

H O M O S A P I E N S .

by Hans Thirring

Volume I. The Psychology of Cultural Deterioration.
(The psychological background of manifestations
of cultural deterioration).

*Preface containing a summary
of the main thoughts underlying this book.*

This book is written at the end of one of the worst world-catastrophes that have ever befallen mankind. With all the many differences of opinion left behind by events of such magnitude, unanimity undoubtedly should exist amongst all sensible and ethically thinking people on one salient point: In order to prevent further self-destruction amongst mankind, we must, above all things, find effective safeguards against catastrophes of this nature repeating themselves again and again in constantly aggravated forms and dimensions. Nevertheless we must surely expect to find the most divergent opinions and suggestions now cropping up to achieve this universally accepted aim. This book is written by a physicist and accordingly treats the subject matter from the angle of the natural scientist. Under this same angle we will have to realise that two subjects are of vital importance if a repetition of this madness of humanity on the general warpath is to be prevented:

1) It should be realised that the ultimate causes of all major wars are of a psychic or mass psychological nature and that these causes should therefore be treated with the dispassionate conscientiousness and realism with which a doctor diagnoses the illness of his patient.

2) The entire problem of mutual understanding amongst Nations, in particular the problems of world-security and economic relations, will have to be imbued with a new ideology; altogether; the attitude to be adopted towards political problems must become an entirely new one. This, and this alone, is the course to be followed if we wish to escape from that vicious circle of extermination, revenge and oppression, which within it's own bounds continuously must create new evil.

Once punishment of the responsible and guilty exponents of this war, which undoubtedly is necessary, has been completed, the only sensible remedy to the situation can be found by throwing overboard the antiquated ideology in the spell of which both past and a great many present statesmen are bound, and by attacking the problems in the same spirit and with the same mental equipment with which our physical age has brought about it's great achievements.

True peace can never be founded upon feelings of hate and destruction continuously oscillating from one side to another without some arresting moment. It would be entirely wrong, for instance, to substitute the criminal slogan of " Deutschland erwache, Juda verrecke" by the likewise criminal slogan of "Juda erwache, Deutschland verrecke": this would merely mean a changing of parts in the same disastrous system.

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This terrible last world-catastrophe being possible is largely explained by ~~the~~ fact: The general attitude towards peoples and nations, as shown by the statesmen, political economists and geo-politicians of the Axis-Powers (or at least those that were ~~able~~ to speak) was entirely based upon that same ideology, which was handed down to us from antiquity, and which has been upheld practically unchanged right through the middle-ages unto modern times. The so-called 'new conceptions' of the self-styled 'Young Nations' in this respect certainly contain no new ideas, or at least nothing that in any way markedly deviates from the corresponding ideology of the old ages. ~~Letting loose the heavily laden express-train of modern warfare on this old and shaky trackway necessarily had to lead to most horrible disaster.~~

The imperious cry of 'Never Again' is only too natural after this terrible disaster which has befallen us. The same applies to the countless suggestions and propositions that are now being advanced with the object of ridding humanity from this terrible scourge of organised mass-slaughter once and for all. These are problems which primarily will have to be dealt with by the World Peace Organisation, in particular by securing such measures as are necessary for political and military stability. Nevertheless, true conviction of these measures and real freedom can only ensue by ways and means simultaneously being found for a corresponding mental demobilisation, and for the complete abolition of the Lycurgus ideology on matters of war. In dealing with such subjects as world-security this book therefore differs from its predecessors and will presumably also differ from the majority of its contemporaries by setting off with a precise diagnosis of the case before advancing any therapeutics. We may not forget, that it was entirely due to the scientific knowledge on bacteriology gained in the course of the nineteenth century that the efficacious remedies for dealing with infectious diseases were subsequently found. Henceforth, it is equally necessary to first probe into the structure of the human mind, from which the thoughts and feelings originated which were directly responsible for the ~~greatest catastrophe of all times~~. This is where we find the true solution ~~to~~ the absurdity that ~~the~~ three outstanding civilised Nations let themselves be carried away to the greatest madness in history. The essential doctrine of this book is accordingly based on quite definite psychological perceptions.

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What actually happens by letting loose the heavily laden express train of modern warfare on this old and shaky trackway, we have just now experienced with horror.

We have only recently experienced with horror, what actually happens by letting loose the heavily laden express train of modern warfare on this old and shaky trackway.

The Fundamental Ideas of this Book.

The psychological conclusions arrived at in this book are hereby given in an abbreviated form for purposes of a preliminary survey. In reading this short survey, however, it should be born in mind that a true and precise comprehension of the subject matter can only be gained by a complete study of the respective chapters of the book itself.

The psychological research work of this book leads to certain predominant and fundamental facts, which can be ranged into three groups:

1) Competent scientists have hitherto failed to adequately stress a certain psychic mechanism, the importance of which, both in relation to himself and the world in general, everybody ~~easily realises~~, as soon as his attention is drawn to the fact. This mechanism operates in the manner of a magnifying-glass. It lies in our nature to regard matters with ~~which we happen to be concerned in the enlargement~~, ~~they~~ ~~merely in consequential~~ proportion to our ever-increasing interest attain an importance in our minds, which is far beyond their actual merits. All objects, persons or ideas, with which we happen to be associated, in being brought to the foreground, appear enlarged according to optical perspective, whereas such objects on which our attention is not focussed appear smaller in the distance. This evident fact might be called "the effect of psychic perspective", whereas a particular variety ~~to be dealt with hereafter~~ of this effect might be called "play-inclination". Due to play-inclination the means originally employed for the purpose of attaining a certain result gradually become an independent factor operating to their own ends, ~~the original aim has been lost sight of~~. Hunting, for instance, was originally merely the means for obtaining nourishment. Both in human and animal life hunting, however, has also become a pastime of its own. The original impulse of self-preservation has given way to the secondary impulse of a purely sporting instinct. From the biological point of view the effects of psychic perspective and of play-inclination are most important factors, they are the cradle of civilisation by inducing animal-man to become a creative and productive being.

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These same impulses can, on the other hand, also endanger and destroy civilisation, and can altogether produce most detrimental effects, if they are allowed to overspread and degenerate. Same as psychic perspective is apt to distort the image of the universe by neglect of true proportions and true values, so also can play-inclination do immense damage by overrating the importance of

its own means of action. This inevitably leads to imaginary values and fixed ideas with resulting manifestations of cultural deterioration. Frequently certain actions or intellectual impulses and movements originate in a well-devised and purpose-like manner, but once they get properly going, they are liable to roll on under their own momentum; influenced by play-inclination and with the distortions of psychic perspective they lose all connection with the original purpose for which they were started, whereby this purpose may have already been achieved long ago or may have been missed altogether. They keep reeling on and in their wake cause immense damage.

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Examples of such manifestations of cultural decline can be found in great numbers both in private life and in world-affairs. They range from the harmless eccentricities produced by play-inclination, which every keen observer has experienced himself or with his neighbours to the depravities of fanatical mass-movements and world-wide strife.

2) The Psychic Powers. - Whereas play-inclination and psychic perspective operate as a kind of steering to the human impulses, thereby keeping these on a certain level, additional psychic powers frequently also crop up which act like a motor to the human impulses; the latter frequently lend that extraordinary strength and that remarkable perseverance to our strivings which causes so many tragedies. In a positive sense these powers embody a truly idealistic enthusiasm; in blessed moments, in religious rapture, in the ecstasy of a great love, or in devotion to great works of art, we find ourselves transformed into a wonderful spiritual state of transfiguration. This state of transfiguration is always a culminating point of our lives, every true religion strives towards fulfilment of this state of transfiguration. We rid ourselves from the dead-weight of subconscious discomfort usually clinging to our every-day life and suddenly attain a strong and serene attitude of spiritual superiority towards our fellow men. What is more natural than that the causes of our transfiguration, the ideals, the ideas, the persons or the underlying abstract or concrete reasons should become to us like a sanctum, for which we are prepared to fight with passion and abandonment. This explains why religious and ideological wars are conducted with such stubbornness.

These positive powers, which impart enthusiasm and willingness to fight for certain things, are accompanied by negative spiritual powers, which give the incitement to fight

Verklärung

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to attain ^{it} ~~this~~ state may be considered ^{as} the ultimate aim of every true religion.

against certain things. Such negative powers for example are vengeance, delight in sensation, the aboriginal wild-beast instincts of man, dream-life illusions and blunt bloodthirstiness and sadism. Each of these features taken alone is barely of decisive importance, but once united by political leadership they form one of the main factors of mass-movement.

3) Systematical Conception, Mental Habit and Standpoint.-

Our actions, both individual and collective, are governed by the above mentioned psychological powers, which relatively function as a steering or as a motor. To these must be added another set of factors, which together form the track on which our mental machinery runs. They play an important part with all spiritual and political movements. Our thoughts can naturally only operate within the conceptional structure built up in our minds. Hence every widening of our mental horizon is accompanied by a corresponding widening of our conceptional faculties. This is, for instance, particularly noticeable in the domain of natural science and ~~technic~~ ^{technology}, in which the great advances made completely changed the old methods of thinking and allowed for entirely new conceptions. The case with history and politics is, as already mentioned, quite different. Here, the fundamental conceptions, the general attitude and the mental approach towards such questions as are of ethical importance, for instance the relations between the different Nations, have remained fundamentally the same as in by-gone ages. The terrible happenings of this century are undoubtedly mainly due to the retention of this antiquated attitude, despite the fact that the material foundations of our entire civilisation have radically changed within the past two centuries.

engineering

In applying these criterions to present-day problems we arrive at the following conclusions:

1) The conception of "Nation" has within the course of our last generation become entirely overrated under the influence of a psychic perspective. With tremendous zeal the nationalists have been propagating the ties of race and language; they have invented the slogan of communal interest based upon joint historical fate, and in doing so, they have all overlooked the following simple fact: The essential difference between the average citizen of any civilised nation is far smaller, than the difference between individual citizens of the same nation. The characteristics of people belonging to the same profession are likewise far more uniform than those originating from people belonging to the same country. This assertion finally also applies to those pronounced characteristics of temperament which are part of our constitution by birth,

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and which are likewise to be found throughout the civilised world. Psychologists have classified certain pronounced types of character into "zyklothym" or "zykloid" and "thymothym" or "schizoid". Persons belonging to one or the other of these types are endowed by nature with certain fundamental characteristics which are far more distinguishable than are for instance the characteristics of origin, nationality or native language. It is therefore utter nonsense to raise the definition of "nation" to a kind of super-person to be worshipped like an idol and to be endowed with the singular power to use force.

2) Similar to what is said about the "nation", the definition of so-called "Lebensraum", the necessity of territory as means of existence, is a mistake in itself. The standard of living and the welfare of the population of any given community far less depends upon territory in relation to numbers as upon the production capacity of its citizens in relation to its consumption. How could big cities otherwise exist? Similarly an entire nation can maintain a high standard of living, irrespective of the raw-material supplies it happens to have within its own territorial boundaries. The only conditions being a sufficient capacity for productive work and free trade and intercourse. Frontiers, in any case, are not provided by nature or providence, but are made by mankind and based upon historic tradition.

3) In drawing our conclusions from what is said above, we find that the wars we have been waging in the past centuries have nothing whatsoever to do with biological necessities. Neither were they conducted to maintain sheer existence, nor were vital material interests of the people involved. These wars have been waged for imaginary values and for fixed ideas. It is typical therefore, that they have been regularly started by a small group of politicians and militarists, who were never aware of their true responsibilities, and who were totally misguided by a false interpretation of history.

4) It has frequently been said, that the only means to prevent wars is to change human nature. This is by no means the case. All that is needed for a mental demobilisation is a change in our manner of thought. In other words: We must break with that habitual way of thinking handed down to us from the primitive early ages, according to which any given community (state, country, nation) not only has the right, but also the obligation to defend its interests by force. Let us be reminded that according to the habitual manner of thought we have without any noticeable objection and as a matter of course been used to accepting all the human offences of war, the intrigues of diplomacy, the immense burdens of armaments and compulsory service and finally the horrors of mass-slaughter and hate propaganda. All this is the outcome of

false education, quite irrespective of any particular national characteristics. It is accordingly only by general education and by public enlightenment and instruction that a change can be accomplished.

Actually the line of thought that leads to the above conclusions is a quite simple one that can be grasped by any average minded person. The straightforward psychological facts referred to are easily understood and their knowledge need by no means be restricted to a few highly trained intellectuals, as is so frequently the case with scientific treatises. It should be possible to introduce them to the general public with the same ease, with which for instance the four major operations of arithmetics have become general knowledge. For the benefit of such of my readers who might feel inclined to doubt this statement, finding the subject-matter too abstract, I would point out, that most grown-ups would also not be able to divide in five figures, unless they had the necessary elementary training in arithmetics at school; they would, likewise, considering the haste and over-work of modern life, look upon an abbreviated instruction on mathematics as a very abstract subject hardly worth studying conscientiously. - Every reader, however, who has gone to the trouble of a complete study of this book, will undoubtedly come to the conclusion that everything is quite comprehensive; he will also realise, that every young man who has studied this book from A to Z, will be once and for all proof against becoming a Nazi or Fascist or a military chauvinist.

This statement obviously contains a great promise for the future. The conclusion being, that the peace of this world of ours can be established by the comparatively easy process of an appropriate training within our general system of schooling, instead of by subjugation, oppression and muzzling. It means, that the immense ballast of military, political and general organisations, now still necessary for maintaining peace, will in future become dispensable.

We may justly hope, that the present predominant problem of world security may be solved by the next generations. The psychological facts established in this book, however, purport to be of further significance. Wars are admittedly the worst, but by no means the only amongst the various avoidable evils, to which humanity has to submit. Lack of organisation,

It is the intention of the Allied Nations to ^{establish} create in Germany an economic state so that the Germans can never again wage war. It is the intention of this book to create in Germany a mental state so that the Germans will never want to wage war again. The latter method is more human and at the same time more efficient.

thoughtlessness, lack of judgment and mutual understanding and run down nerves all produce further evils, which likewise have nothing to do with providence or nature's catastrophes. These avoidable evils, the superfluous petty and incessant nagging of injudicious neighbours summed up together give rise to far more unhappiness amongst mankind, than all the unavoidable misfortune arising from illness or brought about by nature.

To abolish these avoidable evils and erase the traces of our barbarous nature would undoubtedly bring more blessing to mankind, than any further progress by science or technic could possibly produce. The latter, being the advanced guards of civilisation, have in any case by far outstripped the stage of general development and have left humanity as such behind in utter darkness. If we could imagine ourselves in the position of a supermundane and independent observer, we would be most surprised by the sharp contrasts of our civilisation; we would appear like a man wearing a perfect coat, whilst his legs are draped in rags.

The ragged and unbalanced condition of our civilisation is, in addition, accentuated by the present day decline of our religious life. This book contains a lengthy description of the disastrous process, which with all religions has led to a general deterioration under the influence of a the psychic perspective. In the course of the middle-ages the ethical functions of the Christian religion were gradually neglected and religious doctrine came to the foreground together with the militant church, which persecuted the heretics and infidels with fire and sword, and which constantly strived to strengthen it's worldly might. The ethical dogma of christian charity was renounced - a sin against the spirit which later avenged itself. We must not forget, that the origin of all religions dates back from a period in history, in which entirely erroneous conceptions on nature and on the part played by mankind in this world still prevailed. In the ensuing conflict between the advancing perceptions of natural science and traditional dogmatic system, the latter was therefore inevitably placed in the defensive, and constrained to fight a retreating battle. Unfortunately, the shock thereby given to simple faith quite generally undermined the confidence in the revelations of our religion altogether. As a result the predominant state of affairs in our twentieth century has come to be, that true religiousness nearly only exists in large parts of the rural population, whereas in the cities and with the working classes and with the majority of brain-workers membership

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to any particular religious confession practically only stands on paper. During Nazi regime in Germany, for instance, the main value of a certificate of baptism was to prove the arian descent of the holder.

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One of the consequences of this decline of religiousness has naturally been a corresponding deterioration of the general spiritual condition of mankind. ~~The question of a general decline in moral and of an~~ *increase in crime is, as such, an entirely different one.* Nevertheless, the absence of a certain spiritual hygiene, which is attached to religion, and the want of a great ideal governing all other interests must necessarily also take effect on a population, that is otherwise morally irreproachable. The people, after frittering away their aspirations on petty interests, begin to listen to the seduction of false prophets like Hitler and Mussolini and finish up by an idol-worship of the idea nation, which is not to be wondered at. This neglect of our spiritual self also explains, why to the highly cultivated and philosophical minded Chinese or Indian the average highly civilised European or American, despite all his superior knowledge and ability, so frequently seems a ridiculous and semi-tragic creature. Despite our superiority in many purely mental functions, the majority of us belonging to the Western civilisation have seldomly gained that philosophical calm and that faculty for spiritual absorption of an ideal far above worldly matters, that so greatly distinguishes the intellectual elite of the Orient. The impression we therefore create in these quarters is that of a nervous barbarian full of childish ambition, who, whilst wildly pursuing unimportant aims is continuously getting excited about the most petty matters.

Modern scientific progress with its rationalism is generally being blamed for the decline in religiousness. This is unjust, inasmuch as the attitude of the church in endeavouring to uphold a dogma of the middle-ages had in any case become untenable and had to collapse sooner or later. The very heavy blame, that nevertheless rests upon the scientists, is far more on account of their omissions and neglect of their responsibilities. They entirely ignored the strong psychic forces of religious feeling and all idealistic enthusiasm, or anything that was glorious and a manifestation of "Verklärung". All they did in this respect was to entirely disillusion the once pious souls of mankind and in place leave nothing but an ugly gap in spiritual life.

instead of attempting to build up a sound, popular and practical

The philosophers and psychologists, instead of occupying themselves with the structure of a healthy, popular and practical philosophy, that might effect civilisation and have an influence on the affairs of this world, withdrew to the domain of exclusive science with all the incomprehensibility and abstruseness typical to the scientific scholar. - Independently of the merits of natural science as such, the physicists have thereagainst worked very successfully in their own sphere and have undeniably left their great mark upon civilisation. The discoveries of Volta, Faraday and Heinrich Hertz and the inventions of Watt, Werner Siemens and Marconi have led to universal changes in the mode and the pace of our every day life. It is impossible to imagine these discoveries undone without depriving civilisation of its entire materialistic foundations.

men of the spiritual branch of science

In comparison hereto the works of the philosophers, psychologists and other scientists, who in the first place were ordained for the improvement of the moral and spiritual welfare of mankind, have left no appreciable mark behind whatsoever. The state of our spiritual being could hardly be worse, if these men had not lived at all. Europe has only recently been the scene of the most dreadful atrocities imaginable, both unopposed or even with the tacit consent of many exponents of our so called culture.

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Science, as shown, has undermined the authority of the church and of religion in general, without being capable of placing anything equally significant in its place for the guidance of our spiritual life. To ~~fill~~ fill up ~~good this omission~~, is the ultimate aim of this book. The author, being a University Professor, has endeavoured not to repeat the mistakes of his predecessors by writing a further purely scientific treatises. All the facts stated and all the observations made are being advanced with the sole aim of bringing to humanity that sane and intelligible philosophy of life, which has been so badly lacking for many generations. From the mammal species of ~~homo sapiens~~ ~~plans to the real~~

homo sapiens to the real homo sapiens, the truly wise man, is a long way. The title, which mankind bestowed upon itself in utter conceit and which in view of our present behaviour is sheer irony, has first to be won.

Although it is written by a University Professor and is therefore, ~~liable to be~~ ~~regarded as~~ ~~being~~ ~~too~~ ~~academic~~ ~~and~~ ~~abstruse~~ - its author has never let out of sight the great aim

Plenty → In making this statement we must

It would be a good thing in this connection to define the idea of a 'wise man' more closely. 'Sapient' means ~~the~~ wise man in the sense of the man that knows and understands. But beware of the polyhistor and the prig. It is quite impossible to be all-knowing; hence it makes no great difference, as to whether a person has learned a one-millionth or a ten-millionth part of all human knowledge. What is material is, that every man should know those things that concern him most; he must have a clear insight into his surroundings and must understand them, and furthermore he must have a clear judgment on the true order and rank of human values and interests. The true 'homo sapiens' will above all have to possess these qualities, quite irrespective of his general education.

We cannot help questioning why our Western civilisation has so completely neglected the cultivation of these both obvious and important faculties. In most countries we now have compulsory schooling from the age of six to fourteen, high school until about eighteen and university training until ~~approximately~~ ^{about} twentytwo or twentyfour, which means that on the average approximately eight to eighteen years are spent upon instilling all kinds of knowledge into every juvenile mind. Nevertheless, the majority of young people that have completed their education and are ready to start out in life, are quite hopeless, when it comes to judging their fellowmen or altogether the existing relations of persons to oneanother. For sheer lack of insight and understanding, by ~~misconstruing~~ ^{misconstruing} the motives of their neighbour's actions, or by way of a frequently misplaced distrust, they find themselves involved in unending conflicts. Naturally, not everybody is inclined to become a perfect judge of his fellow man; this requires certain inherent talent. ~~However,~~ ^{however,} ~~lack of purpose in our educational system to cultivate such faculties as each person may possess in this respect,~~ ^{lack of purpose in our educational system to cultivate such faculties as each person may possess in this respect,} has resulted in most people - and amongst these at least equal numbers amongst the intellectuals and the lower classes - remaining complete novices in the art of judging and treating their fellow men. We seldomly encounter mutual understanding and appreciation of the fundamental necessities for a successful companionship amongst mankind. Our present day social life, accompanied as it is by nervousness and an incessant jolting of one against another, gives one the impression of a badly greased machine creaking in all its joints. The wide scale training of homo sapiens and introduction into public life would have the effect of fitting this machine with well oiled ball-bearings.

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Most people, however, far from being experts in this respect, remain even complete novices

- a fact that is due to the lack of purpose in our educational system to cultivate such faculties as each person may possess in this line.

The subject-matter required for forming the true homo sapiens has been carefully composed in this book. It comprises the psychological perceptions already enumerated above and furthermore gives a short delineation of human nature and character. The knowledge ~~of the latter is necessary~~ of the outstanding facts about the various types of character and the different temperaments is necessary for the general improvement of human intercourse. A separate chapter finally treats the task of a methodical training to criticism and to self-criticism. The lack of true sapientia is disclosed most markedly by that extraordinary mixture of unjustifiable distrust on the one hand and of childish credulity on the other hand, which is so frequently ~~found~~ to be found with even highly educated people. Dozens of university professors can be seen light-heartedly repeating the most clumsy and mendacious phrases of political hate propaganda, and for sheer ~~want~~ absence of any gift for true criticism these same men will on the other hand practice quite unwarranted distrust towards their closest neighbours. It is obvious, that an improvement in our mutual relations cannot come about, as long as this state of mentality continues. To supplant the present-day thoughtless and hap-hazard manner of our relations to one-another by appropriate discriminating methods will be a great step forward in our development, comparable to the advance made centuries ago by natural science in supplanting the superstitions of the middle-ages by exact scientific methods.

One of the essential components of the art of practicing unprejudiced criticism is self-criticism. The inscription on the holy shrine of Delphi 'nosce te ipsum' is a first command of human wisdom. This has been made far too little use of in twentieth century education (atleast in the Axis powers). The master-man and super-man ideology of Fascism has even warned against self-criticism, in which it fears the dangerous result of 'self-derangement', and yet it is one of the most important things in life, that every one of us should ~~bring~~ ^{endeavour} ~~judgment to bear on~~ ^{to follow} the strong and the weak points of ~~our~~ ^{his} own character and ~~the~~ ^{the} extent of ~~his~~ ^{his} own abilities and faults. After all, we are ourselves the main partner in all our relations with our fellow-men, so that in order to be able to correctly judge these relations, we must necessarily first know something about ourselves. Honest introspection necessarily requires strength of character and wisdom combined with a certain spiritual maturity, failing which we may be overwhelmed by the deep cleavage in our soul and our entire being, with which we are presented.

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Are we towards ourselves always to remain the Veiled Image of Sais? The ideology, which fears that introspection will lead to self-derangement, would have us wear blinkers. As *homo sapiens* we have the courage to face the issue squarely. The things we have learned will be a safeguard to us against the perils of self-derangement. - In a special chapter on 'contrasts' I am describing to my readers that the habitual classification of 'good' or 'bad' is far too simple a pattern for distinguishing human nature. On the contrary, every person embodies hundreds of different qualities, which themselves again are liable to changes, as a result of which even the best man has his weak points and the so-called bad man has his good points. In coming across even major faults with ourselves we need therefore, as *homo sapiens*, by no means despair, nor need we try to cover up the facts. There is no disgrace in admitting our faults, nor is there any weakness in frankly admitting that by nature we are exactly that type, for which we recognise ourselves to be with all advantages and disadvantages. Generally speaking all we can do is to improve upon a number of easily corrigible bad habits and in particular to cheque such vices as might endanger our common life. Honest introspection is by no means a sign of weakness. On the contrary it requires great strength of character to overcome our conceit and to admit our faults. It also requires will-power for us to assert ourselves towards our fellow men in full knowledge of our shortcomings. - I would like to remind my readers in this connection of what has been said in the chapter on play-inclination and the dangers of the psychic perspective; otherwise this constant preoccupation with ourselves may easily become a fad and a terrible boredom to our poor fellow-men.

Whilst dealing with the manifestations of deterioration we have found one of the main features of all our endeavours and actions to lie in the tendency to go far beyond the mark. We should also bear this in mind in our endeavour to gain complete knowledge of our surroundings and of our fellow-men. A complete mental penetration of our surrounding world is an impossibility and even the keenest observer of human nature may misjudge his neighbour's motives, provided all the imponderabilities are not known to him. All that is required, therefore, from the *homo sapiens*, is a fundamental knowledge of psychic life, with the aid of which and allowing for circumstances he may be expected to form his own judgement. If this alone can be achieved, it will at least largely avoid the repetition of those terrible blunders, which are constantly multiplying our human sufferings.

we must bear in mind ⁻¹⁵⁻ that ~~there~~ even the praiseworthy endeavours to suppress these faults, should not be carried to the extreme.

Now, always remembering what was said about psychic deterioration, there is no object in carrying our endeavours to suppress these faults to the extreme. Even the wisest man may have his hobby and there is no harm in any of us enjoying ourselves with the small and innocent pleasures of every day life. What we, as *homines sapientes*, want to avoid at any cost, however, is to blindly follow in the footsteps of those untold millions, who are on the track after all sorts of sham values, and by fritting away their time on futilities make their lives so shallow and their hearts so barren, ~~finally lose every faculty~~ that they finally lose every faculty of uplifting their soul to the "verklärende" ideals of life.

Seeing it is not within our power to lay down a general rule on human values, we are, as far as this question is concerned, confined to a few essential observations. - We can, at least, establish two guiding rules, which are important for the governing of our actions and for the forming of our character.

In the first place: Mankind should develop a full and happy sense of life, at the same time laying as little claim as possible ~~for~~ ^{on} the services of others. According to modern standards everybody necessarily ~~requires~~ ^{needs} some service from his fellow-man, even if only to satisfy his simple requirements. The disproportion between the amount of effort necessary to achieve this and the volume of actual happiness realised thereby, is, however, most pitiful. From the point of view of life in general the improvement of this proportion is a fundamental necessity, as it is in essence the outcome of our entire collective effort.

efficiency
In the second place: The classic ideal of 'mens sana in corpore sano' requires a certain extension. Complete harmony should not only exist between mind and body, but also between mind and soul. The Homo Sapiens ideal briefly expressed, is: A responsive soul, enlightened by a clear and understanding mind.

Simply presented as above, these two maxims of life will probably ~~have~~ make no more impression on my readers, than the pious passages from the Bible, which are generally more read than obeyed. I am hoping, however, that by reading the numerous examples and illustrations taken from actual life, which are to be found in this book on every subject, will have more persuasive power and will exercise greater influence, than would otherwise be the case. The Homo Sapiens doctrine is the outcome of an object lesson on life. This explains, why in the following chapters so much space is given to critical reflections.

The Homo Sapiens doctrine is the guide to the elimination of ever so much unnecessary evil; to accomplish this, is the most urgent and important task of modern civilisation. Even then, there lies beyond these problems a far more sublime task, which one day will have to be fulfilled: The regeneration of modern Christianity by linking up religion with natural science. Towards this greater aim this book is only a first step.

with all the mistakes which are daily presented to us by our fellow-men.