

Observations and reflections of clinical and theoretical interest

SPIV

A spiv kid is dead awkward in the home. Causes no end of bother he do. You can bet they'll not do much good with a spiv kid at school. It ain't they're dumb; it's just they don't take no interest, and they don't like to be ordered around in front of their mates. They got little ways of showing off and being naughty. Gambling, pitch-and-toss in the schoolyard, that's what we used to do. Getting in little gangs and pinching toffee and coppers off of other kids. We used to smash street lamps, throw bricks at them, and all that caper. It's only the real flash kids out of these young spivs that are gas-meter openers and shop-breakers.

And he usually slings a nice tale to the bloke in charge of these societies what help kids to go straight. Course, once you've been used to making a few bob you get yourself tied up in tastes that need it.

After all's said and done, if you're living in a slummy neighbourhood, it don't half tone you up wearing good clothes. Yes, and you'll do anything to get the money that's needed.

He thinks he is somebody and that's the only way he's got to show it.

The nicking of loaded lorries etc. Just wants that extra bit of nerve that don't flicker if the cops begin to ask questions, and somebody young and quick who enjoys a risk and knows his way about.

Notes on the double negative

Most strong emotional drives have both a positive and negative aspect which are related to each other like sides of a penny. If one is manifesting itself it can be taken for certain that the other one is also present somewhere in the personality, and it is more or less of a chance which will appear, and one can with suitable means be turned into the other. In the case of the double negative however, the position of being negative is in itself enjoyed, and the situation runs something like this:

Single Negative

"I don't want to go into an office, and I do want to be a sailor." Which is equivalent to "I want to go to sea and I hate offices".

Double Negative

Can be expressed as "I don't want to go into an office and I refuse to expend the effort of finding out what I want to do." "I wish to destroy all present schools, and I will destroy you if you suggest I construct alternative schools".

Attempts to "conquer" the double negative impale themselves on the second one and increase neurosis. This type therefore tend to deteriorate, and treatment is only possible if sufficient skill can be used to make the patient realise that second negative, which is really a positive i.e. is an enjoyment of inchoate aggression.

A case of benevolent possession

In the summer of 1931 there lived in a quiet East Anglian village a married couple who kept the shop, - the usual sort of village shop. Both came of local families, and were well known and respected in the district. During that summer it was noticed that the woman seemed anxious and troubled, but no one knew any cause for it, until a day came when she confided

the reason for her distress to a more educated neighbour. She told him that her husband had become prone to sudden profound sleep, usually around six in the evening, and then as she phrased it, - "He talked gibberish." At first this state had lasted only ten to fifteen minutes, and she had taken care that no one should know of it, - she shut doors and windows when it happened lest people should overhear him and gossip, but now it was occurring more and more often, and lasting longer, and she had begun to fear that her husband was going out of his mind, and felt that she must have advice. Her friend offered to come and listen that same evening, and to his amazement heard instruction in astronomy being given in French. Further investigation increased the extent and range of talk which grew into a series of lectures, and as the control developed these were given more in English than in French, and questions on the subjects dealt with were carefully answered in either language, and advice given now and then on nervous ailments. When it was asked who was speaking the answer was, "Flammarion, - Camille Flammarion."

It is certain that neither husband nor wife, nor their only child, a girl of about thirteen, knew or understood a syllable of any language but their own. The man G.L was wholly unconscious of what passed while he was in "this sleep" and to his wife it was all incomprehensible. However, as she was presently assured that no harm was coming to her husband, she began to take comfort, and she and her daughter took notes of what they could understand and remember of the lectures.

In the following spring the family removed from the country and settled in one of those seaside towns, where L. hoped to find work that would bring in more than the shop was doing in the lean year of 1931-32. The present writer was taken there by a friend one evening last September to see and hear what by now had become a matter of almost daily occurrence. The conditions were such as to preclude all possibility of "conjuring" or trickery. The house, a tiny semi-detached artisan's dwelling held no space for concealing anything or anybody: the little parlour was simply furnished and brightly lighted by an electric pendant. We all sat apart, L's wife and daughter, we two visitors, - both there for the first time, - and L. himself in an upright chair beside a small table on which was a glass of water. We were all silent, - L. lent back in his chair, and his eyes closed. He seemed asleep, but gradually sleep deepened until all sign of life was gone, - then after a short space he could be seen to breathe again, and his face gained colour, his eyes opened and he spoke quickly in French:- "Bon jour Mesdames, qu'est-ce que vous me demandez?"

The whole personality was transformed, voice, manner, apparent age, colouring were those of another being. A few questions set him off on a general description of the universe, of stars and solar systems, of which human eyes at best may see only a small portion, with their satellites and planets. Countless myriads of these, - so Flammarion assured us, are inhabited by conscious life in various grades surpassing man's imagination. Our world and many others are stages on the way from primitive existence to life of infinite powers and experience, and he maintained that the study of the universe, in every direction in which earthly science can lead, - the search after Truth and Beauty which are the showing forth of Infinite Good, should be humbly and faithfully pursued to the utmost of our powers.

He described in vivid words the birth and evolution of new worlds in space and their adaptation to varying conditions of life, and then spoke of the progress of life and of the individual consciousness we call the soul, by means of obedience to the moral sense that is most truly an increasing revelation. He condemned in scathing terms the perversion of knowledge to base uses such as the gain of power or material wealth by trading on

ignorance, or fear that is the outcome of ignorance, - practices of which the history of learning, and alas, - of all religious systems, - holds only too much record. He spoke of the transition and evolution of conscious life from the tiniest forms wrapped in matter, to the great Beyond, where he repeated, live the perfect forms of which matter holds an imperfect image. He reiterated that there was no need to fear the transition we call death but that we should hold fast to faith in the Divine purpose which, as moral vision widens, is made increasingly clear both to the individual soul and to the human race. And of that purpose he spoke with grave reverence and deep certainty; - "All life, from the tiniest and simplest form to the highest and most wonderful, - all are impelled and guided to ultimate perfection. Time is nothing – a thousand years is as the tick of a clock in eternity, but the end of all life is perfection." There was a pause, he shut his eyes saying: - "I leave you now." And once more the physical body slept into stillness, and presently the Suffolk countryman awoke and asked what "the Professor" had told us.

We had been listening for fully two hours, and whether in French or In English, the style and language were those of a trained scientist.

G.L. who lends himself in this involuntary way is of simple but fine type of character and mind, and utterly disinterested. The "control" gives his intense desire to teach truth as the ground for his "permission" to return to the planet on which he lived so lately. No word that is unbeneficent or untrue is repeated of these sayings, but much of very great interest. While he could earn even a small wage, G.L. refused any payment from visitors who came to listen to "the professor" but as times grew hard, and visitors insistent, small gifts of money have been accepted, - but only small ones. Reports of these happenings have from time to time reached spiritualist circles and invitations to take part in seances of various kinds have come to L. One day a smart car stopped at the door, bringing an agent of various theatres, with an offer of what to the L. family was large money if L. would "go round the halls," – a suggestion that was unhesitatingly refused. – "I don't think the Professor would like it at all," he said simply in telling of the incident, "It is just a gift his coming and telling these wonderful things, it's not for me to make money." As for the Spiritists they sheered off when L. laid down the condition that if he were to take part in any séance it must be, as in his own house, always in the light. In actual fact L. has taken no part, whatever in any séance, nor gone outside his own dwelling when these visitations occur. And Flammarion is his only visitant – it would seem to be a case of benevolent possession.

How to produce mumps

We lived in a small town in the Hartz, and when I was five years old a cousin aged about ten came to visit us. He fell ill, and the doctor said it was a bad case of mumps, and I was forbidden to enter his room, but I heard through the closed door how good and kind my mother was to him.

Since the birth of my brother I had always felt neglected both by my parents and my grandparents with whom we lived. I cannot remember having had a single day's illness in my early childhood, and I longed intensely to fall ill myself. One day, therefore, when my parents were having their afternoon nap, I went to the feverish boy, sat down on his bed and caressed his hands. Some days later I developed mumps myself. It was not so severe a case as that of my cousin, but I had pain and had to stay in bed, and was looked after and taken care of. I must have had very sensitive ceruminous and salivary glands, for from that time any draught, or a very windy day always caused mumps. I had it two or three times every

year, but as it proved not to be infectious, I could continue to sleep in the same room as my brother.

My parents then moved to Berlin, and according to the custom of those days, the two nice, sunny rooms to the front of the house became parlour and drawing-room, rooms scarcely every used, my brother slept in my father's little private office, and I had a dull back room looking into a stone yard. We had our meals in this room, and all the mending and ironing was also done there. I once overheard a visitor say that my room was rather an unhealthy one, and as I hated that room with all the hatred of a child who loves sunshine and beauty, I thought I would prove it now.

My mumps came, and someone happened to give me an orange or some orange-juice. As I swallowed it I felt my glands swelling bigger and bigger till I could scarcely open my mouth. I had a great deal of pain and had to take my liquid food through a glass pipe. This lasted for a long time, and one day the doctor said, "You ought to put that child into the sunny front room." Consequently a sofa was put up for me there, and I felt very happy and important, and after that I was always put into the front room whenever I felt ill.

They tried to cure my mumps with warmth, an ointment prescribed by the doctor, cotton-wool and a bandage round my head. When I had a temperature I was put to bed, but if I had no temperature I was proud to go to school with my head bandaged. The teachers pitied me and were more indulgent to me than to the others, which I enjoyed very much.

As the doctor thought it was scrofula I was sent one summer to a salt bath. The last week there my mumps came out very badly and I came home with a bandaged head. It seemed however to have been a real cure, for it never came out so badly again. My glands remained sensitive, and are so to this day, and I could feel my glands swelling if I sat in a draught or tasted something very sour. If I paid no attention to it, it disappeared as quickly as it had come, but if I felt it a matter of consequence to be ill for some days, I was able to increase the evil at will. As soon as I took a drop of lemon juice on my tongue, my glands reacted by swelling, and eventually I had only to imagine I was swallowing something sour for my glands to begin to swell.

My glands still swell now and again at meals or in a bad draught. I then usually press them slightly and feel the swelling is diminished by their emptying a certain secretion into my mouth.

Marie Heynemann.