macmillan belongs to quite a different class. He has intellect, he has emotion, he has practicality, but he has also something immeasurably superior to them all—intuition.

Many are the questions which arise in this complex age but the most significant, the most important question of all, lies buried and ignored underneath the others: "What is the higher purpose of human life?" This in turn suggests its corollaries: "Is there a God higher than the one which earth offers us? If so, of what kind is it? What is the way unto it?" The answer to these queries can be got only by the use of intuition. They indicate that every man is called to a life higher than that of the senses, the flesh and even the intellect.

The devotional impulse, the religious emotion, the mystic intuition, the sense of veneration, the desire to worship—these feelings may be covered up, perverted or materialised,

but they belong inalienably to man. They are his instinctive and half-conscious response to the call of his divine self. And because the self is immortal, the call will likewise be incessant. He has to find the *I* behind the *me*, the truth of himself, the truth hidden under a covering of materialistic beliefs, selfish attitudes, emotional turmoil and animalistic thought.

So long as man separates himself in consciousness from his true inner being and thus remains cut off from personal knowledge of his relation to the Infinite Being, so long must he accept unhappiness, doubt, weakness, ignorance and materialism and be tormented by unsatisfiable restlessness, frustrated desires, insatiable passions and endless longings. Only in his return to a recognition of the true source of his being, is there any real hope for his future. He may continue evading the spiritual issues with which thought and experience confront him but he cannot evade them indefinitely, for the hidden purpose of every human entity's life is to reach the state where it becomes conscious of its relationship to the divine life.

It was inevitable that the experiences and environments in which they found themselves, caused the previous generations to doubt the truth of their religion and to question the value of its ethics. Quite within this century it was no longer the fashion to appreciate holiness in a man's life. Smart young men glibly quoted their Lenin and dismissed religion as "an opiate," or smoothly mentioned their Freud and despised it as "a neurotic illusion." Scientific thought had corroded their religious belief.

The religious instinct cannot be extirpated but it can be dulled, narcotised or paralysed. It is not religion that has failed mankind but corrupt and decayed forms of religion. What can and ought to be extirpated is religious fanaticism, religious superstition and religious hypocrisy, along with the

spiritual inertia and lethargy which makes such religious imposture live, thrive and survive for centuries, while blocking the influence of contemporary men inspired in mind but unknown in name. The appearance of a worldly organisation in religion is sooner or later followed by its infection with worldly selfishness. Success is a religion's direct road to sin.

We can understand a religion aright only after we separate its inner spirit from its outer letter, its original impulse from its historical conduct. The true church of every spiritual prophet is and ever has been an interior one. It dwells on earth only to the extent that it dwells in the hearts of men. But unfortunately, popular ignorance and official selfishness always succeed in diverting mankind from looking inward and beguile them into the belief that salvation can be achieved only through outward means, processes, institutions and persons.

The few fundamental truths of religion—that a higher power exists, that man's duty and privilege is to adore and commune with it and that good conduct brings pleasurable effects and evil conduct painful ones—are separate from, and should not be confused with, the social history of religion. For individual men and powerful institutions have often made use of it to serve their own selfish ends. But nothing they have done has destroyed the validity of those truths. Let us not mistake mere sentimentality for the deep spirit of religion nor tribal anecdotes for the glorious promptings of religion, as we endeavour to get at the truth about religion. It is quite insufficient to consider it only in decay and corruption. We must also consider its early purity and original concepts. It is quite unfair to examine only the superstitions that degrade it. We must also examine the truths that inspire it.

There can be no creed that is new in essentials. The old wisdom is indestructible and those who created the Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim religions acted out of the

deepest wisdom. But a re-statement of their truths in more familiar terms is desirable. No matter how long a time we spend fumbling through the ancient texts, the palmleaf manuscripts and the medieval parchments, we will not find truths beyond these: God exists, the holy spirit of man *is*, wrong-doing brings punishment and righteousness attracts rewards.

God is. There are plenty of evidences to show that an organising and directing intelligence is behind life and the Universe. This, of course, is not to say that the God of the creeds, a benevolent or punitive deity, is the same. The blood-thirsty God who demands human sacrifice is entirely a God produced by man's own imagination. It is not a reality. Yet how many unfortunate living creatures have been made the suffering scapegoats of this terrible superstition! This worship of unknown Deity may stretch all the way from the casting of human sacrifice before a baleful effigy to the admirable groping for inner peace of a Quaker maiden in a tranquil meeting-house.

A word like God throws an amazing glamour over people while the different conceptions of God contradict each other so hopelessly that nobody can be satisfied. Is God, then, merely an abstract noun, and Truth but a hollow word?

God is no figment; prayer is no soliloquy and grace is no dream.

It also needs to be emphasised that although religious teaching contains truth, it does not contain the whole truth. What it lacks can be found only in mysticism and philosophy. The seeker who needs more than it can offer must depart in search of further truth along the road pioneered for him by the great mystics and the great philosophers of the past. "The kingdom of heaven is within you." Until these words of Jesus have burnt their meaning into his mind, he will not

really be seeking aright. Intuitive moments of real uplift, of authentic exaltation, may come to him. These occasional gleams prove to him that there is a real light, encourage him to seek its abiding presence and indicate the direction where it lies—within himself.

There is within the mind an answering power which knows with correctness what we know vaguely or uncertainly or else do not know at all. It is intuition. We cannot know that it is there, however, except at the moment when it is actually active in us. It is always there but we have to open ourselves to its presence if we would profit by it.

Intuition manifests itself spontaneously but not always compellingly. Therefore it has to be recognised for what it is. If we fail to do this, we do not receive the flash of truth which it brings with it.

A new conception of the human personality is needed in the thought and outlook of our time. And it must be based on facts in which the mystical and the physical appear side by side. The kind of materialism which set up the tradition that man is only a super-monkey, being the spiritual treason that it is, is responsible for the heavy punishment which such treason has brought down upon us. If we can keep to the double viewpoint of the higher philosophy and remember that the ultimate hides within the immediate, we shall keep closer to truth. We shall see then that man is not only sinful and fallen flesh, but also holy and immaculate spirit, not only psychically savage but also fundamentally deific. All that is worthy in his creative endeavours comes from this innermost source.

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Starting from different intellectual standpoints, travelling along different lines of worldly experience, the conclusions

which I have reached in the foregoing lines seem to tend in the same direction as those which Mr. Macmillan has reached through his own use of intuition and which he has included in his book. And out of this use there has not only come the truths written down in its pages but also the gift of healing. He not only writes, but heals.

But he is a healer under protest. He is most insistent that this aspect of his work should be regarded as a *result* of his surrender to the intuitive power, and not as something he set out to develop and practise. He found the gift of healing in his hands, the power of healing in his mind.

To the reader who knows little about these matters, it should be pointed out that Macmillan's technique for the healing of sick people is primarily not mental but spiritual. It may and does include the mental and the physical but these are merely incidental to the chief effort.

That such dramatic healings of sickness and cures of disease occur to-day, have occurred in the past and will occur in the future, in most countries and among most peoples, is a fact of recorded experience, both within and without the circle of established orthodox institutional religions. That the Spirit contains tremendous energies which can be vividly felt in the mind or the flesh under certain conditions, is incontestable to those who have had personal experience of them. It is more effectual than any talk or any reading to make a man a lifelong believer. No amount of sceptical argument can banish such memories, no wordy dismissal can convert them into mere hallucinations.

During the time I was reading this manuscript, a Scotsman became Macmillan's patient. His case interested me and I personally followed its history from the very start to the striking finish. Here, in his own words, is the patient's story:

“Before I start the story of my cure perhaps my mode of life and thoughts will make readers understand more fully what this treatment has done for me.

“Many responsibilities come my way. I am managing director of a large firm and director of two others. Efficiency has always been my motto. The standard had to be of the highest, and second best was not enough. Sentimentality or spiritualistic thoughts had no place in my busy everyday world. My life was ruled by ‘hard facts.’ I am so much the progressive business man that if anyone had told me a couple of years ago that I was to be cured by a psychological therapeutical healer I wouldn’t have believed it possible.

“Without foreknowledge of the temperament or beliefs of those who will read this note it is difficult to assess whether it will be accepted as fiction or fact. It is my firm belief that only those who have known the depth of despondency, gloom and despair arisen from utter helplessness without hope or expectation of recovery and who have not had the good fortune to experience the miracle—for there is and can be in the patient’s mind no more applicable word—of Mr. Macmillan’s work can ever know or realise the unbounded, the overwhelming joy of being brought back to a state of health comparable with their fellow men.

“Perhaps after two and a half years of misery increasing in intensity as time progressed my own case may be of interest, not only to those interested psychologically in the subject, but also to some afflicted with infirmity who have not had the good fortune or opportunity to make personal contact with the author of this book.

“Looking back over these two and a half years one wonders at the apparently inexhaustible forms and types of treatment that may be pursued, the indignities that may be suffered, and the pain that may be experienced therefrom. Perhaps in

order to appreciate the full significance of the treatment and, for the patient, its apparent ease and simplicity, it would help if in an abbreviated form a résumé were given of the various forms of attack which were made upon the writer's obscure disease. In doing this it should be clearly understood that there is no attempt to disparage the skill and efforts of those of the more orthodox practitioners.

"To avert the gradual loss of power of the legs and the weakness and pain conjointly therewith, bed for half a day was first prescribed. As this proved of no avail injections were prescribed (type unknown)—but with no avail. These were followed by liver injections which increased in size as the disease became worse. Thereafter it became one of the former and one of the latter injections each twice daily. Massage was interspersed, for periods of a month, at intervals throughout the two and a half years. Submission to electrical tests proved no solution, nor did a lumbar puncture or a pipe through the mouth into the stomach for three hours produce any clue. Washing out of the bowels daily for a period was of no avail. Instructions to practise Couéism proved equally abortive. A course of psychiatry produced no result. A Spirit Doctor was consulted without any success. Injections of adrenalin provided relief only for a few days. Repeated blood tests revealed nothing. Further injections of unlimited numbers of established drugs had no effect. Injections of serum made up from one's own body were of no avail. Visits to spiritualists produced only a feeling of further despair. Herb treatment was as unsuccessful as any other. Exercise performed only with considerable pain produced only further exhaustion. Pills and powders medically prescribed in what appeared to be every shape and form were taken throughout almost all the time of illness unavailingly. A suggestion of three months in a nursing home for observation was not followed. At the end

of two and a half years movement on crutches was restricted on occasion to a shuffle of six inches at a time.

“Can it be wondered at that after the failure of so many efforts to find the solution one became apprehensive, distrustful and sceptical of any further efforts? It was natural therefore that one required some concrete instance of a cure that had been successful, not necessarily of one’s own disease, if one was to essay a cure of an unorthodox nature. By the grace of God such evidence was brought to the writer’s notice. Without the loss of half an hour, buoyed up once again with hope, contact was made with Mr. Macmillan. No attempt is made to explain what created the immediate confidence and faith that was at once established. Suffice it to say that from the outset the greatest optimism prevailed and not without justification. In less than ten days from the beginning of treatment crutches were discarded and in two weeks steep stairs were ascended and descended without even the aid of a stick. The word miracle was used earlier in this note; the reader may now understand the justification.”

The need of studying and examining such experiences as the foregoing under scientific conditions is a great one, but at the same time a difficult one to satisfy.

The most convincing testimony to the authenticity of these extraordinary cures would of course be that which came from qualified physicians and surgeons, from registered medical practitioners, much more than that which came from patients themselves. Records of clinical examinations, made when the disease is at its worst and again when it is perfectly cured and the cure maintained over a long period, would bring faith to the faithless, truth to the puzzled and an arousal to the sleeping. But this is precisely what we cannot get, except in rare cases perhaps. This is because the General Medical Council warns such practitioners against associating

themselves with unqualified persons in the treatment of patients, under a liability to the penalty of losing their registration. Yet despite this failure to give spiritual healing official recognition, it is a fact, which many know, that individual doctors are to-day working quietly together with clergymen, with mystics, and with unorthodox healers. That this secrecy should be necessary is as regrettable to such doctors as it is unfair to the healers. That medical science must be protected against the dangers of chimerical theories and the medical profession against the intrusions of charlatans motivated by fee-snatching and cranks led away by enthusiasm, is a sound ruling. But that this precaution should be clung to with extreme rigidity and materialistic timidity, is indefensible. However, the trend of contemporary history is such that these unhelpful attitudes are weakening from year to year. Public demand on the one hand and the development of professional knowledge on the other, is inevitably bringing about a change.

What are the laws governing healing? That they must exist is a conclusion forced on one by the knowledge that laws exist in the other spheres of human mental and physical experience. Here is a challenge to the medical profession to accept an opportunity to enlarge its knowledge and increase its capabilities!

There is a direct relation between mind and body, emotion and health. Even a cured patient may suffer a relapse if his thoughts and feelings continue to follow old evil ways. I am pleased to see that Mr. Macmillan has noted and stressed this fact. The mere disappearance of a patient's outer symptoms does not by itself constitute enough evidence of a cure. The inner trouble, the state of emotion or mind or character, which is the cause of those symptoms appearing must also be removed. Who knows how to trace a connecting line

from the passion of spitefulness to paralysis of the spine? Poisonous emotions must in time poison the body. No technique of healing can be a complete one, nor permanently effectual, if it does not recognise this fact, if it does not seek out such emotions and cleanse them. Was not the same thought behind Jesus' healing of the woman, whom he thereafter told: "Go and sin no more"?

Do nervous troubles alone react to spiritual methods of treatment? Or do all sicknesses, including infections, cancers and fractures react to them? Macmillan refuses to permit his finite and limited mind to place frontiers and boundaries upon what he regards with the fullest conviction of his whole being, as an infinite and unlimited power.

The book brings out another interesting point, that the personal unworthiness of the healer need not prevent his acquisition and practice of the power of healing. This would seem to be in line with the tenet that the personal sinfulness of a seeker after spiritual illumination need not prevent his reception of Grace.

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Those who associate mystics with trembling hysteria and self-important solemnity would be pleasantly surprised on meeting Mr. Macmillan. His sense of humour is above the average, his humility is quite disproportionate to his power, his interest in the arts and literature, in people and events, is not less than any worldling's. He thoroughly enjoys living and conducts himself as if he completely believes that life is well worth while. Yet he never lets this interfere with his deep attachment to the Source, rather does it express positively his sense of Its beauty and love.

This capacity to be in the world and yet not of it, is surely what we of the twentieth century need to gain? Several

years of life and work, study and research, in Oriental lands have brought me to this conclusion. My recent return home to the Occident has only clinched it. The monk, the holy man, the yogi or the hermit has the advantage of living in an external atmosphere which does not draw out his lower nature by its emphasis on lower things. He has the benefits of an environment which is friendly to his higher aspirations. But active life brings us from time to time the situations which test our character and reveal our weaknesses, or involves us in circumstances which try our intuition and show our strength. In this way it gives us the chance to try to rise to a higher point of view, it provides the opportunity to draw out latent resources.

Anyway, the times are such to-day that mystical philosophy must repudiate the sad notion, born out of a limited knowledge, that to lead a spiritual life is to lead a retired pensioner's life, or a semi-invalid's, or an intellectually infantile one!

The message of this book is that a tremendous profit will come to us if we live from moment to moment by the light of intuition, by deep faith in its promptings and by ardent feeling of its worth. We must strike deep down into the core of life to find what is truly important and truly fundamental.

It will be humanity's misfortune if only the aspiring and the sensitive can appreciate such ideas and approve such a way of life.