

*Narcissism and animal
sensualism personified*



DOWN TO EARTH SERIES
BRAINWAVES OF AN INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGIST

From Aristotle down to Herbert Spencer, no philosopher has ever pretended to have fathomed even the least important Forces of Nature. Not so with an invertebrate zoologist, who acts as if Mother Nature had kindly placed the aggregate amount of all her Forces in his vest pocket, and appointed him sole guardian of her secrets.

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[Fragment in H.P. Blavatsky's handwriting in the Adyar Archives. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

There were those, who not content of forging out of his name a synonym of refined voluptuousness — or rather, of the most animal sensualism — in more than one case got hold of his ideas and paraded them as their own, though in no one instance did they give him credit for it.

The greatest opponent as well as the most fierce one we modern Spiritualists had to encounter was Dr. W.B. Carpenter, CB, MD, LLD, FRS.¹ There were from the beginning and still are, many men of Science as uncompromisingly hostile to the new “Epidemic” as himself, but they have chosen the most prudent course, and unable to demonstrate what these phenomena are, they either shut their eyes to the most glaring facts or — decline having anything to do with them. Until Science has something more definite to give us than mere generalizations, this is certainly the wisest course to pursue.

Not so with Dr. Carpenter, and we propose to prove it. We all know it, for instance, that from Aristotle down to Herbert Spencer, no philosopher has ever pretended to have entirely fathomed the least important Forces of Nature. In animal Magnetism, as well as in those curious nervous diseases which seem to develop and intensify mental faculties *ad infinitum*, our physicists, physiologists and biologists are as completely at sea as they were in the palmy days of Mesmer's *baquet*,² or Magendie.³ The recent case of Miss Mollie Fancher of New York,⁴ is a living proof of it; and [346] her disease, one of those which Science so early as the latter part of the preceding centu-

¹ [William Benjamin Carpenter, 1813–1885, English physician, invertebrate zoologist, and physiologist.]

² [Franz Anton Mesmer, 1734–1815, doctor of medicine with an interest in astronomy. He theorised the existence of a natural energy transference occurring between animated and inanimate objects; this he called “animal magnetism,” later referred to as mesmerism. Mesmer's theory attracted a wide following between about 1780 and 1850, and continued to have some influence until the end of the 19th century. In 1843, the Scottish doctor James Braid proposed the term “hypnotism” for a technique derived from animal magnetism; today the word “mesmerism” generally functions as a synonym of “hypnosis.”* Mesmer also supported the arts, specifically music; he was on friendly terms with Haydn and Mozart.

* *Note to Students*: Hypnotism is the illegitimate son of Mesmerism. Consult “Presentiments of what lies in the bosom of future,” “The Pitfalls of Occult Art and Metaphysical Healing,” and “The Theosophical Society's position on hypnotism,” in our Black versus White Magic Series. Also, “Magnetism, Mesmerism, Hypnotism,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [François Magendie, 1783–1855, French physiologist and pioneer of experimental physiology. He is known for describing the foramen of Magendie. There is also a *Magendie sign*, a downward and inward rotation of the eye due to a lesion in the cerebellum. Magendie held the Chair of Medicine from 1830 to 1855 at the College of France. He was succeeded by Claude Bernard, who worked previously as his assistant.]

⁴ [Mary J. “Mollie” Fancher, 1848–1916, otherwise known as the “Brooklyn Enigma.”

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fasting_girl]

ry regarded as the *scandalum medicorum*, is as little understood now as it would have been then. The only evident progress physiology and Science in general have made since then, is, that about a hundred years ago, there were those among them who yet believed that these kind of diseases were produced by and under the control of the “Enemy of mankind” — which now none of them do. And yet, the celebrated Author of *Mental Physiology* acts throughout as if kind nature had kindly placed the aggregate amount of all the Forces of Nature in his vest pocket and instituted him sole guardian thereof. True he did not achieve much in the way of discovering any one of the mysteries of Sp * * * , though he tried hard to make believe he did; except, insomuch as having discovered nothing himself, worth discovering, whether intentionally or not, it does not matter . . . [for]

Did anyone ever fathom to its bottom any one of the forces of nature?

And can even Dr. Carpenter who goes for Spiritualism like Richard Cœur de Lion¹ went for Saladin,² by trying first his hand and sword on his nearest and dearest Colleagues, be able to help us any more [by identifying purely] mental operations — will, for instance, or faith, or rather that “third faculty of man, coordinate with sense and reason, the faculty of perceiving the Infinite” so boldly put forward by Max Müller — with a physiological, material agency?

Or again, can any one of the other disciples of the half-forgotten James Mill³ and his *Analysis of the Phenomena of Human Mind*⁴ force upon us the conviction that consciousness consists of but three elements, *i.e.*, sensations, ideas, and train of ideas — which do, and must account for all the complex phenomena of the mind, such as judgment, abstraction, memory, belief, ratiocination and the power of motives?

Or have we to accept *a priori* that which physiologists, *still* more materialistic, tell us, namely, that mind, as a subject has no existence whatever, but is simply a machine of grey matter evolving different states of [347] consciousness, varying but in their degree of activity?

But before accepting any of these theories we should feel thankful to Dr. Carpenter to finally show us what prepossession and expectancy which are given by such leading parts in the melodrama of those who are not ignorant of the fact that the ancients for long ages, previous to the Neo-Platonic school or the Hermetic philosophies, discovered, that in order that the human Voltaic battery should decompose

¹ [Richard I, 1157–1199, King of England from 1189 until his death. He also ruled as Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Gascony, Lord of Cyprus, Count of Poitiers, Anjou, Maine, and Nantes, and overlord of Brittany at various times during the same period. He was the third of five sons of King Henry II of England and Eleanor of Aquitaine, and seemed unlikely to become king, but all his brothers except the youngest, John, predeceased their father. Richard is known as Richard Cœur de Lion (Richard the Lionheart) because of his reputation as a great military leader and warrior.]

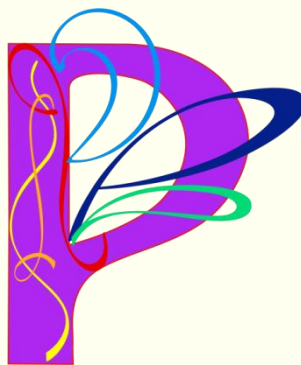
² [Al-Nasir Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, 1137–1193, better known as Salah ad-Din or Saladin, was a Sunni Muslim Kurd, the first sultan of Egypt and Syria, and founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. Saladin led the Muslim military campaign against the Crusader states in the Levant. At the height of his power, his sultanate spanned Egypt, Syria, the Jazira (Upper Mesopotamia), the Hejaz (western Arabia), Yemen, parts of western North Africa, and Nubia.]

³ [James Mill (born James Milne), 1773–1836, Scottish historian, economist, political theorist, and philosopher. He is counted among the founders of the Ricardian school of economics. He also wrote the monumental work *The History of British India*. Mill was the father of John Stuart Mill, a noted philosopher of liberalism and utilitarianism, and a colonial administrator at the East India Company.]

⁴ [2 vols., 1829. Revised ed., 2 vols, 1869]

and analyse the *occult* properties of nature, it required in addition to the physical a second and spiritual brain. Such a brain is either a gift of nature, in which case the person endowed with it is according to Cornelius Agrippa “a natural-born magician,” or, it is acquired by a long and painful self-development. For though, the common property of all, it yet may remain in its latent state during the course of a whole human life. At all events, science ought to accord to the *inner* man something higher than the possession of a mere machine of grey matter, evolving different states of consciousness, which vary but in their degrees of intensity.¹

H.P. BLAVATSKY



¹ If we have to believe Mr. J. Milnar Fothergill, M.D., Jr., Physician to the West London Hospital, “Thought” is no more than “the product of the cells of the grey matter of the brain — the result of a change of form in inorganic matter taken into the system as food, of which acids and other products of oxidation, or retrograde tissue-metamorphosis, are the waste.”!!