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SURPRISE AND THE PSYCHO-ANALYST

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On the Conjecture and Comprehension of Unconscious Processes

By
THEODOR REIK

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DEDICATED IN TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP, TO

DR. I. E. G. VAN EMDEN

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SURPRISE AND THE PSYCHO-ANALYST

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

PSYCHOLOGY IS NOT SELF-EVIDENT

THIS book is an attempt—so far as I know, the first—to describe what is required of an investigator into the unconscious mental processes of another person, and what he achieves. By describing the psychological process of cognition from *within*, I intend at the same time to trace the way from conjecturing to comprehending the unconscious processes.

I shall not treat the processes of conjecture and comprehension of unconscious phenomena on the same footing. I shall establish the process of conjecture as far as my knowledge goes. As regards the process of comprehension, I shall only discuss its initial phases, its primary intent and psychical mechanism. This discrimination is due to the different part which the unconscious plays in the two processes; it is, of course, greater in the reconnoitring phase of conjecture than in the stage of cognition, in which the performances of the unconscious mind are apprehended with the resources and methods of conscious thought. I am concerned with the investigation of the *unconscious* and *preconscious* phases, leading from the perception of a psychical phenomenon to its comprehension.

Undoubtedly there are at the present time various schools of psychology occupied in the investigation of unconscious

psychical phenomena. Yet there can no longer be any question but that psycho-analysis denotes that school which has penetrated furthest into the unexplored regions of the science. If we wish to know what goes on in the psychologist who grasps the unconscious processes in another, we must first depict the nature and direction, the preliminary conditions and aims, of the processes in question. In the present case, since I may assume a knowledge of the results attained by psycho-analytical research, this part of the inquiry is superfluous.

Nor am I concerned with a systematic restatement of the methods of analysis, but with its psychological prerequisites. The reader will, therefore, hear nothing of the theoretical assumptions and the nature of the method of penetrating into the unconscious depths, nothing of the principle of psychical determinism, of associations, the manipulation of dream interpretation, nothing of the technique of psycho-analysis in the sense in which we ordinarily understand it.

The methods of psycho-analysis have been frequently and fully described. We have a series of works on the subject, from Freud's early papers to the recent book by Imre Hermann.

From the present work I have deliberately excluded everything that has already been treated in the scientific literature of psycho-analysis; only such questions will be dealt with as, to the best of my knowledge, have not yet been discussed by psycho-analytical writers in a manner adequate to their importance. That does not imply that I intend to confine myself to original matter. Not everything contained in this book is new. What is new, is that it is stated. In this sense—and only in this sense—the present work seeks to point to new roads in the technique of psycho-analysis.

In touching upon the subject of psycho-analytical technique, it will be well, I think, to utter a kind of warning—*avis aux amateurs*. I myself can have no opinion as to whether my readers will be able to learn anything from these essays. But one thing is certain: that they cannot learn the technique of psycho-analysis from them. For I disagree with a number

of my colleagues in holding that the *essence* of that technique cannot be learned. It can only be experienced. So I would beg my readers not to expect a text-book of the method of conjecturing and comprehending unconscious processes, but rather a demonstration that such a thing is impossible. A discussion of the psychical prerequisites of analytical technique must be prefaced by the statement that *technical problems of analysis are not merely problems of technique.* Technical difficulties are first and foremost psychological difficulties. That is to say, we have to do here with no manual or intellectual dexterity; on the contrary, this technique can be treated only in combination with a psychological delineation of the most intimate and secret processes within the mind of the analyst.

It is important for us to realize that this technique is not a collection of rules for correct behaviour during analysis, but the aftermath of our experience whilst applying the analytical method, the result of definite acquisitions and discoveries made in our practice. We do not proceed in analysis in accordance with predetermined technical principles. Rather do the principles spring from our behaviour as the result of experience. The use of technique preceded our comprehension of the reasons for its psychological applicability and necessity. In a large measure it sprang from unconscious psychical conditions, the nature of which was not perceived till much later. It was only in the course of the procedure which he had to follow, that the analyst attained to technical insight. Sometimes, but by no means always, it enabled him to give a subsequent psychological explanation of his technique. The vital reflections and conclusions which I propose to put forward in this book have arisen in the same way as other analytical perceptions. They have proved to be the upshot and outcome of numerous impressions which long remained unconscious, were only much later grasped by the conscious mind, and were examined critically again and again.

Let me proceed at once to announce a further limitation of

the problems put forward for discussion ; I propose to exclude the therapeutic purposes of analysis from the present investigation. We shall devote our attention to the heuristic and psychological aspect of the various questions. Even this distinction is artificial and unjustifiable, though not so marked in character as that of object and subject in the process of analysis. In order to excuse it, I may bring forward certain considerations, both objective and personal. The fact that psycho-analysis has given us the key to the realm of unconscious and repressed impulses and ideas has significance beyond the limits of its therapeutic application. The comprehension, or at least the conjecture, of unconscious impulses is an essential prerequisite of analytical therapy. At present—after almost four decades of development of psycho-analysis—we are in a position to state that its significance has acquired a new aspect. It started as a therapeutic method, making use of a certain insight into the unconscious life of the mind in order to attain its object. Formerly the analyst was merely a mental therapeutist of a particular school. We may also recall the fact that the methods of psycho-analysis at its inception were felt to be in direct conflict with the spirit of medical science, which it was easy in those days to interpret as rudely materialistic and mechanistic. They seemed rather in accordance with the spirit of the medical profession as it was understood in the beginnings of civilization and among the half-civilized peoples of distant continents, where the doctor is not sharply distinguished from the spiritual guide. And in truth, say what we will, the analyst was really nearer akin to the medicine man than to the medical scientist of that period. To us to-day, the analyst is primarily a psychologist, and analysis a psychological method which can be used for psycho-therapeutic purposes among others. The future will show that the use of analysis in the treatment of serious neuroses is not its most important application.

My second reason is educational in character : that is, the discussion of the way by which we come to conjecture un-

conscious processes, their nature, their hidden meaning, and their intent, is of the utmost importance from the point of view of the training of analysts. It appears to me dangerous to accord the first rank to the therapeutic, clinical aspect of analysis in our methods of training, as is often done at present. The psychological aspect must predominate. I know psycho-analysts who are nerve specialists with a wide knowledge of analysis, but nowise psychologists. Indeed, I believe, incredible as it may sound, that there are psycho-analysts whose main interest is not their psychological work. *But psycho-analysis must either be psychology, or it is nothing.*

My third reason for confining myself to the psychological aspect is a personal one: the little that I could contribute on the subject of therapy that would be new, or at least not hitherto stated, has not yet been tested so fully, empirically and theoretically, for me to venture to bring it forward before a wide circle of educated readers. Let me take this opportunity to add a second personal statement to this one: that I only now, after twenty years of analytical practice and theory, venture to speak on the subject of technique is due to two peculiar characteristics which necessarily prevented me from appearing earlier in print. The first is a great inability to learn from other people's mistakes. All the wisdom of proverbs, all exhortation and warning, is useless to me: if I am to learn from the mistakes of others, I must make them my own, and so perhaps cast them off. And with this kind of mental stubbornness or intellectual contumacy, another is combined: I am almost incapable of learning from my own mistakes, unless I have repeated them several times. Only in the case of one or two minor awkwardnesses have I been able to cure myself of them the second time that I had recognized them as such.

Moreover, I would beg my readers to consider one difficulty right at the outset which is involved in the special nature of our subject. We are concerned with processes that are hard to grasp and, for the most part, peculiarly hard to render

account of. If I do not succeed—and it is impossible that I should suceed—in presenting them in such a form as to satisfy strictly scientific demands, I shall not deplore that fact as much as might be expected. I am less concerned to provide my readers with scientifically unchallengeable theories than to give them an insight into the very remarkable psychological process by which we conjecture and comprehend the unconscious processes in another mind. I do not propose to give a full and minute description of that process, but to present it in such a way as to investigate the basic psychical facts and its essential phases, in particular to present that which is almost beyond the reach of description. I shall endeavour to seize upon as many as possible of the representative elements in this singular process, hitherto unexplored by psychologists, and to give some idea of the stream of mental power, flowing freely and yet under control, which is at work in it.

At certain points I shall not adhere strictly to my theme, but shall yield to the temptation of proceeding from it to more general psychological discussion, and once or twice even to hypotheses. In the same way, when we take a walk with a definite goal in view, it is permissible to step aside a little from the direct route when tempted by a wide view, and yet to return to it very soon.

I have trusted to escape the embarrassment involved in the choice of illustrative examples for an exposition of this kind by being chary of introducing examples, and have given preference to simpler ones, even where I might have taken others more convincing. Complex examples would divert interest too much from our main theme, and their full discussion might interrupt the continuity of the argument. It is true that this renunciation has the drawback that examples so restricted cannot be put forward as evidence. They cannot claim to be more than illustrations, introduced into the text in order to elucidate it.

* * * * *

With these preliminary remarks, we will seek for a line of

approach to our problem. What starting-point suggests itself as appropriate, now that we have defined and delimited our subject? Perhaps we shall do well to proceed to the subject of our special inquiry by way of a general psychological problem.

In the opening chapters of text-books and hand-books on psychology we seldom miss the question: how is it that psychology is possible? Doubtless Kant's statement of his problem provides the model for this question. It acquires a peculiar significance when we remember that the way of introspection, which is open to everybody, promises immediate certainty. Along these lines, it would seem, the question receives a prompt answer. We know that that does not prevent plenty from remaining that is open to question. If psychology in this sense is not problematical, it becomes all the more so when we are concerned with grasping and understanding the psychical processes in other minds. For what do we know of the inner life of other people? We only see expressive gestures, hear sounds, observe actions or their omission, but it remains for us to interpret all this. The psychical processes in others are not presented to us immediately, like those dealt with in physics. We have to infer them. Here, undoubtedly, we are faced with a difficult problem, and it is not made easier by an appeal to popular opinion, which is ignorant of these considerations and doubts, and naïvely deduces peculiarities in the psychical processes in other minds from words, actions, or their omission. Nor is the attempt to escape from the problem in the manner of the behaviourists successful. As we know, that school of psychology proceeds at once magnificently and economically. Our lack of insight is elaborated into a method; intellectual exigency is made a scientific virtue. The fact that we are presented only with gestures which are uncertain and hard to interpret is treated as if the conclusion to be drawn from it were that any such interpretation is superfluous.

The question remains: how is psychology possible? A solution would be easier if we could tell how we may secure evidence of the psychical processes in other minds. If I cannot

myself observe these processes, cannot see into the mind of another, I cannot know what is going on in it. True, we may claim that problems of this kind do not face us at the beginning of scientific research. They arise only when we have reached a certain limit, when certain unsolved problems cast an air of doubt over the whole character of the science in question.

Nevertheless, these questions, which arise at a certain stage in the development of every science, have their significance. Queries of this kind, which are full of meaning, are to be distinguished from others, for instance, those which lie in the direction of metaphysics and rather bear the character of brooding speculation. A number of German psychologists are particularly fond of investigating problems of the latter kind, and hold that their science must necessarily maintain a close connection with metaphysics. For this school of research it is but a step from the question : how is it possible to obtain sure knowledge of the psychical processes in other minds ? to a further query : how is it possible to obtain sure knowledge of the very existence of another person ? In that case, it is no longer a comprehension of the inner processes of the other that constitutes the problem, but his very existence. It would seem, indeed, that anyone might convince himself at once of the existence of another, and that in a thoroughly concrete manner. Any epistemologist would sweep such an argument aside with ease and assurance and contempt, suspecting it of pragmatism. For us laymen it is difficult to argue with epistemologists. But fortunately it is not necessary. There can be no disputes about our relative competence, so long as each confines himself to his own ground. We should reply to these sceptics that we act just the same as physicists, who also are not required to concern themselves with the transcendental nature of objects. A physicist, who is studying the laws of gravitation and conducts various experiments in his laboratory with a falling body, need not first solve the problem whether that body possesses absolute being. He assumes that the body which he uses in his experiment possesses as much

reality as his science demands. Similarly the psychologist will be indifferent to the problem of the non-existence of the other person, and will be untroubled by the reproach that his assumption has no foundation in epistemology, and that he is behaving like a simple-minded realist. No less simple-minded in its realism than this assumption that there are other people besides himself, is, perhaps, his second, that these beings have psychical processes. In leaving discussions of this sort to epistemology, I trust that their endeavours to prove the existence of their fellow-men will be crowned with success, so that the right of psychology to exist may be recognized by them, at least in principle.

Actually we should expect to be met with another question much more often than we are, likewise a question relating to the right of existence : why is psychology necessary as a branch of research and a science ? Naturally that question is least often put by the psychologists, who are convinced of the necessity of their science. But it is worth noting that in this assumption they have placed themselves in opposition, felt if not acknowledged, to the majority of their fellows. If we were to ask a hundred educated persons for an absolutely honest and blunt opinion in the matter, we should be driven to the surprising observation that a large number of these our fellow-citizens are by no means convinced that psychology is necessary as a special branch of science.

Is this sceptical, or, more accurately, negative attitude of mind only due to the fact that the persons asked are unable to perceive the direct use of psychology ? Undoubtedly the consideration of practical usefulness has something to do with their attitude. If we could succeed in convincing the sceptics that the employees in their works could be classified according to their characteristics by the methods of psycho-technical research, they would assuredly admit its necessity. Nevertheless, I do not think that the point of view that the science is of no practical use is the only, or even the strongest, reason for their negative attitude. The same persons would pre-

sumably recognize the necessity of the historical study of antiquity, though it also promises no direct practical advantage.

There must be some other reason, involved in the essential nature of the subject of this science, which makes so many people think, whether they admit it or not, that psychology is, if not superfluous, at least not essential. We might suppose that these educated persons are of opinion that we have in psychology a " science of what is not worth knowing " in the sense in which certain grammatical researches in classical philology pursued with the minutest precision are so described. The said educated persons will answer us : " No ; of course we consider psychology in practical life to be of importance, indeed, we constantly apply psychology in our intercourse with our fellows, in our professions and our hobbies." And now we guess what these our fellow-citizens mean when they refuse to admit that psychology may claim the same necessary character for its researches as all other sciences. The average educated person starts out with the conviction that he knows all about the psychical processes of himself and others. So that according to this view psychology is not in any way a " science of what is not worth knowing ", but a science of that which everybody knows already. But if psychological truth is self-evident, like moral truth, why should there be scientific methods of understanding it ?

It would hardly be difficult to persuade these sceptics to make at least a small concession. Presumably they would admit that the science of psychology has a certain right to exist, in so far as it describes, arranges, and classifies mental processes. Moreover, it states the general laws of our mental life, deduced from the observation of countless particular processes of which, it is claimed, everybody has direct knowledge and which everybody recognizes and understands at once, in virtue of a special propensity. But such a concession is nothing but a veiled repetition of the previous negation or repudiation, for there is no such thing as a science without research, without the observation of fresh individual facts,

without the discovery of relations hitherto unknown. A science which only describes and classifies, only examines a body of fact, already known and irrevocably stated, to ascertain the general laws governing it, which can discover no new facts, that is to say, a science without research, does not deserve the name. Yet that is the point of view of a surprisingly large number of educated persons, though they do not admit it : if psychology exists as an academic science, it has nothing new of importance to teach us. Let the reader grasp what that implies by comparing the attitude of the same educated persons towards other sciences ! Can we conceive a large number of cultivated persons, capable of judging and free from prejudice, being secretly of opinion that physics, chemistry, or the science of the structure of living bodies is superfluous, or rejecting mathematics or historical research ? Can we conceive these sciences being rejected on the strength of a conviction that they have nothing new to tell us, that we already know all that is worth knowing ? Should we not be surprised to come upon such opinions among educated people, and rather expect them among the semi-educated ?

And whence do these our fellow-citizens in fact derive their knowledge and perception of their own inner life and that of others ? Whence comes it ? There is no lack of assurance in the answer that we receive. With an indulgent smile at the naïveté of the question, we are told : " We know it, thanks to a special inborn gift for psychological cognition and by turning our experience to account. In the current of external events, and in silence and solitude, we have acquired a first-rate knowledge of the inner life, and we know what moves people, what urges them forward and what checks them. It may be that psychology can supply us with special scientific facts, but undoubtedly psychology is a poorer teacher than life." Let us admit that there is something in the answer. In my native country we sometimes say in joke that we are " trained Austrians ". That is to say, we were born and grew up here, and so we have no need to be taught about the follies

and careless muddles, the arrogance of office and the narrow-mindedness of the officials, the party abuses and the other peculiarities of Austrian life. We know quite well what life is in our country, for that same life has taught us. In a like sense, then, everybody is a " trained " psychologist. It is not difficult, however, to show that the information we have received is false in substance or distorted. Nobody of insight will deny that self-observation and the observation of others by those who have experience of life may supply a great quantity of true and valuable psychological facts, nobody will belittle the value of the judgments uttered by the people in their songs, proverbs, and fairy-tales. The works of great poets and religious thinkers, the memoranda of experienced doctors and statesmen, contain a mass of individual psychological perceptions and subtle observations. Yet the material which we find in these products of the mind can, as a rule, be valued and used only as the substratum of psychological research. It is necessary to extract the essence from often voluminous wrappings.

The difference between this kind of psychological cognition and that which scientific psychology provides is twofold in essence. It is marked not only by the inadequacy, and the lack of clarity and certainty, in short, by the personal and unscientific character of the statements, but also by the exceedingly narrow limits within which they can apply. It is something like the distinction between the kind of knowledge which everybody possesses about the structure and functions of his own body and that which a doctor has at his command. Nobody will claim that the statements of a patient about his own symptoms are without significance in diagnosing the trouble ; but nobody will regard them as sufficient and decisive.

In our own circle it is not necessary to demonstrate that the simple confidence felt by all educated persons in the reliability of their own psychological knowledge is founded upon prejudice. It was, I think, a French statesman who coined the phrase : nothing is so obstinate as fact. It is not only in the

sphere of material reality that facts have this quality. Likewise in the psychical field they have such incomparably vital power that sooner or later we are forced to recognize their existence. We can shut our eyes to them again and again, but we cannot keep them shut. An educated person cannot retain his pleasant assurance when the psychology of consciousness shows him how many and how important are the mental phenomena of whose existence and action the layman knows nothing. But his conviction that he knows all about the mental processes in himself and others must be very seriously shaken when, beyond the wide field of phenomena capable of reaching our consciousness, the incomparably wider field of the unconscious comes within our range of vision, a field which was, it is true, previously sketched in on the map of the inner life, but was first opened out for exploration by psycho-analysis.

I shall not take the trouble, therefore, to prove, as I easily could, that this prejudice regarding a universal gift for psychological cognition is erroneous. Indeed, I shall not even try to present the far stronger impression that there is a general gift for psychological non-comprehension and misunderstanding. It is more interesting and fruitful to find out what fragment of subjective and objective justification lies at the base of the said prejudice. Perhaps we shall return to the question later.

With regard to unconscious processes, the position would be much simpler if psychologists declared resolutely and unequivocally : these are effects with which you have never concerned yourselves, this is a region which you cannot enter. And that is the case. But just in this matter our science shows that everybody has within himself a peculiar kind of familiarity with or understanding of the unconscious. It tells us that the utterances of the unconscious are well understood unconsciously in human relations, nay, that there is a strange possibility of mutual understanding between the unconscious minds of two or more individuals, which may be compared with the

action of wireless telegraphy. That possibility interests us at the present day more than the demonstration of the impossibility of the conscious cognition of repressed experiences.

To admit that such a capacity exists has, meantime, approximately the same significance as to declare that somebody owns a treasure, but has completely forgotten where he buried it. The unconscious mutual understanding follows paths which, under normal conditions, are not accessible to our consciousness. Not only does psycho-analysis show us the nature of these unconscious processes, but it is also able to demonstrate the manner in which unconscious mutual understanding comes about, and to transform it into conscious comprehension.

Whilst I have taken as my aim to trace this inner aspect of the psychological process, we will not forget the question : why is psychology necessary ? It is no merely oratorical question, but one of values, and to answer it must lead us to the heart of psychological research. It was this question which first gave a stimulus to my investigation, and I shall now trust to its impetus.

CHAPTER II

CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS OBSERVATION

HOW can I give my readers a concrete idea of the processes which enable us to conjecture and comprehend the inner processes in others? They are by no means so simple as they appear to a layman, and it is the more difficult to describe them because they are, in part, incapable of expression in words. I propose to begin by dividing the process of conjecture and comprehension into three sections, although I know how artificial this division is, and how misplaced it must appear in face of the living current of the psychical act, so hard to differentiate.

The first section of the way, thus artificially divided, leads from the conscious or potentially conscious perception of the subject-matter to the point where it dives down into the unconscious mind of the psychologist. The second would then represent the unconscious assimilation of the data. The third stretches from the re-emergence into consciousness of the data so assimilated to the point of their description or formulation. Of the middle of these sections we can say nothing except that we have no direct access to it and that it interests us most of all. The other two sections are more accessible. True, we cannot fix the moment in which a perception dives down below our consciousness. No more can we state precisely the time of its re-emergence. For the rest, it is not only in respect of time that we are liable to error in this matter.

The actual process is only partially accessible to introspective observation. The act of slipping down into the unconscious region, the assimilation there, and the re-emergence into con-

sciousness, may best be compared with the passage through a tunnel. For each of the two sections there is a different degree of light. Whether we can depict them, depends upon the brightness of that light.

The first section begins in the daylight of consciousness. Let us call to mind the analytical situation which presents itself to us daily: the subject speaks or is silent, and accompanies his speech or silence with "speaking" gestures. We see the play of his features, the variety of his movements. All this communicates to us the vital expression of what he is feeling and thinking. It supplies the psychical data which the analyst then assimilates unconsciously during the period which we have called the second section.

But is this really the whole of the psychical data that he has at his disposal and uses? If we recall the course of an analytical treatment, do we not feel that something is missing in this account, something important, nay, decisive? Our feeling is right. *In truth, we are incapable of dissecting into all its component parts the process by which we recognize psychological fact.* The data presented to the analyst must be more extensive and differentiated than appears to him during or after the treatment; his field of observation must be wider. It appears that I have committed errors even in my description of the data at his disposal. What the analyst is able to perceive and comprehend consciously is probably only a selection which he makes retrospectively. What his conscious memory supplies to him is only a small portion of what he actually uses. In other words, the analyst knows only a part of the data on which his judgment is based that such and such processes are going on in the unconscious mind of the person he is observing. Our apprehension of the other personality is not restricted to our conscious perceptions. The individual inner life of a person cannot be read in those features which psychology has hitherto grasped and been able to grasp. Of course I know how little new there is in what I am now saying. It is the unconscious mind of the subject that is of

decisive importance, and the analyst meets that with his own unconscious mind as the instrument of perception. That is easy to say, but difficult to realize. Psychologists can hardly conceive the notion of unconscious perception. For psychoanalysis the notion presents no difficulty, but to understand the peculiar nature of unconscious perception and observation is not so easy.

For the moment we will turn from the theoretical consideration of the problem, and proceed with the help of any casual example from daily practice. Any one is as good as another. A patient told me how on the previous day he had had a violent quarrel with the girl with whom he had had sexual intercourse for a considerable time. At first the conversation had turned upon the girl's health ; she had been feeling weak and poorly latterly. She had remarked that she was afraid of tuberculosis, she weighed too little and must put on flesh. The young man, my patient, did not think that necessary. He opposed it on æsthetic grounds. How did the analyst suddenly perceive that the quarrel centred unconsciously upon the question of a child ? Nothing in the young man's account pointed that way. Looking back, I discern that my sudden idea carried me back at one bound to something my patient had told me about a year and a half earlier. About two years previously the girl had become pregnant and, at his urgent entreaty, had procured abortion. She had offered no great resistance to the suggestion of abortion, and had undergone the operation, which proved difficult owing to special circumstances, with real heroism. Subsequently she had seldom mentioned the incident, and that only in passing. And my patient had barely recurred to the subject since that occasion.

Now was it the words " putting on flesh " in his story that roused the memory ? How else could the latent meaning of the lovers' quarrel have revealed itself to me ? I could not tell, even though I were to repeat the story with the accuracy of a gramophone. It must have declared itself somehow or other, in spite of the fact that the girl's fears, according to the

patient's account, sounded entirely reasonable and justifiable. In spite of her perfectly well-founded plea, he must have detected some tone of secret reproach in her words—a tone of which even I, who was not present, was sensible. They must have conveyed to him that the girl had never got over her loss. What psycho-analysis tells on the subject is that my own unconscious mind had acted as an instrument of perception and seized upon the secret meaning of the quarrel, a meaning which was hidden even from the two speakers. It is good to know that, but it is not enough. My unconscious mind was able to conjecture the hidden meaning only through certain signs. It required tokens in order to detect something. Now I have deliberately chosen a primitive example. This is a case of cryptomnesia, people will say. A memory no longer present in my consciousness was responsible for my recognition of the latent meaning. The unconscious remembrance of that long-past incident, emerging suddenly during the story, set me on the track.

Let us take an example that is only a little more complex and has to do with a like conflict, but in which no such memory of heuristic value can be traced. A young girl under psycho-analytical treatment evinces an extraordinary fear of marriage. She repulses any man who makes approaches to her after a short interval, and shrinks from any chance of marriage or sexual intercourse. The reason she always gives for her attitude is her exceptional terror of the dangers of childbirth. She is convinced that she would not survive the pain, and would die. At the mere thought of childbirth she is overcome by violent terror. Her own reference to the many millions of women who survive childbirth without injury, or to the possibility of preventive measures, she herself nullifies by stressing the uncertainty precisely in her own case. Now she had spoken of this fear of hers several times without my understanding more of the nature or mental origin of her emotion than any other observant auditor. How was it that on this occasion I suddenly recognized that, apart from all

other mental determinants, a profound fear must be at work, overshadowing all other feelings, that she was incapable of bearing a child, and that any man must be unhappy with her? Of course I did not give expression to this idea about the suppressed nature of her fear, but waited till the astonishing surmise had been confirmed again and again. In this case I cannot detect in myself any memory of some previous communication, emerging suddenly from the unconscious and helping me to find the connection. Nothing in the girl's statements, so far as I could remember then or have been able to since, pointed to her being dominated by an unconscious fear lest she should be unable to bear a child, which fear I was subsequently able to trace to apprehensions based upon long continued onanism. I had listened attentively to her lamentations and her story without dreaming of any such thing, when suddenly this idea entered my mind, giving me my first and most important means of approach to an understanding of the case. Here, then, there was no memory, or—to put it more cautiously—none traceable. Nevertheless, there must have been something in the patient's words, or something to be read between the lines, which pointed in that direction, something in her utterances, verbal, or mimetic, or otherwise, which suggested the connection.

Here we are faced with a whole series of questions. The idea must arise from something. Why did it arise just at this juncture, since we had talked of her fear previously, since, indeed, she had often told me about it?—What went on within my mind, on what mental processes was the idea based, and what preceded it? But is it not erroneous and unjust to lay special stress on this side of the problem? Is it not better to assume that my idea must have been based upon some factor not hitherto grasped, that is to say that it must ultimately be traced back to some sense perception? In that case, unnamed impressions became the means of communicating psychological knowledge. That brings us back to our starting-point, to the nature of the data at our disposal. It appears

to me that it is here that we must begin, if we want to discover the foundation of the psychical comprehension of unconscious processes. If Kant begins with the statement that cognition arises from experience, that true dictum must be supplemented by the statement that experience has its origin in our sense perceptions. *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensibus* is also true for a psychologist who seeks to grasp the unconscious processes in others.

Psychical data are not uniform. We have, of course, in the first place the considerable portion which we seize upon through the conscious sense perceptions of hearing, sight, touch, and smell. A further portion is what we observe unconsciously. It is permissible to declare that this second portion is more extensive than the first, and that far greater importance must be ascribed to it in the matter of psychological comprehension than to what we consciously see, hear, etc. Of course we seize upon this, also, by means of the senses that we know, but, to speak descriptively, it is preconscious or unconscious. We perceive peculiarities in the features and bearing and movements of others, which help to make the impression we receive without our observing or attending to them. We remember details of another person's dress and peculiarities in his gestures, without recalling them; a number of minor points, an olfactory nuance, a sense of touch in shaking hands too slight to be observed—warmth, clamminess, roughness or smoothness in the skin, play a part—the manner in which he glances up or looks: of all this we are not consciously aware, and yet it influences our opinion. The minutest movements accompany every process of thought; muscular twitchings in face or hands and movements of the eyes speak to us as well as words. No small power of communication is contained in a glance, a person's bearing, a bodily movement, a special way of breathing. Signals of subterraneous motions and impulses are being sent silently to the region of everyday speech, gesture, and movement. A series of neuro-dynamic stimuli come to us from other people and play a part in pro-

ducing our impressions, though we are not conscious of noticing them. There are certain expressive movements which we understand, without our understanding exactly being at work in that understanding. We need only think of the wide field of language: everybody has, in addition to the characteristics that we know, certain vocal modulations which do not strike us, the particular pitch and timbre of his voice, his particular speech rhythm, which we do not consciously observe. There are variations of tone, pauses, and shifted accentuation, so slight that they never reach the limits of conscious observation, individual nuances of pronunciation which we do not notice, but note. These little traits, which have no place in the field of conscious observation, nevertheless betray a great deal to us about a person. A voice which we hear, though we do not see the speaker, may sometimes tell us more about him than if we were observing him. It is not the words spoken by the voice that are of importance, but what it tells us of the speaker; its tone comes to be more important than what it says. "Speak, in order that I may see you," said Socrates.

Language—and here I do not mean only the language of words, but also the inarticulated sounds, the language of the eyes and gestures—was originally an instinctive utterance. It was not till a later stage that language developed from an undifferentiated whole to a means of communication. But throughout this and other changes it has remained true to its original function, which finds expression in the inflection of the voice, in the intonation, and in other characteristics. It is probable that the language of words was a late formation, taking the place of gesture language, and it is not irrational to suppose, as that somewhat self-willed linguist, Sir Richard Paget, maintains, that the movements of the tongue originally imitated our various actions. Even where language only serves the purpose of practical communication, we hear the accompanying sounds expressive of emotion, though we may not be aware of them.

There are besides nuances of smell, peculiarities of touch, which escape our conscious observation and yet enter into the sum total of our impressions. They accompany the coarser or stronger conscious sense perceptions as overtones accompany a melody. In a state of hyperæsthesia we may even consciously observe these variations of tone, glance, or gesture, minutest facial movements, and muscular twitchings; but that is exceptional. In a general way it is only the grossest of these accompanying movements, tones, and smells that reach our consciousness and are consciously used as psychological data. The others appear as part of the total impression. They do not emerge separately in our perception. There can be nothing wrong in comparing these unconscious perceptions with those minute sense stimuli which in fact continue, although they do not reach our conscious senses. Psychology teaches us that these tiny stimuli need only be added together or multiplied in order to become accessible to conscious perception. Each, then, of these minutest stimuli must have contributed something to the sensation. We know that technical science has devised apparatus to bring within our grasp these natural processes which we should otherwise be unable to perceive. And here I will call attention to the important fact of repression, which greatly restricts our capacity for perceiving tiny signals of this kind.

Perhaps we shall do well to draw a distinction between this part of our psychical data and another, even though the distinction may prove at a later stage to be purely descriptive. It is true that the facts with which we have just been dealing are unconscious, but they do undoubtedly fall within the group of sense perceptions of which we have knowledge. I should like to draw a distinction between these and certain other data, also unconscious, helping like the former to shape our impressions, but such that their precise nature can only be surmised. That is to say, we receive impressions through senses which are in themselves beyond the reach of our consciousness. The assumption of these sense perceptions that

have no place in human consciousness or have lost their place in it, is supported by certain facts, and rendered exceedingly probable by others. I mean especially the fact of sense communications having their origin in the animal past of the human race and now lost to our consciousness. Bees' sense of direction, the capacity of birds of passage to find their way, the sense of light in insects' skin, the instinctive realization of approaching danger in various animals, all bear witness to sense functions with which we have hardly anything to compare in our perceptions. Of other sense functions which resemble those of the animals, it may be said that our perceptions are much vaguer, weaker, and less certain. It is easy to detect in them the rudiments of originally keen and well-developed senses. We need only compare the large part played by the sense of smell among dogs and its small significance in our own lives.

Freud has established the probability that the importance of the sense of smell has been thus greatly diminished in man through the development of his upright gait. The fact that the sense of smell tells dogs of things no longer accessible to us, may serve as an example of the diminished importance of a number of sense functions in the life of the human race. Certain senses are reduced to rudimentary remnants from being less and less used. Do we not say: "I cannot scent him," as if we were still olfactory creatures? We might venture to trace the origin of psychology to the sense of smell. Do we not still speak of "scenting" such and such a motive behind X's action? I am of opinion that there are more of these rudimentary senses, tracing their origin to the evolution of prehistoric man, which are not, indeed, totally lost, but have lost their heuristic significance.

In addition there are other senses of which we have completely lost consciousness and which yet retain their efficacy, that is to say, are able to communicate unconscious impressions to us. A comparison with the sense perceptions of animals—for instance, the way in which certain insects can

receive and communicate perceptions—points to the supposition that like senses may survive unconsciously in ourselves. I have in mind such a thing as the means of communication among ants, described by K. Frisch, and the signals which ants give with their antennæ and which the researches of Forel, Wismann and others have explained. Assuredly, there is a significant language in the animal kingdom, and means of communication not ours, or no longer ours. The biologist Degener, in his study of simple animal societies, has assumed a kind of telepathic communication. A minute stimulus given by a particular species of caterpillar to a single individual within a large group caused a simultaneous palpitation throughout the whole group. Degener speaks of a hyperindividual group soul in these animal societies. Freud, too, has recently pointed to the possibility of such direct psychical communication. With reference to the common will in the large insect communities, he thinks that this original, archaic means of communication has been replaced in the course of racial evolution by the superior method of communication by signs. But the older method may, he thinks, survive in the background and be able to assert itself under certain conditions.

It will be observed that, in assuming a direct psychical communication through these archaic, rudimentary surviving senses, we approach the complex of problems known as telepathy. I believe in the special case of communication between two unconscious minds called by that name, these neglected senses, favoured by the weakened action of the others, do really come into action. Such telepathic communication is not supersensuous. It makes those senses actual which have become alien to our consciousness. By using as signals the expression of stimuli which do not cross the threshold of our consciousness, and calling them in to supplement or correct our normal sense perceptions, it gives rise to special psychical apprehensions. The conversation between the unconscious of the one and the other mind does not proceed in a vacuum. It is served by certain means of communication

comparable with those which we have assumed in the lower animal societies. They are not so much supersensuous as subsensuous phenomena, that is, information conveyed by means of ancient, ordinarily discarded senses. The return to these unknown senses, which must formerly have played a far greater part in the activities of living organisms, may sometimes give rise to the impression that telepathy involves no sense perception at all. We have here, not mysterious powers of divination, but rather an interruption of the customary working of our psychical machinery to make way for older methods, not otherwise applied. Thus the unconscious perception passes the bounds of communications received through our known sense organs; we have ears, and hear not with them alone; we have eyes, and see not with them alone. Possibly these unknown senses work faster than those which we know, can communicate their perceptions to the unconscious sooner than the later developed senses, and so seem to act through the air. And it is further worth observing that this action upon secret feelers of which we are unconscious belongs mainly to the realm of instinct, so that we may speak rather of instinct-reading than of thought-reading. The suspension of customary functions renders less keen senses hyperæsthetic —by way of comparison we may recall the greater intensity and subtlety of the sense of touch in people who lose their sight—and long-forgotten senses recover the power of functioning. The enhanced effectiveness is, therefore, caused by the neglect of the mind's ordinary methods of working.

We have long been aware that the acknowledgment of telepathy as a psychical phenomenon does not imply that higher powers are substituted for the dynamics of mental action. It is not necessary to assume supersensuous happenings because the conditions of some small fragment of what goes on in the world are still unexplained. We need not give ourselves up to magic because the cause and effect of some process is unknown to us. We must confess that our knowledge is not adequate to explain the phenomenon. It does not become

more explicable, if we refer it back to some greater unknown factor. When we want to drink a glass of milk, we have no need to buy a cow. The psychological valuation of the efficacy of unknown or little known senses has brought us here to the limits of our subject.

Whilst we have thus been reminded of the prehistoric past of sense perceptions, we may now cast a hasty glance in the opposite direction. The advance of civilization has caused certain senses to perish, and others to become more specialized and differentiated. In general we may say that the development of civilization has reduced the importance of sense perceptions, has challenged the exclusive dominion which they originally had in the life of the individual. The aim is to manage with a minimum of sense perception and to leave the subsequent process of cognition to the intellect. With the advance of civilization sense perceptions are more and more markedly degraded to despised acts preparatory to the intellectual mastery of phenomena. We may cite as a sign of this weakening our mistrust of the data with which they supply us. The development of civilization brings a weakening and stunting of sense impressions which may be compared with the loss of keenness in our sense impressions in old age, deafness and long sight, which, however, are due to biological causes. There are reasons in support of the hypothesis which refers this diminished significance of the senses to the advance of the age-long process of repression. The conceptions " sense " and " sensuality " are not merely loosely associated in speech, but there is an inner connection which gives us an insight into certain psychical processes. The pleasure of the senses really is a pleasure arising from the tension and relaxation of the sense organs. Sense perception, the significance of which is more and more restricted with advancing civilization by the intellectual processes, particularly memory, is closely associated with the satisfaction of organic and elementary instincts. As memory develops, it comes to represent a substitute for the fading strength of sense perceptions. It

might be argued that the loss of intensity and significance in the senses is a mark of diminishing vitality in the human race, since it is associated with a weakening of sexual instinct.

Perhaps the retort might be made that it is precisely civilization which has greatly increased the keenness of our sense perceptions through the instruments it has created. It enables us to see things through the microscope and telescope that were not formerly visible, enables us, by means of appropriate instruments, to hear sounds formerly inaudible, communicates sensations of touch and vibration otherwise beyond the reach of our consciousness. That is true, but it is not in contradiction with the previous statement. In part these instruments serve to correct the very evil caused by civilization—for instance, spectacles—for the rest, their efficacy has certainly nothing to do with processes that are of vital interest to our organism. Undoubtedly, they are of great importance, but it cannot be denied that they are artificial expedients, offering a poor substitute for the direct data communicated by organic sense perception. Perhaps we may venture to regard memory itself, which challenges the importance of sense perception with advancing civilization, as a disposition to feel the strength and immediacy of sense perceptions over again.

Let us return from this digression to our main argument. We have sought the special significance of sense perception in psychology in a different direction from that to which modern sense physiology and psychology point. We have grasped how varied and differentiated psychical data are when we set about to investigate them from the point of view of sense perception, but also how hard to differentiate. Besides the main path, they can use a number of side-paths, subterranean passages, secret ways. In addition to our conscious sense perceptions, we receive communications through other organs of perception which we cannot consciously call our own, although they are within us. We can treat these signals like any others. We can attend to them or neglect them, listen to them or miss them, see them or overlook them. There is

a very natural temptation not to attend to them or observe them. A frequent part of our capacity for unconscious and pre-conscious perception is the observation that something is lacking, the subterranean awareness that something is not there. It is certainly right and useful to sharpen our power of conscious observation of things perceived. In addition, we should not overlook the value of unconscious perception ; we must not reject what makes itself felt by other means, even if it fails to make itself felt in consciousness at once. A psycho-analyst must aim at bringing into the field of consciousness those impressions which would otherwise remain unconscious. Undoubtedly individual differences will exercise an influence upon his efforts : the practice and sensitiveness of the individual will vary, the readiness to trust to tiny stimuli, and the capacity to register these tiny impressions, are not possessed by all to an equal extent. And so we should pay attention to the first, hardly noticeable impressions that we receive of a person, however much they may soon be drowned by other, more insistent impressions. Without doubt " l'empreinte du premier " is of importance. The first impressions need not be right, but they often contain true apprehensions in a distorted form.

These signals do not convey clear information. They are nowise comparable with modern signposts, upon which destination and distance are precisely indicated, but rather with old finger-posts whose lettering is weather-stained and half illegible. Many of the gaps and errors in our psychological comprehension must be attributed to our inattention to these unconscious signals. They may be blurred and their import difficult to determine, they nevertheless supplement conscious perception, and in certain cases they alone enable us to discern its significance or correct the significance which we mistakenly ascribe to it. It is true that psychological investigation meets here with much that is imponderable and difficult to grasp. Research must not ignore these factors. The best that we owe to the psychology of the unconscious is the result

of prolonged observation, without premisses. But it would be a mistake to assume that this observation is purely conscious. Not until we have learnt to appreciate the significance of unconscious observation, reacting to the faintest impressions with the sensitiveness of a tinfoil leaf, shall we recognize the difficulty of the task of transforming imponderabilia into ponderabilia.

In fact, our psychological impressions are the result of the joint assimilation of conscious and unconscious perceptions. And here the conscious perceptions act, in a sense, like the last fragments of day to which something different is attached, behind which something different lies concealed, something deeper than daytime thoughts. If we thrust aside the doubtful communications from the unconscious, as being unreliable, indefinite, and contrary to our conscious judgments and prejudices, we shall, it is true, seldom be deceived, but then we shall seldom attain surprising knowledge. Indeed a special kind of keen scent is no less essential than acumen for a psychologist who wants to grasp the unconscious processes.

If we survey our psychological data once more in all their variety and over the whole field, from the strongest expression of emotion to the imponderabilia, we become aware that we are treating them as if they served no other purpose but to tell us something about the inner life of another person. That is certainly not exclusively the case, and yet it is the case. I mean to say that they must aim, among other things, at communicating to us something about the hidden processes in the other mind. We understand this primary endeavour; it does serve the purpose of communication, of psychical disburdenment. It has, therefore, a sound reason in the economy of the inner life. We are reminded of Freud's view that mortals are not so made as to retain a secret. "Self-betrayal oozes from all our pores." I believe, moreover, that these words do indicate the organ which was the sole medium of self-betrayal in the early stages of evolution. Originally most likely it really was first and foremost man's bodily surface,

the skin, that showed what was going on within. It was the earliest organ to reflect mental processes. Blushing and turning pale still betray our feelings, and perspiration still breaks out when we are afraid. All self-betrayal makes its way through the pores of the skin. That statement clamours for a sequel. What sequel may easily be guessed when we reflect that we react to the unconscious with all our organs, with our various instruments of reception and comprehension: "*The self-betrayal of another is sucked in through all our pores.*"

CHAPTER III

NOTICING, ATTENTION, AND TAKING NOTE

I HAVE spoken of the tiny signals, the faint stimuli which slip past and attain such suggestive significance for the conjecture of unconscious processes. In face of such differentiated data, so hard to grasp, one would think that the keenest attention was called for. One might picture the psychoanalyst as a man leaning forward in his chair, watching with all five senses for these minute signs, anxious lest one should escape him.

The picture is false, and the analyst's attention is of a different kind. There are two factors which have induced Freud to recommend poised attention.[1] It saves tension, which, after all, it is not possible to maintain for hours, and it avoids the dangers which threaten in the case of deliberate attention directed towards a particular aim. If we strain our attention to a certain point, begin to select from among the data offered, and seize upon one fragment especially, then, Freud warns us, we follow our own expectations or inclinations. By this means the danger naturally arises that we may never find anything but what we are prepared to find. If we follow our inclinations, we are sure to falsify the possible perception. The rule that we must note everything equally, is the necessary counterpart to the demand we make upon the patient to tell everything that occurs to him without criticism and selection.

When we hear this recommendation of poised attention, we get the impression that it is a course easy to pursue. But in

[1] The term used in Brili's translation of Freud is " mobile attention ". I have preferred " poised attention ", which is closer to the German *gleichschwebende Aufmerksamkeit.—Translator's Note.*

practice it is hardly less difficult than the course required of the patient, of which it is the counterpart.

Only ignorance of how this principle is carried out has prevented psychologists from beginning their criticisms of this point in psycho-analytical theory and practice. I will myself anticipate their criticism by way of experiment, and will begin with the last sentence of Freud's recommendations, in which he advises the particular kind of attention in which everything is noted equally. It is plain that here two notions are confused which, strictly speaking, have nothing to do with one another: poised attention and taking note. The first notion has to do with a particular attitude of mind or reaction to data presented, the other to a feat of memory. It is true that the word "note" can be used for both, and the lingual connection will doubtless have a certain significance for psychology. But in fact it seems that the scientist passed from the subject of attention to the far removed theme of capacity for taking note, without being fully aware of it. Is attention, then, inseparably associated with taking note, with memory? Assuredly not. When I stand at a crossing and direct my attention to the traffic, is there anything of which I need take note, that I need impress upon my memory? And now: how can poised attention and taking note be brought into consonance? If, from the wealth of a mass of passing data, we want to take note of something, we must direct a keen gaze upon special points, turn our attention to them in particular, must we not? How can I take note of anything, if I do not direct my whole attention to it, if I treat insignificant detail in exactly the same way as what is important? Perhaps it will be said that the notion of poised attention aims precisely at taking note of everything and remembering everything. But is not that notion self-contradictory? Attention is always directed only to particular objects. Attention, we have always been taught, implies selection; how can we avoid the danger of selection, if we want to be attentive?

Anyone who has studied the psychological literature on this question will immediately cite passages from a number of books by distinguished psychologists, in which particular stress is laid upon the statement that the notion of attention does imply selection, nay, that without that essential feature it is meaningless. Let me quote, for a number of others, a representative passage from Th. Ebbinghaus's *Outline of Psychology* (*Abriss der Psychologie*): "Attention is a phenomenon of selection and limitation. The mind escapes from the excessive mass of demands that are perpetually being made upon it in favour of a few which bear a special relation to its own aims." Indeed attention has been defined as "the preference consciously shown to certain mental contents". We might also point to the "narrowness of consciousness", fully investigated by science, to the well-known fact that only a certain number of ideas can find a place in our field of consciousness, and that a kind of rivalry or struggle goes on at its threshold between the ideas pressing for admittance. A large number of experiments, prepared and carried out with remarkable precision and acumen, have led to the establishment of the exact number of perceptions and ideas for which our consciousness has room. All this argues against the possibility of poised attention. Let us consider, further, what scientific psychology tells us of the origin of attention. I will take as a representative example the hypothesis of Karl Groos, a distinguished investigator who claimed, with the support of very intriguing arguments, the "instinct of spying" as the original form of attention. Out of this primary form, which, indeed, represents the "expectation of future events", out of what we may call motor attention, theoretical attention has evolved. Allowing for the distance travelled from this basic form, we should be compelled to recognize in every type of attention its derivation from an instinctive motor reaction. But surely the idea of a poised spying appears absurd.

I would beg my readers to note that my improvised criticism does not aim at investigating an analytical theory of attention,

for no such theory exists, certainly none set up by Freud. We will, therefore, only treat the subject in so far as is necessary in connection with our problem, attention in analysis. And here we must first admit that in one direction the criticism is justified. It would have been more to the point, more advantageous, to treat the question of attention separately, and not to confuse it with that of memory. Still, the association of the two sets of problems may be accounted for by the peculiar nature of the technique of analysis. Freud himself points out that the analyst is usually told things whose significance he cannot recognize till afterwards, sometimes long afterwards. Perhaps the frequent use of the term " taking note " (*sich merken*) is a peculiarity of Austrian speech. At the same time, it is not mere chance that we speak of attention and the capacity for paying attention (*Aufmerksamkeit* and *Merkfähigkeit*). An important psychological association is here revealed. It generally remains at the back of our minds, because we are accustomed to connect attention with a mental achievement corresponding to an instantaneous or immediate reaction. For instance, we test the attention of a subject in the laboratory by causing auditory stimuli to act upon him at definite intervals, and telling him to make some movement, give some signal, as soon as he hears them. A teacher tests his pupil's attention by calling upon him suddenly to continue a sentence which another has just begun to translate. It will be objected that these are very primitive examples. No doubt, but it is just such examples that I chiefly want to bring forward. Attention generally enables us to react immediately to an event or impression. In analysis attention is in a state of poise, and we have been told that the explanation is that not till afterwards can we recognize the significance of the things to which attention is directed.

I have already said that the attention which is directed, for instance, in a laboratory experiment to an impression, serves to grasp it clearly, to appraise its significance at once, to master it, so to speak, by understanding as soon as possible. That,

of course, presupposes that, simultaneously with the impression or soon afterwards, its significance can be recognized. If I go for a walk in a field and something leaps up out of the grass and runs across the path, I recognize at once : Oho ! a hare. If I have good eyesight and there is sufficient light, there can be no doubt. I need not wait until later when, perhaps several hours afterwards, the conviction comes over me : that was a hare. My attention was, so to speak, rewarded at once by recognizing the object, and perhaps, if I had a gun, there might be a further reward. There are, of course, other impressions whose recognition requires time and severe effort. Think, for instance, of the psychical process which we call observation. Such observation may be prolonged, our recognition of the significance of a process may not occur for a considerable time. And here we are really approaching the essential character of analytical attention. It is akin to that of an observer, but important differences remain to be considered. An observer generally selects a definite section of a process, e.g. a perception section, and his attention helps him to recognize the meaning of one or other feature. Undoubtedly the analyst does something of the same kind : he, too, selects a section, for instance, the utterances and expressive gestures of a person, and he wants to know what they mean. But we must reflect that he grasps this section in two different ways. We may say that he reaches two apprehensions : one perception in which he clearly recognizes what the words and movements of the person observed mean : just what they say ; and a second which sets small value upon the conscious meaning in contrast with another which he does not know and which has still to be discovered.

That is not very clear. Perhaps, then, I may have resort to a comparison. Let us suppose that we are in a foreign country and hear a certain sentence in the foreign language, of which we already know many words. We come upon an unknown expression, retain the word, and resolve to look it up later in the dictionary. There we find it, and we immedi-

ately understand the sentence. Here, too, then, our attention is directed to preparation for subsequent understanding. Let me vary the example a little. We do find the word in question in the dictionary; if we insert it in the sentence, it gives a definite meaning, but not one which could possibly have been intended then by the speaker. The whole situation refutes it; the word must have another meaning, not given in the dictionary. Perhaps we have a case of an ordinary, everyday expression which is used in a special meaning in those circles, e.g. among students, or perhaps an allusion only understood in that particular social sphere. The dictionary has been of no use to us, and we decide to await future illumination, when, for instance, the same expression appears in a new connection. We save up the expression, so to speak, and on some future occasion we mean to guess the hidden secondary meaning. Now many impressions that we receive during analytical observation are of a like nature.

We will occupy ourselves a little with the most important distinctions drawn by psychology in respect of attention. It is one of the most disputed subjects of research. In fact everything about it is the subject of dispute; whether it is an activity or a state, is as hotly debated as its premisses and motives, its psychogenesis and its psychopathology. Nay, its very existence is open to question. Not long ago a Copenhagen professor seriously maintained at a psychological congress that it was only a pseudo-conception, and spoke of the non-existence of attention.

We shall not be surprised at the importance attributed to the problem of attention in psychology, if we bear in mind how inseparably it is connected with the phenomena of consciousness and the system of memory, how it accompanies the psychical process from the sense perceptions to the ideas, how it applies equally to our sensations and our emotions, is placed in the service of our will, and runs like a thread through our whole inner life. Psychology distinguishes voluntary and involuntary attention. The former is derived from selective

interest, conscious of an aim, whilst the latter is sometimes described as a partially mechanized instinctive function. The former is mainly active in character, the latter mainly reactive. The sensations of tension and the emotions of activity that are ascribed to attention appear more markedly and clearly in the voluntary type than in involuntary attention, which is released by momentary external and internal stimuli. We may say that in general voluntary attention is directed towards a selected, involuntary attention towards an obtruding, content. Since the days of Lotze and Wundt it has been a favourite illustration of psychological writers to compare the phenomena of attention with a searchlight ; and rightly, when we realize that attention marks out a zone of light in the field of experience.

And now let us turn to another distinction, determined by the content. External and internal attention are distinguished by their object, that is, by the question whether we direct our interest to the external or the inner world. Let us revert to the comparison and imagine a searchlight turned upon the walls of a fort ; it can be turned either upon the foreground of the fortification or on the interior, upon the separate objects belonging to the fort, the courtyards and storehouses.

It is, of course, possible to unite these two kinds of attention. The justification of associating active or passive attention with the external world is self-evident. The second connection, with the inner world, is much more difficult to grasp. As an example of voluntary attention directed inwards, I need only cite self-observation as a psychological action. The second possibility, too, will be made clear to us if we think, for instance, of surprising ourselves in a sudden feeling of sadness under cheerful circumstances, or cheerful in a tragic situation.

But after all, what we want is to learn more of the nature of attention in analysis. We are just coming to that. We distinguish the result of attention directed inwards towards our own psychical processes by the very name that we give it. When, perhaps in trying to solve a problem, we turn our attention inwards and try to realize causal and other connec-

tions and to understand the phenomena genetically, the outcome is thought. But if we approach the problem differently, if we tackle it indirectly or allow it to act upon us, so to speak, without directly attacking it, if we only pay attention to what arises in our mind on the occasion, then the outcome is that ideas occur to us, or at least that they may occur. We now realize that the analyst's heuristic activities are especially dominated by inward, involuntary attention. There remains room enough for the other kind of attention as well, which is automatically called in when needed.

The quality of poised attention may be well illustrated by the comparison with a searchlight. Voluntary attention, which is restricted to a narrow sector of our field of experience, may be compared in its effect to the turning of the searchlight upon a particular piece of ground. If we know beforehand that the enemy is coming from that direction, or that something is going to happen upon that field, then we have anticipated the event, as it were. It is advantageous to illuminate that particular rayon brightly. Let us assume a different case, that something, for instance a noise, has turned our attention to a particular zone. Only then do we turn the searchlight upon it. Our attention did not rush on in advance of the perception, but followed it. This is the case of involuntary attention. If we drive at night along the motor road from The Hague to Rotterdam, we shall notice that a searchlight about the middle of the road is scouring the surrounding country uninterruptedly.[1] It illuminates the road, is then directed to the fields, turns towards the town, and swings in a wide curve back to the road, and so repeats its circuit. This kind of activity, which is not confined to one point but is constantly scouring a wide radius, provides the best comparison with the function of poised attention.

From out of the wealth of psychological problems arising at this point, I will pick out one special question, as being of interest to the technique of analysis: that of the relation

[1] The writer is living in Holland at the present time.

between the various kinds of attention and surprise. It will be said at once that the time factor plays a great part in this matter. If I know that the enemy is coming from one particular direction, and turn the searchlight in that direction from the outset, I shall be able to determine the moment of his appearance precisely, and shall be in a position to recognize the nature of the danger and the steps to be taken for defence. He will not succeed in surprising me. The great advantage of voluntary attention, which knows its object from the outset and maintains a particular direction, is especially that it enables us to be mentally prepared. " Readiness is everything," might be its motto. Voluntary [1] attention offers a much feebler protection against the danger of being taken by surprise. If it is an external stimulus, a sudden perception, which first calls my attention to the appearance of the enemy, he has the advantage of me in the matter of time. I have less time to prepare myself. Poised attention maintains the mean between the two extremes. I cannot escape the danger of surprise, but only attenuate it.

But voluntary attention, which offers such excellent protection against the dangers of surprise, also protects us from its advantages. It involves an excellent protection against irritant stimuli; but it may, in a certain sense, almost amount to an exclusion of stimuli. And that brings us to its negative aspect, one which psychology has failed to appraise at all adequately. Now attention consists in the fact that certain images present themselves vividly and become effective at the expense of others. The concentration of attention involves a setting up of inhibitions, so that keen observation of particular things corresponds to the ignoring of others. Too little study has been devoted to the questions how important it is to the function of attention that those things should be kept at a distance which are regarded as disturbing factors, as alien to the matter in hand, or as unessential; how the withdrawal of certain con-

[1] Probably a misprint, and should read " involuntary ".—*Translator's Note.*

tents from consciousness is no less a part of it than the appearance of others at the centre. It is open to question which part is the more significant to the essence and action of attention, the illumination of particular objects, the bestowal of intensive interest upon them, or its diversion away from others. Some investigators, for instance B. Ferenczi, regard the inhibition of all actions except the one contemplated as the prime feature of the act of attention. If all the paths leading to consciousness are blocked, with the one exception, then psychic energy flows in the one direction that is still free spontaneously and without the need of any exertion on its part.

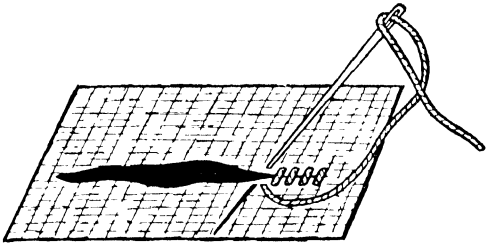
Ferenczi explains the process thus : if I want to look attentively at something, I block all my senses except that of sight. Enhanced attentiveness to optical stimuli follows of itself. I would not adopt this view without reservations, but we have still to consider how much there is to support it and to what original and alluring results it must lead. Think, for instance, how in the light of it we must alter our conception of the lack of capacity for concentration in children : as the incapacity to exclude certain stimuli. Educationally, too, it is of importance, for training in attention assumes a new aspect. The well-known feelings of tension, which can vary in degree and are associated with acts of attention, are presumably due to the effort necessary in order to achieve and maintain this isolation, to provide the inhibition. The narrowing of consciousness would then not be the result of attention, as psychology has hitherto assumed, but its cause. Indeed, the whole controversial question of the nature of attention would be placed in a new light, if it were not a matter of an active principle, but of arresting and switching off other contents, if the clarifying and strengthening of a perception is simply due to the obscuring and weakening of others. I will only indicate in passing that training in attention may succeed " too well ", so that the child is shut off from a whole flood of freely emerging associations and ideas.

And now we will give our minds to the contents which

fall into the background because of the act of attention. Let us inquire of what kind they are, why they are neglected or excluded, or, in other words : what is the determining factor in this process, which we may describe as dynamic and economic, and which we understand as attention ? We now realize that he who approaches the answer to one, raises new questions. We cannot deal with them here, nor do I think that our knowledge is sufficient to answer them, and I prefer to emphasize what we have undoubtedly gained from our discussion of attention. That is the fact, biologically and psychologically significant, that the function of attention was originally negative and consisted in the exclusion or inhibition of all psychical contents except the one sharply outlined. Voluntary attention, which brings so much into a clear light, causes so much more to sink or lose its clarity. Whilst marking the significance of things so vigorously and definitely, it degrades others to insignificance. To recur to our former simile : the searchlight, which casts a brilliant light upon a small area, makes us realize in what profound darkness the greater part of the field is plunged. The proverb : " Where there is much light, there is also much shade," is true of the phenomena of attention too.

What we may call the reconnoitring character of poised attention does not enable us to discern objects and their connection so sharply and clearly as voluntary attention. Its aim cannot, therefore, be instantaneous understanding, immediate placing amongst things known. But that disadvantage is accompanied by a number of advantages which fully counterbalance the renunciation of sharply and narrowly outlined immediate clarity. Now I ought to establish the nature of poised attention theoretically, but I prefer to illustrate it by means of an example, that of the solution of a picture-puzzle. We shall certainly not despise an illustration of this kind when we remember that Freud compared dreams to such a puzzle, and the interpretation of dreams to the psychical labour of solving it.

The first picture is of a piece of stuff with a rent, and a needle and thread mending it. Rent ? Hole ? Darn ? Then two ll's. Rentells ? Holells ? Both nonsense. Darnells ? Mendells ? Let us go on. We next have an arrangement of letters : S, and beneath it GS. GS under S ? No, that does not make sense. S over GS ? That is no better. Or S above GS ? Also nonsense. S on GS ? Songs—that is it, of course. Then the first part must surely be Mendelssohn. But where is the last syllable of the name ? Mendelssohn ?—Mendelssohn ? Why, it is " Mend-els-on-Songs ".



LL

S
G S

BØY
GIRL

We realize that we must not let ourselves be put off by orthography, nor by the exact pronunciation ; we must be satisfied with the sound represented under the conditions obtaining in picture-puzzles. To proceed : the crossing out of a letter or syllable often means something negative in these puzzles. Songs not ? Songs deduct ? Songs take away ? None of them promising beginnings, followed by " boy girl ". What can these mean ? Songs without ? Then of course it must be Songs without Words. We have it in a flash. On reflection we realize that that is the sense of the puzzle. " Boy girl " means nothing. They are simply words, two words.

After all, the solution of a puzzle like this can teach us

something of the nature of poised attention. Let us recall the minor difficulties that we had with the initial word, and overcame. We were checked by picturing the exact spelling of the word to ourselves. Our attention was not exactly imprisoned, and yet it was a little hedged in, by an orthographically determined image of a word. Every dream interpretation displays the same phenomenon. For instance, a patient dreams a long and complicated dream in which he goes to the Sorbonne and walks about the rooms. Who would think of a connection between " Sorbonne " and " sœur bonne " ? I can give another example directly, not taken from the dream world, but from daylight, waking life, in which orthography played a certain part that I failed to recognize. It struck me that during the early months of his analysis a certain patient stopped short at certain points in his account of his experiences, as if there were an unknown obstacle just at these points. I could not account for it, and thought he was concealing some part of his experience. It was the more striking because his statement was altogether honest and serious. Nor did I find any sign in the subject matter of his stories that could lead me to surmise the nature of the check. For instance, he told me of a little quarrel that he had had with his sweetheart the day before, and ended with the passionate words : " I hate her." I did not surmise that the thought that checked him, and which he himself afterwards explained, was that the sentence could be applied to me, the analyst, by the change of a way of writing a single initial letter. (The German for both " her " and " you " is " sie ", but in the latter case it is written with a capital S.—*Translator's Note.*) Even at a later stage the double meaning of the word, caused by similarity of sound, acted as a check on the patient's talk, and he often had to wage his " war on the capital S ", as he prettily called it.

But let us return to our picture-puzzle. We have speedily cast off the slight burden of orthographical and phonetic differences, and read " Mendelssohn ", as if the strict rules of orthography and pronunciation did not concern us at all.

No less lightly, or light-heartedly, we have dealt with " songs ". We have jumped the small hurdles with assurance and speed, and, cheered by our freedom from orthographical and phonetic obligations, we have got as far as " Mendelssohn, Songs . . ." We observe that we do not really owe this easy advance—we came and saw and conquered—so much to our ordinary attention as rather to its relaxation. If we had obeyed the usual laws of attention, if we had not ignored the customary ideas of purpose, we should still be at " Mend ", and might have gone on to stockings, or other fancies ; in short, we should have been caught in a tangle of mending wool. But let us suppose that we had disentangled ourselves and had turned our voluntary attention to the next step, we should never have found the last syllable of the name " Mendelssohn ". If we employ the purposive, active kind of attention that is so necessary, so indispensable in life, the situation would soon have become hopeless. We owe our advance precisely to our escape from the strict demands of attention, which holds all other associations at bay and follows the one train of thought unswervingly.

Our psychical action when we guessed the last element of the puzzle—" words "—was of a different nature. When we remember how we beat our brains over that mysterious sign, and how we came to solve it, and then compare the process with that which preceded it, we shall be driven to note a marked difference between the two. At first we wanted to proceed according to the familiar method of solving picture-puzzles, and simply guess the word concealed behind the sign. Did it mean boy and girl, boy over girl, girl under boy, or what ? It all produced no sense, and yet the correct, logical solution was close at hand. Concentrated attention was no good. We have here one of the cases in which strained attention, conscious, purposive effort, can at best lead us to the conclusion that we are on the wrong track.

Attention, which is intended to facilitate intellectual achievement, or, indeed, to make it in any way possible, has misled us. In those cases in which, in spite of our utmost and most

strenuous endeavours and the bracing of our attention, we do not succeed in recalling something, in reproducing a forgotten content, we know that there is a tried remedy : we must drop the idea of purpose and stop turning our attention in that particular direction or on that particular set of circumstances. And now this withdrawal of attention does not give rise to inattention, but to the mobility of attention, to a readiness to receive a variety of stimuli, emerging from the unconscious or the unknown. As in the case cited above, a rigid, one-sided attention may detract from our mental achievement, and injure our success, because it prevents us from moving in any other direction. We gazed, as if spellbound, upon the words " boy girl ", which we read, as if they absolutely must be a part of what we were seeking. Not until we had freed ourselves from this fixation of attention, not until we allowed our attention to turn in other directions, did the solution occur to us. We have noted this negative effect of attention plainly. Not negative, of course, with regard to the actual subject to which it was directed, but negative with regard to the much larger number from which it was diverted.[1]

Let us try to generalize the inner process and call up a second by way of comparison. We often hear patients complain that they fail to concentrate their attention. In analytical investigation we find that this complaint conceals a totally different situation. The attention of these patients is concentrated, though, upon an unconscious content, for instance, certain fantasies. Where they fail, is in detaching attention from particular psychical contents and directing it to others, which is what life demands of them.

[1] In the German original a picture-puzzle was used, of which the solution was a German proverb. It was, of course, impossible to use the same illustration in translation, and I have substituted an English picture puzzle as nearly as possible corresponding to the original German one in the special illustrative features, and have made the necessary consequential alterations in the text.—*Translator's Note.*

When we beat our brains so long over the last part of the picture-puzzle, we were behaving like people who find it difficult to escape from concentration on one point, and to keep their attention free and mobile. In a sense we were unable to throw off the chain of our concentration, and circled, like dancing mice, round the words "boy girl". Analytical practice brings daily proof what a hindrance this rigid form of concentration is, directed to particular ideas of our aim, to the heuristic task, and how it is only when we replace it by poised attention that it becomes possible to capture unconscious processes. In the early days of my work as an analyst, when I was faced with surprising symptoms, puzzling dreams, and incomprehensible trains of thought, just the same thing happened as when we were seeking the last part of the solution of the picture puzzle. Not till I cast off the customary restraint of voluntary attention, was I able to get hold of the hidden psychical data. Not till I had left the firm and broad high road, did I reach the goal along side-paths. The secret meaning escaped my conscious, active attention, and was not found till I had become inattentive in the popular meaning of the word, that is, till I gave myself up to unconscious ideas of the goal. Now of course it would be nonsense to declare that analysts work only with poised attention. The statement would be false, if only because at certain points poised attention must be changed to voluntary or active, when, that is to say, the significance of a symptom or a latent relation has been recognized, and it has now to be placed and evaluated. Let us recur to our comparison with the searchlight: the searchlight which scours the whole foreground equally will, of course, stop at one point if the enemy is sighted there. It must be noted that what we have here is the replacement of one form of attention by another. On such occasions, the original, poised attention gives way to the voluntary, direct form.

Another form of substitution is more important. On special occasions attention is definitely withdrawn from the object

before it and turns with a jerk, so to speak, to other, seemingly more remote, relations. A special significance attaches to this withdrawal of attention from the immediate aspects of the data. Our thought goes off and reaches a goal by this unusual path which it would have attained by no other. Thus the psychical process of conjecturing the secret meaning of an obsession or part of a dream or a mental reaction is often like that of solving the last part of our picture puzzle " boy girl ", if we compare the attitude of attention. The essential thing about it is the withdrawal of attention from what is immediately before it, or at least its slackening, and the fact that in this way the emergence of sudden ideas is facilitated. It is possible to attain to an understanding of many unconscious processes only after this temporary switching off of direct attention has prepared the way psychologically. And the contents that previously occupied a central position, and were thrust into the background by the shifting of attention, will acquire a new and often undreamed-of significance later.

Whilst we adopted an attitude of poised attention most of the time in solving the puzzle, when it came to the solution of the last word our interest was withdrawn from the object for the fraction of a second, and poised attention was interrupted for a moment by " inattention ". It is as if a swimmer were suddenly to break off his regular motion through the water in order to plunge into the depths. We can observe these two examples of the distribution of mental energy in analysis, too, and introspection may easily distinguish them. Moreover, the momentary plunge into unconscious depths, hitherto undreamed-of, is akin to the mental phenomenon of the birth of wit. Indeed, the result is sometimes similar, as in our example the solution has something of the quality of wit. The psychical effect of discovering this last word of the riddle is different from that of solving the others. It partakes of the character of surprise.

I have previously made a paradoxical statement, and I owe it to my conscience to revert to it : I said that attention of that

special voluntary kind prevented surprise. People who practise it, always find confirmation of what they already know. Attention as a hindrance to the progress of scientific knowledge—assuredly that is a bold assertion. Still, it is not its boldness but its falsity that we dislike. But I have spoken in this derogatory manner, not of attention as such, but of its special active and voluntary form, and then only as a possibility, and in its application to unconscious data. This latter often leads to a fixation of our minds which may be called auto-hypnotic on the object immediately before them or the one relation that is just in the forefront of our thoughts. Under certain circumstances this kind of attention may prepare our minds for the reception of knowledge. Its main effect is that of clearing a particular path, disposing of particular possibilities, which must then make way for the consideration of others. I should altogether disagree, if anyone were to say that Isaac Newton's straining of attention when he was struggling with the problem of gravitation was useless or superfluous, because its law was only revealed to him when he withdrew his attention and saw the apple fall from the tree in the garden. His laborious and consciously directed thought constituted, we may say, an important psychological prerequisite for the idea that occurred to him unforced ; in a sense it gave sanction to it inwardly, and had economic and dynamic value. Every serious brain-worker knows that voluntary attention in the form of intellectual labour often stimulates ideas, just as unforced ideas sometimes give birth to thoughts. It is true that we cannot produce valuable unforced ideas by an effort of thought, but it is often their preliminary condition. Tschaikovsky once called inspiration a guest who does not care to visit lazy people. That is equally true of scientific and artistic labour and of attention in association with productive work. If, in the heuristic labours of analysis, psychical energy is differently distributed, that is due to special qualities of the region to be investigated, the data to be examined, the most important parts of which seldom reveal themselves to reflection, but usually in an

unforced idea. It is that which helps the oppressed minorities in the kingdom of the mind to win their rights.

I have said that active attention generally precludes surprise, whilst poised attention attentuates it as a rule. But this process of momentary slackening of attention and diversion of interest in another direction, with subsequent return to the object, is a preparation for surprise. We shall recur to the question how this preparation is connected with the effect of surprise ; for the present this allusion to the fact may suffice. We had wanted to solve the last part of the picture puzzle separately and in isolation, like the others, without troubling about what had gone before. We failed. The solution did not emerge in our mind until we had abandoned the effort and remembered the previous part of the puzzle, which we had already solved. The way to the solution was paved by the words " Mendelssohn Songs ". Really it ought to have occurred to us at once, we say now, wondering at ourselves.

Not quite in the same way, and yet similarly, the surprise is prepared in analysis, and as it dies away we ask ourselves incidentally how it came about. Tracing our mental process backwards, it seems to us that we had really no justification for surprise, if we had consciously noticed small signs, which we now remember, if a symptom which now occurs to us had been noted consciously as it was repeated or appeared in some obscure place. Then a psychical implication, which we now remember, strikes us as a clear indication of what we took so long to recognize. A symptom, the fragment of a dream, a long-forgotten fact, suddenly appear in a new light, widely scattered data arrange themselves in a new relation. Such retrospective reflection shows that unconsciously we understood the meaning of the separate facts very well, and that this unconscious comprehension was, so to speak, a necessary preparation for the present surprise. Things that were not in the centre of our attention, things that it only brushed at the fringe, a passing impression, a fleeting presentiment, now assume importance.

We now discern the great importance of the time factor in appraising the different kinds of attention. Poised attention generally involves the renunciation of the immediate recognition of links of association. It apprehends the several details of the psychical data equally, and prepares the way for us to work our way into them later. It provides, so to speak, a storeroom of impressions, from which later knowledge will emerge. It also creates the prerequisite conditions for those surprising results which appear in analysis as the product of a prolonged unconscious condensation and dissociation of impressions.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE TRULY STARTLING TO THE STARTLINGLY TRUE

THE essential character of the process of analysis is marked by the long-enduring perturbation accompanying the cognizance of repressed processes. I say " cognizance " deliberately and not " cognition ", because the former word describes something different and more deep-seated than mere intellectual knowledge. The difference is somewhat like that between " confiding something to a person " and " saying something to him ". People speak lightly of somebody having undergone analysis, and yet it makes a great difference whether he has simply been through it, so to speak, or experienced it. Perhaps the reader may ask with annoyance or merely with astonishment—according to his familiarity with the process of analysis and the way of the world—whether such a passing through deserves the name of analysis. Perhaps he will add : " That was not the person to whom it happened ", but life demands compromises and half solutions.

And now, if I try to grasp the peculiar nature of the mental perturbation that is the specific mark of analysis, if I try to determine its peculiar character as widely and yet as accurately as possible, it appears to me essentially as *surprise*. It will be remembered that I have already referred to this factor in connection with the nature of attention in the analytical process. I must emphasize that it does not seem justifiable to stress this factor, unless we ignore the special conditions and peculiarities of numerous cases, and only regard what is general and common to all. I am now prepared to hear a storm of protest, including specially emphatic reference to many cases of analysis in which

something other than surprise was most to the fore, and to many in which nothing surprising was to be detected. So I beg the reader to desist for the time being from raising these objections and to allow me, in order to make my meaning clearer, to recur to a proposition which I tried to set forth in 1926 in a book entitled *Shock* (*Der Schrecken*). A fact is there designated as surprising, the expectation of which has vanished from consciousness and which comes upon us at an unexpected time or under unexpected circumstances.

This is equally true of external and of inner perception, of material and of psychical facts. In both we see in surprise a defensive reaction against the suggestion that we should turn away from what is familiar and recover in what is new something ancient that we no longer know. In other words: surprise is an expression of our opposition to the demand that we should recognize something long known to us of which we have become unconscious. In the work of analysis, therefore, where the object is to reveal unconscious processes, it means recognition once more of a part of the ego formerly known to us but lost to knowledge. We have discovered resistance in analysis as the emotional expression of this opposition. It is comprehensible that surprise should be greatest where we have the confirmation or fulfilment of repressed expectations.

In analytical practice those acts of recognition will prove most efficacious which possess this quality of surprise. Their efficacy will progress as recognition penetrates to deeper and deeper planes in the mind. It will prove most lasting when the ancient expectation, to which the analysis has penetrated, had been repressed. The effect is easy to explain psychologically, if, in addition to the frequently discussed topical significance, we consider the special economic and dynamic characteristics of the process. The dynamic effect is brought about by a fragment of psychical reality of an unconscious, repressed character coming into contact with material reality in the act of analytical cognition.

Let us take quite a primitive example, such as may be studied

daily in practice : in one of my patients violent aggressive impulses against a near relative have appeared, and have led to an unconscious desire to commit murder. I have guessed that this was going on because the patient, in order to repel the murderous impulses, produces certain compulsions whose secret meaning may be recognized as a ceremonial of punishment or penitence. Let me now try to characterize the psychical process which I set in motion, if I tell the patient the latent meaning of his symptoms and their hidden connection with the unconscious wish to commit murder. By speaking of the secret meaning, I have brought a fragment of psychical reality in touch with the external world, and set up a most fertile contact. Utterance has released the unconscious process from the dumbness and oppressive heaviness that weighed upon it. Actually I have only done a piece of translation, my explanation meant exchanging the means of expression used by the unconscious for others, more familiar to us ; it may be said that I have translated something from the language of symptoms into that of words. But the making vocal of this translation or transformation distinguishes the coincidence, the meeting of psychical and material reality.

Here appears in the intellectual sphere the most significant case of the surprise which recurs so frequently and in such various forms in the phenomenon of the belief in omnipotence. Let me cite a commonplace example of this belief in the omnipotence of thought by way of comparison between processes seemingly so different : this same patient tells me how often it happens to him that he is just thinking very vividly of an acquaintance, and at that very moment the acquaintance meets him quite unexpectedly. The coincidence of the thought and the external fact cause a slight mental shock. The situation described in the analytical treatment is exactly similar : the patient's unconscious thoughts were occupied with the murder of the relative. And then he heard the same meditated possibility spoken by the mouth of another person, it confronted him, incarnated in words. It was as if he had experi-

enced a miracle in the full daylight of consciousness, which seemed to confirm the belief in the omnipotence of thought. And it is not only this feature, the utterance of secret thoughts, their becoming material reality, which links the translation with the forcible impression that these omnipotence phenomena make upon the sufferer from compulsion neurosis.

Another surprising feature connects that phenomenon with the verbal capture of mental processes in analytical treatment. We have frequently found that evil or grossly selfish wishes were at work at the root of the belief in omnipotence, and that the apparent confirmation of the belief pointed to the possible fulfilment of these wishes, nay, actually involved their fulfilment in thought. The strange behaviour of a compulsion neurotic may often be explained by the conflict of wishes and opposing tendencies ; it is meant to protect from the remotest approach to possible realization. He resists the possibility so vehemently that what he secretly wishes becomes reality.

But, strange as it may sound, the analyst's utterance of his wishes implies a partial fulfilment of the repudiated wishes. It is thought-play that has attained verbal reality, and gives shape in a way most nearly approaching material actuality to what is wished and yet repudiated. In this way, too, the analyst's explanation approaches the nature of those phenomena which seem to confirm the belief in omnipotence ; it offers in a verbal formula some satisfaction of forbidden impulses. But the fulfilment involves also something of mastery of impulse by the mind. And so through this function analysis bears witness to the magic power of words.

We have the simplest and most natural form of this surprise in analysis, caused by the coincidence of intellectual and material reality, when the patient says things which surprise himself. He did not know that he had such thoughts, cherished such feelings, and harboured within him such impulses. What we ourselves think, spoken by others, often enough sounds alien to us ; so alien that it occasionally requires a mental effort to recognize it as part of our ego. It often suffices to hear a

sentence spoken by another which we ourselves have spoken, in order to read something different into it. Such strangers are we to ourselves. Traditional psychology endeavours in vain to convince us that mental processes are immediately self-evident data.

On the threshold of psychological research we find, not familiarity with ourselves, but astonishment at the phenomena of our own minds. That is to say : the subject of analysis is suddenly confronted with his own thinking as something alien. This alienation from our own ego is a prerequisite of the recognition of the deeper planes of our personality, paradoxical as that may sound. In order to learn to know ourselves, we must first become strangers to ourselves. In this situation, in which the external perception of his own words surprises and compels the patient's inner perception, a situation in which material reality is, so to speak, taken unawares by inner reality, the nature of analytical cognition as a confirmation of a repressed expectation is most clearly shown. The case of a mistaken interpretation or erroneous deduction offers a kind of counter test. There, too, a psychical emotion is produced, but not surprise in the sense indicated of a reaction to the confirmation of an unconscious expectation.

Now let us consider the experience of surprise from another aspect, from that of economy of emotion. What happens in the mind of the patient if, for instance, we tell him that his compulsions point to his harbouring unconscious wishes to do violence to his father or brother, or even to murder them ? The first reaction to such an encounter with his own repressed impulses is not surprise pure and simple, but a particular case of the emotion of surprise, *shock*. The patient often becomes aware of the repressed impulses with shock, so that the shock may sometimes be definitely taken as an indirect proof of his becoming aware. The reaction of repulsion is due to the fact that our interpretation represents an inroad into the realm of intellectual taboos, into a carefully guarded secret region of the soul.

The psychical process reminds us of another in a totally different sphere, of what happens in the mind when we hear a joke. There, too, when the latent meaning of the joke has been unconsciously recognized, the first reaction, lasting only for the fragment of a second, is in the nature of shock. This unconscious shock is justified, because the expression of repressed tendencies secretly contained in the joke appears like a suddenly emerging danger. Both here and in the case of an analytical explanation, which lays bare the most secret impulses of the ego, we have a momentary intensification of the readiness for inner inhibition, comparable with the unduly hasty mobilization of a defensive force. In analysis, too, this shock of thought is realized to be superfluous, but not quickly and easily, as with a joke ; it requires the gradual conquest of inner resistance. Demobilization is effected with such hesitation because only in that way can the special circumstances of the mind's economy bear a profound reorganization. We know the psychical factors which help the patient to overcome his surprise, and to recognize the alien content as only alienated, as a part of his repudiated ego.

Thus the gradual reduction of the output of inhibiting and repressing energy is introduced in analysis by a remark whose first result is its momentary intensification by way of a defensive reaction. There then ensues a much more radical saving of emotion than in the case of a joke, because a greater volume of energy, hitherto applied to the maintenance of the repression, is set free for use elsewhere.

Regarded from the standpoint of economy of thought, too, we must pronounce analytical explanations to be surprising. Since the analyst's idea emerges from the unconscious—a part of the part that once was the whole—it seems to arise from the void. And this origin allows of those acts of condensation and displacement which belong to the primary process and appear intellectually inacceptable to our conscious thought. In this way special abbreviations become possible, since various links in the chain of thought are dropped out, or, in other words,

skipped over, and many conditions necessary to the conclusion remain unspoken. Thus surprise is effected by an economy of conscious intellectual operations, because the intervention of the unconscious allows of a short circuit in place of logical inferences. We remember how the same economic tendency which leads here to such serious results, fraught with such far-reaching psychological inferences, was likewise dominant in the play of a joke, although, indeed, that is not mere play to anyone who looks beneath the surface.

It is easy to give an outsider an impression of the surprising character of the analytical idea, but difficult to make him realize the power of conviction inherent in it. We need only recall the general disbelief with which the establishment of a system of unconscious sexual symbolism was formerly regarded, though this was nowise the discovery of psycho-analysts, but must clearly be laid to the charge of the lustful attitude of mind of mythologists, folk-lorists, and ethnologists. How, then, shall we convince stubborn sceptics, who think, indeed, that they know everything about analysis, but will hear nothing of it, of the firmness of the hidden foundations upon which an analytical interpretation is built up.

Let us take any chance example—not one from the interpretation of dreams, not a complex effort of reconstruction, none at all that calls for long and complicated description, but a primitive example from some analysis of a neurosis, say a screen memory. A case occurs to me : a patient who had been under analysis for about six months told me of a childish memory : as a child of five or six he had seen on the floor of the passage leading from the dining-room to the water-closet a black tail of hair belonging to his much older sister. His sisters often lost their tails of hair. Is it possible to make an outsider understand that this scene, emerging in isolation, represents a screen memory behind which another, unconscious memory lies concealed, according to which the little boy once saw his sister's genitals, presumably in the closet ? Of course we can trace the logical operations which have led us to that

view, we can explain to our hearer the psychological conditions that determined the occurrence of the idea to us. Perhaps —perhaps—we shall be able to recount all the factors which contribute to make the idea probable, to show the associations surrounding this screen memory, to demonstrate the many single elements that went to make our interpretation, like a mosaic picture.

Doubtless the hearer will understand my explanation, nay, he may even admit that it has a certain justification. Nevertheless, he will not be convinced that the idea is intellectually inescapable, for he is unacquainted with the imponderabilia of the situation, and I cannot communicate an impression of them to him. I cannot tell him what ideas that occurred were unconscious, what memories of vague impressions, arising from earlier statements by the patient, arose in my mind, I cannot convince him that everything drove me on towards that particular assumption whilst I followed the chain of association : from the sister's black tail of hair to the way to the closet—it has come off—something that girls have—something that girls lose—something that girls have not, and so on. I did not communicate my interpretation to the patient. I remained silent, and he proceeded ; in another direction, if we judge only by the manifest content of his former statement : as a little boy he usually played with a little girl of his own age in the neighbouring garden. On these occasions he examined the girl's genitals once, or several times. He described the impression made by the black hairiness, the pubic region and the vagina, which struck him as like an ugly dark wound after an operation. It seemed as if the patient's further chain of associations had confirmed my idea. It seemed as if—surprisingly enough—he would now be able to formulate the unconscious links, or as if he were nearly able to, after the analyst had recognized them consciously.

A patient is always surprised when he is told something which unconsciously he already knows. That follows from our designation of surprise as the reaction to the fulfilment of

an unconscious expectation. He will take in what was formerly known to him and has only been alienated, as if it were something new, and will repel it. We may now understand the effect, which often does not appear till later, of such a surprising communication upon the repressed content, if we recognize it as a kind of psychical shock that it needs time to master.

We shall not be put off by the fact that the patient experiences these *surprises within his ego*, although he thinks that he is well acquainted with his own inner life. It will seem strange to us that the analyst, too, who has such wide experience, is largely dependent upon receiving such knowledge from unknown powers of the ego, and upon listening for the stirrings of his Id in tracking the hidden meaning of psychical phenomena. Where the analyst's idea penetrates to the profoundest depths of the other's inner life, it may be recognized as the offspring of what is repressed in the analyst and appears to him as something alien. In short, to sum the matter up: *the most vital knowledge obtained by the analyst of the unconscious-repressed is, for him too, a surprise.* It is true that this surprise reaction will lose intensity as the analyst gains insight and deeper psychological knowledge. There may come a time when it does not appear at all. But at least in the early years of an analyst's work it remains as a sure signal that his own unconscious is involved in the recognition of unconscious relations. It is not logical reflection and theoretical learning that constitute the core of the pre-conscious and unconscious knowledge, so helpful to the psychologist in later years in recognizing repressed processes, but the memory traces of the surprises he has experienced. If, in our analyses of mental effects, we can so often infer hidden, unconscious motives, the inference is of value, not so much as a logical operation, but rather as the outcome of repeated insight into the mind which surprised the analyst at first.

We mistrust psychologists who declare that they experience no such surprises, that the unconscious of those whom they study is immediately transparent to them and easy to penetrate.

There may be psycho-analysts of such a nature ; they are, so to speak, professional adepts in the heights and depths of the inner life. The psychologist " who is surprised " then stands consciously opposed to those for whom there are no surprises left in the inner life. If these gentlemen boast that they find it easy " to read the other person ", that the unconscious lies before them like an open book, then they do not know how to read it. The wonders of the inner reality are hidden from their sight. I know that there are some, even among psycho-analysts, who shrink from what is astonishing and set up a defence against what is surprising in the psychological field, and try to protect themselves against it by a barrier of theoretical learning, as a means of parrying and intercepting it. But the majority of analysts have learnt to appreciate the heuristic value of surprising ideas, emerging from the unconscious, and gladly welcome them. (You shall be welcome whenever you come.)

The surprise which is felt when the unconscious meaning of individual phenomena is recognized, when the latent significance of individual symptoms, dreams, strange reactions, is understood, may increase at a later stage, towards the end of the process of analysis. When we survey the development of a neurosis or a special character, our surprise does not diminish when we recognize how the co-operation or conflict of particular impulses has produced just this psychological result, how inevitably and yet how naturally just this type of character arose in the play of psychical forces. And so, when his task is accomplished, the psychologist is struck with amazement as he surveys what he has seen of the dynamic and economic conditions of the inner processes. His incipient understanding of the methods by which our mental machinery works will not lessen his amazement, but rather increase it. No analyst will be able to give an adequate account of his own inner experience, involved in the conjecture and comprehension of unconscious phenomena. I have denoted the nature of the impression made by the knowledge gained in the process of analysis, in the title of

this chapter : *it develops from the truly startling to the startlingly true.* Not one of us will be able to reproduce the impression of that sudden or gradually increasing clarity of vision, when data that seem heterogeneous and unrelated come to life through the development of an idea, and are fitted together like the loose and scattered bones in the vision granted by God to Ezekiel.

What we experience is a two-fold surprise : amazement at the significance entering into the psychical data, which at first seemed puzzling, bizarre, or absurd, and amazement at what went on in our own mind, enabling us to penetrate their hidden meaning. I confess that for me this is one of the fascinating rewards, one of the silent triumphs of my psycho-analytical labours. To all of us, as we follow the trail of unconscious relations in analysis, there comes a feeling like that of the master, Max Liebermann, at the first night of Hauptmann's *Rose Bernd.* Those who sat next to the old artist, attentively following the presentation of human destinies on the stage, heard him murmuring admiringly : " How it works." Something of this amazement remains with an analyst who has followed unconscious psychical processes for many years, as it does with every scientific investigator who has learnt to discern the variety and wealth of organic processes and recognizes how, in spite of great freedom, they obey unchangeable laws.

CHAPTER V

THE PSYCHOGENESIS OF ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION AND OF WIT

WHEN, in the following pages, I try to show the relation between analytical conjecture and the mental process involved in hearing a joke, it will be easy to recognize my argument as a continuation of the subject of surprise, as the same thread spun further. The reader must not think that, tired of the dry manner, I am now going to call his attention to problems of minor importance or of an amusing character. On the contrary, new questions arise, difficult to solve, and my readers will quickly realize that from a joke we may proceed to the most serious psychological problems.

In resuming the subject of surprise in this new connection, I shall be obliged to recall certain things that I have already stated. I trust that the unpleasant necessity of repeating myself will make for greater clarity.

We will not start with the joke, but with some quite primitive example culled from analytical practice : the dream of a German-American patient shows a variety of incidents in a Viennese hotel. In the centre of them is the figure of Metternich. The manifest content of the dream gives the impression of order and sense. There are few associations with it. The only striking feature in the forefront of the dream is the appearance of Metternich. What is the Austrian statesman about in the dream of this American patient ? He strikes us as curious in such surroundings. One would never guess : the despot of Austria's past does not appear here as the representative of a political standpoint or course of action. He has only his name to thank for his appearance in the dream.

During the analysis the name is dissected, and the result is "met her *nicht*"—an Anglo-German sentence meaning: I did not meet her. Does not such an interpretation sound like a bad joke? And we must not suppose that this case stands alone. This case of analytical interpretive technique is built up like many thousand more.

This dream reminds us how, as children, we played with words in the same kind of way. We seem to feel pleasure that the dream has succeeded in saying what it wanted to say, not only in such a hidden form, but also in so condensed and concentrated a manner. Let me recall what I have already said about the significance of the factor of economy in surprise. It appears here in the form of condensed expression. In analysis, too, the effect of surprise is secured by suspending the exertion of suppression and inhibition. Only a superficial mind could think that the analogy between analytical interpretation and jokes was confined to their formal aspect.

A comparison of the mental dynamics in both cases shows that there is an inner likeness between analytical explanation and jokes. Think, for instance, of the enhanced preparedness for inhibition in anyone listening to a joke, which is recognized to be superfluous and released in laughter. I have already shown how originally it was a case of shock, of an encounter with a former fear, which is suddenly made actual and overcome in the mind. A man who hears a joke laughs like someone who gets a sudden shock and realizes at once that he need not be alarmed. Not, indeed, in the same, but in a similar manner, the analyst's communications produce a kind of shock in the patient, for the moment his preparedness for inhibition is enhanced and slowly overcome. Here, then, is a feature common to the psycho-cathartic effect of the analytical process and of wit. The fact that patients are often constrained to laugh when the analyst tells them of repressed impulses lying at the root of their neurotic symptoms and troubles, bears witness to this effect. The patient

experiences the same process as the third party in a joke, in spite of the fact that the subject of the psychological surprise is himself, that is to say, an alienated part of his ego, and thus corresponds really to the second party in a joke, its subject. Let us, moreover, consider what such laughter at a part of the ego means : that we are already capable of regarding and judging it as something alien. Here, too, surprise follows upon conscious recognition.

Let me take this opportunity to carry the comparison between analytical conjecture about unconscious processes and the technique of wit a little further. And in so doing I will keep to the point of view of the surprise element. The comparison is in itself surprising enough, so surprising that some colleagues have admonished me that it ought to be excluded from the field of serious scientific labours. Others, on the contrary, have told me that I was reading into the joke process too much that was not there at all, and others again that it was a question of minor common features resulting from the fact of a common origin, but that they did not apply beyond a very narrow sphere.

I am stubborn enough to oppose all these arguments coming from fellow-analysts, even if I should fail to demonstrate the essential likeness in the psychological field between analytical interpretation and wit. For the strength of a conviction is not dependent upon personal ability to prove its truth. First and foremost let me point out that perhaps we may trace at the back of this contemptuous treatment of the significance of wit an emotional residue applicable to the whole type. If it were not so, analysts would attribute greater significance to wit as the subject of psychological study. We might almost claim that wit deserves greater attention on the part of psychologists, just because of its rôle of Cinderella.

The surprise felt at the solution of the dream element " Metternich " is of the same kind as occurs with a pun. Indeed, it could quite well be used for one, although it would hardly satisfy the fastidious. I will not make the effort of

thinking of a similar joke : I can cite one which will immediately convince the reader of the position. One of Freud's books tells how a red-haired young man was introduced into a Paris salon, and was supposed to be a relative of the great J. J. Rousseau. He behaved so awkwardly that the lady of the house said to the gentleman who had introduced him : " Vous m'avez fait connaître un jeune homme roux et sot, mais pas un Rousseau." Now this is a pun dependent upon sound, a play upon a proper name, and really not a very good one. When we compare an element in a dream of the above-mentioned patient with the peculiar characteristics of this pun, we shall at once confirm our impression of the similarity of method of the mind in the dream and in the pun. He dreams of Voltaire. Ideas occur which lead to the breaking up of the name. It then refers to the fear of a patient suffering from compulsion that in crossing a street in process of repair he might have got his shoes full of tar (*voll Teer*). We recognize that the mind is working here, in the dream, as it would in a pun, setting aside the rules of pronunciation and orthography, and attending to the sound rather than the sense of words. In both cases the machinery of the mind recurs to former achievements, representing something much easier than what consciousness accepts. As in a pun, so in a dream, we escape from one range of ideas to another, often far removed, by means of the identity or similarity of sound.

Freud argues that we get a bad joke when we make a short cut with the help of a word with two meanings, or a slightly modified word, from one range of ideas to another, if there is not also some connection of sense between the two. In a bad joke of this kind the verbal bridge is the only link between the two disparate ideas. Now the compression of " met her *nicht* " in the dream makes just the same impression, that of a bad joke. Perhaps we might assume that these verbal links between the elements of puns and dreams are common to these two processes alone. It does not seem unnatural that a dream, in which conscious thinking is eliminated, should

allow of a use of words rejected by the waking reason, just like the pun.

I will proceed at once to cite an example which leads further, and where there can be no question of sleep favouring the appearance of such verbal links, or of wit reviving our old delight in sporting with assonance in words, and yet one which displays the same psychical peculiarities. In this case, which, of course, is only put forward as representative of many others, and, in its general structure, may claim to be typical, the transition from one set of ideas to another is brought about through verbal assonance under the control of all our waking senses. The case is one of a woman no longer young, who suffered from an obsessive fear that her husband would soon die of cancer, although at the time he was in excellent health. In order to repel the obsessive fear, which pursued her almost without interruption, she had to utter certain charms, make certain movements, and observe a large number of protective measures. Among these was the avoidance of certain things, intended, as in all such cases, to protect the patient from an attack of fear. Surely we should suppose that the things avoided had some connection with the object of her fear, the terrible disease, and that the connection would be neither simple nor direct in the symptomatology of the compulsion neurosis.

The following example of such avoidance will surprise only those who are not closely acquainted with the nature of compulsion neuroses. One day the lady came very late to her treatment. She professed to have been obliged to make a long detour, for on the way from her hotel to my house she had found herself in a street in which there was a food store. To her horror she had seen living crabs in the window of this shop. (In German the same word, *Krebs*, stands for " cancer " and " crab ".—*Translator's Note.*) Here, too, we see it is a question of using the same word, and passing from one set of ideas to another remote one, only connected with it by verbal identity. This avoidance is certainly more serious, and has

deeper and more vital effects, than a bad joke. Crabs are avoided, as if they were identical with the disease she fears, although they have nothing in common with it but the name. We are justified in likening the sphere of such neurotic compulsion avoidance to that of the primitive taboos of Australian savages. The two sets of ideas—cancer and crab—meet only in the common name. It cannot but be clear to us that the treatment and valuation of words in this experience, culled from the symptomatology of neuroses, is psychologically the same as in the joke.

Making these or like examples our starting-point, we may equate the analyst, who recognizes the hidden meanings and intentions of unconscious processes, with a man listening to a joke. Freud has told us that the psychical process in the listener imitates that in the maker of the joke, tracing, so to speak, the same path that the wit has already trod. An essential element in analytical comprehension is understanding hints, filling gaps, smoothing out distortions, in short, in tracing the way back to the repressed core of communications. I may mention here in passing that such reproduction of the inner processes of another mind is not possible without certain prerequisite conditions in the listener. In the process of reproduction the analyst must use the same technique as the patient, must apply the same mechanism of condensation, displacement, and omission, because by no other means has he any prospect of understanding the secret meaning of unconscious processes. The analyst must therefore be capable of using the same methods, adopted in the joke to attain pleasure, in order to grasp the unconscious intention of, say, some element in a dream, or a special symptom.

It is easy to lay stress upon the inanity and folly of an interpretation like that of the dream element Metternich, and then, arguing plausibly, to ascribe the character of a joke to the process of interpretation itself. This attitude, which sometimes even claims to be scientific, overlooks with a grandiose gesture the fact that the interpretation is not left to the free

choice of the analyst, but only reflects what may be conjectured from hints and allusions, and that in its intellectual and verbal expression it must adapt itself to the peculiarities of unconscious processes, that is to say, to their infantile character. At this point we are reminded that Freud was led to investigate the phenomena of wit because he was reproached with interpreting dreams in a way which suggested a joke. The analyst can be made responsible for the supposedly absurd or inane content of his interpretation exactly as much and as justly as an Egyptologist for the content of a hieroglyphic text that he deciphers. None of the keen critics who reproach analysis for its fantastic interpretations supposes that, say, Naville or Maspero believes that a prayer to the god Khnum with the ram's head will cure him of rheumatism.

Whilst I have compared an analyst conjecturing the repressed meaning of a psychical phenomenon to a man listening to a joke, the simile is changed as soon as we picture the analyst telling the patient what he has detected: we might then sometimes compare him with the wit himself. I have already said that the recognition of repressed tendencies often finds expression in the patient's laughter. In the former case the secret meaning of the repressed content is made clear to the analyst; in the latter he makes it clear to another.

If we think of the process of joking, characterized by Freud, a common feature presents itself immediately. In the analyst, too, who wants to conjecture something repressed, a great number of pre-conscious thoughts and ideas dive down into the unconscious, are subjected there to a certain re-casting, and are then seized by consciousness. We see, too, the differences between the two processes. Primarily, of course, the difference in mental attitude is of importance; we will recur to that. In the process itself, our attention is called to the importance of the time factor. Whilst in joking the unconscious re-casting only lasts for a moment, there is no such time limit to be observed in the act of recognition in psychoanalysis. It is not incompatible with this to say that the

analyst's idea, which we have seen to be a consciously grasped outcome of something repressed in his mind, is the product of a moment. For he can point to a long course of conscious observation, and to often still more prolonged unconscious labours.

We find a further difference when we turn our attention to the final phase. The analyst, like the wit, has counteracted a mental effort of repression and overcome a certain resistance in the ego before the idea occurs to him consciously. But the analyst's power of discharging the energy set free is subject to much greater checks than that of the first person in the joking process, for this energy is straightway turned to another use—namely, that of explaining the suddenly acquired knowledge psychologically and formulating it in words. His conscious interest in its psychological application, in fitting it into a network of relations that he is beginning to discern, in short, his intellectual effort, will, of course, render a psychical effect like that which we find in the wit impossible. Nay, the different attitude towards the object, as well as the difference of aim, necessitate a different result.

The hidden links between the genesis of an analytical idea which puts an end to a repression, and of a joke, may be illuminated from two sides. It is easy to show that a large number of jokes contain an unconscious pith that is essentially akin to the explanation of an unconsciously repressed impulse or idea. When it is reduced to this pith, we see that the idea became a joke only through the form in which it was clothed. We all know examples of jokes of this kind. A single one will suffice here to represent the type : at the time when Gustav Mahler was conductor of the Viennese Opera a young violinist was recommended to him for an engagement in the orchestra. The intercessor reported that the young musician had not, it was true, great powers, but he was very modest. Mahler fired up in his impulsive manner : " What is he modest of, then ? " Our laughter proves that this remark, of the wit of which, by the way, Mahler was not

sensible, hits off the sham nature of the modesty, and exposes the unconscious, exaggerated self-assurance of the violinist.

The problem can also be approached from another side. I have already shown that one of the decisive differences between the process of acquiring knowledge of the unconscious and the invention of puns lies in the direction and application of the psychical energy set free. This turned our attention immediately to the different mental attitude in the two cases. A wit conceives of his subject with hostility or contempt, his tendency is aggressive or sexual in character, whilst an analyst's attitude towards his subject is definitely otherwise.

It happens—though rarely—under special circumstances that, instead of an analytical idea, searching into the most secret recesses of the patient's mind in order to transmute what is detected into the form of psychological knowledge, a witty thought is produced. A momentary mood of the analyst, aggressive or merely exuberant, may find expression for the idea in some such witty formulation of a thought. The analyst will have no difficulty in overcoming the temptation to utter the joke. For our argument it is not the utterance but the emergence of such a mental product that has importance.

The discretion that is due even to oneself accounts for the fact that thoughts of this stamp are not brought forward for scientific discussion. The unavoidable personal sacrifice in communicating such a thing cannot be considered great when it is a question of grasping the psychological nature of the process, as is here the case, and comparing it with the genesis of wit. The following example is only intended to characterize the type of these ideas; other analysts could doubtless cite much wittier and more conclusive examples. The idea, which lenient judges may allow to be witty, occurred during the analysis of a young American woman patient who had found her powers of work considerably weakened after a bitter disappointment in love. At the same time she evinced a

marked inclination for alcohol, which had just been forbidden by the Prohibition laws. The best opportunities to indulge her taste presented themselves at small parties, to which she invited for the most part young people. On one of these occasions, she reported, an acquaintance once said to her that she would never achieve anything in life because she was " too full of the milk of human kindness ". (The reader will remember that these words are used by Lady Macbeth who is urging her husband to commit a murder : " Yet do I fear thy nature ; it is too full o' the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way.")

It was during the treatment, in the course of this report, that the idea emerged : What a pity that she has no milk of the other kind ! Regarded as a joke, the idea is certainly poor. Perhaps it merely contains the elements of a joke. But it must be noted that the " witty " idea really was destined to anticipate a psychological relation that later grew increasingly clear. In addition to many other psychical determinants which we need not enter into here, it came to light much later that the patient's taste for alcohol and her offering it to her guests was a displaced substitute, a surrogate, for the fulfilment of the unconscious wish to suckle a child. Ideas of this kind, which yet bring a fragment of the repressed content to consciousness, would certainly create the impression of cynicism, if they were spoken. It is easy to trace their origin to those impulses which we find as unconscious tendencies at the root of cynicism. There is no need to emphasize how radically an analytical interpretation differs from a joke that unveils the unconscious, even if the content were essentially the same. *C'est le ton qui fait la musique.* In the case of an analytical explanation it goes without saying that the tone would be different, more suited to serious work, even if the analyst said essentially the same as the wit.

The important point which I believe myself to have discerned is to be found in the similarity of the psychical process

by which the hidden meaning of unconscious processes is discovered both in an analytical idea and in a joke. In certain important points the mental process, by which the pith of the matter is grasped, is the same, whether the case stirs our deep sympathy or raises a laugh.

CHAPTER VI

KNOWLEDGE EXPERIENCED AND KNOWLEDGE LEARNT BY ROTE

WHEN I ventured upon the declaration that the most vital knowledge acquired during analysis presents itself both to the patient and to the analyst as a surprise, I promised to return to the objections to my thesis. Even now I can answer them only in part, for the most weighty reasons in support of my view can only be the product of a complete description of the inner processes of the analyst's own mind. Still, I can attempt to discuss a few objections now, which are to be expected in particular from among psycho-analysts themselves. It will be pointed out that the knowledge culled by the analyst from the psychical data is by no means always of the nature of surprising interpretations and reconstructions, and that I am ignoring a number of consciously logical processes. That is true, but it does not in any way affect the validity of my surprise theory, as it seems to me. That theory states that the most important intelligence of repressed processes is, in every case of analytical investigation, of the nature of a surprise, and that in saying this we designate, not just one quality side by side with others of equal importance, but its very essence. In other words : *that the most significant intelligence received in every analysis represents the confirmation of unconscious expectations.* A house is not made of bricks alone, but also of cement, wood, and iron, etc. ; nevertheless, bricks are the chief material used in building houses.

What, it will be objected, of the preparation through what has been learnt, what of everything that theory has done to widen the analyst's knowledge and consciousness ? In my

opinion, we cannot warn learners emphatically enough not to approach the investigation of the unconscious mind with definite ideas of what to expect, gathered from their conscious theoretical knowledge. It would not matter if it were merely " ridiculous " to interpret every association with, say, an umbrella as a thought referring to a penis, or to " unmask " a friendly impulse towards a middle-aged lady as a recurrence of an Œdipus wish. A man who has not the courage to make himself " ridiculous " when something of decisive importance is at stake, who does not feel within himself the intellectual independence to adhere to what he has recognized as true in face of the smiles of the cultured rabble, had better look about him for another profession.

In countless cases the interpretation might be correct in substance and yet technically erroneous, that is to say, the interpretation that is true in itself is without significance in the case under consideration. And this is a specially illuminating instance of the marked difference between the kind of analytical knowledge that I would call " card-index science " and the knowledge that springs from our own unconscious. As in the smallest things so in the greatest : such misunderstanding, such lack of understanding of the essence of analytical knowledge will make itself felt likewise where it is no longer a case of one element in a dream, an idea, a symptomatic action, but where our conception of the most significant unconscious intention of a neurosis is in question, and there it will lead to yet more unpleasant consequences. I know of cases in which the analyst's heuristic proceedings looked as if he had set out with the object of finding confirmation for the theory of analysis, instead of reverting to it after the case was completed. How often we feel, in looking back upon our own cases or hearing accounts of other people's, that this card-index science has caused the gangway to reality to be withdrawn much too soon, that the ship put out into the ocean of theory too early. In my practice I generally become confused in proportion as I think of the analytical

theory that is so familiar to me whilst treating a case, and only recover my bearings in the chaos of living psychical processes.

Who to-day, hearing, for instance, the expression " Œdipus complex ", thinks of profound agitations, of passions withdrawn from the ken of the ego, determining the life of the individual and forcing it along ways that he did not wish to tread ? The designation has become a descriptive abbreviation for a psychical fact, worn like an old coin in everyday use. In these days, if we tell a patient from the educated classes that he cherishes unconscious desires for the death of his father or brother, we may receive the answer : " Oh, yes ; why not ? " And he is ready to admit at once that he wants to start a massacre among his closest relatives and friends. Such ready admission does not of course preclude the same patient, who immediately accepts an important element of the theory of analysis as fitting his case, from thrilling with pain if he thinks in a quiet hour of the possibility that his father might die, his father, so full of vitality and so beloved. The idea of his father dying, uttered in the course of an analytical treatment, and the same idea thought of at another time, may be too entirely different things. To accept the psychological existence and efficacy of such murderous wishes is not comprehension, not self-comprehension, in the analytical sense. The patient has heard and read of incestuous wishes, of hatred of fathers, and of childish sexuality. Perhaps certain memories attached to these ideas have emerged in his consciousness, but such preparation makes the psychologist's work harder rather than easier. It is separated from the knowledge of the ego aspired to by analysis by a great abyss, across which there is only *one* bridge, that of experience. Nowadays it often happens that designation in analysis long precedes experience, and the patient has long to wait till that comes—if it comes at all. But designation ought to be something like the signal that an experience has been inwardly mastered, comparable with its epitaph, with the inscription on a tomb.

Now it seems to me that a beginner in psycho-analysis is faced with a similar danger. The danger, I mean, which becomes imminent when the appearance of complete accord between the special symptoms of a case and the theory of analysis forces itself upon the analyst at an early stage. I should prefer to call it taking flight to the refuge of terminology, to a manner of forming our thoughts feebler and more remote from reality than any other. And let me take this opportunity of confessing readily that of all the gains secured to us by analysis its terminology seems to me the least valuable. The designations for the subtlest and most complicated mental processes are often—with the exception of a few names given by Freud—marvellously lacking in vividness, they are like tight garments, with the mental content splitting all their seams. Many of these technical terms are hardly adequate to the idealogical content of the mental processes which they are meant to designate, and most of them are not capable of giving so much as the smallest suggestion of their affective content.

Much might doubtless be said about the use and abuse of analytical terminology. Sometimes, when we listen to or read accounts of analytical cases, we are seized with a kind of giddiness, like that felt when watching certain acrobatic performances: it is as if a rope-dancer were walking across an empty space in the heights of theory along a rope of words. I, too, sometimes feel a genuine *horror vacui*, a shock at the mental void concealed behind so much theoretical knowledge and such a wealth of terminology. I open a psycho-analytical journal which happens to lie beside me on my writing-table, and read the first sentence I light upon: "In a number of cases of ejaculatio præcox I have noted in particular in addition to their typical urethralanal-oral fixations the presence of a wealth of urethro-regressive fantasies . . ." It is a bad omen for the situation of any science when, as is here the case, the reader has to make a great intellectual effort to grasp the form of its statements, but none at all to grasp their substance. I

know that terminology is a necessary evil, but it seems to me that too much stress is laid upon its necessity and too little upon its drawbacks.

In my opinion the intellectual side of analytical training, aiming at knowledge, is still too much stressed. For its practicians, too, analysis should be an experience in the fullest sense, not in the restricted and one-sided sense. The depth of a cognition does not depend upon the way by which we reach it. If we do not reach it by our own way, there appears, instead of an original perception, a word from the analytical vocabulary, and we think in the clichés of the psychology of the unconscious. The fact that such knowledge is not experienced, that is to say, its profound unreality, cannot be permanently concealed by giving it a Greek or Latin name. Some analysts behave as if analysis were itself the goal, whereas it is only the way to a psychological goal. What matters is not only that the unconscious should become conscious, but also that it should be recognized and felt as objective and belonging to the ego. The patient has not got to know of his repressed impulses, he has to know them. Anybody can talk for hours about an unconscious process without having more than an external consciousness of it ; nay, we can even talk for hours about something that is by its very nature inaccessible to verbal expression. In analysis, too, it is possible to remain in the consciously " comprehended " periphery of experience, instead of penetrating to direct mental processes.

Analytical theory is not the heuristic instrument for which it is often taken, and so used and abused ; it is the final precipitate of intelligence received through psychological work with living objects. It is, of course, very useful to be able to observe and study dead butterflies in a case, tidily pinned and labelled, but a butterfly-case is a very poor instrument for catching the creatures. And, moreover, it is dangerous to apply analytical theory in acquiring knowledge because it prevents the peculiar experience of conjecturing and comprehending the psychical processes, and the analyst arrives at

a false show of certainty, a pseudo-comprehension. Every time he applies it so it is like a criminal abortion practised against the embryo of genuine psychological knowledge. *Terminology tempts us to intellectual laziness, so that we substitute something learnt by heart for something experienced, something acquired for something really our own.*

Sometimes it is not so much an inclination for the analytical way of seeing and investigating as an inclination for the analytical manner of expression that is displayed. Terminology can be a fatal menace to a science, if it is used, not to give names to relations, but as a substitute for comprehension that is lacking. Not long ago I heard a man who was undergoing training analysis say that he had passed again through the oral, the anal-sadistic, the phallic phase, etc., and now he was near the end of his analysis. It is difficult to express in words how such a remark disgusts one. But more important to me than the æsthetic impression made by his remark is the fact that the student who made such a statement seriously could have felt little of the essential experience involved in analysis. Even analytical designations and conceptions may conceal a psychical void full of pretentions. Sometimes I tremble for a young generation who make such short work, not only of their own experiences, but also of the analytical term that describes them. A person who values analysis only as the application of a therapeutic method has discovered only what is good in it, not what is best. A man who feels the call to be an analyst should realize that more and other processes are involved in analysis : an emergence of secret things that were not only unspoken, but never spoke, an encounter of hidden impulses whilst the ordinary business of life goes in the upper planes of consciousness.

I maintain, therefore, that in the process of comprehension the vital difference between knowledge experienced and knowledge learnt by rote holds good not only for the patient, but also for the analyst—also for the analyst who, after all, has undergone an analysis in his own ego. The process of analysis

is not ended when the analytical treatments are at an end; its fermenting effect is not restricted to the duration of one's own analysis. We are still too apt to overlook the fact that we need time in order to master our experiences, and all the more time the deeper their effect upon the tissues of the mind. It is this which makes the process of analysis of so long duration, but also so durable. Analysis is such an experience of profound effect, and must be surveyed from a considerable distance in time, in order to be understood for what it is. Its effects are of less importance than its after-effects. And now, when we come to the practice of analysis: it is true of analysis, as of other experiences, that we come to comprehend its meaning differently and more fully when we see it reflected in another mind, for the deeper planes of the ego can be reached only by a roundabout way, through an object. It is, therefore, legitimate to speak of the psycho-therapeutic value to the analyst of the analysis of another person. *In beginning to comprehend another, we discover a clue to ourselves.*

Training in analysis can mean nothing essential to the student but the re-discovery of contents deep down in his own unconscious ego. For anyone who does not re-discover the knowledge conveyed in analysis, it is a dead science of the inner life, and the work of analysis a sort of mental exercise upon a psychological basis. The analysis of self is rather the beginning of the process of re-discovery than its fulfilment. We must first stand at a distance, affectively and in time, from our own analysis, the experience must first penetrate to those depths in the inner life where it can make contact with other experiences, must first be rejected and re-emerge, before it struggles through to clarity. Unlike many of my colleagues, I am by no means delighted when a distinguished nerve specialist or psychologist declares his conviction that the results reached by analysis are right. I want to know first how deeply he can doubt, before I believe in the depth of his conviction. Novalis once said that, in order to grasp a truth rightly, we must have argued against it.

Perhaps I can best illustrate the difference between knowledge learnt by rote and knowledge experienced by means of a comparison. Suppose we go to a performance of *Faust*. Not only do the actors' speeches sound familiar to us, they sound like quotations. A little later we hear the same words in another performance, spoken by other actors, but they have now assumed a new meaning, touched with personality. They seem to spring from the very fountain-head of speech. And yet it is the same poem, the same words.

I will recur, as to a dominant theme, to the statement that the essential element of analytical technique—I mean in the sense of the application of the method to a living subject—cannot be learnt by rote, but only experienced. To me it seems essential that a young analyst should for once leave all "training" behind him, in order to return to it along his own path. So essential that the roundabout way is preferable to marching straight on along the broad high road.

I will try to demonstrate the difference between knowledge experienced and knowledge learnt by rote by an example from practice. It is taken from the analysis of a woman no longer young who was being treated for depression, inability to work, and a variety of other symptoms. Her relations with her husband were seriously troubled, and the marriage was on the verge of collapse. The husband and wife only talked together of what was absolutely necessary. The patient had refused sexual intercourse to her husband, whose potence was but feeble. They had had no sexual intercourse for a year. Since the husband had contracted a superficial intimacy with another woman there were almost daily quarrels. The patient spoke of her husband only with expressions of the deepest loathing and bitter hatred. The quarrels had become more violent latterly, since the two children had been sent away for the holidays and the couple remained alone together in the house. The patient, exceedingly embittered by her husband's repeated unfaithfulness and unkind behaviour, had terrible attacks of rage in which she threatened to kill her husband.

One evening there was a fresh quarrel in which the couple said nearly everything to one another that they had on their minds. The next day, in her treatment, she told how she had not been able to sleep for fury. When, towards morning, she was falling asleep, a mouse ran across her bed, so that she was kept awake. Then she resolved to leave her husband and return to her parents. During the day she so far altered her resolution that she decided to return to her parents the next morning, if the mouse ran across her bed again in the following night. When she came home from shopping about noon of that day, she found the mouse in a trap that she had set for it. She stayed.

In the interpretation of this example we will study the difference between the conception put forward by conscious knowledge, and an explanation arising from the unconscious. Let us assume that during the patient's story the analyst thinks at once of the fact that the mouse is an animal that frequently symbolizes the male genital organ in dream and reverie, in fairy-tale and folklore. His conscious knowledge of this symbolism seems to penetrate to the hidden meaning of the patient's thought. We may insert this symbol in her story like the solution of x in an equation. I do not want to detract from the value of such a direct translation. It may really lead to a correct psychological explanation of what the formula of the mouse meant unconsciously to the patient. The other way, which seems to lead to the same goal, is this : the analyst has already studied the woman's sadistic and masochistic fantasies ; he has watched the growing bitterness of the conjugal strife. He has long divined how the woman is suffering under lack of tenderness and pent-up sexual feelings, and how cruelly she was tormented by jealousy of her hated, and yet still beloved, husband, when she heard of his intimacy with another woman of her acquaintance. He recalls that recently the patient has complained that she can no longer love her children, and that during the absence of the children the conjugal scenes have become even angrier and her accesses

of rage still more violent. At some point while he listened to the woman's stories and accusations there occurred to him a surmise of the unconscious purpose of the violent accesses of rage, for which the husband's cold behaviour and his aberration provided a sufficient conscious motive. And this surmise grew to a certainty, thanks to continually accruing fresh circumstantial evidence. Unconsciously the patient wanted to regain her husband, a wish stimulated in part by what was left of her love, partly by pity for him, and partly by the desire to overcome her rival. She knew nothing of this secret wish ; her conduct seemed to tend instinctively in the very opposite direction. In accordance with her coleric temperament, the repressed wish had made use of violent outbreaks of rage to attain its end. Yet the attacks were not merely means to the end, but also its surrogate. We are reminded of the proverb that war is a continuation of diplomacy by other means. Perhaps it may occur to us that the unconscious thought was at work that reconciliation with her husband might be more easily accomplished during the children's absence, and that her rage became more violent when she failed.

Her mental and physical craving for her husband must have reached a climax on that evening. We shall not err in explaining the subsequent sleeplessness as an expression of sexual tension. In that night the patient was frightened by the appearance of the mouse in the same way as other women. Her resolution to return to her parents is explained by the unconscious disappointment because her husband did not come to her that night. When, in the course of the following day, she so far changed her mind as to resolve to return home if the mouse ran across her bed the next night too, we can well understand what the change means : unconsciously she hopes that the secret wish may be fulfilled in the following night. We may also express this thought, which was alien to the patient's ego, in these words : if the mouse, and not my husband, comes to me in bed to-night as well, then I will

return to my parents. The contrast, which stands for the mental attitude of rejection, need not prevent the one object acting at the same time as surrogate for the other. And when she then remained, because she found the mouse in a trap during the day, the unconscious sexual connotation of her thoughts stands revealed. I need hardly say that in the following night her unconscious wish was satisfied. There, too, the trap was skilfully set.

The psychical road from the first surmise to certainty concerning the unconscious meaning of the patient's thoughts is different from the process previously indicated, where the analyst introduced the symbol into the train of thought, in order to comprehend it, as a result of his conscious knowledge. In the latter case he did not think of symbols, but allowed his unconscious to lead him. He was guided, not by what he had learnt from books and lectures, but by his unconscious comprehension. Later, perhaps, *after* he had grasped by what hidden, and yet instinctively assured, means the Eternal Feminine pursued its aim, it may have occurred to him that the mouse is a well-known sexual symbol. It may, indeed, be urged that the knowledge helped him pre-consciously to conjecture the latent meaning of the train of thought. That is not the question. I have only said that I comprehended the repressed processes of the patient's mind without calling in the aid of my conscious knowledge of the sexual significance of the animal. Now it might be argued that both ways led to the same goal, and that the first, that which made use of conscious knowledge, is actually the shorter. But we must consider that, even if we admit as much, it is not a matter of indifference by *what* road we reach our heuristic aim, and that the shorter is not always the better way.

Meanwhile closer consideration will show that the goal is not the same. In the case of the direct and conscious introduction of the symbol we have merely grasped a train of thought psychologically, an isolated fragment. From thence we can proceed regressively to comprehend the recent conduct

of the patient. But in the second case, in which we have followed her conduct with a comprehension arising from the unconscious, the outcome will be a comprehension of a different and deeper kind, insight will be revealed to us of the varying impulses, of different sides of her character, nay, of the nature and secret purposes of the neurosis. The play of inner forces in the patient will be revealed to us in all its variety and with its hidden springs, her present behaviour will offer us certain points of vantage from which to discern explanations of other, earlier, and not yet comprehended processes, and will take its proper place in inner relation with all the rest of what we know about the patient. I call this kind of comprehension *knowledge experienced*, and place it in contrast to *knowledge* merely *learnt by rote*, operating with conceptions derived from consciously acquired facts. The danger involved in the latter is that we may cling to mere dummies representing words, instead of reaching ideas corresponding with inner reality.

Thus respect for terminology may prove to be the scientific expression for our belief in verbal magic. Theory, which ought to come as the final precipitate of personal experience, so often becomes its actual substitute, and as such can be used for the purposes of superficial routine. I hold that not only is the heuristic value of the two types of knowledge different, but also their dynamic value. It is not a matter of indifference for the progress of the analysis whether we simply apply conscious knowledge to the psychical data presented to us, or whether conscious knowledge arises from its unconscious assimilation—not even if the substance of the knowledge should be in both cases the same. The effect upon the patient is different, and so is the mental reaction upon the analyst. Experience teaches that we readily spend money that falls into our lap by chance, because we value it lightly, whereas money that we have ourselves earned is better spent because, unconsciously, we value it more. So it must be with knowledge that we work for. It is this knowledge

that we have earned ourselves that is of prime effect in analysis. In conjecture it is the idea that occurs freely that will bring the analyst upon the tracks of repressed processes, not the idea that is trammelled by theoretical prejudices. Only that which springs from the depths can call forth deep echoes.

CHAPTER VII

THERE IS NO ROYAL ROAD THROUGH THE UNCONSCIOUS

WHEN I said that vital discoveries and intelligence of the unconscious repressed came as a surprise even to the analyst, I pictured myself hearing the loudest chorus of objections and protests. Opponents will naturally protest against a scientific method of this kind, but I seem to hear more familiar voices in the chorus as well—those of my fellow-analysts. Whatever there may be to urge against my thesis, it would be hard for me to make concessions on this particular point.

It may certainly be argued in retort that investigators in other fields are also prepared to meet with surprises in their researches. Nevertheless, there can hardly be another diagnostic or heuristic method so lacking in plan, so unsystematic in approaching its data, so free from prejudices with regard to what is coming. Let us consider other methods of psychological investigation, let us picture to ourselves an experimental psychologist, a representative of the phenomenological school, a shape psychologist, or a behaviourist at the beginning of his researches into a living subject. Different as their methods of research into the mind may be, yet they agree in demanding the strictest attention to definite and previously defined points in the investigation just begun. A psychologist who starts a scientific investigation of this kind with a person as the subject of his experiment, will concentrate all his intellectual powers upon some narrower or wider problem, all his attention upon one or several points that interest him. An analyst who wants to penetrate the deeper planes of the mind,

approaches the investigation unprepared and without prejudice, and so gives the impression that he is looking for nothing in particular. He conducts himself quite differently from, let us say, a psychologist who is beginning a series of experiments in the laboratory after exact and careful preparation and according to a previously arranged plan. The analyst seems rather like a pupil of the witch in the Walpurgis Night (in Goethe's *Faust*) when he seeks to penetrate to the hidden knowledge of the unconscious repressed :

> To him without thought
> It comes unsought,
> He has it without care.

This impression is not quite correct, for the analyst does come to his investigations with certain psychological assumptions and expectations. Think, for instance, of his conviction that everything in the psychical process is determined, and also of his assurance that the unconscious repressed has means of expression and will betray itself in its offspring. Nevertheless, we must admit that, in comparison with the methods of other psychologists, the impression is largely justified. I must, indeed, point out that the character of a method of investigation must adapt itself to the nature of the subject of investigation. Clearly it would be absurd for an expedition to explore the Sahara to equip itself with a ship.

It is instructive to compare the attitude of, say, a neurologist of pre-analytical days towards the story of a nervous patient with that of a nerve specialist of to-day. The former listened gently and patiently for a long time to the story of a neurotic patient. But at a certain point he would feel constrained to intervene and turn the patient from his meandering tale to an orderly statement. Perhaps, during the course of the treatment, he would point out that the story was disconnected, the train of thought desultory, and that he, the doctor, could not make head or tail of it. With a little imagination we can picture to ourselves the doctor's voice, admon-

ishing gently or sternly : " Your thoughts are too desultory, they jump about all over the place ; do try to keep to the point." Or : " Please do try to tell straightforwardly and in proper order what you have to say to me." If the doctor has enough insight or patience to refrain from such an exhortation, he will nevertheless pick out himself what seems to him important in the story with conscious selection, and set aside what he thinks insignificant. He will separate the chaff from the wheat and will try from the outset to bring order and connection into the conscious statement. In any case, the doctor endeavoured to conduct the treatment in accordance with conscious principles and in a clear and systematic sequence. But that was possible only if the patient could be induced to plod along a beaten path of thought and not to flit hither and thither like a will-o'-the-wisp. And now, if we consider how radically different is the analyst's way of setting about his investigations, how he avoids making any such impression and leaves the manner and sequence of presenting psychical data almost entirely to the patient, we shall be able to understand the suspicion of many people with regard to a method so little systematic and consistent.

We shall not be surprised that even within the analytical school there are groups who demand that psychological heuristic work shall resume its systematic, orderly, consistent character. But anyone who, through years of daily analytical practice, has proved to himself the way in which the unconscious of the patient and the analyst act as a signpost for the conjecture of repressed processes, will hardly allow himself to be taught worse by new ideas of this kind. The old German academic proverb still holds good, that with a system incoherent drivel begins.

Quite recently Wilhelm Reich has put forward such a view very decisively in his interesting book *Charakteranalyse* (*Character Analysis*), which is particularly valuable in its clinical section. He calls for a vigorous approach to the complexes, a rapid and consistent advance to the central infantile conflict,

in a sense a pre-arranged march into the field of the unconscious. He repudiates passive expectancy, and requires that the conjecture of unconscious relations shall no longer depend upon uncontrollable "intuitive" ideas occurring to the analyst. If we proceed so, he claims, the so-called chaotic situations will no longer arise. A programme of this kind holds out to the student analyst the promise of labours systematic and reliable, nay, after the initial difficulties have been overcome, even smooth. If this expectation were to be fulfilled, the result would be a considerable abbreviation of the treatment for the patient, and therefore a sensible diminution of difficulty and greater success. This analytical programme represents, so to speak, a One-Year-Plan in the economy of the mind.

It sounds admirable, and has secured many adherents, especially among the younger generation of analysts. If I here subject Reich's technique to the light of criticism, that is not on account of its inherent merits, but on account of those ascribed to it by many analysts; not because it shows us anything in a new light, but because it has created such a stir. That is what induced me to introduce the subject here, although strictly speaking it lies outside the limits of my argument. My second reason is one of principle: I am of opinion that this tendency must necessarily lead to an abandonment of the most valuable characteristic of the analytical method. The road upon which Reich's book sets forth leads far. To me it seems, too far. Precisely in the name of science we must reject this methodical semblance of accuracy, the false suggestion that psycho-analysis admits of a fixed system. That theory puts forward a claim that is unfounded, gives rise to the idea that, thanks to analysis, we know everything about the unconscious that there is to know, and makes our method appear complete and final. Such a view is inspired by an unjustifiable optimism about the extent and depth of our knowledge of the unconscious, and ignores the fact that it is still as dark and impenetrable as an Indian jungle. The

founder of psycho-analysis was more modest and never indulged in the belief that he had solved all the riddles of the inner life. A few years ago he likened his work to that of an archæologist who had rescued a few temples from the dark earth and brought them to light; but he had no doubt that great treasures still remained below, awaiting excavation. So much for what has already been disclosed, and what still remains to be disclosed.

At this point I would emphasize my view that there is no royal road through the unconscious. I would also remind my readers that even great generals have sometimes attached no peculiar value to a consistent and pre-arranged plan. Napoleon, when asked about the nature of his strategy, answered: "Je m'engage et je vois." Since we are dealing with a region that is largely unknown, we can only give a little advice as regards the first steps leading from the territory with which we are familiar—advice, so to speak, about the frontier land. We can recount our own experience in making incursions into the unknown territory. Reich's endeavour, on the other hand, is precisely, as he says: "to establish a standpoint, both general and particular for each case, by which we may apply the data to the technical handling of the case *according to natural law*, and to know exactly in every interpretation what its basis and what its purpose . . ." In my opinion this application according to law, consistent, and fixed from the outset, is ill suited to the unconscious. The technique of analysis has grown from unconscious assumptions, and will always remain essentially dependent upon them and owe to them its most fruitful perceptions. In contact with the patient's unconscious it will always renew its strength, like Antæus in his struggle with the Titans when he touched the earth.

The requirement that in every interpretation we must know exactly its basis and purpose seems to me altogether utopian. And this not because it is too rationalist—we, too, acknowledge reason as the ultimate principle in the comprehension of the

unconscious—but because it introduces this rationalization at a stage of the analytical process which cannot be grasped by the understanding till later. There can be no prescribed rules for our procedure with regard to the imponderabilia of each individual case. It is out of the question, if only because we cannot define in advance the inaccessible potentialities of the unconscious. A technique of this kind, expecting everything from conscious considerations and plans, shows, moreover, surprisingly little confidence in the heuristic powers of our own unconscious. An analyst ought to have learned in the course of his practice that his own unconscious drags all kinds of things from the darkness with a thousand polypus-like arms. It is not necessary for an analyst to be constantly occupied with his plan of campaign during the process. If he is a good psychologist, the blind urge within himself will teach him the right way.

Reich aims at " a clear-sighted, regular, and systematic analysis of resistance " making unwaveringly for its goal—that is, he assumes a detailed plan with definite points of attack. The systematic technique which he suggests to us for the conquest of the desired territory may be excellent in itself; but it is so high-flying that it feels able to ignore the nature of the terrain where the decisive battles are fought. Reich recommends his systematic, consciously arranged procedure by urging that the way hitherto adopted " is very uncertain, dependent upon incalculable chances, and lacks the assured foundation of analytical lucidity . . ." How true! For we work for the most part in unknown territory. On such journeys we certainly are dependent upon chances, we do lack " the assured foundation of analytical lucidity ". But I do not think that an exploring expedition is surer of success, if an exact itinerary is worked out beforehand through a land that is unknown. There is no *géographie de l'inconnu.*

I cannot believe what Reich's systematic technique of analysis assumes—namely, that we shall find a well-arranged card-index and catalogue of the unconscious ready-made.

Reich reminds us that many treatments fail because the analyst cannot find his way through the mass of data revealed : " We call that a chaotic situation, and hold that it is due to particular errors in the technique of interpretation." I should not call it so, and I hold that these situations are not only due to particular errors in the technique of interpretation, but also to particular and far-reaching deficiencies in our knowledge and our psycho-physical constitution. We may wait with unruffled scepticism to see whether the technique recommended to us will cure these deficiencies. I doubt whether a change in technique, in the direction of a consistent and systematic treatment of the patient, can teach us anything new. I should rather incline to believe that it is possible to find something new which will then create its own technique.

But after all, what are the errors which Reich assumes to be responsible for the " chaotic situation " ? They are premature interpretations, or interpretations of the data in the sequence in which they clearly presented themselves, without consideration of the structure of the neurosis and the stratification of the material. The error lay in interpreting, simply because the data presented themselves clearly : to use Reich's caustic words : " unsystematic interpretation of the meaning ". In these cases the interpretation of the meaning often precedes the interpretation of the resistance, he says, or else the interpretation of the resistance is inconsistent. This unsystematic procedure is to be replaced by orderly interpretation and analysis of the resistance. Only a very slight exaggeration of the technique here recommended must lead to a situation similar to that described in the affecting plaint of an orchestra : " It is so dreadfully difficult to keep a conductor coherent."

Especially, he says, we must pay attention to latent resistance. " I make a habit of tackling these latent resistances." Reich gives several interesting examples of this " tackling ", which seem to indicate that his method deserves the name rather of an aggressive than an active technique. Sometimes

we are reminded of the prescription referred to by Jaroslav Hasek : " More severity towards the poor ! " Such militant psychology may be a matter of taste ; we have a right to inquire more curiously into the criteria which decide what is to be " tackled " and what passed over. With a sureness of aim that proves that Reich is as gifted a satirist as he is a strategist, he remarks that it is not always easy " to convey the simple information that one should always start from the surface ". And then he shows what must be first interpreted if by chance two surface contents emerge side by side, both with an unconscious foundation. We shall certainly agree with Reich when he says that there are special reasons for discussing one part of the psychical surface first, and not the other. Doubtless there are such reasons, but they will be largely of a preconscious or unconscious nature, so that it is not till a later stage that they will present themselves as useful reactions for the purpose of illuminating or guiding the analysis.

Certainly there may arise situations during the analysis in which the analyst will consciously—that is to say, here, with a consciousness of purpose—interpret one particular fragment of the material offered, and will pass over another, but these are exceptional cases. As a general rule the reasons are consciously realized at a later stage. But they need not even all be consciously realized. As a general rule it is not logical or rational considerations that decide how we proceed in such cases. These considerations occur later when we reflect on our procedure and test it. The course of the analysis is not directed by a consistent and conscious system on the part of the analyst. In choosing the sequence of the data to be interpreted he is guided by unconscious reasons, the inner significance of which far exceeds any principle of pre-arranged order and system. We have here a secret understanding and an unconscious order, exceeding in its heuristic value that of any rigid and pre-arranged consistency. If at first guidance of this kind through the vistas of the unconscious order seem madness, yet it has a method of its own, revealing relations

more profound than the professedly consistent procedure according to a pre-arranged, rational plan. The longer I continue to conduct analyses, the deeper becomes my suspicion of any attempt to mechanize and systematize them, the stronger my impression that *in analysis it is less skilful technique that counts than inner truthfulness, nay, that this inner truthfulness is the very essence of analytical technique.* If we regard the matter in this light, it is of small importance whether our choice of material is from memory or from the sphere of the actual, or whether we are concerned with the interpretation of meaning or of resistances. That is to say, the choice of data to be interpreted must also be left to a great extent to the analyst's sagacity and tact.

It still remains most advantageous to start from the psychical surface. It is true that the surface is the uppermost plane, but it can mirror the depths. The analyst's unconscious, without the aid of a rational system, without conscious consistency, without precept or prescription, will thence be able to discover what needs interpretation, and in what sequence it should be interpreted. This new school wants to pick out from the mass of material the one fragment that plays a central part in the resistance. It calls for continuity in the analysis by means of a consistent marshalling of resistances, and wants the technique of interpretation of resistances, likewise, to be orderly and systematic. Its ideal is " a direct development of the transference neurosis and its analysis, in keeping with the original neurosis ; the patient develops his resistances systematically, and in the intervals he produces affective memories free from resistance ".

Everything here proceeds smoothly, I admit ; the transference neurosis develops exactly as foreseen. The patient develops his resistances systematically, the analysis proceeds with the accuracy of the planets, and its appointed march is accomplished to the sound of thunder.[1] This remoulding to a comprehensive, mechanical, and consistent system seems to

[1] An allusion to Goethe's *Faust.—Translator's Note.*

stamp analysis with the character of a psychology rather of business than of instinct.

Reich asserts : " Whereas when the work of interpretation is unsystematic we must confine ourselves to sudden pushes, search, guesswork rather than inference, if we have previously worked at the resistance in the analysis of character, the analytical process advances automatically." It advances so smoothly that anyone who is really familiar with psychoanalysis is bound to grow exceedingly suspicious. The region in which this kind of analysis occurs may be situated in the land of the lotos-eaters ; it is assuredly not of this world. In analysis of Reich's type it is not determinism of thought that prevails, but a military discipline of thought, an analytically prescribed intercourse of thoughts, so to speak. The ideas do not occur in a disorderly tumult, but one is admitted after the other, in accordance with the degree in which it can prove its standing in the service of the new technique.

We are directed to pay heed to the formal element as the great means of discovering the new consistent and systematic technique. In addition to dreams, blunders, etc., the patient's deportment merits attention, that is the manner in which he tells his dreams, makes his blunders, etc. " The manner is of equal value with the matter, regarded as interpretive material." " Through this experience," we read in another passage, " the formal element is introduced into psychoanalysis, hitherto mainly concerned with the content." This astonishes the professional analyst, and the layman is puzzled. Where shall we find an analyst who has not ascribed full importance to the deportment of a patient and his individual manner of telling his story, one who does not pay great attention to the formal element in his impressions ? " A qui dites vous ça ? " his French colleagues would ask the new strategist. He is proclaiming, with great aplomb, the conquest of a land that has always been ours.

There is so little that is new in emphasizing the formal element, so little that is original, that he does not even venture

to take a small step further and declare that form is nothing but content changed to an outer layer, kernel changed to shell, that, to quote Novalis, the outer is only " the inner raised to a mysterious state ". What Reich says here has always been so obvious that it need not be said, nay, that it was not *permissible* to say it, if the intention was thereby to designate an essential element in a new technique. What still remains to be noted on this point, is less the substance of the statement than the boldness with which it is made, and with which a truism is proclaimed as a gospel of salvation.

Undoubtedly it is justifiable to warn us of the dangers of a chaotic situation, only I fear that the warning does not involve any protection, and that, however consistently we push forwards into the darkness of the unconscious, such situations are unavoidable. It happens not infrequently during analysis that for a time the threads threaten to become tangled and we grope our way in the dark. Then suddenly an intonation of the voice, a pause, a gesture, that we had not observed before, leads us towards a solution. It is precisely from this temporary darkness, this chaotic situation, that the clarifying and explanatory idea arises, " the strange son of Chaos ".

Systematization involves the loss of what is most valuable and characteristic in the technique of analysis. Was it not an advantage that we were not required to marshal our data immediately, to manipulate them with violence, that our technique remained close to the mental processes of the moment and could adapt itself to them ? It is one of the essential benefits of this technique that the analyst retains his respect for the peculiar laws of the unconscious, and need not state in the sweat of his brow what he does not know. And now he is to be required to make an exact and conscious selection of the material, arranged according to fixed principles, and to push the analysis consistently in a pre-determined direction. The understanding between two unconscious minds will, I fear, be replaced by misunderstanding between two conscious minds. Undoubtedly there are stages in many analyses in which such

consistent analysis of resistances comes about of itself. In these cases the special technique is automatically prescribed. We need not prescribe it ourselves. In principle, an ordered and systematic technique, which only concerns itself with resistance, is as unnecessary, nay, as harmful, as artificial aids at a normal childbirth. It merely disturbs the organic growth of the analytical process. Such selection of material solely from the point of view of resistance does not mean guidance of the analysis, but an affective act of violence against it. In actual fact this much-praised energetic procedure is better adapted to any other object than the repressed elements of the mind. If we survey the description of the orderly, systematic, and consistent technique of dealing with resistance, we shall come to the conclusion that it is easy to be consistent; the difficulty is to know to what end.

My decided rejection of the conscious ordering, the consistent and systematic discipline, of the analytical process is most certainly not tantamount to a denial of any guiding principle. What I repudiate is the totalitarian claim of the new technique of dealing with resistance, the claim that the planning, rational factor is to be our guide in a psychical phase in which it is out of place. I repudiate the totalitarian claim of a conscious and systematic procedure, where it is a question of conjecturing repressed tendencies. I will not admit that we can extract from the living psychical processes with levers and screws what they will reveal only in the course of organic development. In such procedure the Logos is degraded to mere intelligence.

There is an order governing the unconscious of the patient and the analyst; the analysis obeys the law by which it unfolds. But that is determined by the reciprocal action of the unconscious. The analysis pursues its aim by ways that are only revealed at a subsequent stage of the process. In contrast with the systematic and militant type of analysis that is recommended to us, I praise the exclusion on principle of order and compulsion in technique, the absence of a consistent

system, the lack of all conscious and rigid arrangement. I confess myself an opponent of every kind of conscious mechanization of analytical technique. This establishment of order and plan that is to be forced upon us corresponds in the inner life to the efforts of so many domestics who do, indeed, tidy our writing-tables and ruthlessly make an end of all disorder, but, by their consistent and systematic methods, sweep away or destroy, stupidly and senselessly, the fruits of years of laborious work.

Analysts must not allow themselves to be led astray by the prospect of quicker therapeutic and heuristic results. What is being attempted is to bring back analytical procedure, by a roundabout way, to the old methods of medical and psychological investigation, which were undoubtedly thoroughly consistent, orderly, and systematic. These people, who act the rebel, are rather engaged in a bold retreat. The Left wing of a movement to which we owe a scientific revolution, is marching with flying colours into the camp of the reactionaries.

The other danger which analysis, as a heuristic method, has to resist has certain common features with that just described. A briefer statement will be enough for this other would-be improvement of technique, which also professes to lighten our labours and ensure a smooth working of the process of cognition ; for, though certainly it has not fewer advocates, its defects are much more obvious. It is the technique of interpretation advocated by Steckel and his school. Here everything is left to the ideas that occur to the analyst ; he is subjected only to a very slight inner control. The analyst has made himself so far independent of the psychical data that it sometimes seems as if he had no urgent need of them at all. The result is that the analyst rather forces the idea that occurs to him upon the patient than communicates it—and in this method almost everything is in the form of such ideas, good and bad, unchecked, subjected to no filter of self-criticism and examination. The common features are obvious. Reich's technique of interpretation is arbitrary in its trend, that of

Steckel's disciples in its content. In the one case psychological conjecture based upon our own unconscious knowledge is almost entirely excluded and branded as " intuition " ; in the other it becomes omnipotent. In the one case the discipline of rational thinking becomes, so to speak, a tyranny : in the other there is rather a state of intellectual indiscipline.

I have already compared the investigation of unconscious processes to a voyage of discovery. But that voyage is not to be mere filibustering, but a scientific expedition, undertaken with all the caution and care, all the sense of responsibility, proper to such a journey, ready at any moment to give an account of the strange lands visited. It is indeed a journey to an almost unknown land, but no mere random trip.

It will be pleasant to return from this dispute, which proved necessary in order to avert a danger and clarify the issue, to more positive tasks. But before I do so I will utter the clear warning that arises from these critical considerations : we are justified in regarding any innovation in analytical technique with suspicion, if it promises to enable us to penetrate into the unconscious smoothly, easily, and quickly. Again and again an analyst will experience, besides satisfaction at the slow dawning of light in the dark places of the mind and at illumination, sudden only in appearance, disappointment at difficulties, and his own errors, and " chaotic situations " ; again and again, in spite of every extension of the boundaries of consciousness, he will strike against the limitations that bound our psychological knowledge. Anyone who takes part in our labour of investigating the unconscious mind, must realize that after the first phase, in which we recognize with amazement how much that is new and undreamed-of we learn in the course of analysis, a second follows in which we see how much that is unknown and unknowable there is in the realm of the unconscious.

This recognition of the limits of his possibilities will lead the psychologist to set sober bounds to his aims, and to reflect. It will not lessen his keen interest in unconscious processes,

will not have power to damp his enthusiasm. The nature of his interest will undergo the same changes, amidst the inevitable obscurities and difficulties of his psychological labours, as mark the development of a wholesome marriage : passion vanishes, love must remain.

CHAPTER VIII

POINT OF DEPARTURE, PAUSE, RESUMPTION

ONCE again I must revert to the statement that what is most important in the technique of psycho-analysis cannot be learnt by rote, but only experienced. Can we, for instance, " teach " an eager student the ideas that occur to an analyst ? No doubt, they form only a part of the trains of thought that lead to a recognition of the unconscious processes and their hidden meaning, but nevertheless they mark one of the most pregnant moments during analysis. That is, the moment when an idea emerges from the unconscious, or, in the language of analysis, passes from the primary to the secondary process. I propose to call this moment the " point of departure ". We might, with the slightly comical love of the academic mind for Latin words, also call it the *status nascendi.* I will refrain from doing so, not because it sounds somewhat pretentious, but because it would not be quite correct. The moment that I have in mind, in which an idea emerges from unconscious assimilation and is consciously grasped, is not the moment of its origin. That is certainly earlier, often much earlier. For instance, we may have " comprehended " the secret meaning of a psychical process very soon, but not yet be aware of it. That implies that we have not yet consciously taken cognizance of it. But our own reactions and certain previous trains of thought bear witness all the same that the hidden meaning of one or the other trait had yet been fully understood unconsciously.

How do we recognize this point of departure ? To answer that question is more difficult than to experience the process. Let us take any example of such an idea. Yesterday I had to

interpret the dream of a woman patient. Her account was: "I was with my tutor in Leiden. After the lesson I hurried to the station. The train was already gone. I ran to the taxi-stand. There was no taxi. Then I went to a restaurant and asked for a car at once to take me back to The Hague. The woman to whom it belonged would not let me have it. I spoke angrily to her: I must get to The Hague. I feared that I was late. Whilst I was waiting, I suddenly asked myself how I had got to Leiden." The patient really did frequently go to the University town in question, in order to prepare for her examination with her tutor; she was a law student. All the ideas that occurred to her had reference to that situation, to her tutor, to the difficulties of transport. When, in telling her associations, she came to that part of the dream where she said: "I suddenly asked myself how I had got to Leiden", the meaning of this part of the dream occurred to me: she was asking what the origin of her neurotic trouble might be. (In German the name of the town, Leiden, is the same as the word *Leiden*, trouble, suffering, illness.—*Translator's Note.*) The patient had really been greatly occupied just then with this question. She did not recognize it in her own dream, and yet the idea is obvious enough. Later I heard that in Holland there is a well-known pun which shows how closely the two notions are associated in people's minds: David, it is said, was a Dutchman, for he was "born in Leiden".

Let me give another example from the analytical treatment of a young doctor: he said that he was expecting that afternoon a private visit from a young, attractive lady who was coming to visit him for the second time. The first time he had not tidied his flat, and had told the lady so. He had added that he always disliked it when a hospital was specially cleaned and carefully tidied upon a visit from the Queen being announced. He was particularly disgusted with the feverish activity shown at such times. It struck him as false and spurious. To-day he himself had cleaned his washing-stand thoroughly. We will ignore the sequence of these

opposite attitudes of mind, and turn our attention to the gallant comparison, and to his expression of disgust at the special cleaning when a visit of the Queen to the hospital was announced. From what regions of the unconscious did the idea occur to me that the patient had, as a boy, often befouled the seat of the closet with his urine, and had been scolded for it by his mother? I communicated the idea. The patient reacted with memories from his twelfth and thirteenth years which might indirectly support the supposition, but he had no conscious knowledge of the behaviour indicated by me. But he mentioned incidentally that, in case of more or less urgency, he was in the habit of urinating into the washing basin, which was quickly cleaned by the hot running water. I have deliberately confined myself to these primitive examples, which may perhaps show where the point of departure is to be found, and how the idea emerges from the unconscious fashioning of the material.

As regards the factor of time, I need only say that as a rule we know exactly when the idea in question occurs. Sometimes, indeed, we only recognize it when it has been passed over. I do not know whether many analysts have the same experience, but with me the emergence from the deeper or obscurer planes of thought is preceded for the fraction of a second by a sense of alienation, a rapidly passing feeling of absence of mind. It is as though an act of analytical cognition of this kind and origin were announced by a moment of eclipse preceding it. (It is darkest before the dawn.) Perhaps this moment of eclipse before conjecture is only an expression of the unconscious resistance to the cognition that is pushing itself into consciousness, and at the same time the signal of its imminent emergence. The psychical situation may well be compared with the effect of Rembrandt's treatment of light; the French call him a *luministe*, and one observer writes that he carries " dark lanterns under his cloak, which he suddenly whips out and holds in our faces, so that at first we can see nothing for brightness ". This passing chaotic situation, of

which I am not so very much ashamed as might be supposed from Reich's view, is ended by the immediate lucidity with which the idea crosses the threshold of consciousness. We must assume that certain factors, dynamic and mentally economic, are responsible for this process, and that at the particular moment an enhanced psychical tension is suddenly relaxed.

Not seldom it happens that the idea slips from our grasp as soon as it occurs, and we try in vain to recapture it; it has withdrawn into the unconscious. What has happened is a mental blunder, following the same psychical tendencies as similar occurrences in everyday life. In principle it is nowise different from losing a key and being unable to find it. We think repeatedly that we have got the lost idea, and we only snatch at empty air, or rather at air filled with rational reflections. Our difficulty in capturing these ideas is similar to that of the patient, and its mental conquest requires a special training, as with the patient. What I have already said indicates how important are inner susceptibility and retentiveness of slight irritants and barely noticeable features, in order that the idea may take shape beneath the surface.

Experience shows that it is advisable to formulate in words every idea occurring to the analyst that has reference to the analytical data. I do not, of course, mean that we should tell the patient of every idea, that we should immediately communicate to him the conjectured meaning of a network of symptoms, the hidden bearing of his inner attitude, the unconscious connection between what he experiences and his repressed motives. To have an idea and to utter an idea are two separate things—or should be, at least. I only mean that we should give the idea expression in words in our own mind, as if we wanted to tell it to the patient, or, better, as if we wanted to tell it to ourselves.

It is a true statement that thoughts are speeches never made or condemned to silence. When I advise analysts to formulate ideas that occur to them in words in their own minds, psycho-

logists will immediately perceive the advantages of such a course. Thanks to the inner connection between our consciousness and language, an idea formulated in words will prove stronger to resist the repressing forces than one not so formulated. It will be more capable of opposing the tendency to withdraw into the region of repressions. The best ideas and thoughts, those which often lead, like Ariadne's thread, out of the labyrinth of creations of the unconscious, are indeed the offspring of the analyst's repressions. These are the thoughts which sometimes enable the analyst to leap, so to speak, right into the centre of the secret of a case with the help of a single formulated statement.

Ideas of this kind need not, therefore, be uttered when first they emerge, but they ought to be inwardly spoken on the first occasion. Nor should we shrink from this effort when the idea emerging from the unconscious is confused and self-contradictory, when the impression lacks unequivocal clarity and is difficult to express in words. Resistance will, of course, make itself felt with particular force to senseless or absurd ideas. Wilhelm Busch has said: "Everybody has silly thoughts, only a wise man does not utter them." To this we may retort that he is still wiser who seeks meaning and hidden substance even in his "silly" thoughts. And in this instance we need not pause over the objection: that is all very well, but there must be some notion attached to the word. That is only necessary with a finished, thought-out idea, not in this early form. In truth, in that truth which logicians and psychologists do not like to hear, the conscious notion often follows upon the inwardly spoken word. Words will arise of themselves; we need not be concerned about that. *It is not at all difficult to find words for what we think. It is much more difficult to find out what we think.*

It sometimes happens that when we meet a second time with an analytical idea that has slipped from us—sometimes it even comes from the lips of the patient—we recognize it, and that in a particular way. In Vienna it is said in jest that

one knows so-and-so " by looking the other way ". We may know our own ideas " by looking the other way ", too. The limits set to this book hardly allow me to give my reasons for another recommendation—namely, to drop the idea once it has been formulated, to forget it—we know that can only be a metaphorical expression. Then when we come upon the idea again later, often unexpectedly, it will often have developed, will show new aspects that we had not seen formerly. It is necessary to forget it, in order to remember it.

The point of departure marks our entry upon the significant initial stage of comprehending unconscious processes. Let me illustrate the psychical situation by a comparison : experienced sportsmen tell us that the best moment to shoot partridges is when they rise out of the corn. It is more difficult to hit them in free flight. In like manner the point of departure seems to be the best moment to seize an analytical impression or idea. Once we miss it, it is not much use to pursue it with the devices of conscious reflection. It has already moved too far from the terrestrial realm of the unconscious, like the partridges a few minutes after their upward flight. And any sportsman will be able to teach us that by this delay we lose much more than the single partridge. In the same way, if we allow the point of departure to slip by unused, whole chains of ideas and thoughts may be lost. In the shooting illustration, we have to make up our minds to wait till we have roused a new covey of partridges—sometimes it will be the same, which has settled elsewhere meantime. In the same way, in analysis we have to await the return of the ideas we have let slip. (" Shall I try to hold you this time ? " says Goethe in his Dedication to *Faust*, speaking of the memories of his youth.)

The point of departure is a psychological moment *par excellence* in the act of tracing the hidden meaning and purpose of unconscious processes. A practical analyst will attach value to other moments in addition to this. Perhaps the mysterious flash with which an analytical idea arises makes it

impressive. But meanwhile its unconscious preparation, the silent mental labour from which it emerges, is yet more important. For it is the outcome of innumerable impressions, both conscious and imponderable and incommensurable, the final product of mental labour accomplished, for the most part unconsciously. When the unconscious preparation is far enough advanced, it only needs a slight external impression, the tone of a voice, a pause, or a movement, to thrust the idea across the threshold of consciousness. We might call this maturing phase the *latency period of psychological comprehension.* When we realize that the typical process is that certain hardly tangible, pre-conscious, impressions are assimilated unconsciously, and then come to light as psychological perceptions, or at least presentiments, the designation *unconscious interval* seems best. It will often happen that during this interval one or more impressions will be repeated and so strengthened. When our ear catches a very faint note, it can hardly distinguish what it is. But if it is repeated several times, it begins to be more easily recognizable, distinguishable. The repetition of an impression has the effect of making it clearer and more capable of interpretation.

The psychological comprehension of unconscious processes requires, like all comprehension, a definite time, which varies in each case. The analyst, too, must have a care to allow his perceptions to mature, or to mature himself for the perceptions that await him ; not to pluck them too soon, like unripe fruit. For the analyst, too, who seeks to penetrate to the depths of the soul, the charming Tyrolese greeting is valid, customary among the peasants when they go mountain climbing : " Take your time ! " It is no good to try to force the comprehension of repressed contents, to coerce it mechanically. It is an organic process, like any other. We have no call to feel ashamed of ourselves as analysts if we take a long time to comprehend the details of unconscious processes—at least any such shame must appear exaggerated in contrast with the self-assurance of others who never attain to this comprehension

at all. The cautious disentangling accomplished during analysis often requires a very long time. I confess myself an opponent of the breathless chase after interpretations that rushes helter-skelter after every symptom, every association of thought, in order to snatch from it its unconscious secret. It is possible to miss things because we have been too greedy in seeking them. Even our own ideas must be allowed time to reach consciousness. Some analysts are like a Paris authoress, famous about the turning of the century. This brilliant lady venerated the Pope profoundly, but said that unfortunately she was unable to believe in God. She told her friends that for decades she had been assailing God in vain with her entreaties to give some sign of his existence, activity. Really he might have revealed himself to her for so long a time. One of her interlocutors said: "Perhaps you never let him get in a word, Madame."

For the rest, during the interval, during this phase of passivity, which is nevertheless full of hidden activity and movement, the patient's unconscious will continue to express itself, to communicate its secret instinctive life. We have no need to set the comprehension of unconscious constellations artificially in motion; it moves of itself. What is repressed shows traces of itself in concealing itself; it thrusts itself forward in the offshoots which it sends out with growing boldness, whilst all the while it demonstratively withdraws itself. It is a crescendo of clarification. What is repressed shows traces of itself until it has found its solution, and even a little longer, so that we may not think it is the solution. There is no analytical time-table for the unconscious.

It is not necessary—I say this in conscious opposition to well-known recent tendencies—that every single treatment should show results. It need only have consequences. We know that what is psychologically most important in analysis often occurs, not during the treatments, but in the intervals between them. Why should we deny it? The long duration of the analytical process is undoubtedly due in part to the

analyst, who will not pretend to be able to take in the secrets of the inner life at a glance.

The unconscious interval between the pre-conscious impressions and their conscious psychological capture is a break in our efforts to attain comprehension of psychical phenomena by direct means. In making the break we cherish the expectation that the impressions will develop during the period of latency, will become clearer and take fruitful effect. How often has it happened that we have been able to reach only very imperfect comprehension of some particular network of symptoms, have been able only very partially to explain a complicated case of neurosis or character distortion. We have been obliged to interrupt the treatment on account of some organic disease of the patient's or some unavoidable journey of our own. After an interval we return to the analytical treatment of the patient. Nothing essential is changed in his symptoms in the meantime, the neurosis or character difficulties remain the same. And yet their hidden meaning has suddenly become clear to us, we recognize some relation hitherto unconscious, veiled from our sight, we conjecture the purpose of the repression. Something has happened within ourselves, in the relation between the pre-conscious and the unconscious, and that has clarified our dimmed sight. We hear again what we have so often heard, but we hear something different in it. Now, at last, we feel psychologically at home after a long absence.

The essence of the unconscious interval, then, of this fruitful pause, consists in our not striving consciously to comprehend the inner processes, and trusting for that to the psychological efforts of our own unconscious. Nameless psychical forces within us have accomplished the work in the pause, like the brownies of the fairy-tale in the darkness of night. And then it is as if a wall, which we thought to be firm and immovable and against which we beat in vain, suddenly vanished spontaneously and left a free view of hidden things. We really ought not to be surprised at psychological

comprehension taking shape, unobserved by us, in this interval. For we know that man is aware only of a small part of what he experiences. And the process of psychological comprehension is also among our experiences—if it were not, it would not deserve the name of comprehension. Once again, as so often in our investigation of mental processes, the significance of the time factor in the analyst's work appears in a special light. Here it is in close relation to the factor of psychical readiness to comprehend the unconscious : we must on occasion be able to wait in order to reach our goal.

Often in the moment when our ideas and thoughts about unconscious processes emerge, we know no more of their significance and trend, whither they are leading us, and how far they are preparing and determining further perceptions, than we do of what precedes them. We do not always know at once, when we have discovered something, *what* we have discovered. It is therefore of importance not only to seize upon the point of departure of an idea or thought, not only to make a number of impressions operate during the interval by assimilating them unconsciously, but also to recur to the idea or thought later and to pursue it in all its possible implications. Only when it is so resumed will it show what it was worth and how far it can lead the investigating intellect. In psycho-analysis, as in all sciences, there are sterile truths and fruitful errors.

It is often particularly difficult to detect the conjectured unconscious significance in the more remote offshoots and derivatives of a repression, to pursue it into all its retreats and hiding-places. For these unconscious, instinctive traits, once they have been discovered and interpreted, will make themselves more and more hard to detect in the further course of the analysis, will conceal themselves better and more carefully, will assume, with the help of conscious powers, distortions more and more difficult to penetrate. Let me again resort to a comparison ; let us suppose that we are playing hide-and-seek with a child of two. It is enough for us to hide behind

the nearest tree. If we play with the same child ten years later, we shall assuredly not choose so easy a hiding-place.

If a thought or idea proves valuable when we take it up again and subject it to examination, the requirements of analysis demand that we should, so to speak, let it sound till it fades away spontaneously. We shall then, certainly, allow conscious intellectual effort to play a great part in following, slowly and carefully, the further intellectual possibilities thus emerging. But it will not be possible to dispense entirely with the co-operation of the analyst's unconscious. We might compare this pursuing our own idea to the end with the manner of bowing on the violin indicated by " Molto sostenuto ".

CHAPTER IX

CONCERNING TACT, TIME, AND RHYTHM

THE course of an inquiry like the present one is not determined solely by its central subject. Objections which arise at a particular point call for consideration, and questions directly relating to the subject under investigation must at least be treated according to their significance, even if they are not answered. In connection with the subject that we have just been discussing, the question arises when it is best to communicate one of these surprising interpretations or ideas to the patient. Freud discussed this question in a particular passage in his writings. In this passage the analyst explains the special characteristics of his technique of interpretation to an imaginary auditor. He says that we must await the right moment to communicate the interpretation to the patient with the prospect of success. The auditor, anxious to learn, very properly asks: "How can one always know the right moment?" "That is a question of tact, which may become much subtler through experience," is the explanation.

Is it not surprising to find the notion of tact here mentioned as so important in analysis? What has tact to do with grasping an objective psychical content? This is not a reference to the effect of tact in the general treatment of the patient; but the fact is stressed that it is tact which determines the right moment to communicate an interpretation.

Let us by way of comparison imagine that a psychologist, say of the school of Wundt, requires tact to determine the moment in which to tell the subject of an experiment that his reaction to light is of a certain speed. We shall say, of

course, that the analyst has to give information of a different kind. They are things that we do not like to speak about, that we do not like to say, nay, things which precisely tact forbids us to mention. Tact forbids it, but necessity requires it. And so tact is called in to perform the necessary task. Well, the situation is not unique. There are a number of occasions in social life in which we are actually compelled to say what, under other circumstances, tact forbids. No doubt; but then tact tells us to avoid direct or immediate expressions and to use allusive, roundabout phrases. Consider, for instance, matters in spheres in which, according to Freud, civilized mankind is particularly hypocritical: sex and money. What a number of circumscribing and indirect expressions we use, instead of admitting our physical needs straight out, how many allusive words in order to speak of sexual processes! To pick one example from among thousands, I read not long ago the expression "il n'est pas orthodoxe" to indicate that a man was homosexual. And it is not only on these two subjects that people use such indirect means of designation. How often do we allude to death by indirect means when we write letters or pay visits of condolence! Not only does analysis speak of things which we tactfully avoid on other occasions, but it gives direct expression to them, speaks of them in a quiet and objective manner that would never be possible in any social situation. Was not the American lady patient right when she complained at the beginning of her treatment: "Analysis is so intrusive"? If we do not wish to subscribe to this lady's opinion, who felt analysis to be too little discreet, we must take refuge in the realization that tact in an analytical situation is different from what we ordinarily understand by the word.

We can point out that an analyst will certainly not tell his patient the delicate things that must be communicated to him without preparation. It would be tactless to fling at a patient's head the statement that he had been sexually in love with his mother and had wanted to kill his father. A certain mental

introduction and preparation is needed, an understanding of the contrast between conscious and repressed ideas, and so forth. But I do not wish here to pursue this subject ; rather it is my intention to use it as a stepping-stone to a more general problem : the relation of tact to time. It is only at the first glance that this temporal factor appears strange, upon further examination it proves natural enough. How ? people may ask, " tact ", a word that we apply to a scarcely tangible quality in social bearing, an imponderable, incommensurable capacity, a name that may be regarded as the very type of the class of imponderabilia, this is to be associated with what is most certainly measurable, with time, a thing that we can determine so accurately by clock and chronometer, a magnitude that can be gauged by the coarsest mechanical means ?

I admit that this impression has its justification, but all I have asserted is that tact stands in a particular relation to time, not what the relation is. Nor have I, in stressing this relation at this point, denied the existence of other factors. We must also take into consideration that objective and psychological time must be distinguished. Only the former is measurable and divisible, whereas the latter is altogether subjective.

Those who still object to this association of tact and time or find it unconvincing, need only think of music. It can hardly be denied that there is the closest connection between music and time, indeed, that the very essence of music can be derived from a function of time. And is not music, of all the arts, the most difficult to grasp intellectually ? Are we less deeply moved on hearing the Adagio of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, less delighted at Mozart's Serenata, when we reflect that waves of sound are striking our ear at definite intervals of time which determine the acoustic impression. We remember at the right moment that the notion of tact [1] belongs to two fields, the musical and the social, and that in all probability

[1] *Takt* in German has the double meaning of musical time or rhythm, also bar, and social tact.—*Translator's Note.*

it has retained something of its temporal character even in the second, derivative meaning.

I really need not have taken so roundabout a way to establish the connection, for we started from the passage in Freud in which he discusses *when* we should communicate an interpretation or the hidden meaning of a symptom to the patient. In a popular sense tact may be regarded as the ability to do the right thing in social intercourse, but then the right thing is dependent upon the proper moment to do it. Something that is right just now might be wrong five minutes earlier or later; something that must be said just at this moment is, perhaps, quite unallowable a few minutes later. I heard of a teacher who said to a girl in her class: "You are too impatient to be tactful." Everyday life offers us examples in plenty of the relation between tact and time. If a young man is wooing a girl and tries to kiss her too soon, he is lacking in tact as a lover. It may be that at a later stage the sexual approach is expected, indeed its absence may be felt as tactless. I willingly admit that tact includes other factors, but I insist that the temporal factor plays its part.

Perhaps I shall do best to start with a psychological description of tactlessness, or lack of tact, in order to define tact. It would be quite wrong to regard lack of tact, or of the proper feeling for the requirements of social intercourse, as an ultimate and inexplicable psychological phenomenon, a constitutional defect, so to speak. Whenever we elucidate these cases of tactlessness analytically, they will appear to us in the form of blunders serving secret, unconscious purposes. We must, therefore, regard these blunders in social intercourse exactly like such others as forgetfulness, or mistakes in reading and writing. To leave a door open that ought to be shut, to drop an observation that is felt by everybody to be embarrassing and out of place, must be judged almost exactly like stumbling, a slip of the tongue, or dropping some object. One makes a slip in manners, a *faux pas*, and the very words tell us how near the latter errors are even in name to the former blunders.

If we investigate these subtler instances of tactlessness analytically, these social cases, so difficult to nail down, of deficiency in good breeding, good taste, and good manners, we shall find again and again that such errors are expressions of unconscious impulses which have broken loose from their repression. In support of this view, which associates tactlessness psychogenetically with blunders, we might point to the nature of our own reactions. When we have made one of these *faux pas* we feel ashamed, we are angry with ourselves, and afterwards it is often difficult to understand how we could have said such a thing or made such a movement. This psychical reaction is so well known that a lady once declared that the best way to repulse a tactless remark was a courteous : " I beg your pardon ? " as if we had not caught what was said or had misunderstood it. That embarrassed the speaker and made him aware of his tactlessness. And this quality of social blunders is evinced in the fact that even people who in general fill their place particularly well in society, and are definitely tactful, may fall into gross errors of tact. It is not for nothing that we speak of " going off the rails " (German *Entgleisung* means both " derailing " and " error ".—*Translator's Note*), as if we wanted to stress the part played by the unconscious in the mishap.

We have now learnt a number of unconventional things about tact, things that are not to be found in compendiums of good manners : among them the close relation between tact and time, and the nature of tactlessness as a particular kind of blunder. We shall not be surprised at this designation, if we reflect that we are not concerned with æsthetic and social valuation, but with psychological explanation. We will venture a few steps further. I do not know whether I may count upon general agreement when I say that an adult is tactless who treats children with whom he is talking or playing with condescension or markedly as inferior beings, who, for instance, uses unnatural, pretty-pretty, childish language. Can we reconcile this with the supposition that tactlessness is

a case of unconscious social blunder ? For this is a perfectly conscious, deliberate change in a person's usual behaviour. And yet the foregoing designation retains its validity in a certain enlarged sense. It is the intention of the adult to get into social contact with the children, to bring himself to their level, so to speak. And now let us consider, does he achieve the purpose for which he takes so much trouble ? Hardly, for precisely the affected, pretty-pretty manner of speech, the marked condescension in his bearing, will prevent the children from regarding him as one of themselves, or even as a friend. We can only explain this by saying that they feel unconsciously in his unnatural manner the intention of degrading them, that they sense the arrogance of the " big person " through the transparent veil of his condescension.

But let us suppose that the adult deliberately treated the children exactly like adults, that is to say, expected from them the same self-control and the same " good " manners, or, if he wanted to explain something to them, did so in the same form and the same terms as, let us say, a professor to his students, then he would be acting not only foolishly, but also tactlessly. In both cases he humiliates the children, either by condescending without justification, or else by exalting himself. He would show tact, if he neither ignored nor stressed the difference of age and maturity, but assumed it as a matter of course. And here we touch in passing upon a quality of tact which it is surprising not to find more often mentioned : it is self-evident, and, in my opinion, much more so than morality. I may remark, by the way, that children often show marvellous tact, often more than adults. That is shown in the fact that when children play with adults they are capable of chasing them and romping with them without restraint, of treating them as perfectly equal playfellows and yet at the same time as superior adults.

Let us take another example : a lord dealing with a labourer from the East End would be tactless if he imitated the workman's manner of speech and thought in a marked degree. It

would sound to the man like mockery. But it would be equally tactless to adopt an aristocratic manner in speaking to the workman, and so to stress the social distance between them. He need only be natural, need only be himself. And this brings us to a special aspect of tact which, I believe, has hitherto been ignored. We are in the habit of associating tact closely with consideration for others, for their feelings, their particular interests, and so forth. Now it is my belief that this aspect is not nearly so important as people try to persuade us, and, especially, that it is not the most important. In my view tact requires much more attention to what our own endopsychical perception demands as right and proper. Anyone who has learnt to pay attention to the minutest expressions of his own impulses, and especially of his reactions, will be tactful without consciously troubling overmuch about other people. And here I must stress that the perception of warning, checking voices within ourselves is of special value in developing tact. No consideration for others will help anyone who does not pay attention to the guiding voice within himself, indeed the direct expression of such consideration may be felt by the others as embarrassing, nay, as tactless.

The same applies to social intercourse, which is partly governed in secret by these underground affective currents, as to one special sphere of social life, that of sex. Here, within certain limits defined by the obvious respect for the will of the other party, it is true that the man or woman who pursues his or her own pleasure—that is, in the popular sense, is an egoist—gives the other party the greatest possibility of pleasure. We all know cases of husbands and lovers who show great and deliberate and apparently tender consideration for the woman in matters of sex. Either they are men of feeble potence or else such as pursue unconsciously abnormal sexual aims. Such great consideration is unconsciously felt by the woman as a repulse or brutality, even when consciously she is greatly pleased by it. Our nature is such that we make our neighbour pay—and often not him alone—for an excess

of conscious consideration towards him to which we are driven by hypermorality. Let us, then, not forget that tact is the outcome, not only of consideration for others, but also of attention to our own impulses, and especially our own reactions.

In music it is a matter of course that questions of " tact " are treated from the standpoint of time. (See translator's note, p. 114.) For *Takt* means time as counted and consolidated in units. The transference of this metrical term from music to social life shows that here, too, temporal factors come into play. And here, moreover, sexual life may claim to have typical significance, the society of two may be taken to represent society in general. The temporal factor, as seen in the seasonable beginning and ending of the sexual prelude and in the final ecstasy, is decisive in character. A poet has spoken of the ideal of love as " two hearts and one beat ". Even those who are accustomed to regard sexual attraction as a matter of instinct, in accordance with its dominant element, cannot escape the conviction that happy love is largely dependent upon the temporal concordance of the individual rhythm of two human beings.

Human intercourse is governed by a certain measure of yielding to impulse and denying impulse, differing according to the social and cultural level of the parties, their race, and the epoch in which they live, etc. We may regard tact as the unconsciously active force determining that measure, as the state of being in harmony with the varying attitude which prescribes the limits of what is permitted and what is pleasing within any society. To be tactful is to grasp and obey this socially determined rule of conduct. It seems to me that in tracing tact back to its instinctive basis, we have stumbled upon a hidden element of the notion of tact. We have discovered it as an authority that decides on each occasion the measure in which instinct is to be satisfied or denied in social intercourse.

Conventional tact gives rules of conduct for the individual, according as this measure is determined by the society of the

time. It is, so to speak, adapted to a medium time, a certain modicum of satisfaction and denial. Anything more or less than this medium time, anything that falls above or below, is held by society to be tactless. We all know that civilized mankind in general feels this conventional measure to be too small in the matter of satisfying the sexual and aggressive instincts. And so we find in it an agent which tries to cover social inadequacy by means of conventional lies.

Returning to our theme after this long digression, we ask ourselves whether analysis has nothing more positive to tell us about the nature of tact than the rather slender information so far offered. I must confess that I really have no positive and assured results to present. Instead, I may perhaps draw attention to certain experiences culled in the course of analytical practice, which do at least show important, if partial, results. Here, again, it is better to start with the negative results, that is to say, with the experience gathered from the numerous errors and mistakes made in practice. What happens when we do not communicate the interpretation to the patient at the right moment, that is to say, when we are not guided by tact but by other considerations, when we allow ourselves to be ruled by strong feelings or rational arguments? The results are not uniform; they vary, from the absence of success to the rousing of violent resistance.

Let us for a moment turn our attention from these results to the analyst himself; if we watch the patient's reactions, to whom we have communicated an interpretation or the hidden meaning of a symptom at the wrong moment, our endopsychical perception generally tells us soon that we have not proceeded in the right way. And then a feeling that will not be denied teaches us that the occasion was not right, whether because it was altogether the wrong moment for an interpretation, and we should rather have held our peace, or because this particular interpretation came too soon, or—much more rarely—too late.

And here experience of analysis gives a kind of rule of

interpretation, which is a certain safeguard against acting unseasonably. I heard it from Freud, and have made it my own. Do not interpret until the patient himself is near to discovering the interpretation for himself, till, so to speak, he need only take one step more in order to find it himself. This final step the patient does not take alone, or, at least, very rarely. The analyst must help him to cross the threshold. The counsel is good, but it is not enough. In particular there are important exceptions to the rule, two of which I will emphasize : it cannot apply when it is a question of symbols and their interpretation. The meaning of symbols, which originates in archaic ways of thought, is generally lost to the individual consciousness. And the rule equally fails to apply in the wide and important realm of displacement. Numbers of psychical processes are here beyond the reach of the patient's consciousness, and there is no sign of his being anywhere near to grasping them.

We must also remember that the rule is of a general character, and that it embodies only negative guidance, it amounts to a " don't ". And how do we know that the patient has reached that point, that he need take only one step further in order to find the interpretation himself ? Perhaps it could be inferred from the speed of his associations, from his bearing and mimicry, and from a number of small signs. The interpretation seems to hang suspended in the air, or can be read between his words. Let us assume that that is so—but the assumption is by no means always correct—we must yet admit that it is not an objective and reliable criterion. And so we find ourselves driven back to that mysterious tact of which Freud speaks. And now let us recall that connection between time and tact, our idea that tactlessness is a kind of unconscious social blunder, the sense of *malaise* after an unseasonable interpretation which readily assumes the character of shame or dissatisfaction with ourselves. There must be a psychological connection. But what can it be ?

In order to find a means of approach from the positive side,

I propose a provisional definition of tact. I hold that tact is the expression of a certain adaptation of our own vital rhythm to that of our surroundings for the time being. I am well aware how vague and hard to grasp, indeed, how unscientific, such an expression sounds, and I hasten to put forward two excuses. First and foremost I would stress the provisional character of the definition. And secondly I must point out that we are entering an undiscovered region of psychology, a region yet untouched by scientific research, so that for the time being we must content ourselves with the most indefinite statements. It is not the problem of rhythm in itself that is so difficult to grasp, but its psychological significance, or its significance for the understanding of psychology.

Rhythm is a universal vital function, belonging to every living creature. This function, which runs throughout organic nature, regulates the flow of vital processes, governs waking and sleeping, hunger and satiety, work and fatigue, ebb and flow, warmth and cold, and the changes of day and night and the seasons. It governs our pulse and breath and extends from the vegetative system to the forms of expression of the more complex mental processes. Kretzschmer, who rightly stresses the importance of rhythm in mental life in his *Medizinische Psychologie*, points to the clock-like circular movements of beasts of prey in cages, the rhythmic movements of idiots, the tendency of little children to turn over every quarter of an hour, as well as to the extraordinary monotony of the refrains and verbal repetitions in the dancing songs of primitive peoples. He shows how the primary requirement that the rhythm should give satisfaction is afterwards concealed by practical motives and more complicated considerations, but that nevertheless the basis of our psychokinetic system remains. We know that as civilization develops rhythmic movements give place to more complex, non-rhythmical ones. But they never quite disappear. And here our attention is called to the instincts which spontaneously follow a rhythm governing the living substance. It would seem that

the instinctive rhythm of all men was originally identical, or at least approximately the same, and that the prehistoric and historical development of the race has brought about a difference. It was the advancing differentiation of mankind that caused the significant differences in the strength of instincts, and far-reaching changes in the periodicity, the ebb and flow, of our instinctive impulses.

Man's affective expressions are partly governed by the rhythm of his instinctive processes, and originally no doubt they were much more clearly subject—as they are in animals —to the periodicity of the instincts. However much other factors have subsequently restricted the field of action of rhythm, it yet remains a power beneath the surface. It is my view that the utterances of our patients, in which we recognize the unconscious, instinctive element, also obey the secret power of rhythm in all their variety. Anyone who has conducted analyses for a series of years will have noticed that what is unconscious and instinctive in his patients' communications follows a definite rhythm, though one which we are unable to define, and he will be able to divine when the hidden aggressive and sexual tendencies will appear in these communications, and when they will reach their height, die away, and repeat themselves. He will often perceive this rhythmical rise and fall of the hidden instinctive process behind the patient's communications, without being able to tell by what signs he can detect the rules governing the movements of these nameless forces.

And here a point arises, very vague, which comes nearer to answering our original question than that arrived at previously. That is to say : the most favourable moment to give an interpretation, to communicate the repressed meaning of a series of symptoms or the hidden sense of some attitude of mind, is conditioned by the unconsciously felt rhythm of the patient's instinctive processes. If I may venture to define it more accurately : before the unconscious instinctive impulse has reached the greatest capacity of expression, or, to use the

comparison of a process in nature, before it has reached the crest of the wave.

No doubt this explanation merely shifts the problem. The notion of tact, which determines the moment for interpretation and communication, is thus merely referred back to a more embracing phenomenon. That is true. For all scientific progress consists in such reference back to a new, wider problem. Moreover, we must reflect that this reference back is fairly far reaching. It very nearly touches the limits of psychology, that is to say, is close upon that region where psychology is obliged to give place to another science, that of biology, for the investigation of rhythmically determined instinctive processes falls within its sphere. The prospect that we have reached is this: without intending or knowing it, the analyst becomes aware of the rhythm of his patient's instinctive impulses, and this unconscious knowledge will tell him when to make his communications. Unconsciously he follows this rhythm of instinct, vibrates with it, so to speak. Perhaps it is better to say that he is a fraction ahead of the patient, a bar, let us say, so that he divines in what direction the unconscious will move. Thanks to this start—of the length of a psychological phase, to use an expression of Freud's —he can conjecture and anticipate what is to come or what is unconsciously purposed.

And here let us recall the single step which, in Freud's opinion, the patient would require in order to discover the interpretation himself, the step that the analyst must take for him. That step, then, corresponds to the length by which the analyst is ahead of him. The analyst owes the psychological advantages that he enjoys over the patient very largely to the broadening of his consciousness, and to his knowledge of the nature of instinct, which he has gained through his own analysis and his analytical experience with others.

Even after this explanation, the importance of the subjective factor in the problem does, indeed, remain, but at least we can detect in addition an objective factor in its hidden

character. It is still our own mental reaction to the communications of the patient which illuminates our path, the response, as I should prefer to call it. What I wish to stress here, is that the tact which determines the moment of our communications is nothing but an unconscious knowledge of the direction, strength, and sequence of the instinctive impulses. The connection with the temporal factor, which I stress in this matter, is established by our subterranean knowledge of the ebb and flow of the other person's impulses. If we offer an interpretation at precisely this moment, and no other, it is because we know unconsciously in what direction the wave of instinct will move which we have apprehended. This knowledge arises from our commonly unconscious vibration in time with the instinctive rhythm of the other. To use a simile: we behave like the members of many Indian tribes, who put their ear to the ground in order to detect whether horsemen are approaching from a distance, and so hear the beat of the horses' hoofs long before the riders can be discerned.

I must stress the fact that I have been dealing in this chapter only with a specialized question: when ought we to communicate an interpretation to the patient or open his eyes to the secret meaning of his unconscious means of expression? It is only the question, when? that I wished to answer. In seeking the answer we have touched the limits of psychology, have been led to the discussion of a universal phenomenon of all living beings. The same thing happens to the student of the theory and practice of music when he tries to grasp the action of the pulsing basic force in music. When he has reduced the capacity to understand melody and harmony to its elements, he is driven to adopt a view which likewise points to the fundamental biological processes: in the beginning was rhythm.

CHAPTER X

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MEMORY AND REMINISCENCE

HAVE I not hitherto, in my account of the conjecture of unconscious processes, recognized and admitted too little the importance of conscious knowledge and reminiscence? I am bound to admit that the misgiving is justified. Most certainly the conscious knowledge that we acquire from experience, reading, and attendance at lectures and discussions, is of great importance in this process, but the admission is so much a matter of course, that there is no need to stress it. On the other hand the claims put forward by this conscious knowledge must be restricted within the bounds of its real efficacy. I assert that in conjecturing—note that I say *conjecturing*—psychical processes, unconscious reminiscences, or, as I prefer to say, memory traces, are of far greater importance than conscious knowledge. What, people will say, you argue that the experience gathered throughout long years by a psychologist, that what an analyst has comprehended and learnt from a number of cases, is of slight significance, does not make itself felt in the easier and quicker conjecture of unconscious processes? Oh, yes, but such acquisition is not identical with conscious knowledge. Our comprehension of a case of neurosis or difficult character, and of the unconscious submerged causes of severe conflicts, widens our psychological comprehension, but that is not the same as present reminiscence. Where we are confronted with a new case, and a clear and straightforward reminiscence of our analytical comprehension of a former case arises in our mind, we have an exceptional phenomenon, conditioned by special circumstances.

In a general way the process of conjecturing the latent meaning and the mechanism of what goes forward in the mind, is governed by knowledge that has become unconscious. That is equally true of each particular case regarded as a whole in comparison with previous cases, and of single phenomena in which we have to conjecture the repressed instinctive impulses. Of course I do not deny that, in the act of conjecture, conscious reminiscences help, but I am almost tempted to venture upon the paradox that these conscious reminiscences generally occur *after* conjecture, as if they wanted to offer themselves as confirmation, and later to give clarity and strength to our comprehension. That means that, after the analyst has conjectured the nature of the repressed process, reminiscences of similar cases, of which he has already attained comprehension, occur to him. Indeed it sometimes happens that he tells the patient about the hidden meaning of the earlier case, just recalled, when he gives him a psychological explanation of the unconscious process, by way of illustration. So, too, it often happens that, after the analyst has conjectured an unconscious relation, a number of connecting links occur to him, which show him where former impressions of the same patient belong. Admitting that there are exceptions, we may state that such conscious reminiscence does not occur until shortly before or after we have penetrated to our first comprehension of the unconscious phenomenon. That is an astonishing psychological occurrence, but there are plenty of analogies in scientific work and in every-day life. We need only think of some sudden realization, of which the preliminaries and causes do not reveal themselves to us till later. We have reached a goal, and it is not till afterwards that we realize by what way we have reached it, upon what foundation we have built our knowledge.

Thus in conjecturing repressed processes unconscious memories are the ruling factor, some of which may later become capable of conscious realization, but which need by no means always become conscious. I recall, for instance, the case of

the girl who had such intense terror of marriage and child-birth, and my first presentiment of the meaning of her fear. In discussing the case I said that, so far as I know, no reminiscence of anything she had told me before helped me to get at the secret meaning of her fear. At the same time I pointed out that something in the story and the lamentations of the patient directed my thoughts to this hidden meaning; only I cannot say what it was.

Although, when I reflected upon the way by which my mind was first led to approach the comprehension of the symptom, no reminiscence of anything previously told me by the patient occurred to me, yet a reminiscence of another case did occur—but, note, after I had made my conjecture. When I had given expression to my surmise of the latent meaning of the fear symptom, there arose in my mind the idea of another young woman whom I had treated many years earlier. This idea, grasped for the fraction of a second, followed upon a reminiscence of several essential features of the case. This earlier patient had told me that during her engagement she suffered from an oppressive fear that when she was married she would be unable to bear children, so that at last her husband would be alienated from her. She had gone in her despair from one doctor to another, and had had difficulty in allowing herself to be convinced that there was no organic reason for such a fear. Although from the point of view of the examining gynæcologist there was no visible reason for her panic—later she gave birth to four healthy children—yet the analysis revealed the unconscious motive of her fear, and especially its psychical origin in the struggle against masturbation. The differences between the two cases, as also their common features, are plain; my recurrence to the unconscious memory trace must have helped me to attain psychological comprehension of the later case. Any analyst can tell of numerous examples of such unconscious knowledge, consciously grasped afterwards, and every one of us would have many more examples at his command, if we had accustomed ourselves to track the origin

of our psychological knowledge. Recurrence to earlier memory traces, combined with the perception of small, barely observed signals from the patient, will always contribute something, more or less, to the psychical result of conjecturing repressed features.

And, now, will the reader accompany me on a short digression? We have learnt the psychological significance of the difference between reminiscence and memory trace. As a rule we contrast reminiscence with forgetfulness: what is forgotten is lost to reminiscence, and a reminiscence has been saved from forgetfulness. Our insight into the structure of the psychological mechanism and into the peculiar characteristics of mental dynamics makes us sceptical from the outset of such an excessively simple assumption. For we know that there is no such thing as real forgetfulness, with the exception of the exhaustion of extreme old age, perhaps. There would be more reason in stressing the contrast between memory and reminiscence. Memory, which has been designated as a universal quality of organic matter, is by nature unconscious. The small portion of it that becomes conscious confronts us as reminiscence.

We will turn our attention to the deep-seated changes wrought by the act of reminiscence in material that has lain under the protection of "forgetfulness" or unconscious memory. Memory, as a covered or hidden reservoir, has primarily the power to maintain and conserve. In our study of an important part of the material so conserved, that which is repressed, we have come to understand why such protection is necessary. It consists of painful, or merely unpleasant impressions, ideas, or impulses, which were incompatible with the existence of other mental forces and so were obliged to quit the field of consciousness.

Freud's later researches made it clear that this view must be enlarged by the inclusion of impressions that were too intense or too sudden to be assimilated mentally within a given time. We will pay special attention to this more general case. If

we form a true conception of the extraordinary extent and depth of the unconscious memories in our possession, we are led to the supposition that the majority of impressions come to people too intensely or too immediately to be able to be assimilated at first. In other words : we live to a large extent unconsciously ; or : very little of what we experience, only the upper planes, reaches our consciousness. What each day brings to us is generally too forcible, so that our mental machinery would not be equal to mastering such a number of impressions, if we had not the power of setting many of them aside for later assimilation. This state of affairs is most easily demonstrated when we think we have grasped the meaning of one of these experiences properly. Often enough subsequent endopsychical perception shows how little we were aware of what was going on in our minds. For instance, we experience the death of a near relative, the loss of some beloved person, and believe that we feel our grief in all its depth. Not till later do we realize how shallow was that conscious depth, in what hidden abysses our grief persists, how petty was our conscious sense of the real inner meaning of the loss. We think that grief has overcome us, but our grief only reveals its depths long after we think that we have got the better of it.

As a rule we experience events at a long interval after their occurrence. In many cases the interval is so long that the causal connection is quite lost to us. In fact we know only a small fraction of what goes on in our minds during every hour. This ignorance, which is to some extent the will to ignorance, implies a protective measure on the part of the mind, for if we knew, we should not be equal to receiving the knowledge. *To experience means to master an impression inwardly that was so strong that we could not grasp it at once.* The machinery of repression, which carries on within the ego the process of suppression originating from without, is, from this point of view, a special case of the dynamically and economically significant process which occurs when the ego is unequal to

meeting certain demands made upon the mental mechanism. The more general process of defence does not cancel the strong impressions ; it only lays them aside, to bring them out again later.

It will be in the interest of clarity for me to state the contrast between memory and reminiscence with deliberate bluntness : the function of memory is to protect our impressions ; reminiscence aims at their dissolution. *Essentially memory is conservative, reminiscence destructive.* Thus single reminiscences involve a perforation of our unconscious memory as a whole, an incipient process of dissolution in becoming conscious. Not long ago I read an observation in a novel by one of our writers (Franz Werfel) which well expressed this functional relation between the two mental factors. Somebody says in the novel : " I have a very good memory because I am bad at reminiscence."

It might, indeed, be urged against this view that reminiscence revives our unconscious or pre-conscious experiences, that, for instance, history makes ancient events live for us, enables us to realize and possess what has long lain hidden. " L'histoire c'est une résurrection ", is written on Michelet's tombstone. But this resurrection generally amounts to an evaporation of hitherto hidden forces, a slow attenuation of their subterranean psychological potency. Egyptian mummies, buried deep in the earth, are preserved for thousands of years. The moment when they are excavated and restored to the influence of the sun's rays and other atmospheric influences really marks the beginning of their dissolution. With some of these ancient objects, brought to light, the effect really is that they explode in dust ; others are subject to a slow process of destruction from which their concealment has so long preserved them.

Seen in this light, one mental function of reminiscence is revealed to which too little attention has been paid as yet. It represents a particular kind of mental labour, leading to the liquidation of impressions. Not till we have recalled an

experience in sufficiently frequent and clear reminiscences, can it escape our memory. What is not brought to reminiscence is psychically immortal. With a certain reservation we may say : *the past cannot fade until it has again become the present.* Only what has become reminiscence is subject to the process of exhaustion common to all organic life. Reminiscence is the best road to " forgetfulness " in the sense of psychical mastery of experiences and events. The absence of reminiscence has a wonderful conservative power. It may sound like a joke, but it is one with a serious note, when we say : a man who is always calling upon his beloved to recall the happy hours they have enjoyed together—" Do you recall how we . . ." is well on the way to destroy the lasting power of those hours. *Not common reminiscences, but common memory traces, are a strong bond in human relations.*

It is my belief that this secret common possession of memory of sorrows and joys shared, binds the members of a family and of a nation more closely than conscious tradition, and draws a dividing line between them and the outer world. This unconscious community is more essential to the persistence and further development of cultural forces than the conscious reminiscence of history. Reminiscence drags the past into the full light of day, but it illuminates as the setting sun does a landscape, soon to set in darkness.

I have said that, as regards the depth and significance of our impressions, we live, as a rule, unconsciously. Our experience, I said, is too strong and direct (or our ego too weak and unstable) to be mastered in the requisite time. If I may compare our consciousness with an official, and the impressions we receive with the papers that come into his office, I should say that the business of that office was always badly in arrears. We have very few resources to enable us to keep pace at all. And so, for example, dreams do something to clear off the arrears of the day. This explains the psycho-economic significance of the day-residues for the structure of our dreams. It is not strange that, to these arrears of the past day, others are linked,

dating from past years; nay, that impressions attach themselves which we failed to master in our childhood. And so the overburdened official, who wants to clear up the papers left over from yesterday, will find in them references to earlier documents, and will discover to his consternation that there are quantities lying locked away in deed-boxes, undealt with for years past. Behind the piles of yesterday's letters, which we have not been able to work through, we shall find a long series of earlier arrears, still waiting to be dealt with.

How, then, we may ask, do we manage to work off our psychical experiences? The answer is not simple. In the first place, it seems to me by no means certain that we do manage it always. Possibly none of us ever catches up and experiences all the impressions received in childhood. In many cases the ego must, so to speak, be content with payment by instalments. Of course individual differences will affect the issue; besides the nature of the impressions, we must gauge the constitutional character of the ego, its intellectual and affective capacities, its weakness and independence. But in my opinion human life is and remains patchwork in the matter of assimilating impressions. To despatch all our experiences psychologically is an ideal to which we can only approximate more or less. Complete psychical mastery, in the sense of a full inventory, must not be expected, if only because a definite time, which, however, we cannot define, is required in order to master an experience. Reminiscence only throws what we may call narrow emergency bridges across the gulf of that time interval.

If I have rightly understood the function of reminiscence, or rather one of its functions, it cannot be difficult to compare it with another phenomenon that we often find described as its precise opposite in analytical literature. Repetition compulsions take the place of the impulse to reminiscence, as Freud once observed. We may regard it as a successful effect of analysis when conscious reminiscence replaces this tendency to repetition. In cases where repetition occurs in place of

reminiscence we have regression, a return to a more primitive way of mastering experience.

The compulsion to repeat is the earlier, archaic attempt to despatch our experiences. The tendency to reminiscence is a later, more spiritual form of the same attempt. When we persuade the patient to proceed from action to reminiscence, we are trying to lead him from an infantile method to one that comes later in evolution, that is more rational and comprehensible to us. But we know that the attempt is not always successful, because sometimes reminiscence proves mentally inadequate when confronted with the strength of the experiences. That we can understand, because reminiscence is so much more remote from reality than a repetition of experience. Analysts know a number of situations representing a blend of repetition and reminiscence, processes between *souvenir* and *recréation du passé*. A simpler example is that of patients who show great excitement and make it plain that they are occupied with a certain experience without being able to tell what it is. Perhaps they say : " I should like to beat somebody ", or, " I feel like screaming ", they feel sulky or tearful, and inclined to perform senseless or eccentric actions. Later the reminiscence often occurs of the experience that stirred these impulses.

A child tries to keep abreast with the impressions that flow in upon it by obeying the tendency to reproduce them ; adults try to despatch them by means of reminiscence. We know how far the value of such a general statement is merely relative, and that it is only true within limits. That is shown by the fact that adults remain grown-up children. Freud's account of a child's play, who played at the disappearance of his mother, is a typical example of the way in which, at an early stage, the attempt is made to master experience by means of action. It may be that, as Wälder has shown to be probable, all children's play serves such purposes.

Children evince an unwearying impulse to repeat the same impressions unchanged—for instance, to hear the same fairy-tale again and again—and they do not at first want to have a

" reminiscence " of their impressions, but to master them. A system of education rightly influenced by psychology should be able to derive valuable guidance and new ideas from the realization of these facts. At quite an early age mental processes occur which show how the tendency to repetition is blending with the other, newly arising way of mastering experience, that of reminiscence. Thus one patient remembered from his early boyhood the special manner in which he confronted surprising, or merely new, impressions. For instance, he heard an unaccustomed word at play, or saw something new that made an impression upon him. He still remembers how he said the new word to himself or imitated the action, if only sketchily, and resolved to repeat the process before he went to sleep. And before the child fell asleep he lay quietly for some time and repeated the word several times to himself or pictured the action to himself again and again. We may assume that at a certain age many children have such an imaginary stage in their minds.

And this calls our attention to the relation between receptivity and reminiscence, as it changes with advancing years. Children seem most receptive to new impressions. A French psychologist speaks of the *cerveau de cire* of children and primitive man. This remarkable receptivity may assume the character of the love of sensation. A child is *novarum rerum cupidus*. Only a feeble ego confronts this receptivity, and, incapable of mastering so many new impressions, it is forced to hand over the greater part to the unconscious for later assimilation. It is not, therefore, because childish experiences are specially forceful that they are mastered later, but because it is too hard for the feeble ego to master them. In this sense, then, we must attribute a traumatic character not only to particular events, but to the sum total of childish experience. This fact goes far to explain the extreme importance of childish impressions in the subsequent life of the individual.

The impression that children quickly despatch their experiences is illusive, as any analysis may prove to us. The manner

in which the infantile mind works is like that of a coarse sieve, letting through a number of impressions, in order to re-examine and despatch them later. As the ego grows stronger and more independent, it is better able to stand up to its impressions. It restricts the field of its attention, and, by distinguishing between what is important and what is immaterial, between what harmonizes with the ego and what is alien, it can apply greater mental energy to the mastery of fewer experiences. Thus with a finer sieve a great deal is prevented from slipping through. Old age shuts out new impressions more and more, as if it were satiated or knew that the time left to it would not be enough to assimilate newly received impressions. It is like a sieve with only a few small holes.

We can see how various must the significance of conscious reminiscence be in these different ages. A child lives for the present, it is, so to speak, without reminiscence, but to make up, extremely receptive. An old man lives, so to speak, in his reminiscences, but is to a large extent shut out from new impressions. Thus receptivity and reminiscence are functionally related to one another, though here we can only throw light on one aspect of the manner of their relation. And so reminiscence, which later takes the place of repetition, of the tendency to reproduce, not only becomes a substitute for experience, but also its final phase. Appreciation of the significance of the brain's degeneration in old age does not, of course, exclude the validity of my thesis of the emergence of early reminiscences and the rejection of new impressions then. Nor does it aim at being anything more than a psycho-analytical contribution to the explanation of amnesia and hyperamnesia in old age.

Have I not already stated that an experience is not mentally assimilated until it has been often and clearly enough recalled as a reminiscence? The fact that childish experiences are so vividly and forcibly recalled as reminiscences in old age is presumably a sign that they are losing their affective signifi-

cance. Perhaps we need a whole long life in order to reach some degree of psychical mastery of what we experience as children. To live in reminiscences means that we are growing old, for it means that we are despatching earlier experiences instead of entering upon new ones. Goethe felt in his old age: "What I possess I see as if afar, and what vanished becomes real to me."

I believe that the validity of this psychological theory extends beyond the individual life, and that the lasting, unconscious traces of ancestral experience are among the undiscoverable and yet effective factors determining our lives. Young nations, or other types of community, seek sensation, old nations live in their reminiscences or traditions.

It seems to me clear that the impulse to reminiscence is not opposed to the original tendency to repeat, but is its continuation in another form. We have in it a late differentiation of the archaic repetition compulsion. Originally reminiscence implied the attempt to assimilate an experience by re-living it in the imagination. It is, therefore, the repeated performance of a play on the stage of thought or idea, whilst in the earlier form of action it was really performed again. In the psychopathology of the traumatic neuroses, which so frequently repeat the original situation, the play is performed again, so to speak, because of its overpowering effect.

Let us trace the psychological development a little further still. Psychology distinguishes sharply between reminiscence and sense perception. Thus, for instance, B. Wundt, in his *Grundriss der Psychologie*, points out how untrue it would be to describe reminiscences as copies of the direct sense perceptions, weaker but in the main faithful, for the two processes differ not only in their origin and intensity, but also in their composition. "However indistinct we let a sense perception become, yet so long as it is perceptible at all, it remains essentially different from a reminiscence." That, of course, is true. But the fact remains that a reminiscence is the imaginary repetition of the sense perception, that, to use a good phrase

of Driesch's, it is a " present experience with a finger pointing to the past ".

Is, perhaps, the repetition, which I have described as an early archaic form of reminiscence, a connecting link between the sense perception and the reminiscence ? In that case it is not the sense perception as such that is the last link of the psychological chain we are following, but the tendency to recall it to the present. But at the other end of the chain we discern the sense perception as the model of the reminiscence, for that strives to reconstitute in imagination the full sensuous force of the original perception. When we have a clear reminiscence of a particular person, we are apt to say : " I see him before my eyes ", or, " I can hear him saying it ". Everybody knows from experience that specially strong reminiscences may easily assume the character of hallucinations.

Reminiscence is thus an externalization. The end of the chain connects up again with its beginning. In my view reminiscence was originally an hallucinatory image of experience, and what we now call reminiscence is in general a mere faded, sketchy development of that original form. But if so it anticipates repetition or action, or rather it denotes a first phase which was, perhaps, a condition of action and rendered it possible. A little child tries to master strong impressions by recalling them in hallucination, causing them to reappear. He then reacts to the hallucination as if it were a real impression. In place of hallucination, which he later fails to produce or finds insufficient and unsatisfactory for the mastery of an experience, the tendency to revive the former experience appears in other forms, for instance, play, and other actions that reproduce the earlier situation. The reminiscence of later days has its primitive prototype in the primary hallucination of an impression or childish experience. This later endeavour to assimilate experience is linked with the earliest, that of the baby.

I will only add one or two remarks, slightly connected with this subject. I should like, for instance, to call attention to

the *economic* significance of reminiscence, hitherto inadequately appreciated. It makes room for fresh mental undertakings by clearing away the old ones. We know how important this function is in the analytical process. In this respect analysis acts as a kind of cultural spring cleaning and so hastens the necessary discharge of psychical excitation, hitherto unresolved. The evolution of our culture involves the piling up of more and more undischarged emotions, or, to recur to our former simile, an alarming degree of arrears in our correspondence. (Alarming, too, in a literal sense.) In this non-stop life, to which the growing difficulties of adaptation to the conditions of civilization drive us, analysis offers a unique situation. It works off the undischarged emotions, which force their way into our everyday life and hamper us in meeting its demands, works them off so far that they can be put away in the files.

There is a further economic aspect of this discussion of the relation between memory and reminiscence : it is often pointed out that the surest way of retaining impressions is to repeat them frequently. Thence follows, for instance, our realization of the importance of constantly repeating lessons that are to be learnt. Whilst granting what is obviously true in this view, we must not forget that frequent repetition of something that is to be impressed upon the memory has its dangers, for, in accordance with the foregoing considerations, it must lead to psychical discharge of the thing to be learnt. We must interpose intervals between learning and repetition, for accumulated repetitions weaken the memory trace. We must forget what we want to retain, in order to possess it.

I now return to the point from which this digression started, in some compunction for its length. We have discussed the genesis of analytical knowledge, and I have urged that the conjecture of repressed ideas springs from the depths of unconscious knowledge, and does not connect with our conscious knowledge, based upon theory and practice, until a later stage. The question that we have been considering is that of the part played by conscious reminiscence. We can

now state that the impressions received from the data offered in analysis are generally too strong and too immediate to be mastered at once, that is, in this case, comprehended. At this point we realize once more the value of Freud's counsel to give the reins to poised attention in analysis.

We need not strive to retain the single impressions. We do retain them, without effort; they will re-emerge from that storehouse of the unconscious, from memory, when we have need of them. Analysis is an experience for the analyst, too, and as such has its place in the general process of mental assimilation that I have described. It demands a certain distance from our impressions, and it is often not till long afterwards that we can recognize their significance. If we have a conscious reminiscence of these impressions, that is a sign that we are beginning to master them inwardly, a sign of incipient comprehension. But the comprehension of people is only a special form of the mastery of the affective excitation that they arouse in us.

CHAPTER XI

AN UNCOMPREHENDED CASE

IN investigating repressed processes we are always dealing with things that are not uttered directly, cannot be uttered directly, for they are not in conscious possession of the person concerned. Inevitably, we are always occupied with hints, allusions, images ; a phantasmagoria instead of flesh and blood figures. The analyst's task is to conjecture the meaning of these hints, to correct distortions, to supplement deficiencies, to complete what is begun. The data presented to him may be very plentiful, various, and fertile, and yet they are only an indication of a far greater hidden treasure, a latent variety beyond our conception.

An analyst who holds too much aloof from his data, and considers them too little in detail, starts wild hypotheses. He is led into speculations that have no relation whatever with the patient's experience. But if he cleaves too closely to his data, he becomes their slave and makes no progress in his researches, because he is bound to the data and dares not proceed beyond what can be proved then and there. We are faced, therefore, with a two-fold danger. The right course moves to and fro within certain limits. That is to say, he must sometimes be quite close to his data, and at others stand back at a distance from them, in order to survey them. It is the same as with certain pictures, to which the spectator must come close in order to see certain things, and stand at a distance in order to get a total impression of the subject.

These two dangers are not the only ones that threaten analysts when they make their first efforts in the practice of

analysis. There is another danger to which most have fallen a prey at one time or another, especially at the beginning. That is, to conceive our data too much in accordance with a plan, to force them into the Procrustes bed of a preconceived theory. And it does not much matter what theory it is. The flow of phenomena cannot be confined even within the limits of psycho-analytical theories. Theory ought to be the final result, the deposit of experience, not a means of gaining new experiences.

I will proceed at once to speak of another danger. When we hear of difficulties in comprehending unconscious processes, we are accustomed to look for their source in the patient, and doubtless we shall succeed in finding it there. But that must not make us forget that there are unconscious tendencies within ourselves that prevent us from discerning the latent meaning of what is going on in the other mind. I would ask permission to cite an example at some length, for that will be necessary ; this example makes it clear how much that is unconscious there is in the analyst himself that may prove a hidden source of such failure to comprehend. I wrote an account of this illustrative case on the evening of the day on which I was occupied with it, when the impression was still fresh. The nerve specialist, Dr. X., whom I like and respect for his frankness, had undergone a long analysis with another colleague and had now been undergoing training analysis with me for three months; on this day he came for his treatment in rather a bad temper. He began : " I am getting on badly, I can't understand anything ", and went on to report that on that day he had been particularly bad at comprehending what was going on unconsciously in his patient's mind. On the previous day he had been present at a discussion in the Analytical Society, and had noticed once again, as so often before, how far his colleagues were in advance of him, how little able he was to give analytical interpretations and explanations. That had put him in a bad temper then. The same cause of ill-humour had been specially recalled to his mind

the next day during the treatment of a lady patient, for he had failed altogether to comprehend what the woman wanted, what she feared, and so forth.

And now he began to talk about the case of this patient, as he had already done twice during his analysis. Here I will only tell a little of what Dr. X. reported to me of the case, just enough to give a picture of himself and bring us on the track of a vital psychical relation : Mrs. Anna Z. came of a family of comparatively low social standing and was strictly brought up. Her parents' marriage had been unfortunate. The father, a drinker, had taken a number of pretty housekeepers as his mistresses, so that the mother, who was slowly dying of tuberculosis, was finally obliged to quit the house with the youngest daughter, that is, the patient. The patient herself had had no social intercourse whatever with young men as a girl. In her early twenties she made the acquaintance of a doctor who was much older than herself, but who took a kindly interest in her and finally married her. The busy doctor, a good-natured but rather brusque man, soon proved a very inattentive husband. He loved his wife in his own way, but that way was presumably not of a kind to bind her to him permanently. During the analysis she constantly complained of his inconsiderate conduct. One of the instances, one which Dr. X., my patient in training, emphasized as a mark of an inconsiderate attitude, was that the husband forced her to share his pleasures even if she was not in a mood for it or felt ill. For instance, one evening her husband wanted to go to the pictures, but she had previously complained of feeling unwell, which he called an excuse. When she protested more and more urgently, the doctor at last made up his mind to examine his wife, and found to his horror that she was suffering from acute inflammation of the lungs.

And now, after she had recovered from this illness, the conflict arose in the woman's life which threatened to destroy her marriage and drove her, with her husband's consent, to resort to analysis. After her severe illness she had gone to

a German sanatorium for convalescence, and stayed there for a considerable time. Among the doctors there was a young assistant who first attracted her notice by his beautiful eyes. She felt soothed by the friendly and confiding manner of the young doctor, who was many years her junior. And now, in the analysis, Dr. X. told briefly how Mrs. Anna had gradually fallen in love with the much younger assistant, and how this affection conflicted with her feeling for her husband. Her affection was the more astonishing because she spoke very little German, whilst the doctor did not understand her native language. There had been no sexual approaches, but Mrs. Anna thought she discerned clear signs of love in the young doctor, too. At any rate, the conflict tormented her more and more after her return home, so that she confided in her husband.

It was during this time, too, that the first serious neurotic symptoms appeared, which induced her husband to take her to Dr. X.—the man who was undergoing training analysis with me—and ask him to give her analytic treatment. Dr. X. now said that he understood very well that the woman, repelled by her husband's lack of consideration and attracted by the young doctor's sympathetic manner, had felt drawn to him. That was the effect of a kind of revenge on her husband ; he really was a remarkably unattractive man. But Dr. X. said he could not comprehend why the woman constantly complained that she could not forget the other doctor. And yet at the same time she declared that she knew very well that she did not really love him and that she wanted to stay with her husband. Nor could he, Dr. X., understand how the young doctor could have been a surrogate for the woman's father. There the theory of analysis did not fit the case. Altogether, he said, he did not understand the whole case, either its unconscious conditions or its purposes.

Let us make these latter remarks of Dr. X.'s our starting-point. When he said that he did not comprehend how the young doctor could be a surrogate for the father of a lady so

much older than himself, we might add that we do not comprehend it either. But what we do understand is that Dr. X. had here fallen a victim to the danger already mentioned, that of applying the analytical theory of the Œdipus complex mechanically and rigidly to his case, of doing violence to reality for the sake of theory. Such a mechanical and wholly unjustifiable application of analytical knowledge is itself a sign of the severest latent resistance to analysis. The absurdity of such a manner of application is an indication of Dr. X.'s unconscious scorn and mockery of analytical theory. When he complained that he could not comprehend how the young doctor could be a surrogate for the father, we recognize that he is mocking at the theory of the Œdipus complex, which consciously he defends. In this unconscious rejection and denial of analytical theory we shall, I think, find the first source of his lack of comprehension.

Perhaps the following way will be best: instead of describing to the reader the result of our conversations, the explanation, that is, of the other psychical barriers which hindered Dr. X. from comprehending the case psychologically, let me tell how I myself made an approach to the comprehension of the patient's unconscious situation, although I did not know her and had learned so little from Dr. X.'s recitals. Whilst Dr. X. was describing the sombre aspects of the patient's marriage and giving an account of her relations with the young doctor, a question arose in my mind, and, as it persisted, I finally put it to Dr. X.: "Has Mrs. Anna any children?" He then told me that the lady had three children. I asked the age of the eldest son, who had just reached his tenth birthday. Why did I ask this? I did not know when I put the question, but I realized it so promptly afterwards that we must assume that unconscious knowledge of the significance of the question had preceded it. And I was able immediately to conjecture part of the secret motive force in Mrs. Anna's history, and not only to communicate it to Dr. X., but also to show him at a later stage what unconscious motives had

prevented him from grasping the hidden connection psychologically.

My question was not accidental after Dr. X. had expressed his doubts whether the theory of the Œdipus complex fitted this case. I must have understood very well unconsciously the subterranean mockery contained in his words, I told myself later. Wherein lay the mockery? Surely in the emphasis laid upon the fact that he could not understand how the young doctor could represent her father to a much older lady in her unconscious. Of course he meant the question quite seriously, but the quality of unconscious mockery was unmistakable. It is not only on account of its psychological valuation that the character of the unconscious in these utterances is important in itself. Every experienced analyst knows how often this unconscious mockery is only a repudiated confirmation of what is mocked, that mockery merely serves the purpose of repudiation. It simply means: I am struggling against the acceptance of what I am yet forced to admit. For the unconscious knows nothing of rejection, it cannot say, No.

I had, therefore, unconsciously seized upon the latent mockery which found expression in the absurdity of the assumption and the consequent failure to comprehend, and had reacted as if Dr. X. had said: "I do not understand the case, if I look at it from the point of view of psycho-analytical theory. There is no such thing as the Œdipus complex. It is all nonsense." I must have reacted, unconsciously, in the sense of meeting the hidden attack by proving objectively how little it was justified. As I have said, it was not till later that I understood the purpose of my question whether the patient had children. I then suggested, as one possible explanation of her mysterious love and the neurosis connected with it, that resistance to incestuous impulses towards her son, who was approaching puberty, would be one of the causes of her condition. I assumed as a not too remote possibility that, when more and more unmistakable approaches on the part of her elder boy left no room for doubt as to their nature, the

patient had felt and repressed a sensual impulse. But this violent rejection of an unconscious incestuous impulse was not equivalent to its inner mastery. It had persisted in relation to the young doctor, as a displacement surrogate, and had there found a new battle-field, so to speak. Perhaps, I continued, the lady had refused to notice consciously the sexual nature of her son's approaches, and had repulsed them reactively the more brusquely. In that case her subsequent behaviour not only showed greater compliance towards the surrogate later, but was also the expression of her unconscious contrition for her hard-heartedness towards her son.

Dr. X. listened attentively and respectfully to my attempt at a psychological explanation, without expressing his opinion of its credibility. His only remark, that the patient had troubled very little about her children during her stay abroad and afterwards, seemed evidence of doubt. But, without any connection with the subject under discussion immediately beforehand, he shortly afterwards recalled an episode that the patient had recounted to him, occurring during her stay in the sanatorium. The woman's inner conflict did not reach its full intensity until she had offended the friendly young doctor. Once they had been talking about a modern novel, and the conversation, in spite of difficulties of language, had been carried on eagerly on both sides. The young doctor had spoken very feelingly of the description of the lovers in the book. She had answered laconically—and this not only because of the difficulty of expressing herself correctly in the foreign language: "Oh, what does love matter! Work is better." Soon afterwards the doctor took leave of her, rather abruptly, as she thought. Afterwards he had been more reserved, and had not let himself be seen with her so often. He seemed to be hurt. The patient had felt very penitent for her repulse, indeed her neurosis dated from that moment, for it was only then that her depression and other symptoms began to appear. When she returned home she had said to her husband again and again that she must see and talk to the

doctor once more. She did not know, indeed, what she would say to him, but the urge to see him again was strong, for she felt that she had hurt him and owed him some reparation.

It would take too long to recount here all the small signs, all the widely ramified and circumstantial data, which led me to reconstruct, from the words of the colleague treating the case, the psychological framework—most certainly not more than framework—of the unconscious conflict in which the neurosis had its origin. It was something like this : in the sanatorium, where she felt strange and lonely, the aging woman had unconsciously thought of her son much and with yearning. These thoughts, in which I need not prove the unconscious sexual stress, got associated with the pleasant impression that the young doctor had made upon her. They had jumped across to this second object, so to speak. Why ? That we can only surmise. Anyone better acquainted than we are with the woman's inner life will be better able to account for the intertwining of her mental pictures of two persons so very different. It may be, I think, that when the mother's thoughts were occupied with her growing boy at this time, ideas of his future possibilities came into play. Perhaps she had indulged in one of those day-dreams that are so typical of women : some day my boy will look like the nice German doctor, who is so courteous and capable. It would be natural for her to think that her son might be a doctor, like his father. Sometimes she may have wished in earlier days that he might become a better copy of his father. Thus her liking for the young doctor received support from an unconscious source, making it stronger and deeper ; that source was the displacement of tender, repressed sexual impulses, originally directed towards her own son.

Psychologically it is easy to understand that her incestuous impulse, unconsciously transferred to an alien and remote object, appeared far less dangerous than in its former direction, nay, that it even became capable of entering the region of consciousness. But it is significant that the previous mental

forces of inhibition that had acted in relation to her boy asserted themselves later in her relation to the displacement surrogate. Her relation to the young doctor was soon clouded. It is easy to recognize in her reactions in the conversation about the novel, when she said : " Oh, what does love matter ! Work is better ", an attempt to resist once more the tender and sensual impulse. Perhaps, indeed, these words are an echo, only slightly modified, of an opinion that her husband had once uttered to her and that she—at least consciously—had adopted. If we look and listen closely, we shall recognize in her behaviour to the young doctor at that time the repetition, modified by the circumstances, of a process that had played a great part in her inner life. A repetition that we may regard as a kind of unconscious memory of certain situations in the life of her family. It must have happened in a similar way that she opposed her son's demand for love with a remark about the greater importance of his school work. She had repulsed his tender approach in the same way as that which she felt pre-consciously in the talk of the young doctor.

We have long conjectured that the psychologically essential part of the inner process must have lain in her resistance to her own sensual impulse, alike towards her son and towards the surrogate. We recall the fact that her neurosis dates from the moment in which she felt contrition for her repulse of the doctor and yearning for him, and wished to make up for her lack of tenderness. Is it too bold to assume that here an earlier psychical process was being repeated, and that what, for various inner reasons, could not and must not reveal itself in the original relation, was indicated in the displacement onto another object ? I believe that in the loneliness of the sanatorium not only her yearning for her son, which would be psychologically easy to understand, but also contrition for occasional irritation in her repulse of his tenderness had been aroused, and with it increased fear. It is clear why these natural feelings could not enter the field of consciousness ; because they were mingled with the memory and revival of

sexual impulses, forbidden in relation to her own son. Whereas the road to consciousness was thus barred to them in relation to their original object, no equal psychical barrier confronted them when displaced on to a secondary object. It is in keeping with the psychical process here indicated that at this time the patient troubled very little about her son and was not conscious of any longing for him.

No doubt it is not here that we must look for the ultimate causes of her mental disease. Nevertheless, by following this path we are led to the inner conflict from which, between the pressure of unconscious impulses and the failure of the compromise solution, the illness arose. It is plain that the illness revived old states of conflict, which we will not touch upon here. It is equally plain that secondary, unconscious purposes were fulfilled through the neurosis. I had long surmised that these included revenge upon and torment of her inconsiderate husband, as if the wife wanted to make him jealous by showing him: see, you ought to treat me as this young doctor does, and behave as considerately to me! It is equally certain that, on the other hand, tender memories of her own engagement played a part in the psychical situation, of the time when her husband was still a young doctor.

There is no occasion to go further into the psychogenesis and the subsequent development of this case. The reader will remember that it was not one of my own cases; indeed, that the colleague who related it was not even practising controlled analysis with me. There was really no reason to occupy ourselves with this material, which was remote from our direct concerns. But in analysis there is no binding rule to tell us what material to bring forward and what to set aside. There are only psychological reasons, which suggest to us to favour this and neglect that, and these reasons are by no means always conscious. The doctor recounted the case of his patient in his own treatment, just as a patient recounts any part of the material which is occupying his mind, and at first we treated it just like any other indifferent material. I

had the impression that my colleague brought the case forward in order to show me unconsciously that he, who had long been attached to one of the schools diverging from psycho-analysis, had held to his doubts even in the earlier analysis, but without expressing them.

I should like to enter here into the technical problem why, as a general rule, we ought to avoid discussions of this theoretical character, and in what exceptional cases it is possible to defend them. But I will only observe that I did not take up the challenge thrown at me in his words in order to cast it back at him, but to see what lay beneath it, what it was meant to conceal. There really was something beneath it; my colleague could not comprehend the case, because it touched complexes of his own. The still unconscious application to himself thrust itself in as a barrier, shutting off the psychological connection that he sought. My patient had himself a little boy, whom he loved dearly, and whom, until recently, he had protected from punishment and from certain unjustifiable educational experiments on the part of his mother. In recent weeks an inner change had taken place in his wife; presumably she was overcome with compunction, for now she had begun to spoil the little boy very much, had allowed him to indulge in all kinds of naughtiness, and had shown him great tenderness. We conjecture one of the inner checks which prevented our analyst from understanding what was going on in his patient's mind. In order to understand her, he would have had to see more clearly that unconscious impulses of jealousy and hostility towards his own little son had recently been stirred in him.

His psychological comprehension was checked from another direction: not long before his own mother had died of a prolonged illness. In recent years his relations with his mother had been good. But he could not forget that in his childhood she had not treated him lovingly. She had often been domineering and impatient with him. In her latter years the old lady's character had undergone great changes. She had

grown kinder and gentler; it seemed as if some tension had been relaxed in her. She had grown specially tender towards her middle son, our Dr. X., and at the same time had felt a kind of pride in him, the most socially successful of her children.

Perhaps this brought Dr. X. nearer to the unconscious comprehension that there had been an incestuous element in his mother's relation to him, now more clearly discernible than ever. He came near to perceiving that her treatment of him in his boyhood had principally denoted a defensive reaction against her and his own unconscious sensual impulses. And now, in the after effects of her death and his consequent memories, together with his melancholy and tender feelings, the ancient sexual impulses tried to force their way into the son's consciousness. Their repulse was reinforced by his reaction to the obvious parallel of the relation between mother and son in his own marriage. That he failed in psychological comprehension of his patient's relation to the young doctor must be ascribed to the action of these same defensive forces. He betrayed a great deal to me by his unconscious mockery: by denying one side of the Œdipus complex, he confirmed the other, which forms its natural and necessary psychological complement.

Why have I recounted this case? What purpose had I in view? Analysts will say: we have always known that the comprehension of unconscious processes in others is checked by individual repressions. The case here recounted only gives further confirmation. Perhaps it will be allowed at least that it offers an exceptionally good opportunity of confirming what is already known. Undoubtedly the fact of psychological scotoma has been sufficiently recognized and appreciated in analytical theory. The expression "blind spot" has established itself in the psychology of the unconscious. That is true, yet when that convenient expression is used, it does not always imply living experience, but sometimes only what might be called a terminological deposit. I have taken the oppor-

tunity to trace once again the path leading from a scientific term to the inner reality of which it formed a convenient deposit.

I had other reasons for taking the liberty, after some hesitation, of describing this individual case. We have seen how the analytical comprehension of the case was checked because it reminded Dr. X. of certain inner conflicts, from the after effects of which he could not escape. He brought up the case for discussion because he did not comprehend it psychologically. But the explanation of the unconscious forces that would not let him comprehend, had an unforeseen effect upon his own analysis. Some things that I had only surmised hitherto, things that were not clear to me about Dr. X. with his reserved and pent-up character, now assumed fixed and definite psychological outlines as he told me of the case he did not comprehend. May we deduce an unconscious purpose from this psychical effect? Whilst my patient told me of the case, he told me, without knowing or intending it, of his own difficulties and conflicts. What he failed to comprehend in another's case showed, in the light of analysis, why he could not comprehend. The unconscious self-betrayal rose from his account of the neurosis of another, which he did not comprehend and yet grasped unconsciously. I will not here yield to the temptation of entering into several problems of controlled analysis, though they are both important and interesting.

But what about myself? Is it not a fact that certain vital inner processes in my patient did not come fully to light until he presented me with data so remote as the analysis of a person unknown to me? My patient's unconscious scorn must have embraced the secret purpose of saying to me: "I can offer you something towards a solution if I choose. You are dependent upon my good or ill will." At this point, therefore, in the surrender of part of his own data, a positive tendency was at work which appeared even in his resistant attitude.

We can trace a number of technical and psychological prob-

lems from a case like this. Is it not remarkable, for instance, that I pursued just this tactically risky path with the assurance of a sleep-walker, or, rather, of the unconscious, in defiance of all technical rules? That, undisturbed by the perceptible mockery of my patient, and with attention actually roused by it, I picked out this remote case of neurosis, the telling of which appears to a superficial view as an attempt to evade important data of the patient's own case, and treated it in his analysis as if it were a part of himself? Is there not something here that we can only call an unconscious node where many threads are joined?

It must be admitted that in this unconscious interaction there is a kind of secret mutual understanding, about whose psychological character we know very little as yet. At this point we are drawn aside to the problem of the mutual understanding of two unconscious minds, and so on to that of telepathy. We will not pursue that path, nor the other which starts from the question why the doctor chose this indirect method of depicting his own inner conflicts unconsciously, why he did not tell me directly about his wife and his mother and his own childhood. Other questions arising here give me occasion to allude to psychological considerations brought forward earlier—for instance, the problem of the part played by the time factor in our comprehension of unconscious processes in others. Or is it perhaps better to regard the remoteness and effort of psychological comprehension spatially, and to say, for instance, that somebody is thus and thus far removed from the conscious comprehension of a repressed process in another? Certainly nobody thinks it possible to grasp such psychological situations in the same way as we measure other relations of time and space. And yet perhaps it is not fanciful to suppose that it might some day be possible to estimate in some way our approach to or distance from the goal of psychological comprehension.

I will only add that such future estimate cannot be independent of the observer's individual capacity of sharing him-

self in the single unconscious processes of his subject, and yet of regarding and investigating them objectively as the experience of another. The psychological comprehension of the unconscious may be no more bound up with the ego than comprehension in other fields of research, but it is more dependent on the ego.

CHAPTER XII

THE QUESTION OF EVIDENCE—CONJECTURE AND COMPREHENSION

WHAT criteria have we by which to judge whether an idea occurring to the psycho-analyst is really in keeping with the true unconscious situation, or whether it must be simply ascribed to his fancy, his arbitrary desire, or his preconceived notions? The answer is, that, with one exception, there are no direct and objective criteria, equivalent to those applied in chemistry or any of the other natural sciences, none, at least, of such a nature that every thinking mind must recognize them without the slightest doubt. If we mix a certain substance with another in the test-tube and observe unequivocally a certain reaction, we can say positively that the original substance was such and such. There is no analogous case in the analytical process, for a determined sceptic to whom we point out that, say, the explanation and analytical treatment of a vehemently repressed impulse has effected a radical change in the patient's inner life, can always retort: there is no guarantee that the change is due just to the said process. Success cannot decide the question.

Does it give us any objective surety that our unspoken psychological assumption occurs simultaneously or later to the patient, independently, that is to say? Certainly not; his mind may have been prepared for a similar idea by something previously said or read, he may have acquired his knowledge from psychological experience of other people, or, lastly, he may have conjectured our thoughts by telepathy. There is no objective, immediate, and indubitable proof that our interpretation has really hit upon the unconscious reality in the

patient's mind, has demonstrated the effect of the particular impulse in the psychical result, and conjectured the repressed nature of interrelated phenomena. The sole exception which a consistent sceptic might perhaps admit would be our inferring an event, a date, a fact, which we could not possibly have known otherwise. Let us suppose by way of example that our analytical idea represented the essential factor in the reconstruction of events having reference to the patient's childhood, and that it assumed an event of which we had no knowledge from any other source, and which was confirmed by a third party.

If, then, we can seldom have objective proof that our idea corresponds to the unconscious facts, would it not be better to dispense with such " ideas " that just come to us, and simply to trust, in the process of analysis, to what our assured and conscious knowledge of psychology and neurology tells us ? What kind of a science is it that goes to work with involuntarily occurring ideas, and uses the unconscious of the investigator as recipient, instead of the conscious, critical reason ? Has this science so little respect for empirical methods ? Does it overstep the limits within which reason is acknowledged as the supreme principle ?

I expect these reproaches from opponents who are unacquainted with the essential character of analysis. I am more surprised when some analysts, who really ought to be better informed about the peculiar nature of analysis, fiercely attack my view of the significance of unconscious cognition. Some objections raised in the discussion must be admitted to be material and objectively justified. The same cannot be granted of others, because they are based, not upon a presentation of my argument, but a misrepresentation. They must, therefore, be taken less seriously than their propounders would wish. Perhaps it will be best to give an example of this kind, and so to make an example of it. In a recently published criticism [1] a colleague recognizes two ways in which an analyst

[1] Dr. O. Fennichel in the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, 1935.

may err ; he may make too much or too little use of the reflective reason. But my critic expresses his fear that I go too far towards the other extreme and forget Ferenczi's admonition that we should test our data logically and make our interpretive activities depend solely upon the results of our intellectual labours. Just as psycho-analysis leads from the intuitive grasp of the unconscious, which poets have always had at their command, to a natural science of the human soul, so it must lead to ranging analytical technique within the rational categories. My critical colleague, in referring to the process described here, uttered the severe censure that a technique which was supposed to be able to function without the application of rational categories did not deserve the name of analysis. He pointed out that I quoted the saying : " To him without thought, It comes unsought " (that is, cognition). According to him I thereby reduce analysis to the level of simple people's knowledge of human nature, and rob it of its scientific character. He defends a systematic technique, and blames me for recommending " the lack of all system, the absence of any definite plan ", for such a formula is in conflict with the aim of psycho-analysis, which is just to bring that field of research within the range of reason.

I must concede that what my pugnacious colleague has published sounds very well. It captures us by its appeal to reason and scientific method. I must acknowledge the great skill with which single sentences are resolutely torn from their context in order to show acumen in proving them false. Again, I must acknowledge the large-mindedness with which an " as if " is ignored, as though I had never used it, and the dexterity and quickness of wit with which the heuristic technique I recommended is so re-interpreted as to seem to be able to " function without the application of rational categories ". My critic courteously refrains from saying straight out that the absence of rational categories is attributable not only to the technique in question, but also to its practitioner. That is only hinted by a discreet reference to the level of " simple people's know-

ledge of human nature ". No fault, therefore, can be found with this criticism, if we regard the bare-faced distortion of important facts and the clever falsification of the essential points in my statement as harmless and incidental.

It is more material to examine the general psychological assumptions from which a tragi-comical misunderstanding like this arises. We all regard reason as the supreme authority in scientific research. In the actual course of research conscious and unconscious processes of thought will co-operate in variable proportions to reach our result. In the field of analytical technique this ratio of conscious intellectual effort to unconscious comprehension of the psychical material will be special and peculiar. An analyst's real instrument is his own unconscious, which has to seize upon the patient's unconscious processes, " intuitively ", as is wrongly said.

What, then, can be the meaning of intuition in research ? The word denotes immediate cognition through the inner vision. In science intuition can only mean the ability to grasp complex relations in an instant, to perceive solutions, or at least partial solutions, of difficult problems directly. Now it seems to me that the word " intuition " is wrongly applied here, unless we explain and establish the nature of intuition psychologically. Such an explanation would characterize intuition as a form of vision, in which a hitherto unconscious recognition of certain relations forces its way right through into consciousness. This " intuitive " cognition may in a certain sense be compared with an act of perception, and it makes no difference whether its object belongs to the outer or the inner world. The essential thing is the immediate, or seemingly immediate, conscious apprehension of hitherto unconscious cognition. The gist of that cognition proves to be a repressed experience, or suppressed knowledge, of unknown origin. The unexpected reappearance of this repressed possession justifies the psychical effect of surprise, which any observer may note in himself in the act of cognition. Here we light upon a psychological factor that we have often

discussed. The experience of surprise has reference to two elements in the process of cognition : that the result emerges apparently immediate and unprepared, and that it is attended by a peculiar clarity. The decisive part played by the unconscious offers an easy explanation of both qualities. The clarity of cognition is produced by contrast with its previous unconscious character ; what is essential in it was unconsciously ready and prepared.

The analytical technique of cognition of unconscious processes is marked by oscillation between the conscious and unconscious labour of the intellect and imagination. The proportion of unconscious ideas in the heuristic process is variable, but they always play a part in determining the result and are undoubtedly of peculiar significance. For several reasons I have here placed the realization of this unconscious element in the forefront of psychological discussion. The heuristic employment of the unconscious as a vital organ of apprehension constitutes a *peculiarity of the analytical method, which differs in that particular from other scientific methods.* There is a second reason : to the best of my knowledge, the nature of the special function of the unconscious in the psychological process has not hitherto been treated exhaustively, even in the literature of psycho-analysis. It goes without saying that I have not here paid equal tribute to the important share of conscious and rational thought in analytical investigation, for it is not peculiar to the analytical method, which has it in common with every other method. In all methods it will go far beyond the mere arrangement and comparison of the constituent parts of the material ; it will be at work, not only in perception and conscious observation, but in testing and verifying the ideas that arise from the unconscious, in linking them with previous knowledge, in drawing certain conclusions, in criticizing them, and, generally, in the strict examination of the psychological data.

In truth, it is no part of my intention to minimize the share of the conscious mind and purposive thought in analytical

investigation. Fennichel's touching concern lest I should ignore the need of testing our data logically is misplaced, both in substance and in his manner of expressing it. A recognition of the supremacy of the unconscious as an organ of psychological perception is fully compatible both with the strictest self-examination and with continual logical scrutiny. The scientific character of the analytical method is to me so much a matter of course that there is no need to stress and emphasize and laud it again and again. It seems to me unnecessary and rather absurd to stress the fact in these days that psychoanalysis " leads to " a natural science of the human soul—Heaven help us ! where else should it lead ?—and to seize upon every opportunity of pointing out its scientific character (" I am a natural scientist ; do you recognize my colours ? "). There is no occasion to be concerned lest reason should be denied its fair share in analytical investigation. There is far more occasion to fear that it may be used in the wrong place, that is to say, it may be granted an unfair share. The real danger is not that analytical technique may " be supposed to function without the application of the rational categories ", as my keen-witted colleague thinks, but rather that it may apply them where they are out of place. Reason is needed even to see where it should itself be employed, and where its employment is premature or inappropriate.

Our enhanced theoretical knowledge of unconscious processes, gained from the results of analysis, makes the temptation the stronger. It misleads us to make use of theoretical results where only comprehension springing from the unconscious can help us, and to content ourselves with psychological word-symbols culled from what we have learnt, instead of trying to penetrate the data of immediate experience. Other people's experience can direct our attention to certain relations, but only *our own* psychological experience proves permanently useful in analysis. To me the presentiment of a hidden association, springing from the unconscious, is still more productive than a certainty arising from theoretical knowledge

alone. More productive, not merely for further investigation, but in its unconscious action. The patient cannot distinguish whether a statement about the unconscious mind is true or not, but he has a subtle, unconscious or preconscious, power of distinguishing of what nature it is, whether it springs from academic science or from the analyst's psychological comprehension and sharing of experience, whether it is genuine or faked in our sense.

An analyst is first and foremost a psychologist, and in his approach to his psychological data he must respect the separate life of the unconscious, which reveals itself, not to critical reason and purposeful thought, but just to the sagacity of the unconscious, a life whose hidden meaning is discovered by these psychical forces within us, whereby a conscious and purposeful search rather hinders than helps. At this point a conscious knowledge of the forms in which the unconscious expresses itself proves to be of far less importance than a sensitive ear for the unspoken that is yet expressed. A knowledge of the mechanism of instinct is a prerequisite for the practice of analysis, as indispensable and also as universal as that of anatomy is for the general practitioner. With it alone—let us say, for instance, with a knowledge of the mechanism of hunger—you cannot even entice a more or less intelligent and well-trained dog from the fire. Even for that purpose you need some applied psychology.

As my third reason for stressing the part played by the unconscious in my account of the way in which we conjecture repressed processes, I will urge that the attempt, hitherto hardly made at all, promises to produce results that may be fruitful in scientific psychology and its application. If we pursue this path further, we are bound to reach important conclusions, throwing light upon the unconscious motives and psychical driving forces at work in the processes upon which our psychological knowledge and judgment of other persons are based. An examination of conscious and logical thought, on the other hand, produces no such important results for

psychology. If it is true, as Poincaré once said, that a science grows at its periphery, then we analysts may expect a peculiarly significant extension of our knowledge from the illumination of just those unconscious processes which usher in and determine our psychological perceptions.

I agree with my opponents that conscious and unconscious elements, co-operating and supplementing one another, work together to bring about the results of analytical investigation. All that is at issue is the extent of the share of each, and what is primarily at issue is the *point where the work of the unconscious should begin, and where that of the critical, classifying, and associative activity of conscious reflection.* I maintain that conscious knowledge and reason should have, not the *first*, but the *last* word in the process of analytical discovery ; I want to see the peculiar character of the unconscious method respected, which lies in the function of unconscious sagacity ; and I believe that to call in the rational functions and conscious knowledge in our *approach* to unconscious phenomena is erroneous, both as regards matter and method. Such early and premature employment of consciously logical thought for heuristic purposes blurs the special character of our psychological labours and checks the free play of associations and the emergence of fruitful ideas which draw the hidden meaning of the products of the unconscious into the region of consciousness.

That hidden meaning reveals itself first, not to conscious intellectual effort, but to the unconscious, struggling to overcome its own inner inhibitions—which, by the way, is no slight or negligible mental achievement. In this initial stage of analytical investigation of the unconscious mind, the wet blanket of conscious reflections and knowledge is out of place. To apply them here robs analysis of the better part of its efficacy, and *amounts to a misapplication of reason*, to " putting the cart before the horse ". Anyone who thinks differently about the analytical process may, perhaps, study psychology, but that does not make him a psychologist. His wealth of theoretical knowledge may, perhaps, conceal his poverty in

ideas for a time, but it cannot supply their place. Let critics hold that I allow too much room in the process of analytical cognition for the " unscientific " unconscious, and too little for logical thought. He who declares for the light of reason, need not therefore deny the profundity of darkness. It was necessary to argue against the view stated above, not because of its real significance, but because of that which it falsely claims. The place allotted to the analyst's unconscious labours in this account—differing therein from all previous ones—is not, as these simple critics suppose, a result of undervaluing the powers of reason, but of the danger that the purely intellectual activity in the process of psychological cognition may be overestimated, and analytical comprehension become merely a " problem of deduction ". *But there is less fear of analysts being too little logical than of their being too little psychological in their thought.* Let me conclude this discussion of principles with a quotation from Goethe, which gives beautiful expression to the contrasts that have come to light : " There is a great difference between striving to reach light from darkness, and darkness from light, between trying to envelop ourselves in a certain gloom, if we dislike lucidity, and seeking, in the conviction that what is lucid rests upon profound, hardly fathomable depths, to raise what we can from those almost unutterable depths."

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I am grateful for these attacks, for the necessity of meeting and examining them, and the attempt to hold my own against them, has drawn my attention to a distinction whose psychological significance was not previously so clear to me : the distinction between conjecture and comprehension in the investigation of unconscious processes. I need not explain psychologically the distinction between these two intellectual activities. To conjecture is to find one or more tracks along which the mystery of the phenomena is cleared up. To comprehend is to examine the track, to convince ourselves

where it leads, and to follow it to the point where it joins paths already familiar. Applied to our special subject, we say that to conjecture means to grasp the nature and trend of unconscious processes, to bring the instincts and psychical mechanism lying at the back of them nearer to consciousness. But comprehension amounts to understanding them as accurately as possible in their definite significance, to making ourselves familiar with their psychical conditions and aims, and to placing them in the chain of cause and effect so that they are illuminated, both in isolation and in their manifold relations to other mental processes. If we conceive of conjecture as an approach to the intellectual mastery of unconscious phenomena, then we shall designate comprehension as the attainment of the goal.

We shall best reach an understanding of these distinctions, if we call to mind instances of unconscious processes. Let us choose the simple instance of a certain situation: a young girl undergoing analysis tells of her habit of standing in front of the mirror when she undresses before going to bed, contemplating herself for a little, and kissing both her upper arms tenderly. Nothing in this strikes me as remarkable; it is not uncommon for young girls to take pleasure in their own beauty. Still, it is not quite usual for the pretty scene to be repeated every evening in a stereotyped succession of actions, and for the girl to whisper words to her reflection or herself which she cannot afterwards remember. The process of conjecturing the unconscious meaning of this little scene is easy: the vital element in its hidden significance occurs to me at once. It represents a particular man, or one yet undetermined, seeing the girl with her bare shoulders, being charmed by her beauty, whispering words of tenderness or sexual excitement to her, and kissing her on both arms. The conjectured meaning enables me to go on tracing the mystery of the action psychologically. When shall I be able to say that I have comprehended it? When I can recount exactly the single features of the scene and their special meaning,

when I have discovered the actual or imaginary events from which it arose, the kind of instinctive satisfaction that the repeated intermezzo gives the girl, its significance for her mental state, the psychical mechanism at play in it, and when, moreover, I have established the inner connection with the patient's other psychical processes.

Another instance : the reader will remember the lady who, being on bad terms with her husband, made the decision whether she should return to her parents depend upon whether, in the following night, a mouse should run across her bed. In discussing the case previously, I referred to sadistic traits in the patient's character. They found expression in long-drawn-out fantasies in which an element of lust was markedly present, that is in which a slight sexual excitement was evinced at first, rising, in the presence of certain images, to the *moment suprême*. Some of these images originated in the reminiscence of harmless little everyday experiences of her own, which were elaborated to narrative fantasies, some from the books she was just reading. Here is an example of the second type : she had read a novel by Benoit in which the life of the farmers on the large islands of the Australian continent was described. There was an account of several Europeans going on an expedition to the interior and being captured by a cannibal tribe and tortured most cruelly. The fantasy started from the description of the various forms of torture to which the Europeans were subjected, and lingered over the torments of a farmer who was hanged by the feet from a post and tortured. There can be no doubt of the sadistic character of such a fantasy, which was accompanied by all the signs of sexual excitement and designated by the patient herself as a form of masturbation.

My conjecture of the unconscious meaning of this fantasy had its origin in this last image : the European hanged by the feet, head downwards. The idea occurring to the analyst had reference to this particular position, which reminded him of that of the embryo in the womb. The conjectured latent

meaning of the image springs from the mental picture of childbirth, which involves such great pain for the woman. Thus the still earlier masochistic pleasure in suffering appears behind the façade of cruelty. The fantasy image represents the displacement onto a man of the instinctively desired but consciously rejected situation of childbirth. Perhaps the unconscious thought will extend to the motives responsible for this displacement, of which the principal corresponds more or less to the idea : I wish a man might find himself in such a position and suffer such pain. Comprehension will test this piece of interpretation, trace its separate elements, and correct or supplement it. For instance, it will establish the connection of this fantasy with the patient's mental reaction to the birth of her youngest child, will work back to the ideas, some forgotten, some repressed, which the patient had had as a young girl and a child of the nature of sexual intercourse and birth, and will find how an element of instinctive cruelty is welded in these images with an unconscious feeling of guilt because of the forbidden masturbation. The psychological motive for displacement onto a man, appearing in the fantasy, has still to be explained, as well as the characteristic unconscious identification of the mother in labour with the child, and other special features.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PSYCHICAL PROCESS OF CONJECTURE

IF I am asked why I have not demonstrated the difference between conjecture and comprehension by describing a complete case of neurosis, I must admit that it would have been more interesting, and probably more illuminating, to show, by describing a case of hysteria or phobia, how we make our approach to analytical comprehension. That would make plain how a first, preconscious presentiment of the hidden purposes and the psychogenesis of the disease emerges from a number of impressions, how it grows clearer and clearer, and how new perceptions help us to understand the conditions and development of the psychical processes and to grasp the case in all its local, dynamic, and instinctive-economic peculiarities. In such a description, moreover, we could show what manifold corrections and modifications this first conjecture undergoes, how it sometimes proves false, and more often inadequate and incomplete, and that no less often it is partially or wholly confirmed by the further progress of the analysis. But such a description would require many pages, and would prevent me from doing justice to my wider theme.

As a poor substitute, I will cite two small examples from the symptomology of neuroses, both from analyses of compulsion neuroses. A young doctor thought that he had cause to feel hurt by his father's refusal to fulfil a request of his. His revenge fantasies included the idea that his father would soon die. Following this, images arose connected with a variety of situations after his death, and associated with them various doubts : how should he frame the announcement of the death in the papers ? Should he merely say : " Yesterday my father,

Dr. X., died . . ." or should he write something fuller, or even something in which he expressed his sorrow in the usual way? What suit should he choose for the funeral? He considered whether he should wear a top-hat or a soft hat on the occasion. Let us select this one item from his long-drawn-out broodings, which reflect the displacement of the tension of ambivalence onto apparently insignificant details. In this last-mentioned thought I believe we may detect an unconscious effect of the patient's doubt whether his father's death would not restore his lost sexual potence. The tall, stiff hat symbolizes erection. The idea may seem grotesque to anyone unacquainted with the peculiar habits of thought of the unconscious. But that does not trouble me at the moment. Is it true? Do other, later associations point to its psychical reality? Does it fit the young man's mental condition, and is it in keeping with the rest of his thinking, as governed by his compulsion neurosis, and as it has come to my knowledge in the course of analysis?

Yet another example: a second patient, suffering from serious compulsion neurosis, has forced the chambermaid in the hotel where he lives into the service of his complicated compulsion to wash. Among other things he practises an elaborate washing ceremonial, the central feature of which is the manipulation of towels returned from the laundry. The chambermaid, who has to bring the towels made up in packets of thirty, bearing them on arms outstretched in a particular way, has to knock at the door and wait till the patient has spread a linen cloth on the floor, upon which the towels are laid. Thereupon the chambermaid must advance a certain number of steps, then walk leftwards at a word of command, with her arms still outstretched, in such a way that she reaches neither the washstand nor the door leading to the bathroom and water-closet; and so forth. The slightest deviation from the prescribed movements, the smallest non-observance of the steps or pauses enjoined, excites the patient to fury. No questions are allowed about the special object of the actions.

Particular little movements must be performed just so, even if they seem quite senseless.

We know that each of the actions and omissions enjoined has its adequate unconscious meaning within the system of the compulsion neurosis. I will not enter here into the meaning discovered by analysis, but only into a secondary feature of the patient's conduct during the ceremonial, his tyrannical stubbornness. It often seemed as if he only wanted to assert his will against every demur, and to suppress maliciously the smallest motion of independence in the fulfilment of his commands. I will not describe the structure and origin of his compulsion, nor will I attempt to show how the compulsion to wash had grown up as a psychical reaction to an exaggerated method of accustoming him to cleanliness at an early age, and likewise as evidence of a bitter struggle against masturbation in childhood. I will merely demonstrate the difference between psychological conjecture and comprehension through this one feature. What is the unconscious meaning of the senseless doings with the chambermaid ? We can conjecture it, if we trust to the unconscious images in our own minds which accompany the repeated description of the ceremonial given during analysis.

The analytical idea which emerges at this point leads to the conclusion that the scene may be understood as the caricature and reversal of a situation in the patient's childhood. A certain nursemaid had played a great part in the little boy's life. This woman had trained the refractory boy very strictly in a degree of cleanliness that he intensely disliked. Every one of her orders had to be obeyed unquestioningly by the exceptionally intelligent child. It looks like belated revenge when the adult now demands the same reactions as the nursemaid had done formerly, grotesquely exaggerated, with the position reversed and with a displacement surrogate. It looks like a representation in caricature when each single movement is exactly laid down, when the utmost care is taken to prevent the clean linen from touching the furniture of the room, when

the patient falls into a rage the moment there is the smallest deviation from the ceremonial, when he cannot tolerate the smallest criticism and must assert his will. In this reversed situation he lets a representative of the hated, but also admired, nursemaid feel what he had to suffer as a child, and he plays the part of his former tormentor. The element of unconscious defiance and scorn in his behaviour is clear.

In such a case the step from conjecture to comprehension will be attained chiefly by acquiring a knowledge of the patient's life-story. Undoubtedly we shall be better able besides to answer the question, what secondary aims he was unconsciously pursuing, what other meaning lies concealed and finds expression in the separate elements of his compulsion, and what is their place in the structure of his neurosis.

It goes without saying that the way leading to conjecture of the unconscious meaning of a symptom, a fantasy, or certain behaviour, varies with the nature and extent of the available psychological evidence. At an advanced stage of the analysis, when we have already discovered much about the psychical conditions and about the patient's motives, and are familiar with his individual manner of reacting, we shall conjecture with greater assurance. The results of our own unconscious and conscious intellectual activity will come nearer to the psychical facts under investigation than at the initial stage. For instance, the patient with a compulsion neurosis just cited could hardly touch anything with his bare hands. In order to touch door-handles, money, or letters, he had to use gloves or paper napkins, which he afterwards laid down in a particular place. At a later stage of the analysis, in which the symptoms became for the time being worse and more intense, he used ordinary brown toilet paper in order to avoid contact, instead of gloves, because it was cheaper. Every time he threw down the piece of paper with which he had touched an object, crumpled up, in a particular place in the room, where a heap of brown paper soon collected.

It is no great analytical feat to detect in this behaviour one

of the original motives of his fear of contact. Here, as so often in this later stage of a compulsion neurosis, the repressed content emerges from what is repressing it. Whereas one of the essential aims of the neurotic precautions was to protect himself from pollution, especially by fæces, a belated protest against his exaggerated training in cleanliness here breaks through the very heart of his neurotic efforts at avoidance. The earthly remains, which he consciously finds it so unpleasant to carry, are demonstratively piled up in the room. Behind the adult, who, with his compulsion neurosis, takes such pains to preserve cleanliness, we discern the defiant child who flings the soiled toilet paper into the middle of the room, to the displeasure of those about him.

Undoubtedly an experienced analyst sometimes succeeds in conjecturing the, or rather one, hidden meaning of a neurosis, or of one of its chief symptoms, soon after the beginning of the analysis. Let us take the following case of a woman patient: the young woman suffered from the obsession that on every possible or impossible occasion she might have been used sexually by a strange man. She protected herself against the situation she feared by extensive neurotic precautions. She must never be left alone for a moment; her husband must always be close at hand. If he went into an adjoining room to fetch something, or retired to the closet, she suffered from the fear that in the interval the waiter in the hotel where she lived might have come in and seduced her. She loaded her husband with bitter reproaches on his return, because he had left her alone again and abandoned her to these tormenting doubts. For instance, she drove through the town in a taxi with her husband; he stopped it at a tobacconist's to buy cigarettes. When he got into the taxi again a couple of minutes later, he found her despairing and in tears. She feared that the driver might have violated her in the interval.

Undoubtedly it is correct to deduce, in such a case, a neurotic defence against unconscious seduction fantasies, but the special character of the lady's fears and the psychical effect produced

enable us to conjecture other, additional unconscious aims. The result of her obsessive fear was that her husband had always to be close at hand, and that she tormented him in a special way by her grotesque anxiety to preserve her chastity. One soon conjectures how much scorn and bitterness lie concealed in the behaviour due to her compulsion neurosis; presumably, also, that it represents a cruel revenge for a long past aberration on the part of her husband, secretly discovered by her. Needless to say, this effective form of vengeance had the secondary purpose and secondary effect of keeping the untrustworthy husband at her side and under her eye.

To conjecture these hidden tendencies is certainly not the same as comprehending them in the analytical sense. That is proved by the mere fact that further analytical study of the origin of the neurosis enabled me to establish the historical conditions, the strata of the case, and that it demonstrated the significance of the attitude of the patient's parents in her girlhood for her subsequent illness. With morbid and unjustifiable suspicion, the parents had hardly ever allowed the girl to go out for an hour alone, had supervised her friendships strictly, and had constantly and urgently warned her against the seductive arts of the young men of the town. Her memory revived an experience, dating from a much earlier period, that she had had as a little girl at home. A workman employed in the house had approached her with signs of sexual excitement, which she reported to her mother at once. A less clear memory recalled a time when she had been ill as a child and had lain in her father's bed and had by chance felt his penis touch her body.

It is interesting to note, moreover, that the intense jealousy, which was so important a factor in the origin of this patient's compulsion neurosis symptoms, likewise appeared in a characteristic form in her younger sister, who underwent analysis for certain hysterical troubles. This girl, who had recently become engaged, passed many hours of the day in reveries made up of scenes of seduction with various types of men.

In these day-dreams she " tested " the men, as she said, that is, she imagined how such and such a one would behave in sexual situations, and what sensual pleasure she would feel with each. She especially enjoyed imagining that she was going to deceive her consciously beloved fiancé just before the wedding, so that another man would rob her of her virginity. Here, too, certain features pointed to these fantasies being revengeful in character, and betrayed her resentment that in her country the young men were allowed full sexual freedom, whilst the girls were strictly guarded. She accounted for her fantasies by saying that she suffered so much from the fear that her future husband would assuredly often deceive her later, that she wanted to take her revenge in advance. It is easy to conjecture the psychological significance of the identification with a man and the repressed homosexuality in the psychogenesis of both sisters' illness. I must stop, or I shall really yield to the temptation of describing a complete case of neurosis.

I think these instances are enough, and I may now assume a clear knowledge of the distinction between the two intellectual activities in the analytical process. To use a comparison, let us suppose that a crime has been committed somewhere, the unknown culprit has left certain traces at the scene of the crime, has lost a handkerchief or left a cigarette-end in the ash-tray. The detectives take up the trace and fix upon someone as suspect. And now the interrogation of the culprit begins, the close investigation of the circumstances of the crime, the examination of the prisoner's statement, and all the processes designed to throw light on the crime and the evidence. We may compare actions of the first kind—criminologists distinguish between the preservation, the examination, and the employment of the traces—with those that lead to psychological conjecture. We may class the investigation of the crime and the conviction of the culprit with the intellectual processes which establish how it all happened.

Let us pause a little over this comparison with the investiga-

tion of crime. In spite of the fact that both procedures have the same goal, namely to throw light on the deed, yet there are important differences between them. In spite of the various points of agreement, the methods of a judge differ essentially from those of a detective or police officer. The means employed to accomplish their purpose are as different as the analyst's in the processes of conjecture and comprehension. The first endeavours to ascertain the facts about the crime are of a provisional nature. Inevitably, they allow much more room for uncertainty and doubt than the procedure of proof, which requires the strictest and most careful examination, criminological and logical, of each separate item and of the whole process, and must aim at a perfectly consistent reconstruction of the course of the crime. The common features of the two methods are due to the fact that the work of the examining magistrate is linked up with the preceding investigations of the criminal police, that he tests, corrects, and supplements their conclusions, and accepts the results of the preliminary investigation as useful, or rejects them as misleading.

In spite of the practical connection, difficulties will hardly arise over the question of competence. A detective will not presume to perform duties proper to the magistrate, nor will the latter occupy himself in tracking the culprit. We shall not find it hard to discover the corresponding common features and differences in the procedure of conjecturing and comprehending unconscious processes in analysis. The two activities are mainly carried on in different mental planes. The former may be described as the initial process. In this preliminary stage the analyst behaves like the detective, who ensures the preservation of every trace, follows it up, and makes use of it; who certainly does not concern himself *first and foremost* with the logical proof of his idea, and often pursues contradictory trains of thought. He has an open mind for all possible ideas that occur during the investigation of the crime, and does not shrink from yielding himself, by way of experiment,

even to trains of thought that seem senseless and absurd. At this stage it would be a mistake to demand logical justification for his own ideas, and only to admit such thoughts as could establish themselves as " reasonable " and in harmony with the laws of thought. In this period of preparation one must, so to speak, lower one's demands to the social level of one's own thoughts, and give a hearing even to the less respectable, the unreasonable ideas, the rabble.

And here the withdrawal of the intellectual censor is as important for the analyst who wants to conjecture the purpose of unconscious processes, as for the patient. Listening to the latter, he might be equally justified psychologically in asking himself: " What occurs to me in connection with that ? " Altogether, it is tempting to establish a set of fundamental psychological rules for analysts. In principle they would hardly differ from those which we impose on our patients. An analyst must pay regard to all psychological indications, even to those that seem least important. The principle of poised attention holds good in the first attempt to establish the circumstances both of a psychological situation and a crime.

It is amazing to observe how few people really know how to use their eyes and ears, to see how much we all shut our minds unconsciously against the reception of many definite impressions. The same unconscious resistance recurs later in the realm of ideas. There, too, we refuse to recognize certain ideas, have no eyes for images that rise before us for a moment, and no ears for thoughts that " walk on dove-like feet ", to use a beautiful simile of Nietzsche's. Let me give an example : at the beginning of her analysis, a young woman doctor described her feelings during sexual intercourse in a quiet, objective manner ; in doing so she spoke of sensations at the " orificium uteri ". As I listened I felt a slight touch of astonishment. It was quickly suppressed. Why should not a doctor use this Latin term that was familiar to her ? The subsequent course of the analysis proved this reasonable

reflection to have been misplaced, and the fleeting sense of astonishment to have been psychologically justified. Her markedly objective manner of speaking about sexual matters proved to be mental camouflage. At a later stage it was easy to ascertain that the young doctor's apparent lack of embarrassment concealed a strong hysterical inhibition in speaking on the subject of sex.

Another passing impression of the same kind: a young Englishman came into the consulting-room with his pipe in his mouth, and talked without removing it. I felt inclined to point out his bad manners to him, but of course repressed all comment and said to myself that perhaps this nonchalant manner was just a fashion, unknown to me, in certain circles in the aristocratic colleges from which the patient came. The impression was soon blotted out, and only re-emerged much later in the analysis, when it turned out that the patient was an embittered masochist, who wanted to provoke the desired punishment by a demonstratively easy, and sometimes impudent, manner. I might have saved myself many a devious path in the analysis, if I had held fast to the fleeting impression on that occasion. Just as in criminology people long failed to realize the importance of guarding the traces on the scene of the crime from unskilful or careless hands, of preserving small indications of apparently minor significance for subsequent examination and use, so the art of analysis will pay increasing attention to the fleeting, barely noticeable impressions which we generally overlook or fail to capture. Again and again in analysis we see the difference between the noisy things that strike us, and the effective things that hint gently at their presence. In the psychology of the unconscious, too, it is very important to " preserve the traces ".

Experience of analysis shows that the psychological demonstrative force of these small, unsuspicious-looking impressions, which we hardly notice, is enhanced when we remember them as they re-emerge. They gain in intensity through repetition. It is easy to demonstrate how mistaken and foolish it is to

interpolate prolonged conscious reflections and logical processes during the stage of gathering evidence which precedes analytical conjecture, and how it must disturb the free play of the analyst's associations when he reverts to his theoretical knowledge during this time. It would be as inappropriate and mistaken as if a detective who wants to discover an unknown criminal were to employ the juridical and logical methods of the judge. The unearthing of the culprit is not the marshalling of evidence. The detective's work in bringing a crime to light is differently performed from the reconstruction of the crime during the trial.

But what I condemn during the phase of preparation for the conjecture of unconscious processes, as being out of place, is fully justified in the final phase which precedes comprehension. Here the foremost place falls by right to logical classification and reflection, to deduction, to the strict examination and criticism of single facts, to the application of conscious knowledge, in short, to all the processes of rational thought. I have already said why I have not treated these intellectual processes as fully as the psychical processes in the phase of analysis preceding conjecture. It is only in their material, the unconscious mind, that they differ from analogous processes in the other sciences, not in their nature. They are not peculiar to the analytical method, and, in spite of their great importance, they do not require exhaustive discussion in an inquiry directed towards just the peculiar characteristics of our method.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ORIGINAL NATURE OF COMPREHENSION

MANY persons who read popular newspapers are familiar with a column entitled " Believe it or Not ". It is a collection of strange facts from natural science, history, and other fields of knowledge, from the lives of individuals and communities. The characteristic feature of these brief statements is that each of them tells an objectively demonstrable fact which the average reader would hardly believe. As we read we are often inclined to cry : " That is impossible, it sounds quite incredible ! " And yet they are undoubted facts, mostly from our directly accessible surroundings. It is by no means a collection of rarities only, but also of a large number of facts from everyday life, of which we knew nothing or which we had not observed.

Analysts could present the reader with a yet larger collection of facts from the inner world, each of which would sound even more incredible. Indeed, it is to be expected that the reader of such a psychological column headed " Believe it or not " would quickly decide in favour of the second alternative. And yet he would be wrong, for these statements about strange processes in the unconscious also tell facts, and many of them are more interesting and important than those in the former collection. It is true that in our case it would be much more difficult to prove them objectively, for only one who has himself learnt to apply analytical methods in investigating unconscious processes can convince himself of their correctness.

I have said that in analysis the psychological results obtained are tested and criticized in the phase in which comprehension enters our minds, and that the testing must be performed with

all the strictness of conscious and logical thought. What is often grasped and conjectured only unconsciously at first must pass through the filter of the intellect before its truth can be admitted to be confirmed. The guarantee for the truth of the analytical result depends upon the sense of intellectual responsibility and the mental honesty of the scientific worker in question. Here the analytical procedure differs nowise in principle from other scientific methods. If we proceed in this way, error is not, indeed, excluded, but its possible occurrence is confined within certain limits. To be sure we cannot produce indubitable logical proof of the action of certain repressed impulses, for then they would have to be laid bare, and they do not reveal themselves sensibly to the observer. There is often no objective certainty of the correctness of a situation reconstructed by analysis. But anyone who accepts certain fundamental assumptions of analysis, and who thinks psychologically, will find his doubts vanishing, if he conducts the investigation conscientiously himself. The appearance of arbitrariness in an analytical deduction or reconstruction vanishes when we have convinced ourselves how many and how weighty factors support it.

The psychological power of an analytical example to convince can best be realized by one who knows that it generally only seems to rest upon the psychological factors adduced, but is in reality the last link in a long chain of widely scattered perceptions. For the reasons already stated, it is not possible here to give examples of such interpretation, with all the determining psychological factors. But any example will enable me to show how interpretation is reached : in her treatment to-day an American patient told of an argument that she had recently had with an English gentleman. The conversation started with questions of musical taste. The gentleman said that a year ago he had been very fond of Wagner, but this year he preferred Beethoven ; nevertheless, his friends were wrong when they called him " inconsistent ". The patient thought the expression undoubtedly wrong ; it would

be better to call him " inconstant ". And now a difference of opinion arose as to the meaning of the two words, and gradually became almost a quarrel, thanks to the patient's aggressive attitude. The Englishman asserted that the word " inconstant " was generally used with the meaning of " unreliable or changeable in love ". The patient denied it vehemently. People used, for instance, the phrase " a constant sufferer " and spoke of " constant anxiety ", she said. The gentleman retorted by pointing to the title of a well-known novel, *The Constant Nymph* by Margaret Kennedy, in which the meaning he maintained appeared plainly. They referred the question to the *Oxford Dictionary*, but its dictum was only the starting-point for fresh arguments, in which the living speech habits in America and England were called in as evidence.

The superficial impression received will be that of a chance dispute in which an emotional mood found expression, arising from the well-known tension between the Americans and the English. And no doubt there were other, more personal, causes of tension on both sides, as is indicated by the reproof concealed in the term " inconstant ".

Any auditor who was at all accustomed to regard things psychologically could not help seeing that the dispute turned upon something quite other than the verbal meaning. But are we right in assuming that, in addition to these easily recognized factors, a particular repressed motive was responsible for the patient's emotional attitude ? Can we prove that her excitement in this argument about the word " constant " was partly due to an unconscious recollection of the name " Constance " ? The patient had had an affair at home with a man who had, till then, been attached to her younger sister, Constance. If my surmise is right, a dispute about a " chance " word was carried on so angrily on this occasion because a concealed reference to herself became involved in the discussion of a linguistic question. That only occurred when the gentleman declared that " inconstant " was only applied to

fickleness in love. It was only then that the lady contradicted him vehemently. The word must have stirred an unconscious memory of the affair, so distressing to her, with her sister Constance's lover, and have touched upon certain inner motions relating to the sister she loved and envied. Does it not appear as an indication of certain morbid states in her sister when, in refuting her opponent's arguments, she referred to the customary phrase " a constant sufferer " ? This interpretation is not, indeed, evident to an outsider. And it would hardly become so, if I were to add that the patient, to whom I had not communicated it, came to speak of her sister and the man in the course of loosely connected associations. Strictly speaking, only an observer who had witnessed the whole of the foregoing analysis, and had thus received the same strong impressions of the instinctive life and the unconscious processes of this particular person, could judge of the probability of such an interpretation or analytical explanation.

Perhaps it is even more difficult to justify the analytical conception of an unconscious phenomenon belonging to the twilight region between reality and fancy which we call transference. Once again, I will give only a simple example: analytical treatment had successfully freed the young woman suffering from compulsion neurosis, of whom I have already told, from the particularly tormenting doubt whether somebody—a waiter, workman, or taxi-driver—had not seduced her during a few moments in which she was alone. During the last stage of her analytical treatment her energy and interest in life were so far restored that she determined to give lessons in dancing, in which she had earlier received a training, in order to lighten her husband's care for her maintenance. Although the lessons turned out a success, new doubts arose, this time, indeed, of a different kind. She was now obsessed by the question whether she had taught her pupils rightly, whether she might not have reached her goal as a teacher by some quicker method, whether she were not unnecessarily prolonging the course in order to earn more money, whether

she had the requisite knowledge and skill to teach her pupils as much as they wished to learn, whether she were justified in charging high fees. She spent many hours of the day brooding over these and similar questions.

How shall I prove that these questions reflected certain doubts, transferred to herself, which the patient felt about me and the analytical treatment, and that they reproduced the repressed suspicions which made her doubt my intentions and my abilities? She was conscious of none of this, and she stoutly denied feeling any such doubt or mistrust of me at the present time. None the less, countless little things pointed to unconscious thoughts of the kind. Perhaps I could not give a stronger impression of the correctness of my interpretation, even if I were in a position to recount all the insignificant-looking indications, and to show how her doubts owed their form to the action of the same mechanism which revealed itself in her anxiety about the maintenance of conjugal fidelity, and in other mental aberrations not here described. Consciously her doubts referred wholly to herself; but unconsciously they referred to another person closely connected with her, to whom her intense ambivalence found expression in the veiled form of accusations.

Once again at this point the still unanswered question arises of the evidence in support of analytical interpretation. Like every scientific method, analysis aims at securing objective evidence to support its statements. That is more difficult than with other methods because, in order to achieve it, the critic must submit to accept particular assumptions, since certain psychological assumptions are indispensable—for instance, a conviction of the existence and action of repressed impulses, and of the universal determinism of psychical phenomena. Even then it is more difficult to prove the objective correctness of an interpretation than in other sciences, not because the analytical method ignores experience, but because *here experience is of a different kind.*

To state the case more trenchantly: the difference lies, not

in the more or less empirical character of the investigation, but in the *nature of the subject of investigation.* In many cases we have no possibility of doing anything but rest content with the subjective evidence. As is well known, it often happens in analysis that the analyst adheres to a certain interpretation or explanation of a mental phenomenon, even against the contrary opinion of the patient. Full psychological confirmation is inherent in the interpretation itself, before such confirmation is received from the patient or from outsiders. If the analyst has done his work honestly, if he has tested his ideas strictly and convinced himself conscientiously, by their application to the psychological data, that they are true, he will have the right to hold to his opinion, even when those around him try to shake his conviction by every method of opposition, accusing him of rigid dogmatism and heaping scorn upon him. To quote Freud's unforgettable words, " nothing remains (for the analyst) but to maintain his conviction, based upon his experience, with all his might, after giving himself a careful hearing and his opponents a fairly attentive one."

Of course, every analyst will readily admit that his interpretations have not always hit the mark, that his psychological explanations have erred in one case or another, that an assumption has later proved a delusion. We know—indeed, we know better than our opponents—that limits are set to our psychological knowledge, and we know what they are. So obvious an admission, which every worker is ready to make in his science, must not be interpreted as a special apology for analysis.

For the rest, I may take this opportunity to point out that errors in our psychological assumptions need not by any means always prove useless, if we have worked conscientiously to the best of our knowledge. Sometimes a partial justification of the error emerges later, occasionally it proves fruitful, in that the assumption, though it did not hit the bull's-eye, came very near to it. Sometimes an error, corrected later, calls our

attention to the truth, which we should not have detected without it.

I trust that in my description I have distinguished clearly enough between the two phases in the analytical illumination of what goes on in the unconscious mind—perhaps, indeed, too clearly, a mistake which can only be justified by the descriptive purpose of the account. In real life there is no such sharp dividing line as is here indicated between the processes of conjecture and comprehension. Nevertheless, we can see even in real life that the productive element in our psychological labours, in which I include the reproductive element, can be separated from a critical element. There, too, we detect the Janus face of analytical work, turned both towards the free play of fancy and conscious intellectual effort. Though the two faces may show a certain family likeness, yet they are different. No analyst will deny that the process of cognition in our science generally passes through the two phases here depicted, that its beginning is dominated by one of the faces, its end by the other.

We have travelled far, from a description of groping presentiment almost to that of a clear, scientific, definite cognition of the hidden impulses of the soul. We may compare our journey to the change from early dawn, which only shows things in vague outline, to the morning, when they appear sharply delineated. The fact stated with such excessive emphasis, that the aim of psycho-analysis is to bring the investigation of unconscious processes " within the range of reason ", does not assuredly mean that this aim can be attained solely *by the methods* of conscious reason.

It would seem advisable to come to a psychological understanding about the nature of comprehension, since that is our goal. Comprehension appears to me as a purely intellectual process, indeed as the model of such a process. If, meanwhile, we submit the question of the origin of the act of comprehension to a closer psychological examination, we shall realize that originally it was a kind of taking possession, in a

much more material sense. The root sense of the word points to that, and may be compared with " understand " (to put oneself in the place of something). The German word *begreifen* (used almost synonymously with *verstehen*), the French *comprendre*, and the Italian *capire* approach more nearly to the earliest meaning of the process. They show that originally it amounted to " taking possession of things, seizing them ". The physical quality of the object, the material nature and proximity of what was to be comprehended, must at first have been very important, indeed a necessary condition of comprehension.

In the early days of the human race there can have been no comprehension of abstract things in our sense. It would have been self-contradictory. To comprehend something, people had to catch hold of it, to " grasp " it. It is no mere chance that we use this word, too, in the sense of comprehend. If we compare the word " conceive " in its root meaning, which is undoubtedly material, with the word " conception " in the sense of a purely logical structure, we shall realize how far the process of comprehension or conception has travelled from its original nature. The intellectual, non-concrete comprehension in logical inferences and conclusions so far represents the latest stage in this development. Man undoubtedly lived many tens of thousands of years upon earth without feeling any need to comprehend his surroundings in our sense. Every day teaches us that even in our time that need is by no means one of the strongest of the human race.

Assuredly it would be worth while to attempt to place the process of comprehension psychologically in the history of evolution. Here I can only give a few hints of a very provisional character.

Comprehension is a special way of reacting to the impressions that life brings us, a special case of mental mastery of them, certainly the latest and most spiritual type. In psychology we should express it by saying that to comprehend another, to grasp the mental processes in the world around us, is a

particular way of mastering inwardly the stimuli that we receive from the existence and behaviour of others, of assimilating our impressions mentally, in a sense. The objection will be raised that our comprehension of another person is often just the way to prepare a particular reaction or action. It is not as a rule an end in itself, but is made to serve other ends. Quite true. But that does not exclude the possibility of its representing itself a definite type of reaction ; a preparatory action, if you like, a provisional attitude. We can all confirm from our own experience that comprehension often postpones or modifies our primitive or elementary motor reaction. That, perhaps, is the glimmer of truth in the false and sentimental proverb : to understand everything is to pardon everything. The latent sense concealed in the proverb, which we fully understand, refers to the obvious fact that our original reaction was the reverse of pardon, and that it was afterwards replaced by understanding.

I have said that in a general way comprehension is the result of the effort to seize or grasp something quite physically, and that psychological comprehension denotes a special form of mastery of mental excitement. The most primitive and crudest form of this mastery is doubtless incorporation. To incorporate something, to devour it to the last morsel, is the elementary way in which primitive man made things " comprehensible ", made them his own. He then knew all that was worth knowing about the object, i.e. what it tasted like. Working backwards, he could infer—in so far as he was at all concerned with logical processes—what the object was, or rather, what it had been. We cannot deny the historical connection between the most sublimated passion for knowledge and the primitive desire to devour. Psycho-analysis has arrived by clinical methods at the derivation of our desire to know from our urge to seize.

We find a surviving trace of this origin when we see how children open their mouths when they are surprised. One need not be an unquestioning adherent of Darwin's theory of

expressive actions in order to assume the likelihood that this movement gives expression to the reflexive residuum of an original impulse to devour something. Everybody knows that the little things do not always make a halt at the " preparatory action ". Surprise then finds expression, not only through the hands, but also through the mouth. It shows that we must look here for the most infantile, the archaic form of comprehension.

What has this derivation of comprehension to do with our purpose of studying certain psychological problems? Something at any rate, for this peculiar origin of the process of comprehension will never quite lose its force. It will make itself felt, in a distorted and utterly emasculated form, even in the most complicated and, as it seems, intellectually determined processes of conceiving and forming conceptions. The fact that the origin of comprehension was the act of incorporating an object, that at the beginning of human evolution it amounted to feeling the object within oneself, will never quite lose its significance. Originally one supposes that it did not matter whether a man swallowed the object dead or alive. What mattered was the swallowing. The object comprehended must be changed from " it " to a part of the ego, from something without to something within. To this very day we can speak of a subject being incorporated, and we speak jestingly of somebody lapping up the truth. Later this physical meaning was quite lost to sight ; comprehension had become assimilation in the well-known intellectual sense.

The psychological comprehension of another person is a special case of this sublimated seizure and incorporation. It is, in a sense, psychological cannibalism. The other person is taken into our ego and becomes, for the time being, a part of our ego. Thus in the process of psychological comprehension man's craving for power is satisfied, not only in its most refined and sublimated form, but unconsciously in its crudest. It is true that the process of taking in the object, of introducing it into ourselves, is much more complicated from

a psychological point of view than might appear at the first glance. The division between the ego and the external world is a relatively late product of individual development. Anyone observing a very young baby can see that he knows nothing of the difference. Originally, from the psychological point of view, there is only the ego. The external world, subsequently separated from him, belongs to him as much as his own body, external objects as much as his own organs. It is not for a long time that the external world is divided from the ego, and then with hesitation. But in a certain sense it always remains a detached part of the ego. In the process of taking in an object, of introducing it into ourselves, we only take into the ego once more what originally belonged to it, we only reconquer what we were formerly compelled to yield up under the stern compulsion of reality, and what has been temporarily separated from the ego.

Originally there was only one way of taking possession of an object: one devoured it. Now we know various ways of taking possession, including the possibility, so rich in cultural significance, of taking it into ourselves by comprehension. The introduction of an object into oneself results in a change in the ego: for the moment the ego becomes the object; it is changed into the object. We know the archaic prototype of this attitude; ethnologists and scientific travellers who have lived for a long time among the most primitive Australian tribes assure us that a savage who has eaten a man hopes for certain bodily and mental changes through the act of incorporation. For instance, a man who has made his dinner off a white missionary is convinced that he has made his own the secret powers and excellences, the *mana* of the man whom he admires and envies. He has "incorporated" him, not merely in a bodily sense. This belief rests upon an ancient magical principle: a man is what he eats. The Indian, who has killed an old grizzly bear and wraps himself in its skin, is filled with the bear's spirit, he assumes its movements, and is called "Bear" by his relatives and friends. When a man

incorporates an object, he not only sets up certain psychological processes in his organism, but also takes the qualities of the object into his ego.

The assumption of a change in the ego is not confined to people in the lowest stages of culture, nor to the effect of the crudest manner of incorporating an object. We detect a late and highly sublimated trace of this savage belief in the proverb : Knowledge is power.

We shall recall the primitive conception of comprehension, here indicated, and the kindred assumption of a change in the ego through the introduction of an object into it, when we return later to the subject, approaching it from other points of view.

CHAPTER XV

THE INSTINCTIVE BASIS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONJECTURE

LET us return for a moment to the starting-point of this inquiry. What happens to the psychological data, of which, as I have said, there is such a wealth and variety? The obvious answer is: they are seized by our consciousness at the stage of observation and used for the psychological comprehension of unconscious processes. At this point criticism will immediately begin: an indeterminable number of these signals are beyond the reach of conscious observation; they never reach the psychologist's consciousness. Our corrected version of the answer must, therefore, state that the analyst receives impressions of his subject which he uses for the purpose of psychological comprehension, although a large number of them do not enter his consciousness. Others do not reach his consciousness as such; what reaches his consciousness is the thing they point to or announce. Others, again, are consciously seized upon by observation. Even this description cannot claim universal validity, for the psychical process in the observer is certainly not from the outset so thoroughly and markedly intellectual. In truth the inner process must be far more complicated. We can ascribe such an unequivocal, purely cognitary tendency only to one special phase.

I note with a certain envy that my difficulty in describing the process of psychological comprehension adequately does not exist for a psychologist of consciousness. In my position, faced by the same problem, the expression " empathy " readily occurs to his mind, and almost more readily flows from his

pen. Indeed, this expression sounds so full of meaning that we willingly overlook its ambiguity. The comment of a speaker in a discussion on Geiger's paper on empathy at the Fourth Congress on Experimental Psychology at Innsbrück in 1910 says better than I could how many and how various are the things included in the conception of empathy. The speaker, a professor of psychology, gave it as his opinion that to speak of empathy was on occasion as senseless as to start an investigation into the nature of cataract without distinguishing between the ophthalmological and the other meaning of the word. (The German word is " Star ", and means both " cataract "—the disease—and " starling ".—*Translator's Note.*) And really the conception of empathy has become so rich in meanings that it is beginning to mean nothing at all.

The conception has its origin in æsthetics, the theory of the beautiful, which does not deal with life direct, but with its reflection in art. It was not till later that it was transferred to the process of cognition in psychology and made, so to speak, the sole principle of psychological comprehension. It is hard to form any idea of the psychological nature of empathy, for in the controversy over the conception the process appears, sometimes as the natural, unconscious condition of psychological comprehension, sometimes as the result of a special effort and conscious endeavour.

As a rule the process is described as if empathy were an act dependent on the conscious will and to be performed mechanically. Thus I read lately in a book written for criminologists on the psychology of criminals how such and such a mental process was to be imagined. These words were added : " Of course we must be able to feel our way into the criminal's mind." A demand like that reminds us, in its energetic and untroubled tone, of the case with which the caliph in the familiar fairy-tale changed himself into a stork as soon as he uttered the mysterious word : " Mutabor ", so as to understand the conversation of the storks, incomprehensible to everyone else. In like manner, according to the

ideas of some psychologists, an observer can change himself into various persons by a slight effort of the will. The process of empathy can have heuristic significance only for the most superficial strata of the mind, those nearest to consciousness. But we are primarily concerned with learning the content and mechanism of the unconscious.

So far as the psychical process of such cognition has hitherto been made clear to us, its character is in general as follows : the united or conflicting effect of the words, gestures, and unconscious signals, which point to the existence of certain hidden impulses and ideas, will certainly not at first stimulate the observing analyst to psychological comprehension. Their first effect will rather be to rouse in himself unconsciously impulses and ideas with a like tendency. The unconscious reception of the signals will *not at first result in their interpretation, but in the induction of the hidden impulses and emotions that underlie them.* I do not hesitate to borrow the word " induction " from the science of electro-motor forces, even though I am aware how little adequate it is to the much more complicated character of psychological processes. We can now discern the instinctive basis of psychological comprehension. In popular language, the unconscious and repressed impulses which betray themselves by these signs act like stimuli that release certain effects of a similar kind in the analyst. I use the word " stimulus " here in the most general psychological sense, but it also includes the particular meaning in which it is used in everyday talk and non-scientific discussion. (The German word *Reiz* used here covers a variety of English words : stimulus, irritant, and also attraction or charm in the general sense.—*Translator's Note.*)

Let us suppose that a patient is telling something of his life-story, and in his account he betrays the part played by unexpressed libidinous or aggressive impulses by just such unconscious signals as I have often referred to, the tone of the voice, a pause, a movement. We are justified in ascribing equal psychological value to these modes of expression as to

the more noticeable ones that we observe consciously, even if they only produce an unconscious effect in the observer's ego. The secret impulses are communicated to the analyst by means of unconscious perception. The essence of what we have hitherto learnt brings us thus far. The further step that I will venture upon is this : *not only are these impulses communicated unconsciously to the analyst ; they communicate themselves to him unconsciously.*

If this be so, the latent impulses would act as a stimulus, stirring kindred tendencies in the analyst. That account of the matter cannot be true, or only true in the crudest sense. The thoughts, ideas, and fantasies thus intimated are so manifold and of so peculiar a nature ; they are confined to the one person, and are dependent upon his experiences and opinions. That is true, indeed, but it is not generally the unconscious thoughts and ideas that are induced—even that occurs sometimes, and then it strikes us, when it reaches consciousness, as a telepathic phenomenon—but the unconscious impulses behind them. I was told of a little American girl who was given the nickname of Me-too. It was characteristic of the child that she reacted to everything that happened or was given to her elder brothers and sisters with the words : " Me too." And it made no fundamental difference whether a sister got the measles, a basket of flowers, or sweets. We react spontaneously to the unconscious signals that betray the hidden wishes and inclinations of others to us, just as the little girl did when she was told that this or that had happened to her sister. This rousing of the same unconscious inclinations by induction proceeds on a different mental plane from the various conscious observations and reflections which may occur almost at the same time, running parallel, so to speak.

In designating the psychical effect produced upon the analyst by receiving the signals of the unconscious, I have intentionally avoided the term " identification ". It is not a simple process of identification. It is said that in order to comprehend another person we must be able to imitate in our own experi-

ence what is going on in the other's mind. To me that assumption seems misleading, not because it suggests a difference in the intensity of the experience, but also because at the same time it denotes essential difference in the quality.

I will try to indicate, by means of a comparison, the difference between the process of identification and that which I have intended to describe here. Let us suppose that an actor is studying one of the great characters of the classical dramatists; that he imagines how, let us say, Tasso might have felt in the scene with Antonio. He " enters into " the mood of the tragic poet, and then acts his part in accordance with the idea so acquired. Whilst studying it, he grows more and more into the part, and clothes it with all the passion and intensity of emotion with which nature has endowed him. I do not believe that the greatest and most convincing actors are those who apply themselves to the study of a poetical character in that way. These greatest actors do not enter into the personality of a tragic hero, but they become Tasso, so to speak. They do not imitate his experience, they actually experience his destiny, with the help of the same psychical possibilities within themselves, and of memory traces of their own experience.

There is, therefore, no identification, but a change in the ego taking place in the unconscious. And then what their acting expresses is the part of the ego thus transformed. We might say, a memory of what the ego might have become. They do not enter into another's feelings, but unconsciously those feelings become their own. They are not resonance-chambers for alien experience; but the resonance comes from the unconscious memory and revival of their own experience. Poetry has touched upon a fragment of buried inner life, has stirred the actor's own hidden possibilities. His acting is not the reproduction of an alien destiny, lived through in mimicry, but the possibility, unconsciously experienced in the past, of his own destiny, which has found a point of contact with the other's. In unconsciously sharing the experience of the

dramatic character, he is enabled to revert to his own, and strives to master it inwardly by acting the part. This comparison certainly fails to make the difference in the mental origin and in the development of the process adequately clear. But perhaps it may give an idea of the psychical process, and so may be used to describe the analytical situation. The psychological condition of analytical conjecture of repressed impulses is a like unconscious change in the ego for the fraction of a minute, together with a subsequent reversion to the former state, and the power to discern our own former transformed ego objectively in the other person.

Does not this assumption bring us near to the theory of empathy, which I have rejected as inadequate? Certainly; but only near to it. The difference will be clearer, if we revert once more to a description of what goes on in the actor's mind. We have a presentiment that he has developed in his art what we have all possessed in embryo since our childhood: the capacity to share the experience of others, not *like* our own, but *as* our own. Undoubtedly that capacity was once far more active, and faded more and more in later years. And it applied not only to organic beings, but embraced the inanimate world. If we recall our childish games, we must confess that it was not imitation in the usual sense, it was a transformation of the ego that grown-up people might then have observed in us. There is little of this capacity left in us by the time we are grown-up. Nevertheless, we involuntarily exchange the manifestations of our own personality for those of another person when we want to depict his character; indeed, it may be that there are hints of a change in our muscles, an involuntary variation in the tone of our voice and our manner of speech, when we speak with animation of somebody else. If I read a newspaper article to somebody else, its contents influence the rhythm and modulation of my voice, as if these latter were trying to render the events related independently of the meaning of the words. Our gestures are, perhaps, the last expression of this original transforma-

tion of the ego, but our voice also bears witness to it, even if we want only to describe objectively how a mountain was high or a storm terrible. All these signs still point to the animistic outlook which dominated both our own childhood and the thought of primitive peoples and of antiquity.

The capacity to transform the ego easily and variously must have played an incomparably larger part in the early days of the human race than it does to-day. It is not for nothing that myths and fairy-tales are full of such metamorphoses. With the disappearance of the animistic outlook and the growing repression of instinct, developing civilization has caused this capacity, likewise, to shrink to a feeble residuum of itself. Evolution is tending to suppress to a great extent, not only the instinctive life itself, but also its forms of expression. The history of civilization shows that this tendency, so displaced, still affects our looks, our bearing, and our gestures, and goes far to cramp all our expressive movements. A refuge for the ego, in its readiness to transform itself under the influence of lust, remained in the unconscious. There, what it has lost of that capacity in the conscious mind, is still preserved. It is part of the growing tendency to repression that dramatic art, which formerly found much freer utterance in tone and mien and gesture, is more and more restricted to mere suggestion through speech and gesture, and that, indeed, it may be losing its former cultural significance more and more decisively.

We now see clearly the difference between the theory of empathy and the genetic view here put forward : what appears in the former as the environment and atmosphere for the comprehension of other minds, is in the latter only its prelude. What in the former appears as a special function within comprehension, is pronounced in the latter to be a general psychological prerequisite.

If, after this digression, we revert to the consideration of that prerequisite and its significance for the apprehension of the unconscious, the following mental process emerges :

through the process of induction by the unconscious impulses, the psychical possibilities in the observer's ego are realized for a moment. In other words, by means of the repressed content in the manifestations of the other person, a latent possibility in the observer's ego becomes actual for an instant. This image of the ego, turned to psychical reality, is projected into the external world and perceived as an object.

We can best compare the psychical process with the act of vision, in which a stimulus is transmitted to the brain by the optic nerve, and every ray of light is projected again into the external world. The other person's impulse, which has unconsciously roused a corresponding impulse in the observer, is seen externally like the image on the retina. The observation of other people's repressed impulses is only possible by the roundabout way of inner perception. In order to comprehend the unconscious of another person, we must, at least for a moment, change ourselves into and become that person. We only comprehend the spirit whom we resemble. Within certain limitations, which we will investigate directly, the principle holds good in the psychology of the unconscious that only he can understand another's experience who experiences the same himself.

Thus comprehension is preceded by a reproduction of what goes on in the other person's mind; it is an unconscious sharing of emotion, seized upon by endopsychic perception. The observation of another is here diverted into observation of the ego, or rather to the observation of a part of the ego, transformed by taking some object into itself. In language fitted for philosophers, we might formulate it by saying that the essential element in experiencing another, is an unconscious experience of the ego. Nietzsche was certainly right when he said that Thou was older than I. But between the two stands Thou incorporated in I. The observation of the ego springs itself from a continuation, now conscious, of the process of being observed. A child, becoming aware that it is observed by the people around it, itself continues the observation of its

own movements later, under its own direction, so to speak ; it turns its eyes towards itself.[1] Let us admit that by this long, roundabout route we have reached the perception of a psychological fact to which a German poet gave utterance more than a century ago : " If thou wouldst understand others, look into thine own heart ! "

The special form in which the ego is transformed by taking another person into itself for a moment can only be called an introjection. We are accustomed to use that term to denote a permanent change of the ego in consequence of the incorporation of some object. But there is nothing to prevent us from speaking of temporary introjection. In psycho-analysis we are obliged to assume a large number of these introjections, since every important act of comprehension of repressed processes can be achieved only by means of introjection.

And then the process of introjection is followed by projection, whereby the transformed ego is thrown outwards and perceived as a psychological object. This sequence—the incorporation of the psychological Thou into the ego and its ejection—are conditions as essential to psychological investigation and the observation of other minds as the intaking and outgoing of breath are to the organism. They constitute the primary psychological conditions of the comprehension of other people's unconscious processes.

A few remarks by way of explanation, supplement, and correction will prove necessary after this compressed account of the psychical process. Such an introjection of another person into the ego naturally assumes that on the deep plane on which the object is received the ego resembles the object, or at least that its psychical structure is appropriate to the purpose, just as the retina is prepared for the reception of light rays. There are no psychological errors on that plane of the unconscious. The unconscious of the one person can quite well comprehend that of the other, thanks to this hidden resemblance. Psycho-

[1] I expressed the same view as early as 1927 in my book, *Wie man Psychologe Wird* (*How to Become a Psychologist*).

logical errors are to be placed to the account of the agents of the conscious ; misunderstanding or erroneous interpretation of what is in another's mind generally applies to what has been superimposed.

In the psychology of the unconscious we have the antinomy that we best comprehend the special direction and aim of an impulse, the individual character of a psychical situation or conflict, if we trace it back to the universal and still undifferentiated instinctive element that lives its unconscious life in us all. I will give an example to illustrate what I mean : I was watching a little boy play ball with an adult. After the child had been throwing the ball to the man for about five minutes, who had been catching it, he suddenly ran away with the ball and flung it into a bush some distance off. Then he came back to the man and looked at him in astonishment, saying : " You must cry ! " He meant that his playfellow ought to feel the same disappointment that he, the little boy, would feel himself, if the ball had been taken from him in so inconsiderate a manner. Psychologists will note that his behaviour sprang from a mistaken and primitive inference by analogy. What interests us more than this problem of logical classification, is the question whether the child was *psychologically justified* in expecting from the adult severe disappointment and its expression in tears. Well, of course an adult is not in the least seriously cast down because he may not go on playing with a ball. But we may assume without hesitation an unconscious, or perhaps preconscious, touch of displeasure because he could not go on catching the ball, as a residuum of like situations in the long-past games of his childhood. The little boy's psychological error applied only to what went on on the plane of consciousness, where the throwing away of the ball was certainly not registered as a disappointment. Applied to the adult's unconscious, which, after all, remains a child, the little boy's assumption was perfectly justified.

There is a further observation that must hold good with regard to our readiness for introjection. There must be a

psychical readiness to take the object experimentally, so to speak, into the ego, or else no psychological comprehension of the unconscious of another person is possible. If I want to know the taste of an unknown dish that is set before me, I must at least try a mouthful of it ; I must not refuse altogether to taste it. Readiness for introjection is nowise identical with tenderness or love towards the object, any more than the fact that I eat a dish means that I like it. The hidden lack of readiness for introjection is often the cause of our not comprehending another person, of our inability to discern what is going on in his unconscious mind. It is not so much ignorance of the other person's unconscious as the refusal to know. To change the simile : if I turn off my wireless this evening, when it is set to receive London, that does not mean that there is no concert in London just now, but that I do not want to listen to it. But I may have turned it off without knowing (that is, without conscious intention), and may then be very much surprised not to be able to hear London.

One consideration of a special nature is worth mentioning. People ask how it is possible to maintain any continuity of psychological comprehension, which is yet necessary in psychoanalysis. I must reply at once that we have to draw a sharp distinction between conscious and unconscious comprehension. There is, of course, that difficulty for conscious comprehension ; unconscious comprehension can maintain its psychical continuity through all transformations of instinct, changes in the aims of instinct, and variety of instinctive expression. I have described the process as temporary ; indeed, it can often be called momentary introjection, from which the ego speedily emerges. The question of the possibility of psychological continuity is easily answered by a reference to the fact that we go back to older, earlier processes of introjection on the part of the ego. In psychological conjecture a connection is established between the patient's present and his earlier experience through the analyst going back to earlier processes of introjection, thanks to unconscious memory traces.

What takes effect in the mind is easier to depict by means of an example than by description : an hysterical woman patient had attempted suicide, in a way that could hardly be taken seriously, after a quarrel with her husband ; she took a dose of poison. In her treatment, whilst she was describing the scene, the thought of her mother, who had also attempted suicide, occurred to her. There followed a series of associations which pointed to a recent disappointment in love with another man. The patient herself ascribed her attempt at suicide to her mood of despair after the disappointment, and also to her mother's example. After she had talked of other things, she mentioned casually, at the end of the treatment, that in the early days of her marriage she had really copied her husband in everything. When he read the paper, she did the same ; when he smoked, she had to smoke, too. At that time she had been so much in love with him that she always wanted to do what he did. Her husband had been annoyed because she had no opinions of her own, but repeated what he said like a gramophone record ; and so on. And that did not cease till she made the acquaintance of the other man.

And now it must be understood as a reversion to an earlier process of introjection that the idea occurred to me that she wanted to attempt suicide because her husband had once tried to kill himself in the past. It was a fact that her husband had attempted suicide many years before. It was at the time when his first wife lay dying. He had swallowed the sputum of the consumptive woman in order to infect himself. Now a new aspect of the problem emerged ; an unconscious motive for her attempted suicide appeared in addition to the reasons adduced by her, that were capable of conscious realization. She was still jealous of her husband's love for the dead woman. She still copied him by showing him : see, I, too, can love another as you loved your former wife, so much that, like you, I will die if I can no longer have him. On another psychical plane she identified herself with her mother, but that does

not conflict with the identification just described, for her mother, too, had married a widower and continued to be jealous of his first wife. The patient's actual disappointment in love, relating to another man, was genuine. But this love had the secret aim of making her husband jealous and avenging herself for the jealousy that she had had to suffer.

Of course we had discussed her relation to her husband fully during her many treatments, her jealousy, and so forth, but it seemed as if these strong feelings had receded when the other man entered her life. How, then, did it come about that I suddenly comprehended the connection between present events and the long-past experience, how was it that the remote inducement to her attempt at suicide, of which she herself was not conscious, now seemed to me undoubtedly the primary and more important motive? The case was that the chance mention of a past situation led to the revival of a former object introjection in the analyst. When, a few months previously, she had told me about her behaviour in the early days of her marriage, I had not estimated its full psychological significance. At that time, too, there had been an introjection on my part; but not till now, not till the present occasion, did the former memory trace rise partially into consciousness. We have here a case of subsequent comprehension due to a reversion to a former introjective experience. Thus the question of the psychical continuity of sharing other people's experience presents no special problem of psychological comprehension. It represents a special case of the phenomenon of reminiscence based on unconscious memory traces. And it is not specifically a question of the comprehension of other people's minds, but one of the possibility of reproducing knowledge that has remained or become unconscious.

The process of psychical introjection, which I have assumed, still seems puzzling enough. If once again we trace the psychological process, this is the course of events that presents itself to our consciousness: conscious observation of

the other person, perception of his utterances and gestures, conscious recognition of the hidden meaning contained in them, of the latent motions and impulses at work in them. Here all our attention is consciously fixed on the other person, and there seems to be no room for the process of introjection. Where can we thrust it in? Well, we know that the above account is very incomplete; it only refers to conscious processes. And we have recognized that even in the first stage of the process, that of taking in the psychical data, unconscious observation runs side by side with conscious. But there is another and more significant omission in the account. We can make it good by reminding ourselves that the stage of observation passes into another, governed by the unconscious assimilation of the psychical data we have taken in. The most important part of the process of introjection must take place at this stage, even though it began in the initial phase. But the detachment of the object taken into the ego, and the projection of that part of the ego, must occur at this stage, for in the subsequent stage we already find the conscious assimilation of psychical processes which seem to have their place in the other person.

If, then, we have thus determined the stage at which the process of introjection takes place, the question arises how it comes about that it generally remains unconscious, and that consciously we see only the other person. The part played by self-observation in the psychological comprehension of other people's minds is seldom consciously recognized. I am unable to give a satisfactory answer to that question. Perhaps a comparison may transform the situation into one more familiar to us. For again we are reminded of the physiological and psychological act of vision; there, too, only the smallest and least important part of the processes by which we see the image, and see it as an external object, separated from ourselves, ever reaches consciousness. From another aspect, too, a comparison with the act of vision is instructive; it is well known that we must be a certain distance from an

object in order to be able to see it. Ourselves we can only see in the glass, or in the eyes of another person. This peculiar fact may be cited to explain why we cannot very well grasp the part played by the ego in recognizing unconscious processes in others. That psychological process we have still to consider in detail.

CHAPTER XVI

CONCERNING RECIPROCAL ILLUMINATION

I HAVE said that the analysis of another person leads not only to the psychological knowledge of that person, but may also lead, in a peculiar and indirect way, to the conjecture of secret processes in our own ego. Analysis of a subject outside himself makes a constant demand on the psychologist to know himself. And I have also said that it would not be possible to grasp the unconscious mental processes in the other person, unless they touched upon our own psychical processes, not, that is, if we only appropriated the other person's experience, and it had no point of contact with our own.

The road to the conjecture of the unconscious part in another person's mental processes leads through the endopsychical perception of actualities or possibilities in the ego. And this stretch of the road is itself almost wholly unconscious. Only on exceptional occasions does this part of the process of cognition reveal itself to our consciousness, so that its heuristic and psychological significance for the analysis of the subject and for our own profounder knowledge of self can be grasped. I will call this process the *reciprocal illumination of unconscious happenings.* I am not altogether satisfied with that designation; it is too general, and describes a process difficult to grasp, by mere allusion. Nor does it tell how the reciprocal psychological illumination comes about. Perhaps this nomenclature can later be replaced by a better.

The affective and psycho-therapeutic value of the analysis of another person to the analyst himself is recognized and acknowledged even less frequently than its psychological and heuristic significance for his knowledge of his own ego.

Regarded in this light, the analytical investigation of the other person is a continuation of his own analysis, penetrating to profounder depths. We always maintain that nobody is justified in expressing a serious scientific opinion about psychoanalysis who has not felt its effects upon himself. That involves, not only his own analysis, but also its continuation in the analysis of many other persons which, apart from the heuristic point of view, may claim to be of great inner value. Any analyst of long experience can confirm the statement that his analyses of others help him to master old accumulations of emotion whose nature, and still oftener their intensity, have remained unknown to himself.

As far as I know, this therapeutic reaction of analysis has not been accorded its true significance in our specialist literature. Moreover, the significance of the reciprocal illumination of unconscious processes extends far beyond the sphere of analytical investigation into that of all psychological apprehension of hidden mental processes.

The literature of analysis has emphasized again and again that the appearance of repression in the analytical observer sets definite limits to his powers of psychological cognition. It has not yet been pointed out how the removal of a repression in the analyst helps and deepens his psychological comprehension, and to what psychological surprises it leads. A biased view has emphasized the subjective and misleading element in his own ideas, and too little has been said of how fruitful they can be, if strictly checked and repeatedly tested, in the heuristic problems that confront psychologists of the unconscious. It often happens that these ideas, rising from unknown regions of the mind, open the way to hitherto inaccessible planes of the unconscious and succeed in penetrating to the spontaneous inner life of another. And at the same time it not infrequently happens that a subsequent realization of the origin of the idea teaches the analyst something of his own hidden processes by roundabout and hardly fathomable ways. If he knows more about himself than other psychologists, he certainly owes it

principally to the analysis that he has himself undergone, but also to the analyses that he has conducted. This deeper knowledge of the ego is doubtless primarily owing to the analyst himself, but secondarily to the " unknown patient " (to use Dr. Eitingon's expression), for the latter's analysis leads him back to his own problems.

I will show by means of a single example, described in detail, how psychological comprehension of another person passes through contact with a fragment of our still unconscious ego, and that analysis of another leads secretly and indirectly to the unconscious consideration of our own inner problems, too. Nobody will expect that the road travelled should always be the same ; in each case it is individually differentiated. And my example is designed to show, too, how our approach to the hidden meaning of the other's inner life is partly governed by latent processes in our own ego.

Whilst analysing a woman patient, an idea occurred at a particular juncture which, though nowise unusual, may illustrate what I have to say, if we pursue it psychologically. The patient, whose condition, according to the dominant symptoms, can best be described as hysterical neurosis, suffered among other things from accesses of rage against her children, for which there was no adequate conscious ground. That the word " suffered " is here the right one is proved by the fact that in these outbursts of passion the woman beat and abused her children against her own better knowledge. It was striking that she had no feeling of guilt for these excesses, though she was convinced of their ill-effect. It was possible to understand this remarkable absence of any feeling of penitence and guilt, only if it were taken in conjunction with another feature. After one of these castigations, but often in place of a castigation she refrained from administering, she maltreated herself grossly ; for instance, she inflicted considerable injuries upon herself by striking her head with hard objects. She felt no sense of guilt, therefore, because she had imposed painful punishment upon herself through these self-inflicted injuries.

When, by a slow process of analysis, we succeeded in uncovering the hidden sources of her sudden accesses of rage and of the reactions to them, a sense of guilt really did appear. There were several striking special features : it was her little son that the patient chastised with such ungovernable passion, a child who had become difficult to manage, certainly not without fault on the mother's part. It soon became clear that the little boy's naughtiness specially roused his mother's anger when her husband had previously irritated her or hurt her feelings. It seemed as if she then worked off her rage upon the child. Sometimes the attacks were preceded by a strong sense of inferiority. There was a like reason for her outbursts of rage when the children had behaved badly in the presence of adults whose good opinion she valued greatly or whose criticism she feared. A second feature of these accesses of rage was that they increased in intensity as they proceeded. Once the woman had lost patience and struck a blow at the boy, that very act drove her to strike him again harder and harder. Sometimes it seemed as if she could hardly stop, once the chastisement had begun. Sometimes during these increasing accesses of rage the thought occurred to her : " But now I could stop ", or, " I can still stop ", and yet she was impelled to go on beating.

In accordance with our analytical experience, we shall associate this feature, too, with the absence of a conscious sense of guilt, indeed, we shall see just in it the expression of an unconscious sense of guilt. The accompanying feeling, which analysis had to supply by way of supplement, was : " Now I have done something wicked and mean, I have incurred guilt, and already deserve moral condemnation. Now that I am already lost, I had better commit a crime, ruin myself and my whole life by beating the child senselessly and making a cripple of him." I need hardly say that other instinctive impulses besides this unconscious sense of guilt drove her to repeat the chastisement. The term " orgasm of rage ", which she applied incidentally to her attacks, indicates the most impor-

tant element in these unconscious impulses, which I will not discuss here. The contrast between these excesses and her bearing towards her children on other occasions, which was often particularly patient and tender, was certainly worth noting.

When in the course of her analysis distinct feelings of conscious guilt took the place of her accesses of rage and self-inflicted injuries, the patient often brooded over the anxious question, what consequences her harsh chastisement would have for the inner development of her son. Another question arose, too : what would the boy think later of so cruel a mother ? Would he ever forgive her for what she had done ? Whilst I listened to her lamentations over the serious injury she had done to her boy's mind, a short sentence came into my head, something like this : " It is possible for someone to beat a person violently, and yet for it not to hurt at all." I was surprised at what I had said, for I had not consciously thought of it before, much less thought it over. Whence came these words ? I remembered at once that I had heard them somewhere. And soon I realized that it had been at a performance of Franz Molnar's play, *Liliom*.

I had seen the play eight or nine years previously and had hardly thought of it since. What was it that now made my thoughts revert to it, and why had I spoken those words ? It is clear that they applied to the question that was occupying my patient's mind. They sounded like comfort to her in her anxiety. But why did my thoughts recur just to that particular play and that sentence ? What subterranean path had my idea followed ?

My first glance into the workshop of the idea, if I may use that expression, strikes a chord of memory from that theatrical evening. I had not wanted to go to the theatre, and the first pictures in the suburban legend, *Liliom*, had not impressed me favourably. Certainly there were a few pretty and attractive scenes, which even had something of the charm of a folk-song at the end of the first act ; there were a few moments of

witty dialogue, and even a few that gave food for thought, but the predominating sense was one of dislike. The methods favoured by the dramatist were decidedly coarse, and the effects that he wanted to and did produce were rather cheap, both in comedy and tragedy. I liked the direct characterization of the persons, and the almost undisguised contrast between the scenes, as little as the obtrusiveness of the feelings displayed, which frequently had an element of falsity and sentimentality. It was not only a mediocre piece by a capable dramatist, written for a " gallery " which extended to the stalls ; it was —to put it crudely—simply trash, with a few pleasant features.

But this drama, which was really a bungling and artificial piece of work, took a remarkable and unforeseen turn towards the end, and there was a scene in which the emotional content was certainly not artificial, but the outcome of experience. After one had watched the pictures in this suburban piece pass before one's eyes, occasionally with amusement, often with annoyance, and more often with indifference, one lived through two minutes before the curtain fell in which one felt a deep emotion that could not be shaken off, without knowing whence it came, but divining that its echoes would long persist. Whenever the memory of *Liliom* occurred to me later—and that was seldom enough—whenever I heard or read the name, the reminiscence always came, not only of the somewhat dull evening at the theatre, but also of this impression, and with it the hint of a sense of constriction in the throat which I had felt on that occasion. At the time, too, I had asked myself why I felt the deep emotion, and had found no answer. Was it not unique, so strong an effect produced by a few sentences in an otherwise mediocre play ?

Let me recount the plot briefly : the chief character is Liliom, by trade a specially competent crier for tilting at the ring in the Budapest City Park. The owner of the booth, the middle-aged Mrs. Muskat, thinks highly of him, not only for his commercial ability. And the servant maids, too, hungry for love, who come to tilt at the ring on their days out, like

his rude vigour and his gaiety. One of them, Julie, though she has been put on her guard against him, cannot escape the charm of the rough, pugnacious, defiant child of nature. She remains with him. Liliom is hardly capable of expressing his deeper feelings; when he feels guilty he curses rudely and strikes hard.

As represented by his creator, Liliom is meant to hide a soft heart beneath a rough exterior. The faithful, gentle Julie is dismissed from her place on his account. The jealous Mrs. Muskat also finds herself obliged to dispense with his valuable services. And now Julie and Liliom live together without work. Poverty and care do not make him gentler. Failing in everything, he strikes Julie often and brutally. Only the tidings that she is expecting a child rouses him to exultation which, however, he carefully conceals as a matter of course. It also makes him an easier prey to the temptation of an accomplice to take part in an assault on a bank messenger. The crime fails. Liliom stabs himself as the police try to seize him. The dying man is brought to Julie. Even now he can betray nothing of the gentler feelings that were his motive; he has hardly time to say: "Hullo, my lass!" before the end.

And now comes the surprising turn to which I have referred. We accompany Liliom straight from the bier to Heaven, or the suicide department of the heavenly police court. There he is no more communicative, answers questions with, "That's none o' your business", and remains defiantly seated when the heavenly clerk of the court appears, a person of heavenly patience with a long, white beard; he gives information only reluctantly and rudely. He denies being sorry for anything and shows himself defiant and impervious to gentle persuasion. He is condemned to fourteen years' purification in purgatory and led away by the heavenly policemen, from whom he begs a cigarette in a whisper. After the period of purification he is to return to earth again in order to prove his moral progress by doing some good to his wife or child.

The last picture shows Julie, now grown grey-haired, living in a little house with her fifteen-year-old daughter. Liliom appears, and behind him two heavenly detectives. He is a beggar, and talks with his daughter incognito, partly about her father. He would like to show her one or two card tricks; then he pulls out a large red handkerchief, in which he has wrapped a star. He has stolen it for her in the sphere of supermundane purification. His little daughter will not accept the star, and shows the unknown tramp the door with great energy. He looks at her and strikes her a resounding blow on the hand in an outburst of rage. And now comes the moment when the spectator feels moved by a power that acts as strongly and incomprehensibly as music. The girl is amazed; the blow resounded, but she felt no pain. Whilst the two heavenly detectives escort the incorrigible Liliom out into the street amidst head-shakings, she asks her mother what it means. But her mother says—whilst the curtain slowly falls—as if remembering the blows that she herself has not infrequently received: "There are some blows that do not hurt. Yes, there are really blows that we do not feel."

The question arises, why the memory of these words, of which I had not thought for many years, emerged during this particular treatment. The superficial connection is clear: the anxiety of the mother, who had so often chastised her boy, presents the essential point of contact. When we draw the parallel between the patient and the dramatic character, we have only designated the most superficial plane, the crudest and most tangible of the mental connecting links. Here, therefore, we receive not so much explanations of the psychological process as of the outward circumstances. We are less concerned with demonstrating the associative data in the thought, which are clearly visible, than the unconscious effort whence it springs, and whose outcome it is. To use a simile: we can, indeed, discern the shaft leading down into the depths, and the short passage at the entrance that is half dark. But what interests us particularly is the depths where the metal

is won from the ore, and the subterranean passages by which it is raised to the light of day.

Perhaps we shall have most hope of discovering the unconscious origin of my idea, if we throw the light of analysis upon the latent content of the suburban legend and trace the plot to its unconscious core. Let us, therefore, suppose that a psycho-analyst who is also interested in the problem of poetic creation, has been present at a performance of the drama and afterwards asks himself what applied psychology has to contribute to the comprehension of the hero or of the inner processes of poetic creation.

He will recognize the hero's Œdipus complex clearly : both Mrs. Muskat, who enables Liliom to earn, and Julie, who bears him a child, represent the mother. Regarded from this point of view, the robbery and assault of the bank messenger represent a displacement surrogate of patricide. Nor shall we overlook the effects of the castration complex. It will be easy to recognize the nature of his suicide as a punishment and atonement for the attempted murder. Further, the police officers and constables, both on earth and in the higher regions, will present themselves to the interpreting analyst as symbols of the father. Liliom's behaviour in Heaven is seen to be a continuation of his revolutionary attitude directed against his father. No doubt the analyst will be obliged to note the negative Œdipus complex, the original fantasies, and other effects of infantile development. He will not omit to point out that the poet's imagination is fed from these subterranean sources. I should choose to call such a way of looking at the play, the essence of which is the reference to certain mental constellations of childhood, an analytical explanation on the plane of the complex.

Another spectator of the play, with the psycho-analytical outlook—or the same one on a different occasion—will perhaps turn his attention rather to the particular fateful instincts which determine Liliom's life and character. It is not out of the question that he might designate Liliom as a man with an

instinctively sadistic disposition, since it seems to afford him sexual pleasure to beat the woman he loves and treat her brutally. The other, complementary and antagonistic instinct appears more clearly in the course of the plot, when the hero fails in everything, and he refuses or spoils all his chances. So too the turning of his sadistic impulse against himself, the destructive tendency which affords him a gloomy pleasure even in his own ruin. We might feel tempted to designate Liliom as a case of moral insanity. His unconscious sense of guilt, enhanced perhaps in reaction, drives him into crime and makes him go from one act of brutality to another. Various instincts, alternating in strength, find expression in Liliom and break forth. No one of his aims has gained the upper hand in his inner life ; he has not succeeded in effecting that synthesis in the ego which appears to be the prerequisite of character formation. It is needless to say that instinctive impulses, hidden even from the poet, have found plastic expression, but it usually is said. The manner here indicated of regarding the piece must be designated as a psychological attempt made from the standpoint of instinct.

To-day it is no longer possible to dispute the validity and value of these analytical explanations. Their psychological significance is enhanced when they penetrate deeper into the special features of the character and destiny presented, and when they trace carefully the development of the *libido*, as conjectured from scanty hints. For instance, the fact that Liliom was an illegitimate child, and grew up without the authority of a father, will not lack significance to the observing analyst. It may have contributed something to the formation of Liliom's instinct-ridden character, and to the genesis of his attitude towards women.

I will now speak of a different manner of regarding the piece as a psychologist of the unconscious. It does not, like those just sketched, start from conscious inferences and definite psychological assumptions, but from the unconscious assimilation of single impressions received by the spectator. I have

already said that the last scene in the drama occupied my thoughts for some time after the performance. At that time I could not understand why it had moved me so deeply. Nor did my knowledge of analysis help me beyond pointing to a specially marked psychical reaction to a representation of irascible and violent impulses. And yet the memory trace of this impression cannot have been inactive in the intervening years. After I had spoken the words, " There are some blows that do not hurt," to my own astonishment during the treatment, single ideas arose in my mind which told me, when I pursued them, what the scene meant unconsciously and what its significance to me was.

These ideas, and the thoughts that succeeded them, did not come at once ; they were isolated, divided from one another by intervals of many hours and days, and I was not consciously giving special thought to the play. At first the uninvited guests seemed to be nothing but a continuation or confirmation of the psychological explanation or interpretation attained through the other ways of regarding the matter, from the standpoint of the complex or of instinct. But these explanations certainly did not offer any psychological information about the one surprising thing in the drama, the sudden passage to the heavenly scene and then back again to earth. Nor did they throw any light upon the last scene, the remarkable conclusion, and its psychical effect.

And here there was a condensation of impressions dating from the performance, that had lain passive within me for many years, together with those springing from the psychological re-examination of what I remembered, and in consequence the formation of definite trains of thought. Liliom's trade, that of a crier for tilting at the ring, pointed to the sphere of childish interests, and his uncontrolled character, his wild unruliness, his rebellious and defiant attitude, his failure to adapt himself to his social surroundings to the psychical conditions of his instinct-ridden childhood. The scenes in heaven, in association with his suicide, suddenly appeared to me as a

typical childish fantasy, poetically recast. All at once an image of the fantasy that boys sometimes have when they feel themselves neglected or unjustly or unlovingly treated, emerged, detaching itself from vague and ambiguous impressions; the fantasy that appears after love has been refused them, or punishment administered that they feel to be unjust, in the years preceding puberty. The boy pictures to himself that he will commit suicide; then his mother or father would reproach themselves bitterly; then they would see that in him they had lost a good child, and how unjustly they had condemned his childish naughtiness.

So that would be the unconscious core of the poet's fantasy, the latent possibility evinced as reality in the dramatic form. But that would indicate how the passage from earth to Heaven came about in the fantasy. Of course the Heaven of a child's imagination must appear as a continuation of his earthly surroundings. The Last Judgment is nothing but a slight variant of the police cell, so much feared by the naughty boy. In a typical childish fantasy the lust for vengeance upon the parents is mingled with vain and self-assertive images, bitter feelings of disappointment with motions of love towards the parents from whom came the denial.

Regarded from this point of view, the whole drama appears in a new light. Does Liliom still appear to us as an adult with an instinct-ridden character, as a case bordering on moral insanity, as the crier for tilting at the ring in the Budapest City Park? Does he not now rather appear to us as a boy who loves to tilt at the ring and dreams how splendidly he would perform the part of the crier? And here we find a surviving echo of childish ideas: the crier is envied partly because he can tilt at the ring as much as he likes, without paying. His trade combines the agreeable with the useful. (As a feminine counterpart let us take the exclamation of a girl during the period of puberty: "I should like some day to have a dentist for my husband and a confectioner as friend of the family.")

It is not, then, a criminal who is acting here, but a naughty boy who loves pleasure, yet who may, indeed, become a criminal under certain psychological conditions, for instance, very harsh or too indulgent treatment. Not an adult in insurrection against compulsion and law, but a child who does not see why he should go without pleasure and is indignant at the incomprehensible reproaches and punishments of his parents and their representatives. The boy, who is certainly a social misfit and does not know how to control his impulses, feels himself unjustly condemned and punished. Perhaps he really has boyish fantasies of a robbery to procure money. Perhaps, also, dimly lustful ideas of forbidden meetings with a servant maid, a surrogate for his mother. This liking for the kitchen employees, too, felt by the precocious boy, is accompanied by an unconscious feeling of guilt. So, too, anxiety to procure the precious money that a boy needs in order to tilt at the ring and for his other pleasures is sure to appear in his childish fantasies.

The essential point in the assumption here outlined is that the poet, without having the faintest idea of it, unconsciously depicted Liliom, not as an adult, but as a child, a defiant boy. Regarded from the point of view of this secret, unsuspected assumption, very much is psychologically illuminated as if by a flash of lightning. A vagabond and a ruthlessly egoistical fellow like Liliom is certainly well adapted to represent a bad boy dressed up as an adult. The suburban dwellers are nearer to children in their instinctive and mental life than the dwellers in more aristocratic quarters. In the pictures of this play childish impressions of the City Park have found a belated and vivid expression. The adult Liliom is, so to speak, the enlarged snapshot of a Budapest street Arab, who is bad, but not wicked, of a boy who is at once wild and kindly, whose heart is half filled with childish games, half with God. It is this element of real experience, perceptible in spite of the routine of the royalty-grabber, that grips the audience and gives the final scene on earth with the incorrigible and defiant

ne'er-do-weel something heavenly that is lacking in the scenes in the Other World.

The scene of the suicide and those in Heaven fit on to the whole as the prolongation of a boy's fantasy, a boy who later became an adult and a poet, and who never knew that in his comedies and tragedies he was repeating the play of childhood, and that in creating dramatic characters he was reverting to the images of his boyhood.

It would be an error to say of the author that he was dreaming himself back into childhood. He gave actual shape to the vision of an adult, and yet did not know that just in doing so he was dreaming himself back as a child. It is only apparently in contradiction to the above assumption that, as we are reminded, Molnar has written an obviously autobiographical book for boys : *The Lads of Paul Street.* The unconscious character of childish impressions, which played a part in its production, is more actively displayed in the fairy-tale world of his dramas, *The Fairy-story of the Wolf* and *The Devil,* than here. And there is something child-like in the whole fantasy of Liliom's reception in Heaven and his return to earth, with its half-grotesque, half-popular ideas. It has its origin in the region where the fairy-tales spring up which continue so long to influence the thinking of children.

In these fantasies Liliom satisfies his childish craving for vengeance, shows his grief for the denial of love, asserts his personality in defiance and waywardness, and yet expresses his penitence and the boyish love for his mother which he keeps shyly concealed, the mother who has punished him. So much, and so much that is contradictory, finds a place in the inner life of this boy, and not only of this one. The robbery and assault, which strikes us as so outrageous in an adult, becomes in this light merely the realization of a childish fantasy, and the beating of the woman he loves only the wildness and defiance of a naughty and badly brought up boy, who has come to be bad, and will grow worse if he is forced to feel guilty.

When he wants to steal a star from the sky, the idea is not

nearly so strange in a boy as in an adult. (But is it so strange in an adult? We are told of poets—when they are in love, it is true; and that is a relapse into childishness—that they would like to fetch the stars from Heaven for the beloved. Mephisto points out the childishness of such desires, which know nothing of the limitations of reality:

> To please his sweetheart such a lovesick loon
> Blows bubbles in the air
> Of all the stars and sun and moon. (Goethe's *Faust.*)

The result we have reached is not satisfying. The deep emotion stirred by the last scene is still unexplained psychologically. It would be in keeping with the foregoing to imagine the boy continuing his fantasy and picturing himself becoming a father some day and understanding and treating his own boy much better, showing him card tricks and giving him something beautiful. That might be a description of the continuation in another direction of the fantasy of suicide and Liliom's journey to Heaven and back to earth. Then the return to earth would be associated with a temporal transformation: the little boy has grown to a man and is now the father of a daughter. Such a supposition is not unreasonable, if we compare it with other childish fantasies, but it has no great inner probability.

At this point a fresh analytical idea threw light on the problem, an idea again referring to the scene in question. There was something in it like a picture-puzzle, that provoked one to discover what was hidden. In this confrontation of the three characters—Liliom returned to earth, the grey-haired Julie, and her fifteen-year-old daughter—there was something that gave my analytical curiosity no rest, and that yet I could not solve. It was certainly not striking that Liliom beat both his beloved and his daughter. Psychologically it is not unlikely that the same reactions appeared in both cases. This instinctive reaction can well be explained in keeping with our interpretation: no doubt the wild boy had sometimes struck

a little girl who was not nice to him and would not play with him at once.

Slowly the whole picture is transformed. We need not abandon the assumption that, without knowing it or unconsciously, the author has portrayed a bad and yet kind-hearted boy in Liliom. Nor need we give up the hypothesis that the essence of the scenes in Heaven is a late remoulding of a typical boyish fantasy. We may assume that in the final scenes another, second plane appears, superimposed upon the first and still allowing a glimpse of that first beneath. The first plane has not vanished; it has only receded in these final pictures, in order to make way for other images.

But we can understand the later plane of the fantasy and its content only when it is taken as the effect of a process of reversal; if we realize that in it the same psychical data are applied in another way. That is to say, our analytical explanation, according to which the character of Liliom is, so to speak, a bad boy grown up, who, unjustly punished and chastised, avenges himself in a suicide fantasy, retains its psychological justification. We may grasp the later, unconscious application of the same fundamental psychological data, if we invert the situation (Liliom and his daughter), so to speak. It is then no longer the father, returned from the Beyond, and his fifteen-year-old daughter who confront one another, but the mother, who has died, and her son of about fifteen. We have learnt to understand the action of such a mechanism of inversion psychologically in the interpretation of dreams and myths.

On one plane a boyish fantasy was woven; the offended boy means to commit suicide, he will behave defiantly in Heaven, as he did on earth. Returning, he will bring his mother what is loveliest for a present. But side by side with this, or rather above it, quite a different series of images pass by, a fantasy tending in the opposite direction. This fantasy may even start from a real situation: his mother is dead. And now the little boy dreams that his mother returns to him and brings him a present from Heaven.

At this point there is a break in the structure of the fantasy. It is caused by the memory arising of his former unruly and naughty behaviour. Perhaps the day-dreamer, starting from that memory, imagines himself being just as naughty and defiant again. His mother would strike him hard on the hand again, as she did in her lifetime, would punish him by a blow, she who was yet ready to fetch the stars from the sky for him. But here bitter knowledge dawns upon the little boy, coming late, too late : those blows did not make any difference to his mother's tenderness. They did not mean that she had withdrawn her love ; they were blows that did not hurt. Here, too, an experience recalled from childhood finds expression : the child, who has so often felt his chastisement as a sign of the irrevocable loss of love, nevertheless understands unconsciously that it was not hatred that struck him, that the punishment did not break the bond between him and his mother, nay, that it never would be able to loosen it.

Now I think that we are in a position to survey the situation in which the author's fantasy originated, and to reconstruct the fantasy in its original form. It consists of two main elements. The first : a naughty little boy, often punished for his mischief and misbehaviour, dreams that he becomes the crier for tilting at the ring, and that he is punished for fresh misdeeds which, accordingly, are presented as the crimes and brutalities of a man. Then he will commit suicide ; even the heavenly police and the celestial children's court will not impress him. He will be sent in vain to the reformatory, generally known as Purgatory. And here the Promethean defiance of a Budapest street Arab rises in revolt against the educational powers.

And now the fantasy, carried thus far, takes a decided turn, signalized by definite changes both in time and place. In the last picture we have a different scene again ; it is staged upon earth once more, whither Liliom has returned, but little purified in spite of all the effort expended on him. In time the action is thought of as taking place sixteen years later. Apparently

the plot is continued in a straight line ; in reality in a reverse direction. That inversion has already been hinted at in the change of scene from earth to Heaven. According to our interpretation of the later plane, there would be here a secret indication that it was not Liliom, but his mother, who died and went to Heaven.

As in fairy-tales and folk-songs, it would then be the mother of whom it is assumed that she can return to earth to watch over her children and render them services in secret. Expressed in the form of a wish or fantasy : " If only Mother would return from Heaven ! If she came back now and beat me for my naughtiness, again, it would not hurt at all ; it would be like a caress. For after all, she loved me." Indeed, the wish to have his mother back again may perhaps be represented here by the wish : if only she would beat me again ! It is at once the expression of comprehension after the event and a plea for forgiveness. Thus the turn in the drama corresponds to an affective inversion, an emotion turned to the rightabout and intensified in reaction. The boy, hitherto so wild and defiant, bows his head in sorrow and yearning as he remembers his mother, with whom he was often angry because she punished him.

That other plane, which I have here raised from its latent condition, undoubtedly permeates the whole plot ; the boy suffers from his mother's harsh punishments, and grows up amidst privations as the illegitimate son of a maid servant. In the manifest action, on the contrary, Julie is ill-treated by Liliom.

Here, then, must be the hidden cause of the emotion stirred by this final scene ; and further, in our assurance of the bond between mother and child, which remains indissoluble in spite of the pain they are bound to give one another.

Thus not only the characters, but also the plot, appear to be the outcome of a far-reaching unconscious effort at condensation. It was assisted by the possibility of far-reaching identification suggested by the relation of mother and son.

In this, perhaps the serenest of human relations, there is comprehension which we may almost call telepathic, enabling each to grasp the hidden meaning of the mental processes in the other immediately, in spite of all conscious misunderstandings. Thus the mother can comprehend unconsciously that even in her son's naughtiness there lies concealed a secret courting of her love. She lets the little boy know unconsciously that even in her denial of love, resistance to the mother's own claim to love is at work, that even her angry scolding and punishment does not exclude her tenderness towards her son, but embraces it.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RECURRENT REFLECTION

ONE of the questions under consideration, that of the origin of the deep emotion felt in the last scene of Molnar's play, now seems almost solved. The solution is, indeed, general. It only tells us that it is the latent affective content of the scene, that content which we have been able to reconstruct, that roused such strong feelings. Hitherto our inquiry has only produced the explanation of a common psychical event, in which the individual participates. It does not answer other questions, such as the following, for instance : why the reminiscence of the scene thrusts itself upon me at this juncture, and what its significance was to me. We shall not be satisfied with the banal statement that the idea just fitted the question asked by my patient, represented a reaction to her lamentations, and that its analytical meaning was that of reassurance. It is not only the superficial character of the statement that prevents us. A merely external conception like that is also refuted by our conviction that every detail of our mental processes is determined throughout.

How did the idea come to occur ? We will assume that the patient's words, what she said and what she left unsaid, acted upon me as a stimulus. She stirred ancient emotions that lay hidden in me. And now a few fleeting images presented themselves to my inner perception. All sorts of things emerged from the darkness, until the image of my son Artur thrust itself into the centre of the picture, clearer than the rest. It was the events of recent weeks that had occupied my thoughts vividly and now appeared among my associations.

Some little time before the analytical treatment in question, Artur had gone to a distant country to try his chances for a profession. In recent years he had been obliged to change his school and his course of study several times because of our repeated moves. After we left Berlin, he had passed matriculation in Vienna, and then came at once to our new home in Holland. There he had begun to study medicine, which, however, soon proved impracticable.

In these latter years I had been very much dissatisfied with him. He seemed to me to take life too easily and to neglect his studies for his pleasures and social engagements. I was constantly obliged to remind him of our reduced circumstances, and of the serious and uncertain character of these disturbed times. As an only, and certainly a spoiled, child, he displayed a careless and thoughtless attitude and, to my mind, far too little energy, and worked too little and too negligently. And it seemed to me that he did not take my admonitions, to which he listened in silence, seriously enough. But on his long journey in the distant country, to my great and joyful surprise, he showed an unusual degree of energy and prudence, acted with wisdom and independence, and evinced a maturity of judgment and action with which I should not have credited him. And to us, his parents, he showed so much consideration and tenderness that in my thoughts I often begged his forgiveness for having done him injustice. Decidedly I had underestimated his character and I, a psychologist by profession and, as I believed, by vocation, had judged only the external aspect of his conduct.

In the misunderstandings that had occurred previously, and which seem unavoidable in the relation between father and son, a fear had arisen in my mind, faint at first, then more and more distinct, which clothed itself more or less in the thought that I should die and my son, who had hitherto shown himself so lacking in energy and practical ability, would not be equal to the struggle for existence when left alone. Afterwards a change took place in this train of thought, in which the affective

foundation is so clearly displayed. Artur would not work seriously or make any effort so long as I lived. Not till I was dead would he begin to take life seriously, and that might be too late for him. To an analyst who looks beneath the surface it will not be surprising that this train of thought sometimes ended in a mood of longing for death.

Here it was no far step to recur to my own youth. True, I had never had such care-free days as my son, but I, too, had been fairly negligent at school and—except for one or two subjects that interested me—had shown only just enough zeal to satisfy the requirements of my teachers. My father, too, had often evinced anxiety for my future. After his death, which occurred only a few days before I sat for matriculation, I had plunged into my studies with remarkable zeal. In my early years at the university I worked as if I had not only to make up for lost time but also to achieve something extraordinary for my age. Without my knowing it, this compulsion to work which dominated not only my days but also many of my nights was a severe penitence, which I imposed upon myself, for the anxiety that I had given my father by my carelessness—and doubtless not only by it. Was it not an unconscious fear of a requital that emerged behind the anxiety lest my own son might not take his work seriously till after my death?

Is it here that we must seek the deeper reason for the strong effect produced by the final scene in *Liliom*? Is it not that unconsciously I feared a punishment for the anxiety I had caused my father, and that in the stage picture I was shown that I had been forgiven? Certainly penitence and love appear in the scene and prove victorious against the impulses of enmity and violence. Their reactive nature is demonstrated in the fact that on the stage the blow is felt as a caress, and has become the expression of a mixed impulse.

Now that my son had become energetic and competent, he had not only allayed my fears for his success in life, but also undermined the secret apprehension lest I must die in order

to make way for him. I must beg his pardon, too, for my lack of confidence in him and my underestimation of his character. But he, I hope, will not resent my many admonitions and the largely undeserved reproaches ; for he knows that I love him in spite of all. As in the figure of Liliom, so, too, in these thoughts we detect a high grade of psychical condensation : now that I myself feel the anxieties of a father and have a sense of growing rapidly old, I begin to understand my own father better, his anxiety on my behalf, his distress at my laziness, his reproaches which often seemed to me superfluous or unjust at the time.

A few days after these reflections or reminiscences, I was forced to realize that the trains of thought here indicated were still secretly occupying my mind and still stirring strong emotions in me, that I had by no means done with them inwardly. The new impression which I then received did not at first seem to have any connection with the earlier ones, it seemed to be an isolated and recent fragment of affective experience. It was only later that I discerned how there were many threads connecting this new experience with the hidden experience of the past. In an absent mood I had opened an English anthology and run through its pages. In doing so I came upon a poem entitled *The Toys* by Coventry Patmore, a writer of whom I knew nothing. This is what he describes : the poet's little son had disobeyed his father again and again, and had received a sharp slap by way of punishment. He was sent to bed " with hard words and unkissed ". Later the father went to him, fearing lest grief should prevent the little boy from going to sleep. But he was sound asleep, his eyelashes still wet with tears. On the little table beside his bed he had carefully arranged a stone with red veins, a piece of glass, six or seven marbles, and two French copper coins, to comfort him in his unhappiness. But the poet prayed penitently in the night : one day, when we fight the last fight, may God reflect that our human joys are like these childish toys. He will know how little we understand his commandments.

May God then put aside his anger like a father and say: "I will be sorry for their childishness."

Again in reading this poem I felt a faint shudder of emotion, as if something were under discussion that concerned me more personally than other products of the poetic art. It was much later that the application to myself became clearer to me, this time in the form of a reminiscence dating many years back. Once when Artur was a little boy and could not yet swim well, he had gone far out on to a lake in a rowing-boat in defiance of my repeated prohibition. When we heard of it we passed many hours in agonized waiting. When he returned home I, in my agitation, struck him hard, which must have shamed him all the more because there were acquaintances of ours on the lakeside. Thus the emotion revived by reading the poem was caused by penitence and sorrow for my uncontrolled outbreak on that occasion. This, then, is the psychical plane to which the emotional effect of the scene with the blow in *Liliom* applies—the mortifying reminiscence of the blow I struck, my sense of guilt for it, and my hope that my little son would not always feel resentment against me for my maltreatment. He must have felt unconsciously how great a part my anxiety on his behalf had in causing the regrettable excess.

The inner identity of my fear that I should die soon and of the thought of death expressed by the poet of *The Toys* is plain; likewise its unconscious relation to the previous chastisement of the child. The fear may very well have appealed to the death-wishes of the castigated son, anticipated, but secret and not consciously recognized. It is clear enough that here, as in the latent content of *Liliom*, the fear of retaliation betrays itself. Here, too, there is a hint of punishment, of judgment in the Beyond, as in the father's anticipatory fantasy in *The Toys* and, still traceable, in my own fear of death. The special emotional effect may be explained as the consequence of a sudden reassurance or allaying of an ancient fear persisting in the dark. In *Liliom*, too, the agitation stirred by the last scene presents itself as a psychical reaction to some such

secret fear relating to an expected punishment for a sadistic and cruel satisfaction of instinct. The reassurance contained in the final words tells us : the subject of your chastisement will renounce all vengeance and forgive ; he will feel the impulse of love even in the pain you caused him.

In all three products of fantasy—in the play, the poem, and my train of thought—parents and children appear side by side and confronting one another. Our emotion corresponds to the outbreak of loving impulse and a sense of guilt which, strengthened by reaction, have overcome the tendency to hatred and asserted themselves triumphantly over all the pain that two generations are doomed to cause one another.

Both the outcome and the success of our inquiry now equally urge a return to the examination of the psychical situation in which my thought of *Liliom* arose. What happened ? The patient had expressed her anxiety about the future development of her child, had lamented that her boy would one day harbour a grudge against her for her castigation, and told me of her doubts of how he would regard her in the future. Her lamentations and self-accusation revived in me memories and thoughts no longer conscious of a similar kind. In a kind of automatic and fragmentary self-analysis, these thoughts revealed themselves as the expression of emotions of penitence and fear because of my hostile and unjust treatment of my own son, emotions now hidden but continuing active over a long period. We see clearly the strictly determined character of the train of thought, if we accept the very likely assumption that for a definite part of the way it proceeds underground or unconsciously.

Less clear is that part of the mental process that led to my discovery of the psychological significance of my own experience. Nor is there much light in the gallery along whose devious passages the sentence about the blows that do not hurt was brought to the surface of the mind. The process of induction of the emotion here met with like emotions of my own, occurring as a reaction to certain instinctive experiences.

They had never been fully mastered and carried on a subterranean existence, betrayed by the emotional intensification of certain impressions—remember the final scene in *Liliom*. The taking of another person into the ego, which I have explained to be the primary form of comprehension, led to my grasping psychologically the unconscious processes in the other mind. For my reaction shows that I understood the nature of my patient's fears very well unconsciously, and conjectured what she herself knew unconsciously.

At a first glance we cannot but be surprised at the way here taken to reach comprehension of the unconscious processes in another. It is a roundabout way through the ego and its latent experiences, actual and potential. As a rule our own experience which helps us to conjecture that of the other person remains hidden. Sometimes it becomes capable of conscious realization at a later period, seemingly without any connection with what the other person has recounted. The most important part of our own experience is, indeed, veiled from our inner perception, and is not discovered till much later, if at all. And here the analysis of another offers an opportunity, hardly ever appreciated, of deepening our psychological comprehension of our own ego. Whilst consciously we only see the psychological subject, unconsciously we see also our own self as a psychological subject within the former. In an earlier passage I equated the comprehension of another with a process in which the most important element is a transformation of the ego, the becoming another. We have devoured our subject—here I must say metaphorically, although there was a time when it was more than a metaphor—and so have wholly become the subject. We ourselves are no longer there; nothing of our ego is there. And it is just through such a mislaying of our ego that we may succeed in penetrating to a deeper comprehension of our own personality. It is not infrequently just after careful and attentive observation of our psychological subject that a moment comes in which we no longer seek the solution of the enigma in the other, but

find it in our own ego. And thus the analysis of another may lead, in an indirect sense that is difficult to describe, to enlarging and deepening our knowledge of self in a way beyond the power of our own analysis.

I must emphasize the fact that this road to the comprehension of the happenings in the depths of our own being has not yet been appreciated in its importance to psychology, not even in the literature of psycho-analysis, so far as I can see. Whereas otherwise we learn something of these hidden processes in our own ego by being ourselves the subject of psycho-analysis, being analysed, that is, here all conscious attention is devoted to the subject, but by taking it into ourselves we learn something indirectly too of what is going on or has gone on in ourselves. In the present case it has been clear how my own latent experience illuminated the other person's: but also how my own became conscious with the help of the other's. In the case here described there was a *psychological point of contact, my own unconscious was touched*, as so often happens at a particular stage in analysis, and this exercised a decisive influence in engendering insight into the unconscious of both persons.

The reminiscence of the performance of *Liliom*, or rather the unconscious memory trace of it, had presumably already helped me to comprehend the patient's mental processes. She, like Liliom, suffered from paroxysms of fury; sexual tension, her unconscious sense of guilt, and her deep dissatisfaction with herself, made her more and more enraged with the very people towards whom she should have felt herself guilty.[1] When I quoted those words from the last scene of *Liliom*, I was not consciously thinking of the plot of the play, and assuredly still less of its unconscious core, capable of being grasped by psycho-analysis. But it was just that latent meaning of the scene that constituted the consolation which the patient

[1] A psychical mechanism that was first described in my *Geständniszwang und Strafbedürfnis* (*Compulsion to Confess and Craving for Punishment*), 1926.

expected from me : the blows received by the little boy from his mother had not hurt him so much or injured him so much as she feared, for he understood her very well unconsciously.

Let it be noted that in the manifest plot of the drama, in contrast to our interpretation, it is not a little boy that is beaten by his mother, but a little girl by her father. The utterance of those words shows that the goal was attained sooner than it was consciously recognized, nay, sooner than it was comprehended as a goal. It was not an idea, occurring like any other, but rather the utterance, the signal, of something taking place in the ego, one of those processes in the ego of which as yet it knows nothing. A train of experience was proclaiming itself from which I had not yet escaped. (Not escaped, did I say ? I had not yet reached it. It was the patient's anxieties that first led me by an indirect road back to these concealed queries, doubts, and fears.)

Not till I had cited the sentence about the blows that did not hurt did I realize that it might comfort the patient, and it was still later that I comprehended that I had tried to comfort myself with it. But the reassurance, the nature of which I did not at first recognize, had itself come to me—and even then I did not consciously understand it as such—from another person who must have experienced the same emotions, arising from like sources, and had mastered them by giving them poetic form. (And the fact that his poetic labours were only partially successful indicates that they were not completely mastered.) The psychological road pursued may, therefore, be mapped as follows : I understood the patient's experience with the help of my own, which had always remained unconscious or had lapsed into unconsciousness ; this experience of mine reached consciousness by a roundabout way through a literary work, of which I was unconsciously reminded by the patient's emotion ; the author had tried to master his experience inwardly by giving it literary form. At this point we will only touch upon the question which arises, of the degree and quality of psychical energy necessary in order to

master an unconscious experience, by indicating that the strong effect of the final scene in the performance of *Liliom* is the counterpart of an unsuccessful effort to master it. The fresh attempt, inaugurated by the patient's lamentations and troubles, and agitating the former region of experience anew, led to a better result. In the first instance the outward occasion for the revival of unconscious conflicts had been a human destiny presented in dramatic form, in the second in real life.

If we examine the method here described, it will be seen that " the reciprocal illumination of unconscious processes " is not inapt as a designation. Whilst I was trying to fathom the quality of my patient's mental reactions, an experience of my own was illuminated and entered consciousness, and the psychological comprehension that came so late and so tardily helped me in turn to comprehend much in my patient that had hitherto been only dimly conjectured. If we consider the part played by the effect of the final scene in *Liliom*, we shall see the kind of way by which the reciprocal illumination of unconscious processes was attained.

I propose to use an expression of Goethe's for this psychological process, and to call it " *recurrent reflection* ". The poet speaks on several occasions of this term, which he borrowed from entoptics. In one essay he tells us to reflect that recurrent reflections " not only keep the past alive, but even raise it to a higher existence ", and reminds us of the entoptic phenomena " which likewise do not pale as they pass from mirror to mirror, but are actually kindled by it ". In a letter about obscure passages in *Faust* (to Iken, September 23rd, 1827) he observes : " Since we have many experiences that cannot be plainly expressed and communicated, I have long adopted the method of revealing the secret meaning to attentive readers by images that confront one another and are, so to speak, reflected in one another." I believe that the same procedure that was here adopted for literary purposes can, *mutatis mutandis*, be used on occasion in scientific psychological work, in order to " reveal

the secret meaning ". It will prove specially advantageous when the " attentive " observer, one who is growing attentive, is himself the psychologist in process of learning. Psychology, too, must pay regard to entoptic phenomena, like physics.

The ego can never be known except indirectly, for it can only become an object when it is at a certain distance. There are doubtless many ways by which a hidden part of the ego can be comprehended. We can regard the ego as an object by identifying ourselves with an outside psychological observer, taking his place, so to speak. But we can also regard the external object as a piece of the ego, and by that indirect means reach a partial comprehension of our own inner life. Lastly, we can catch special glimpses of self when, for instance, some event has made the ego a riddle to itself clamouring for solution. Mental phenomena that were little noticed formerly, like dreams, a symptomatic action, curious behaviour in certain situations, or an obsession may cause the ego to become a riddle to itself. Sometimes an action of which we had not formerly believed ourselves capable, one by which we surprise ourselves, may have a like effect. As an example from literature I may cite the Marquise de O. as depicted by Kleist. When the Marquise is cast off by her father and resolves to depart with her children, her own vision of herself is changed : " The glorious effort had made her acquainted with herself, and she suddenly rose from the depths into which destiny had cast her, lifted, it seemed, by her own strength." Anyone who has watched human destinies through the eyes of a psychoanalyst knows how painful experiences sometimes lead to such a penetrating knowledge of our own special characteristics, and how often people are " made acquainted with themselves " by a " glorious effort ". Such acquaintance may even, on exceptional occasions, be a pleasant surprise in situations of that kind.

The deeper psychological meaning of what we experience is always beyond our reach ; access is always forbidden to the more intimate regions of the ego. What others are and experi-

ence may often appear indistinct to us, and often incomprehensible, like a map on which there are wide unexplored tracts side by side with accurately marked areas. The ego is the Dark Continent. Assuredly we psychologists know very little of the inner life of others, but of our own we know much less. All efforts to comprehend others originates in inner perception, and starts from the desire of the ego to be better understood. Every psychological inquiry might bear the motto : *Tua res agitur.* In that sense all psychology is a scientific, roundabout way to the deeper comprehension of the ego.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS IN THE EGO

THERE results an antinomic situation: the deepest and most vital region of the ego is inaccessible to its own contemplative and inquiring consciousness. In order to comprehend that psychologically, it needs to be reflected in another. Now we should expect that the Thou, the other, would be directly comprehensible psychologically. But even that seems to be valid only with reference to the uppermost and conscious planes of the mind; the unconscious planes are not grasped directly. The medium is the ego, which is unconsciously introjected into the other. In order to understand the other we need, not to feel our way into his mind, but to feel him unconsciously in the ego. We can attain to psychological comprehension of another's unconscious, only if it is seized upon by our own, at least for a moment, just as if it were a part of ourselves—it is a part of ourselves.

There remain plenty of objections. I will put forward the most important. If the unconscious of another can be grasped only through the medium of the ego, is there not imminent danger that we shall recognize only the ego in the other, see in the other only what arises in the ego? The extreme case of this heuristic danger would be that the others could only be grasped after the image of the ego, that essential aspects of their unconscious processes would not be discerned, or—worse—would be falsely discerned. We must at once admit the possibility of this danger. Does the recognition of its existence imply at the same time that the method of comprehending unconscious processes here indicated is false? I think not. There are sufficient means of guarding against the

danger ; first and foremost, *the careful observation of the subject, free from presuppositions.* If we do not want to abandon the attempt to comprehend the unconscious processes in others, we must follow this road. There is no other. Alike the scientific psychologist and the layman, the trained observer and the man in the street who only trusts to his " intuition ", are obliged, if they want to discover unknown psychical relations, to pass through this stage of taking the subject into their ego.

The manner in which the ego participates in this process of cognition is usually misunderstood. But the fact of participation has always been recognized. And here it is a matter of no importance whether it is described as empathy by scientists, or by poets as an act of comparison (" Wilt thou understand another, Look in thine own heart "), or is grasped by the people in yet vaguer terms. There is general agreement that without such introduction of self-observation there can be no knowledge of other minds. Whence should the knowledge come, indeed, if it had no link with our psychological experience in the ego ?

If, then, this road is the only accessible one, scientific psychologists will need certain precautions and guarantees in following it, in order to avoid the danger of a generalization of knowledge acquired through endopsychic perception, in order not to distort the truth by an unjustifiable intervention of their own emotions. The science of analysis professes to be able to offer a certain guarantee that the mirror in which the processes in the other mind are reflected is not dimmed. It requires the analyst to be himself analysed, so that his psychological comprehension may not be hindered or distorted by his own repressions. In addition it calls for a strict examination of his own impressions and his own psychological judgment of the data.

A further doubt may arise concerning the way in which the ego participates. I have said that the psychical process is characterized by the other person's unconscious impulse com-

municating itself to the analyst. Our first scruple will relate to the intensity and duration of this induced impulse. Plainly it cannot be compared in this respect with the corresponding impulse in the patient, otherwise the result would be a sharing of experience, but no comprehension of what goes on in the other mind. In describing the psychical process, I said that the same unconscious impulses would be aroused in embryo. That means that they are roused only at the initial stage, and then make way for endeavours of another kind. To use a comparison, it is as if some external impression stirred the reminiscence of a well-known melody in us ; say, for instance, that the opening bars were played on the piano. For a person with a musical memory it is not necessary for the melody to be played all through for him to recognize it. After only a few bars the reminiscence of the whole melody, or at least of its essence, will occur spontaneously to the listener. In like manner the unconscious memory trace of the induced emotion is stirred experimentally, so to speak, in the analyst. To retain our comparison : if somebody else plays those bars of a melody familiar to me, there is no need for me to recall consciously when and on what occasion I heard it. Nor is it necessary for me to become conscious whether I liked it or not on that occasion.

Certainly the comparison does not take us far. But it takes us further than we have yet gone. Outside I hear a voice singing. One or two bars of the melody remind me of one that I know and I join in and sing on a little. Yes, of course I know it ! And now the conscious reminiscence may be stirred : why, that is the Austrian national anthem, Haydn's beautiful melody. But it is equally possible that I do not remember. What rarely fails to appear is the impression made by the melody, its affective content, what the notes are trying to say, to express—and that quite independent of whether I remember the text, or even if I know it at all. Within certain limitations, therefore, our comparison corresponds to a case in which the analyst seizes unconsciously upon the

expression of his patient's emotion before becoming conscious of it himself. The conscious recognition of the melody, and of the conditions of its affective content and its connection with the content of the text, would correspond more or less to the process of psychological comprehension in analysis.

The induction of the unconscious impulse at its initial point recalls to us, moreover, the significance of the time element determining the unconscious part of the process of comprehension. By that I do not mean only the duration of the induced impulse, but the fact that it would be quite impossible to seize upon the induced impulse just at its initial point in embryonic form, if it had not led back to impulses of our own, experienced at some earlier time. No doubt they will not coincide with the experience content as such, but the instinctive experiences of the patient must correspond unconsciously with potential experiences of the analyst, otherwise he would be able to detect nothing in the patient's words, see nothing unconscious in his gestures and movements. Here, of course, the difference between actual experience and the revival of the memory traces of experience acquires psychological significance. What the other person tells us generally only stirs unconscious memory traces in us. And here let me take resolute measures at once to guard against a misinterpretation or misunderstanding. *Nowhere in this inquiry have I advocated a consciously drawn parallel between another person's experience and our own.* The existence and psychical efficacy of the same unconscious tendencies involves no more than a psychological condition ; it is not meant to be observed in us in every case. Self-observation is a derivative and secondary process ; it is, so to speak, the observation of the ego through the eyes of the other person. Conscious reference to our own experience in face of unconscious processes in the other person, and self-observation for the purpose of comparison with another's inner life, would not only act as a disturbing factor in the analysis, but would be misleading. It would be bound to lead us astray, causing us to re-interpret

another's experience in the light of our own, and thus to falsify it violently.

If, then, I reject *conscious* comparison with our own inner processes and reference to our own experience in the comprehension of another's processes, yet an unconscious reference to self seems to me all the more important for psychological cognition. The indirect promotion of our comprehension of self through knowledge of another's unconscious processes is a subject hitherto barely discussed in the literature of psycho-analysis. Sometimes by this indirect method of penetrating another's experience, our own can be better understood, for it is in fact veiled from our inner perception. *Our own experiences are more alien to us than the other person's.* But it seems to me beyond question that to grasp analytically the unconscious processes of somebody else, not only indirectly enlarges our psychological knowledge of self and its psychical conditions, but also helps us to master the material of conflict within ourselves. This heuristic and psycho-therapeutic function of analysis of another person in relation to the analyst's ego has hardly been appreciated hitherto.

The second objection will be something like this: it is quite incredible, in view of the great variety of unconscious impulses, that only the same tendencies will be stirred in the analyst. That objection is justified, but only because it is raised against a statement unjustly represented as too simple. The little word " only " is misplaced here; what I said was that these unconscious impulses in the one mind induced impulses of the same kind in the other—in this case in the analyst. But that only denotes the beginning, generally an exceedingly transient beginning, of the psychical course of events. This momentary impulse is followed by other psychical processes of a different kind; reactions to the other person's and our own (induced) impulses, taking the opposite, or at any rate, another direction. The original impulse speedily made way for another, or several others—let it be noted that I am still speaking of the realm of the

unconscious. In that region, therefore, when an impulse of hatred is perceived in the other person, an embryo motion of hatred is stirred in the analyst, and a libidinous tendency in the patient induces a corresponding unconscious tendency in the analyst. In order to avoid misunderstandings, let me emphasize once more that this induced impulse remains at the initial stage. We have, I believe, seen that it is not the other person's impulse as such, but *its unconscious echo in the ego*, that is the determining factor in psychological conjecture. Thus our own mental reaction is a signpost pointing to the unconscious motives and secret purposes of the other person. Let me admit, moreover, at this point that the rigid assertion that a psychologist maintains an attitude of aloofness towards the mental processes of his subject, and merely observes them, can be upheld at most only for the conscious part of his mind. The assertion of the *impassibilité* of the analyst is a fairy-tale, and not even a pretty fairy-tale. What is essential in the psychical process going on in the analyst is—after the stage of observation—that he can vibrate unconsciously in the rhythm of the other person's impulse and yet be capable of grasping it as something outside himself and comprehending it psychologically, of sharing the other's experience and yet remaining *au dessus de la mêlée*. The first step in sharing the unconscious emotion is the condition of psychological comprehension, his own hidden affective impulse comes to be a means of cognition, but until it is mastered there can be no objectively valid knowledge of the inner processes of the other person.

Certainly it is only crudely true to say that unconscious impulses in the psychologist are stimulated in embryo by the words and gestures of the patient. But if we adhere to this description of the "stimulating" effect of psychological observation, we still see before us a long road from thence, from the emergence of an analogous impulse, to intellectual comprehension. In particular, it is difficult to understand why that road should be taken at all. For these unconscious impulses do not drive us towards psychological comprehen-

sion, but towards motor discharge. Thus the riddle lies in the transformation of this " roused " impulse to psychological interest, in the substitution of one form of psychical energy by another. Now we may retort that it is just from the analytical point of view that the transformation of unconscious impulses to curiosity and the urge to investigate is a psychological process that we have long understood ; we have here just a special case of that process. But it is precisely the special aspect of the process that stirs our curiosity.

We can best conjecture its nature when we study the psychological conditions in transference analysis. Let us choose an instance from negative transference, and assume that the patient's words betray traces of the unconscious intention to humiliate and hurt the analyst. Special features in the patient's behaviour point to the aim of the unconscious tendency to aggravate and mock at the analyst. Apprised by various slight signals, the analyst has struck against this purpose, of which the patient is unconscious. Unconsciously these expressions rouse the analyst's own aggressive impulses. We should expect that these hostile motions within himself would turn against the aggressor. We should expect the repulse of the attack or the humiliation of the enemy to be the object of the impulse. And these hostile impulses really are roused in embryo, but they are immediately intercepted when they arise, unconsciously or preconsciously. Their instinctive energy is not used for motor activity, but is placed at the service of psychological cognition. We note the intention, but we are not annoyed ; on the contrary, we feel impelled to study it psychologically. We may certainly class these impulses among the " instinctively inhibited " motions, but they form a special subdivision in that the inhibition begins early, actually at the initial point. Within the process we must place the point of reversal very early, immediately after its emergence.

The process by which the sum of energy is turned from aggression into the service of the will to know is introduced by a halt, a check. But as a rule the psychical release of the

charge of energy is interrupted from the first, and that makes it easier to employ it differently in the service of psychological cognition. Afterwards the sadistic impulse is observed in the subject, according to the formula already indicated. We need have no hesitation in regarding this realization as simultaneous with the process of projection. It removes a certain psychical hindrance and achieves a certain psychical relief. Projection enables us to become conscious of our own impulses, displaced onto the other person. We may detect the same mechanism in the perception of unconscious sexual impulses in transference. There, too, our own sexual impulse is inhibited at the very outset, and its sum of energy used for the purpose of psychological cognition. In depicting these representative cases, we can see plainly how psychological interest is derived from a tendency to gain mastery, hardly differentiated as yet. It makes no difference in principle whether that primitive urge to gain mastery is more libidinous or more aggressive in quality.

Let us sum up : the road that we have to travel is bounded on the one hand by the conscious, preconscious, or unconscious perception (observation) of psychological evidence, on the other by the conscious psychological cognition of the processes on which it is based. The most important stations on the road are determined by the introjection of the subject and by its re-projection. There was a moment in the process in which it might seem doubtful whether the tendency to gain mastery might not triumph in a motor or verbal expression. At that moment, which we may compare with a watershed, the question whether we should, in a literal sense, seize, or should comprehend the subject was inevitably settled in favour of the latter. Whilst there was a moment, the point of departure, in which the possibility of a disintegration of instincts arose, and libidinous or destructive tendencies clamoured for expression, the triumph of the will to know marked a blending of instincts. (I owe that term to Dr. Carl Landauer.) Although the endeavour to know psychologically had retained so many elements of the urge to gain mastery, yet the deviation from

the original instinctive aim is clear enough. In the place of the will to seize, the will to comprehend appears.

Must the act of comprehending unconscious processes always follow the complicated course here indicated ? Is there none shorter and less troublesome ? In considering that question we must first remark that I have said nothing of the time taken up by the mental process. It might last only for a fraction of a second. The paths pursued are such as have long been prepared, such as have been traced for hundreds of thousands of years. And the description here given only holds good for conscious psychological comprehension, that is to say, for the special case in which the observer makes up his mind to comprehend the unconscious processes of other minds.

Nevertheless, the impression made by my description differs from that ordinarily made by the act of comprehending unconscious phenomena. That process seems to us so much simpler and more direct. We believe that we have often understood at once and immediately what is going on unconsciously in another mind. If we examine this objection, we find no material arguments to support it. Let us, for instance, take a case which seems at the first glance to prove it sound : in the course of a conversation a woman recognizes the unconsciously libidinous nature of her companion's feelings towards her. In popular psychology the account readily given of such an event would be something like this : certain tones of the voice, gestures, and glances have suddenly convinced the girl of the man's unconscious intentions towards her. In reality that account gives only a poor and inadequate outline of the mental process. The unconscious libidinous tendency in the man stirred a like impulse in the girl, if it was not there from the first, and that induced, or at least enhanced, tendency in her ego helped the girl to recognize what was going on unconsciously in the man's mind. It was only the fleeting transformation of her ego that made it possible to realize consciously the unconscious tendency in the man.

Is there, then, no more immediate way to become conscious of the unconscious processes in other minds than the round-about way through the ego ? Here I must plead guilty to a little act of substitution, for I have suddenly replaced the notion of conscious cognition by that of becoming aware of something. Perhaps I did so because the distinction has validity and significance, consciously and unconsciously, only in relation to a higher stage of psychical organization, and is, for instance, hardly applicable to early childhood.

We will, therefore, set aside experimentally that distinction, which later acquires such significance. Perhaps it will be useful to choose an example from a remote field of observation. But for the time being I will attribute no other value to it than that of concrete illustration. Let us ask ourselves : what tells dog A., who has just met dog B., and makes ready for a fight or a game, whilst B. circles round him, the secret intentions of his playmate or adversary ? [1] We assume that it is particular olfactory signals, which perhaps precede visual perceptions—we know that a dog's sight is not very keen. A nuance of smell unknown to us humans—so we assume—announces to dog A. that in the next moment dog B. will proceed to attack. A.'s reaction is instinctive, and does not wait till the olfactory sensation reaches the dog's consciousness as an idea, and is interpreted by him. The reaction takes place rather with the self-evident immediacy of a reflexive movement.

Let us suppose that the dog—and why should we not call him Riquet, in memory of M. Bergeret's clever four-footed friend ?—Riquet, then, who reacted to such practical purpose to the sensory signal, is a kind of super-dog. Nature has endowed him, not only with the gift of speech, but also with the capacity for competent self-observation. Let us suppose that he promptly describes to us the experience of meeting the strange dog, their cautious approach to one another, inter-

[1] Some readers will recall Bismarck's expression " smell " for the behaviour of people who have just been introduced.

rupted by pauses, their attempt to make one another's acquaintance, intended to secure an answer to the question : " What kind of a dog are you ? " Riquet shall tell us how he observed that dog B., or Nero, was going to make a movement of aggression in the next moment, or rather was even then cherishing aggressive intentions.

It seems to me extremely unlikely that Riquet, when asked, would refer us to the process of empathy, familiar to animal psychology, by which he learned his opponent's intentions. If we endow the dog with human qualities, I fear that he would give us only very inadequate information. Perhaps he would not even be able to give us precise information about the exact nature of the olfactory signal. Probably he would remark casually that his instinct warned him in the moment preceding the attack. If we pressed him to describe the mental process more accurately, he might mention his own muscular sensations as the last factor accessible to his self-observation. He would refer to a reminiscence of tense muscles, which told him that he himself was just going to leap or run. Of course, we are at liberty to reduce as far as possible the interval between his reception of the signal and his muscular sensation.

In this fancied, and undoubtedly fanciful, example there is no room for the processes of introjection and projection assumed in us humans. The process really is immediate. We must, therefore, assume that that mechanism cannot develop until a higher plane of psychical organization, and that on the animal plane it is by way of immediate contact that the mind becomes conscious of the other's intentions. Nevertheless the course of animal behaviour here supposed —and I have deliberately exaggerated the anthropomorphic element that generally characterizes animal psychology—offers us material for further reflection. Although the process depicted leaves no room for introjection and projection, yet in Riquet there is a prevision of the psychical process which we assume in the psychological act of human comprehension ; we can recognize it in its preliminary stage. Primitive man

is informed of the unconscious intentions of others by signals like Riquet's. His own impulses, which may announce themselves by slight, unnoticed tension of the muscles, guide him in his " psychological " perceptions. Paradoxically enough, the whole difference between the process in man and in animals is made all the clearer the more unmistakably we establish certain similarities.

In my example I have represented a psychological process in a dog, and assumed that in him the recognition of intentions in his fellows takes place much more immediately and without mediation. And I chose the dog because he is our housemate, and we imagine—erroneously, I suspect—that we know a good deal about his inner life. And we must take into account that the dog has been domesticated for a very long time and has been alienated from his original instincts by intercourse with mankind. Undoubtedly, as our observations show, he has lost something of the certainty of immediate " comprehension ", or becoming aware, of the intentions of others in the course of the development of his species in the company of man, and has exchanged it for new acquisitions, attributable to the society of man. Species that have held aloof from human society will certainly become aware of the intentions of other animals more immediately, more in the manner of reflexive action.

We are forced to say to ourselves that we still know so little of the inner life of our own species that we cannot venture to make assumptions about what happens in the minds of other animals. Nevertheless, we have reason to suppose that wild animals have a much simpler and more elementary way of recognizing what other animals want, or desire, or seek. Thence it is only a step to the assumption that in the early days of his evolution man grasped more immediately what was going on in another mind. A further step leads to the question how he lost that assurance about things psychological that his distant forefathers presumably possessed.

It will be remembered that the question why psychology

is necessary stood at the very beginning of this inquiry. At that stage we evaded it and turned to the problem how we may reach comprehension of the inner processes of our fellows. And now the first question re-emerges in a new form : what has made comprehension at all difficult ? Even now we are too little prepared to give an answer to that question. Perhaps it is even significant that it is raised at all, for in the psychology of consciousness such problems do not arise. Though we cannot at present answer it, we may be better able to some day, when we know more about the genesis and differentiation of consciousness.

In the present state of our knowledge we must be satisfied with quite a general assumption. It points to an increasing loss of this immediate type of comprehension, thanks to the advancing tendency to supplant instinct. And it must be noted that the repression of instinct preceded the process of supplanting it, and acted in the same direction. Let us recur once more to the example of the dogs. I have said that there we have presumably immediate psychological comprehension. Well, that was true if our example related to two wild dogs. In other species their taming and training will already have made a difference to their control of instinct, and will make themselves felt in the weakening of " comprehension ", or of its immediacy. Not long ago I was observing two dogs, one behind a garden fence and the other outside it, who ran along it and barked at one another in the usual way. Whereas for the most part they ran the same distance, stopping at the same moment in their course and turning round as if at a word of command, it sometimes happened that one of them, a sheepdog, turned sooner or ran farther than the other, a Pom.

It seems as if the *immediacy of comprehension were closely bound up with the state of the individual's instincts*, as though all psychological comprehension were primarily grasping the nature and direction of the other person's instinctive tendencies. But with evolution and training the surety of the original

impulses and instincts vanishes, and other secondary tendencies intervene in the play of psychical forces, weakening or changing them, so that the immediacy of the interaction of instincts is lost. It is the differentiation going on in the evolution of the species, ultimately the different ways in which instinct is repressed, supplanted, and employed, that makes psychological comprehension between two human beings more difficult.[1] To these differences also are due the uncertainty of our psychological judgments and prejudices. Since the development of human civilization strives in general to weaken the original instinctive impulses in their ancient intensity and to divert them from their primary purposes, comprehension becomes less and less sure with the differentiation of the individual and of many individuals. Thus our lack of confidence in the reliability and immediacy of our own judgment is really lack of confidence in the reliability of our own instinctive impulses, which have been subjected to such far-reaching changes with the development of human civilization.

The fact that we can no longer trust our own immediate judgment, which so often leads us astray, must be attributed to the individual differences in people's repression and supplanting of their instincts. If everybody were on the same " instinctive plane "—and that would mean the equivalent of the same cultural plane—that is to say, if we had all made a halt at the same particular stage in suppressing and satisfying our instincts, there would, indeed, be no immediate psychological comprehension in the old sense, but psychological comprehension of another person would be much easier. Thus the inequality in our use of instinct, that is, in fact, the difference in the rate of cultural development, comes to be a serious hindrance to psychological comprehension.

Animals would have no need of psychology, in the sense of a theory of the inner life of other animals, because they know with instinctive certainty what is going on in their minds.

[1] We should understand more of the inner life of animals, if our own instinctive life had not moved so far away from theirs.

Nor had primitive man any need of psychology of this kind, because he still had presumably a large measure of the same instinctive certainty about the mental life of others. That psychology came to be *necessary* must be bound up with the changes, going on for hundreds of thousands of years, which determined the evolution of mankind. More and more, that instinctive certainty must have been lost ; the inner life of our fellow-men grew not only more differentiated, but more difficult to know. We are all, it is true, moved by the same invisible strings and checked by them, but they are not equally strong in each individual case, nor is the pull equally forceful in each.

It is true that the ancient reliability and immediacy with which we become aware of impulses in others is only lost in our consciousness, in the unconscious they are preserved. When people are so fond of declaring that they are all born psychologists, there is some truth in it, no doubt : their unconscious is an incorruptible psychological organ of perception, but *only* their unconscious, a part of their personality, which is, as a rule, inaccessible to them. They are right, therefore, in a sense other than they themselves mean.

Not long ago I read a passage in the Viennese satirist Nestroy, which may sound like a witty paraphrase of the view here put forward : " If chance brings two wolves together, we may be sure that neither feels the least uneasy because the other is a wolf ; two human beings, however, can never meet in the forest, but one must think : that fellow may be a robber."

CHAPTER XIX

THE PSYCHICAL MECHANISM OF ANTICIPATION

WHEN, in the preceding chapter, I was trying to solve the problem of unconscious comprehension, I used dogs' play in war and love as an illustration. We tried to conjecture what went on in the minds of the clever animals, how they gained so immediate and precise a knowledge of the intentions that their comrades would put into action a moment later. And now, with one bold leap, we will clear the barrier dividing human from animal psychology, and ask whether there is anything between human beings analogous to that instinctive understanding. And here we enter upon a very interesting section of our inquiry, that of the importance of unconscious understanding in social intercourse. For human interplay is most strongly governed by unconscious impulses.

I have spoken also of introjection, which seems to me a more fruitful concept for the foundations of psychology than empathy. We see clearly the feint practised by the advocates of the theory of empathy, when we realize that they regard the action of the empathetic understanding as an ultimate empirical means of cognition, like seeing and hearing, an elementary instinct, not to be analysed psychologically. From this point of view it is certainly easy to do as Scheler does and speak of the " perceptibility of inner experience ". According to that philosopher there is no psychical I and Thou phenomologically ; there is only an undifferentiated stream of total psychical happening.

If we adhere to the differentiation of a psychical I and Thou, which seems to be out of date, we are compelled to assume a certain psychical action and interaction. And when we refer

to the psychology of the unconscious we see how Scheler could come to his singular theory: the immediacy of the interaction of two unconscious minds might easily lead, or mislead, him to that conviction. In the literature of analysis this immediacy of the psychical reaction, a reflection of which occasionally penetrates to consciousness, is formulated by saying that one person's unconscious comprehends another's. Hitherto when analysts have striven to gain a clearer view of the nature of this unconscious comprehension, they have come up against an almost insurmountable barrier.

It is not surprising that in the attempt to climb over it, the subject has sometimes been clumsily handled or mishandled. Thus, for example, Fennichel distinguishes between two kinds of unconscious comprehension: one based upon signs, and one occurring without the aid of signs. I have already said that the latter supposition seems to me not only mistaken in method, but erroneous. There must be the subtlest signs, unconsciously given and received, and perception by means of senses of which we are not conscious. Especially the term " comprehension " is wrong in this connection; it is rather a lightning-like or slow process of conjecture of what is going on unconsciously in the other person. We see at once how wrong the term " comprehension " is, when we realize that often this conjecture is diametrically opposed to the conscious construction. The unsuitable nature of the term is even more striking when the psychical process is not understood, or is thoroughly misunderstood, by the conscious mind, although its meaning is unconsciously conjectured. Every observing analyst has countless opportunities to note how frequent and how gross is this antithesis between the conscious apprehension and the unconscious conjecture of other people's mental processes in social life.

It seems as though, apart from the visible relations between human beings, there are others, far removed from consciousness, whose character and action we yet conjecture successfully. It sometimes happens that these secret motions not only find

expression, but penetrate to consciousness after many years or even decades. Secret motions are those which struggle in vain against being brought to the light of day. The behaviour of our fellows, what they do and leave undone, what they say and leave unsaid, offer unequivocal evidence, even if we are not always in a position to interpret it. Beyond the region of conscious understanding, there is something in human relations that speaks what seems a subterranean, secret language, softer and yet wiser than that of the conscious understanding. Sometimes it seems as if our conscious actions were only a phantasmagoria, whilst all that was really significant in our mental life took place behind the scenes. In that region true answers are given to false questions, the truth is detected in the false answer, nay, a significant answer is even given to a question that we have not heard or understood consciously. Hints that were not intended as such are shrewdly understood, although we have not consciously grasped their meaning. Unconsciously we sense the purpose of an action or reaction, or of a blunder. Even in the foggy air of human intercourse there is, unconsciously, great clarity. Whilst we have no idea consciously of the hidden purposes and impulses of another person, unconsciously we may react to them as sensitively as a seismograph to a faint subterreanan vibration.

We can illustrate this unconscious comprehension within certain limits by describing the manner in which certain psychical machinery works. I will choose as representative a mechanism that has hardly been appreciated as yet in the literature of the psychology of the unconscious, something that I should like to call the *mechanism of unconscious anticipation.* We have here a special case in which our unconscious knowledge of one another finds symptomatic, and not only symptomatic, expression. This mechanism acts in the unconscious anticipation of another person's psychical reaction to our own behaviour. It is, so to speak, an experimental anticipation, inaccessible to the ego, of the effects produced by our own behaviour.

I can demonstrate this psychical mechanism by an example of the way it acts better than by a definition or description. I choose my example intentionally, not from the sphere of analytical practice, but from everyday life. Moreover, it is not chosen in such a way that the quality of the unconscious is of decisive importance. We have all of us watched a woman, followed by a man, automatically smoothing her hair. The psychical mechanism at work seems fairly simple. The woman tidies her hair because, consciously or unconsciously, she wants to please the man who is following her. Every woman will say that the mental process need not be so primitive. Especially a woman who makes a movement to tidy or beautify herself need not be at all conscious of her action. The fact that the man's eye is upon her makes her see herself, her hair, and her general appearance as another person—in this case the man behind her—sees them. In thus regarding herself with the eyes of another she anticipates—usually unconsciously or pre-consciously—the impression that she will make upon the other. In other words, her action is the expression of a mental reaction to a hypothetical impression. We need not, of course, confine the formula to this behaviour ; it holds good for a certain part of our unconscious processes.

Let us now think of the rather more complicated example of the disgust with which their own bodies inspire women during menstruation. Undoubtedly that reaction may be traced in part to anticipation of her husband's feeling of disgust, which is, of course, taken into account in the education of the growing girl. The mechanism of the anticipation of a psychical effect upon others, whether unconscious or grown conscious, probably dominates the whole inner origin of disgust ; that is to say, the anticipated reaction of the parents and of others in the child's environment determines that psychical phenomenon of repulse.

Meanwhile I will pass beyond the narrow field of typical behaviour into the wider region of more general phenomena, in which the mechanism of anticipation governs a vast number

of individual actions and reactions. And here it is important psychologically to distinguish between anticipations that occur consciously, those which begin unconsciously but are later recognized by the ego, and those which owe their existence to unconscious and repressed impulses and remain unconscious. Let me give a simple example of the second type: Mr. Ab, an American, wants to tell his acquaintance, Mr. Be, that his wife was prevented on the preceding day from going to the theatre; she was ill. He means to say "sick", but chooses another word. Recalling the conversation later on, the reason occurs to him: the man he was talking to is an Englishman, and you can use the phrase "she is sick" in England when you mean that a woman vomits. No doubt he wanted to prevent Be from supposing that his wife was pregnant, he tells himself later. Here, then, is a definite unconscious motive for avoiding the use of the word. Every psychological observer knows of many hundreds of such cases.

Certainly the psychological significance to which the mechanism of anticipation may lay claim in social intercourse has not yet been adequately explored. To realize that fact we need only think of its psychical effects in private and public life, where it draws its power from repressions, and where conscious thought and action seem in violent contradiction to the assumption of such effects. We need only think of the more or less fascinating play of mutual flight and mutual attraction between two young people, to which Mephistopheles gives the contemptuous name of "Brimborium" (rubbish), that prelude to the satisfaction of instinct. How many anticipations of this kind there are then in thoughts and little actions, how speech and answer are tuned to one another in their unconscious meaning, in repulse and surrender! Observation has frequently impressed upon us how an instinct works its way through to its goal in its psychical manifestations, independent of the conscious will, how it advances with the speed of seven-league boots, step by step, its progress determined by law. Psychologists know how helpful this uncon-

scious anticipation is in the relations between the sexes, so manifold and yet so monotonous.

We may observe the same unconscious comprehension and the same anticipation of the peculiar reaction of the other person, where love or friendship is slowly dissolving; that unintentional and yet unconsciously intended misunderstanding of what has hitherto made the relation precious. The mechanism evinces its effects in all human relations as an important means of comprehension apart from verbal speech. The unconscious anticipation of the way in which another person will react is one of the most important psychological conditions in the development of our relations, whether they develop towards tenderness or hostility, friendship or envy. In the process of anticipation we seem to divine the action of our own unconscious impulses, as well as the mental reactions of the other person. A shy man often makes other people shy, too. A person who adopts a masochistic attitude in his social relations, often stirs an unconscious sadistic instinctive reaction in another. Is it not his unconscious desire to stir it?

All this might almost imply that in everything that we do and think we unconsciously picture to ourselves how the other person, to whom it relates, will react to it. And, going a step further, how he would react to our thoughts? In that case we should never be alone? When I think of Mr. X. or Mrs. Z., whatever my thoughts and ideas may be, whether I picture myself as subject or object in relation to them, they are present, so to speak, in that I unconsciously anticipate what their attitude would be to my thoughts about them and to the actions that concern them. And in actual fact we do unconsciously anticipate the emotional and intellectual reactions of these persons, and allow them to take their course, in a way, experimentally. ("Everybody is within us. Who feels alone?") Where we anticipate the reaction of our environment to our behaviour in our conscious thoughts, we have an exceptional case which, under certain dynamic and economic conditions, confirms the regular occurrence of the unconscious mental

process. The mechanism of anticipation is not confined to this direct occupation of our thoughts with persons. It accompanies a large number of psychical phenomena that have nothing directly to do with the objects.

It is easy to see the origin of such an unconscious phenomenon : a child fancies the reaction of his parents and nurses during many of his actions. The imagined or supposed presence of these persons will relate at first more to the negative side of the reactions—that is to say, it will anticipate the repudiation or admonition or disapproval of the parents. We picture the reaction of many a mother in relation to her unsupervised child as a pendant to these anticipations : " Go and see what Teddy is doing in the garden, and tell him not to."

At a later stage the imagined presence of his mother will precede the action, and the primitive character of the anticipated reaction will give place to greater variety (several kinds and degrees of disapproval, consent, delight, and so on). In the setting up of the Super-ego, the most important instance of anticipation has become a permanent institution of the ego. Much more numerous are the cases of anticipation which produce no such deep and lasting consequences in the unconscious life of the mind, and yet reflect the influence of environment.

Amongst the cases in which the anticipation of psychical reactions has reference to repressed impulses, we must count all those in which the ego has called forth reactions that it does not desire through its behaviour. To be consistent, we must assume that here, too, the ego unconsciously anticipated the consequence of its behaviour, and secretly desired this or a similar reaction on the part of its environment, much as we may resist that assumption.

Take any chance case : a young man in financial straits tries hard to obtain a post ; he constantly finds himself before shut doors. Where he is given a hearing he is nevertheless rejected after a short time. In such cases we are of course inclined to suppose at once that there are very few posts free,

and that our young man is just a victim of the present economic conditions. Analysis shows that that is certainly only partly the case. But it supplements the perception by an unexpected explanation: in every case where the young man succeeded in getting an interview with the head of a firm, he made some *faux pas*, behaved awkwardly or arrogantly, suddenly knew nothing about something with which he was usually familiar. There can be no doubt but that he himself unconsciously spoiled his own chances. Analysis almost makes it seem as if he had often staged it with peculiar subtlety, as if he had waited unconsciously for the very moment when he might count upon getting the post. It really seemed as if he could foresee and calculate exactly the effect of some little awkwardness or exposure of himself—it all happened with such accurately calculated skill. This anticipation of the psychical effect of his reactions upon the other man sometimes produced the impression that the preceding conversation had unconsciously merely served to enable him to take the self-destructive step with the utmost certainty, and to prevent the thing towards which his whole conscious energy was directed—his appointment.

It seems to me probable that *many cases of the dark constraint of destiny, depicted by Freud, are possible only by means of this unconscious anticipation of other people's mental reactions.* I received that impression, for instance, in analysing a girl who always suffered the same disappointment, with the same typical termination, in her relations with young men. It seemed as if unconsciously she not only made her choice with this in view, but as if her whole behaviour from the beginning of the affair had been so determined, as though she had always secretly foreseen the recurring termination, great as were her conscious hopes that this time it would end differently.

This mechanism of unconscious anticipation describes, as it were, a great vault, arched above all our social relations, and stretching from unconscious prevision of certain reactions to a chance word, to reactions to our whole psychical behaviour,

from single deeds, with definite and conscious motives, to compulsive repetitions of fated trains of events, seemingly determined only from without. In success and failure the nature and tendency of other people's mental reaction is unconsciously anticipated to an extent not hitherto appreciated. The secret instinctive forces leading to the result which we unconsciously intend are foreseen by some endo-psychic power, though they may appear wholly foreign to the ego. We might say that the ego expects more from itself than it knows.

I have already tried to depict the instinctive conditions of the mechanism of anticipation, without denying the rational elements at work in it. On the unconscious plane where the instincts have their dwelling, may be the origin of the presentiments conditioning the act of anticipation. There, too, we must seek the psychical factors which seem to extend the phenomena of unconscious anticipation on two sides to the border regions of the mind. On the one hand it seems as though the ego could foresee actual future events to whose occurrence no objective signals point ; on the other hand, as though it had remarkable, sometimes positively prophetic, powers of determining the psychical reactions of other people in advance. On this supposition, the ego would possess in its unconscious, not only hitherto undreamed-of psychological qualities, but similar prophetic qualities. And this appearance has some foundation in fact, when we reflect that in these phenomena we have unconscious forces whose action is largely unrecognized, or at least not sufficiently recognized.

In the first contingency we can detect, in many cases that are open to psychological investigation and examination, a blend of that very unconscious conjecture of the instincts governing other minds with conscious or pre-conscious knowledge and experience. And what we have is, not so much a prophetic vision of coming events, as projections of our own unconscious wishes, rooted in instinct, or the kindred expectations of future ill. We cannot always lay bare these subter-

ranean conditions. There really is something like an unconscious presentiment of our own destiny, springing from unrealized insight into the peculiarities of our ego. A hidden, or unconfessed, knowledge of our own inner potentialities is at work in it, or of the things that we secretly strive for or fear.

The anticipation of the effect of our behaviour and our utterances usually appears as the outcome of a like unconscious projection, and we must not underestimate the part played by pre-conscious knowledge, based upon our earlier experience. But the phenomenon is determined in particular by the introspective unconscious perception of how *we* should behave in such a case, if we were the *other person*, that is to say, the object. On occasion this origin of anticipation even reaches consciousness. For instance, a woman patient who had displayed strong unconscious resistance said during a treatment : " How you will hate me ! " That means : if I were in your place, I should hate a person bitterly who tried to torment me so much. We have a similar case in the utterance of another woman patient, who was always trying to assure herself of the analyst's goodwill and forgiveness. She was constantly begging his pardon and asking whether he would always remain friendly to her, although she was so far unaware of harbouring any malicious intentions towards him. It was only much later that we found out what her request for pardon referred to. It had hastened to anticipate the action of cruel and aggressive tendencies, as yet unrecognized by the ego but unconsciously known to it, and was thus fully justified psychologically.

We can explain the psychogenesis of many beliefs and many superstitions by psychological projection, acting through the mechanism of anticipation. It is easy to recognize the protective measures taken to prevent some evil that is feared as a defence against unconsciously projected and anticipated wishes of our own. We protect ourselves, so to speak, against the consequences of the wicked desires that we should ourselves feel, if we were in the position of the other person. Appreciation of this anticipation, in combination with projection, brings

us near to a psychological explanation of the belief in the evil eye, for example.

I have already spoken of the way in which the mechanism of anticipation may be traced to unconscious psychological knowledge and that means experiences—and how it presupposes in itself a secret knowledge of our own ego. It is a case of a psychological possession that can no more be unearthed than a buried treasure whose whereabouts cannot be brought to light. Unconsciously the ego possesses more psychological knowledge of itself and others than is accessible to it. On the other hand, it overestimates, as we know, the extent and value of its conscious psychological knowledge—that is to say, what is has at command.

In his conversations with Eckermann, Goethe calls anticipation " foreknowledge drawn from our knowledge of our inner selves ". We can agree with him, if we supplement his definition by saying that this foreknowledge is derived from unconscious or repressed knowledge of our inner selves. It would not appear justifiable to use the term " foreknowledge ", if that were not the case. We should simply have to speak of knowledge based upon a psychological foundation. Moreover, this character of the function of anticipation shows how far such knowledge is distinct from rational knowledge, and from what depths of the mind it draws its strong faith. In particular cases analysis can prove convincingly that this " foreknowledge " must be traced back to perceptions of our own hidden impulses, either unconscious or lost to consciousness, perceptions of the inner potentialities of ourselves and others. Latin scholars have a proverb which says that learning is nothing but remembering (*nihil aliud discere quam recordari*). I do not think that the proverb is quite true ; we learn a great deal without remembering it. And the foreknowledge of anticipation is perhaps, in its essence, only the reflection of unconscious knowledge, of which the psychical origin and precise nature have slipped our memory.

CHAPTER XX

THE SHOCK OF THOUGHT

A FALSE assumption that has almost developed into a myth is that the course of analysis is largely independent of the personality of the analyst. And here I am not speaking of the therapeutic aspect of the psychological task, but of its heuristic aspect. Surely nobody will contend that individual talent for grasping unconscious relations does not vary.

To me it seems an obvious assumption that the individual's psychological qualifications can be improved by his own analysis and his further analytical training. Still, we know very little how far such training is able to enhance receptivity of psychological data, sensitiveness to the significance and range of interpretation of the products of the unconscious, and the gift of sensing subterranean links. At any rate, I am exceedingly doubtful whether it can equalize the differences in talent. Some experience points to the probability that the measure and depth of psychological comprehension are not greatly altered, even when the student has waded through the whole course or all the courses. Even analysts learn only what they are capable of learning. I do believe that analytical training can amend faults of character and correct defects in personality. But I do not believe that it can supply defects in personality.

Any achievement in one of those spheres where unconscious effort plays a part will always be dependent upon the human quality of the worker. Here, too, in investigating unconscious processes, differences rooted in the nature and character of the investigator will have significance for the quality and depth of his cognition. *The fact that the analyst's ego does*

not come to the fore in his work, that his person is lost to sight behind his achievement, does not mean at all that it is not at work in that achievement. How could it be otherwise, when the subject of the psychology of the unconscious is the most personal and intimate processes of the mind, which can only be grasped and comprehended by the most personal qualities in the analyst? Observe that I am still speaking of the heuristic side of the analyst's task as being the more important. Of him, too, it is true that to achieve something he must be something.

In opposition to a large number of my fellow-analysts, I profess the opinion that the individual manner of conjecturing and comprehending unconscious and repressed processes comes to be the expression of definite characterological qualities. Like every other scientific method, analysis strives to observe and describe the processes under investigation as objectively and accurately as possible. To that end it seems essential that what is personal in the investigator should be, as far as may be, excluded in capturing the processes, since the intervention of anything subjective must have a disturbing effect upon cognition. But that is not identical with the assumption that one of the organs of perception may be restricted in its functions. A botanist will place his eyes, as well as his sense of smell and touch, in the service of his scientific work; so will a doctor who has to ascertain the changes taking place in the human organism. There is nothing to prevent us from regarding the unconscious as a sense organ living a life of its own. We know, of course, that this can only be a simile, but the function of the unconscious in the process of cognition seems to justify it.

Now the unconscious functions alike in everybody as an organ for seizing upon the concealed processes in the inner life of others. It has the same tendencies and the same methods of work. It is, so to speak, the most impersonal thing in the personality, and yet we speak of the personal factor, and attribute to it great importance in the development and peculiar

character of psychological cognition. But when we speak of the personal factor, we do not thereby indicate the unconscious as such, but the individually varying relation of the conscious and pre-conscious to that system, the dynamics and economy of the play of forces so introduced, which govern the intercourse between the psychical agents. The quality of that relation mirrors the history of the individual and his relation to his environment and his inner world.

When psycho-analysts declare that the psychological comprehension of the individual is limited by his repressions, they only pick out *one* factor—a specially important one, it is true—from the many and various relations between conscious and unconscious that are of importance to analysis. It is worth noting that this factor is negative, and states the limits set to the comprehension of each one of us. But it is assuredly not the case that a person whose repressions may be removed in a deep-reaching analysis then understands the language of the conscious and the unconscious repressed as easily and clearly as Solomon did the language of the nations. For the removal is only temporary, we might often say momentary; but repression is a process governed and rendered necessary by the development of civilization, and renews its advance along the old channel.

In addition to the factor of repression, there are certainly others negative in character, and, on the other hand, there are certain psychological factors which favour the individual's comprehension of the unconscious. We still know very little of these personal qualities, and the little that we do know must be held back till it has stood the test of repeated and careful examination. I am at liberty to extract only a very small fragment from this large and still unillumined mass. If I were asked what quality I regard as most important for an analyst, I should reply: *moral courage.* It would be absurd to assert that an analyst must be superior to his patients in brains, or knowledge, or acumen. But in this matter, in moral courage or, as we might call it, in inner truthfulness,

he must be superior. The training of analysts should be directed less towards the acquisition of practical and theoretical knowledge than the extension of intellectual independence. It is not so much a question of acquiring technical ability as inner truthfulness.

I can easily illustrate what I mean by moral courage by means of an example. In Austria the soldiers who had specially distinguished themselves in the war received a decoration with the motto: for bravery in face of the enemy. The special kind of civil courage that seems to me necessary for an analyst might be called *courage in face of his own thoughts.* This courage is seen and proven when an individual meets with a thought or idea in his own ego, the nature of which runs decidedly counter to his moral, æsthetic, and logical demands. There are various means of dealing with these thoughts or ideas, to which the ego offers special resistance. Just as with the external enemy, you can meet them and suppress them, you can hide from them or deny their existence, or you can run away from them.

An unexpected encounter with a thought of this kind generally releases a momentary psychical reaction in the ego which I call the shock of thought. I have taken this designation from Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, where it occurs only once, though in a significant passage. The term " fear " does not seem right here, if only on account of the time factor. If fear is comparable with a line, then we must liken shock to a point.

It is a question of a reaction that frequently occurs when we unexpectedly encounter a thought or an impulse of which we had not believed ourselves capable, and of which we are not otherwise conscious, however conscientiously we examine our ego. Here, again, we come upon the factor of surprise, which has occupied a particularly important place in this inquiry. In the case described, we cannot escape taking responsibility for the startling psychical product, unless we believe that Satan or some Power of Darkness has induced it in us.

But why do I call the reaction to this kind of unexpected encounter the shock of thought? That sort of reaction would be senseless, if only because it is only a case of thoughts and ideas, not of deeds. Do we not know that we should not yield to a murderous impulse, so long as we were in our senses? Thoughts are duty free; ought they not to be free from shock, too? And are they not thoughts against which everything within us rebels?

Analysis shows, indeed, that not everything within us rebels against them, but that a hidden fragment within us welcomes them vigorously. There is, therefore, no other explanation for our shock than the assumption that there is within us the fear and the wish that our thoughts might inadvertently turn to reality. It is certainly a fact that the liability to shock in relation to our own thoughts varies in different individuals; but it is also certainly a fact that most of us are already acquainted with this shock at the first and unexpected encounter with something returning from the region of repression. Where we do not notice it, it has quickly made way for some other kind of reaction, but it was there at first, even if we did not recognize it.

But why shock? Would not fear be a more suitable concept and a more appropriate word? Analysis has shown the pre-eminent significance of the emotion of fear in mental disturbances, and has demonstrated that the problem of fear must be regarded as the most important in relation to the development of neuroses. *But the root problem of neurosis is not fear, but shock.* In my opinion *that problem remains insoluble until fear is brought into connection with the emotion of shock.* The memory trace of the prime shock of the human creature is at work in fear. It is not fear but shock to which belongs the paralysis of our machinery of motion, tightness of breath, pallor, and the sensation of cold. As contrasted with fear, shock has a simpler, less definite, and more violent character.

Shock is the prime emotion, the first that the little living creature feels. I do not believe in the theory of fear in the

trauma of birth, but that the moment of birth is marked by the first, profound shock, from which the later shocks, so frequent in babyhood, are copied. All the physiological and psychological signs support the assumption that nature's first emotion is shock. I hold that shock is in general characteristic of a traumatic situation, fear of one of danger. *Shock is the emotional reaction to something that bursts in upon us, fear the reaction to something that comes with a menace.* Fear is itself a signal preceding shock, it anticipates the emotion of shock in miniature, and so protects us from it and from its profound and harmful effects. Thus, on the one hand it is the expectation of the experience of shock in the situation of trauma, on the other its mitigated repetition.

Not fear but shock is the primary and universal psychical reaction of the new-born human being and animal. A baby reacts to the faintest visual and acoustic stimuli, which the adult ego would not notice, with all the mimic signs of shock. It is only gradually that the reaction of shock yields to an adaptation to stimuli better suited to the child's environment. The little thing's liability to shock gradually diminishes in intensity and frequency.

It would seem that one of the first, unconscious aims of education would be to reduce a baby's liability to shock. To accustom him to the stimulus by repeating it is not only a phenomenon of biological adaptation, but at the same time an educational measure.

Mankind in its evolution passes through the same stages as the little human child in the inner mastery of those stimuli which originally produce shock. Explorers and ethnologists all agree in saying that the most primitive tribes are all exceedingly liable to shock. Everything unknown and unusual is monstrous to them. The advance of human civilization finds expression not least in the conquest or mitigation or liability to shock. Not only the number of objects that induce shock, but also the violence of the emotion, is diminished. And the appearance of fear, placed as a barrier

before the emotion of shock, is one sign of that mitigation. The emotion of fear is distinguished from shock not only in intensity; its very nature shows that it saves the ego from the suddenness and overwhelming effect that characterize shock.

We must regard it as a consequence of the advance of civilization that inner shocks take the place of external ones, that we feel shock at our own instincts and impulses, whereas in the world of primitive man all shocks came from without. In place of the evil spirits, which primitive man saw on all sides, and which gave him shocks, we find in the later periods of civilization "all the terrors (shocks) of conscience". No doubt there are plenty of external causes of shock even for civilized man; but their number seems small compared with the omnipresence of things that caused shock in the early days of the human race. We may assume that, the more the cause of shock came from within, the greater was the change in the violence and the psychical effect of shock. Fear as a substitute for shock and a reaction against it constitutes a guarantee that the emotion is no longer able to overcome the ego.

One of the first tasks of civilization was to free men from shock in relation to outward objects, or objects projected outwards. Perhaps the first heroes of the human race were those who held their own against a shock that paralysed others. Hundreds of thousands of years later the activities of Epicurus, for instance, served this aim of civilization when he taught men to cease feeling terror (shock) of the gods. The continuation of the cultural effort here denoted is the struggle against fear, which has taken the place of the original shock. That new task in the service of human evolution is very far from being accomplished; it now teaches us to struggle against our fear of our own unconscious impulses and thoughts. I believe that a considerable share in this cultural task has fallen to the lot of psycho-analysis, since it diminishes the individual feeling of guilt, or social fear. People would be more sincere,

if they had more the courage of their own thoughts ; but they would also be wiser and maturer. If we watch the fear of other people, which prevents us all from being completely sincere, we recognize how we adults have remained minors, and how like we are in our nature to little boys and girls who resort to all manner of excuses and dodges to avoid confessing their childish deeds and desires. Perhaps people would even be more capable of love, if they had more the courage of their thoughts. It was only a seeming paradox when somebody not long ago characterized love as the " absence of fear ".

It is in accordance with the advancing inward tendency in the course of evolution that we now receive a shock, not only when we catch ourselves with impulses and thoughts incompatible with the moral demands that we make upon ourselves, but also with ideas and impulses of a different sort. I mean, for instance, impulses that seem to menace our æsthetic requirements and the rules of cleanliness and propriety. That sounds more paradoxical than it really is, especially because the emotion of shock is not clearly felt in the case of such violation of our customary behaviour. We must remember that the emotion is mitigated in intensity and of extremely short duration. It may often occur only as a very fleeting initial emotion, speedily replaced by fear and then by other reactions.

There certainly are people who receive a shock at the mere thought of a small infringement of their customary behaviour ; for instance, women who receive a shock if a vulgar expression or a grossly sexual term occurs to their thoughts. Indeed, if I may trust to single impressions from my own and others' observations, there is a kind of shock received when we feel the impulse to say something tactless. We have in these phenomena genuine shock, though it may express itself in a form different from the corresponding more violent emotion in a traumatic situation. In the analysis of pathological phenomena this identity of emotion is seen clearly enough,

as, for example, in the case of sudden obsessions. One patient suffering from compulsion suddenly felt the impulse to drink the contents of a certain person's chamber-pot. It must not be thought that this impulse reflected a perverse preference for a young lady, and that the patient wanted to follow the example of the German knight Ulrich von Liechtenstein, who, according to the mediæval legend, liked to drink the urine of his lady. The person in question in the present case was the patient's grandmother. When the patient was seized by this incomprehensible impulse or command, he received a violent shock. Sufferers from compulsion receive a similar shock when malicious desires or thoughts of death suddenly enter their train of thought, directed against those whom they love. The wide range of things that cause shock extends far beyond the field of pathological phenomena. Certain phenomena of civilization cause people to be ready to sacrifice great parts of their personality and to place great restrictions on their ego in order to avoid shock and the consequent fear.

We often find the same reaction associated with ideas and thoughts that are absurd or fantastic, that unite incompatibles, take the impossible for granted, or violate the elementary laws of logic. It seems then as if a power that we might call the categorical imperative in the testing of reality and common sense, forbade us to think what is nonsensical. It is as if, confronted with these ideas and thoughts, a bad conscience that has adopted an intellectual character made itself felt and protested against our own intellectual sins and delinquencies of imagination. In these cases self-criticism acquires a markedly moral tone. We may understand that as due to the effect of the psychical mechanism of displacement, for it is those nearest and dearest to the child who train him to be reasonable and to respect reality, as well as to be good and moral. The intervention of the laws of reason, and of thought in harmony with reality, continues to depend upon the authority of these persons, admired by the child. And so a momentary relapse into the primitive manner of thinking,

not governed by adult logic, is often evaluated by us as an act of disobedience. The emotional reaction to it is often a kind of intellectual shock of very short duration.

With some people the reaction may occur consciously, when they meet with a fantastic or nonsensical idea in the ego in the full daylight of consciousness. There are, of course, different types of reaction to these unexpected interlopers in the realm of the imagination. It often happens that we smile at their queerness, but sometimes we only smile after a preliminary shock. And in the realm of our own thoughts and ideas it is only a step from the shock-giving to the ridiculous. The momentary shock on the emergence of absurd and fantastic ideas has a psychological justification: once we have broken through the shell of rationality and adaptation to reality, we never know where irrationality, fancy, or whatever you like to call these forces, will call a halt.

One of the duties of an analyst is to stand up to this shock of thought—that is to say, not to start back in alarm when, in regarding his data, absurd or irrelevant ideas arise. Sometimes it is much easier to admit a cynical thought to consciousness than a fantastic or odd idea that is quite out of place in this rational, or would-be rational, world. To take a simple example: a middle-aged man who was undergoing analytical treatment for a compulsion neurosis, complained of heavy pressure on his chest. In describing his condition, which continued for several days, he once said that he felt as if he were carrying a stone on his chest. The idea that occurred to the analyst sounds absolutely senseless: the sensation is caused by an unconscious idea of his father's tombstone. A few weeks previously the father, with whom the patient had severed all relations for years, had died, without his death consciously agitating the son. I cannot here recount all the impressions that led to the idea, and evaluate them psychologically—I was not even aware of them all—but I may assure my readers that it had sufficient psychological foundation. Every analyst knows of ideas arising from the

psychical assimilation of the data, which sound far more fantastic and bizarre.

Even analysts are severely tempted to reject such ideas as irrelevant or senseless. It requires a portion of moral courage to hold to them as useful and to treat them as mentally real and important. A person who does not acquire that courage will never experience surprises in himself and others. One who takes headlong flight from the shock of thought to reasonable and rational ideas, is in the same position as a patient who suddenly has a fantastic or nonsensical idea, and whose conscious ego starts back from it like a horse from its own shadow. The merely intellectual belief in the value of involuntary ideas and associations does not insure an analyst against attack by the shock of thought. Such a purely intellectual attitude reminds us of the large-mindedness of one of Nestroy's characters, who says: "I will make so free as to make so free."

The inner truthfulness that I have called moral courage often goes beyond the obligation to think these thoughts to the end—it calls for their utterance. If we do not say what we ourselves think, how can we expect another to have the courage to do so? It goes without saying that this courage must be coupled with special self-criticism and discretion, but the discretion must not be the better part of intellectual valour.

Courage seems to me to be one of the finest virtues, for it excludes many faults, like lying, hyprocrisy, and insincerity. In many cases it is not lack of knowledge and acumen, *but lack of moral courage that prevents us from comprehending the hidden meaning of unconscious processes, and it is that same moral courage that enables us to discover things hitherto unknown in the realm of the unconscious mind.* We recall that Freud ascribed it to that courage that he was able to make the vital discovery of the hidden meaning of dreams. We see more and more clearly that the psychical conditions of psychological comprehension are less intellectual than characterological. In

order to bring the hidden truth of the unconscious to the light of day, we need not only science, but conscience.

This psychological factor, the conquest of fear and the shock of thought that precedes it, is of the utmost importance to the heuristic technique of the psychology of the unconscious. Presumably courage in the presence of a thought plays the same part here as physical courage does in other fields. Only investigators who are unterrified—" unshocked "—can press forward into unexplored regions of the mind. Such advance has its dangers, no less than the primeval forest, the polar ice, and the stratosphere.

One word more about the psychical effect upon the patient of the achievement, the conquest of the shock of thought. Not only does the analyst win greater freedom in the potential acquisition of knowledge thereby ; he will also be able to strengthen the inner claim to sincerity, a claim which is in all mankind. It is not so important to induce the patient to express what he does not trust himself to say, as to help him to bring into the daylight of consciousness what he dare not think and feel. That projected fundamental rule for analysts includes the commandment to say without reservation what we have to communicate to the patient. And here we may reflect that it is easier for some patients to confess a scheme of murder than that they wanted to cheat the tramway company of a penny. Some are readier to avow the most serious sexual impulses than an impulse of tenderness or a prick of conscience.

The significance of the factor of moral courage extends beyond its influence upon individuals. It is not only an element of therapeutic value in individual analysis. Inner truthfulness is infectious, like lying. It is not always easy to detect lying behind its myriad masks. But truth is unmistakable, its note cannot be counterfeited. He who is courageous in face of the hidden shock of thought, makes others courageous, and may contribute in his own narrow circle to make a whole generation more courageous.

CHAPTER XXI

PSYCHOLOGICAL COGNITION AND SUFFERING THE COURAGE NOT TO COMPREHEND

IN the controversy about whether and why our own analysis is a necessary prerequisite of a deeper comprehension of the analytical method and analytical cognition, dialectics have celebrated many triumphs—and that not only among the opponents of psycho-analysis, to whom we have never grudged successes of that kind.

It must not be assumed that among analysts the question of the best way to acquire analytical cognition is already settled. To recommend the sequence: one's own analysis, the study of scientific literature, controlled analysis, offers only a rough and inadequate plan. A few of us are in some doubt whether that is the best way of studying analysis. Where no such doubts are felt, there is yet uncertainty about various presuppositions and the precise conditions under which the three phases underlying the plan should be passed through, and a number of problems remain about their scope and the nature of their usefulness. Some of these problems it will be impossible to solve until we have many years of experience, embracing three generations at least.

No analyst doubts that it is necessary for the learner to be analysed himself. That conviction is, indeed, suggested to us by theoretical considerations, but practical experience forces it upon us. Is there anything new to contribute to the discussion of that much-discussed subject? Perhaps there is, if we renounce the ambition of discovering something wholly unknown, and only want to say some of what has not yet been said, to give voice to what many have felt. Even that

loosening of tongues is not without its dangers. We cannot tell what that which has hitherto been dumb has to say to learners, and how they will take it. But will it be welcomed, unless it pays dearly for the favour? Such doubt is not without foundation. It may arouse many thoughts in us, but no hesitation. He who feels drawn to the calling of analyst, and, still more, he who feels the vocation of analyst in himself, must not shrink from painful knowledge.

Actually, that statement contains the truth that lives amongst us unspoken, and that I only mean to formulate clearly. It is the fact that there can be no profound and deeply efficacious grasp of the essential discoveries of psycho-analysis without the endurance of a certain measure of suffering. That statement sounds simple and comprehensible enough, and yet it is calculated to cause certain misunderstandings—even among analysts. In every society there are some things which are taken as a matter of course, and which we need only utter in order to make them the subject of serious differences of opinion.

To make my meaning clear, I will preface my remarks by saying that I chose the word "suffering" intentionally. I might very well have said, and should certainly have been justified in saying, that, because of certain psychological conditions, this deeper comprehension is only possible after we have learnt to endure a certain amount of pain. But my object was to denote the most vital and significant element in that pain, the very element that is associated with the acquisition of the most important analytical experience, and for that element I know of no other name than suffering. It is certainly prudent not to call things by their frequently alarming names; but it is not equally truthful.

What? Can the knowledge of objectively valid truths, of definite laws, demonstrable by everyone and to everyone, of typical conditions, be dependent upon the observer or learner suffering under them? It will be said—and often has been said—that a condition of so subjective a nature is unheard of

in scientific investigation. It will be said that it recalls the way in which religious doctrines of salvation are learnt, and that it is calculated to endanger the verification of the objective facts, that no such condition has ever been attached to the acquisition of psychological knowledge, and so on. Unable to meet such a shower of arguments, and unschooled in dialectics, I will not attempt to put together what can be said in reply to these objections. I will only remind the reader that the conditions upon which we can acquire certain knowledge do not depend upon the teacher's will, but first and foremost upon the nature of the knowledge to be acquired.

It is the peculiar nature of the knowledge that justifies my statement, and not only of the knowledge, but also of the experiences that must be acquired. The most important analytical knowledge cannot be acquired, in its full significance, without the removal of repressions. And here we strike upon a central conception. The motive and purpose of the repression was nothing but the avoidance of pain. The removal of the repression must cause pain—taken here in its broadest significance. But the removal of the repression, the conquest of the resistance of certain ideas and emotions to becoming conscious, is the inescapable condition of acquiring the most important analytical knowledge. Assuredly it is not only the individual's narcissistic sensibilities that are touched by analysis. It is other things besides. It is our dearest illusions that are here in question, often dear because their maintenance has been bought with special great sacrifices, the views and convictions that we love most fervently and that analysis undermines, our old habits of thought from which it weans us. This knowledge confronts us with dangers that we seemed to have mastered long ago, raises thoughts that we had not dared to think, stirs feelings from which we had anxiously guarded ourselves. Analysis means an invasion of the realm of intellectual and emotional taboo, and so rouses all the defensive reactions that protect that realm. Every inch of the ground is obstinately defended, and the more ardently the

more trouble its conquest and retention have once cost us. But where analysis penetrates to the deepest and most sensitive plane of our personality, it can only force an entrance with pain.

There is nothing misleading in saying that he who really wants to understand analysis must experience it and its effects on his own person, but it is a vague assertion that paraphrases the position rather than describes it. It is correct to say that the analyst's most significant knowledge must be *experienced* by himself. But it is even more correct, and approaches nearer to what is essential, to declare openly : these psychological experiences are of such a nature that they must be *suffered.*

What we have to do is to throw light on the problem in its obscurest corners ; perhaps the subjective capacity to suffer, or, better, the capacity to accept and assimilate painful knowledge, is one of the most important prognostical marks of analytical study. It seems to me that we have no right to withhold from learners the fact that the deepest knowledge is not to be had, if they shrink from purchasing it with personal suffering. And this capacity is assuredly not one that can be learnt. Suffering, too, is a gift.

Is there not a good deal of psychological knowledge communicated through analysis without the learner acquiring it by painful means ? Certainly, I was speaking here of the most significant part of analysis, the most important both in theory and practice, which starts from the problem of repression and remains dependent upon it. But a deeper comprehension of these questions presupposes a clarification of the analyst's own conflicts, an insight into the weakest and most endangered parts of his own ego, the rousing and stirring of everything that slept most deeply in him—if it slept. That knowledge can only be purchased at the price of staking his own person, of conscious suffering. In this sense the reading of analytical literature and attendance at lectures on analysis only mean preparation for the acquisition of analytical com-

prehension. They certainly do not give that penetration that alone deserves the name of comprehension; they remain on the surface of intellectual comprehension, and show little power of resistance. But why should I lay stress precisely upon suffering? Must not anyone who wants to understand the depths of human experience also have felt pleasure, joy, happiness? Certainly; but a person who has once experienced deep suffering need not be anxious about his power to comprehend other emotions. That intellectual freedom, that profounder psychological insight, that clear vision that come from the conquest of suffering, can be attained by no other means.

To spare ourselves pain sometimes involves sparing ourselves psychological insight. The unconscious knowledge, of which I have so often spoken, springs not least from the reservoir of our own suffering, through which we learn to understand that of others. Not unhappiness, not *malheur* or unfortunate experiences are productive in this way. It is true that misfortune teaches us prudence. But suffering, consciously experienced and mastered, teaches us wisdom.

* * * * *

Before I conclude this contribution to the discussion, I will return once more to the theme of inner truthfulness, which appears to me as one of the essential psychological conditions of the investigation of the unconscious. It is a quality that will not only prove of value in the conquest of unexplored regions of the mind. It is also needed in order to stand out against a pseudo-rationality which declares that it is superfluous to range the distant realm of the unconscious, when the good territory of the conscious lies so near at hand. In our analytical work we soon feel the temptation of yielding to that admonition, for the forces of our own conscious habits of thought will influence us to reject at once an idea about the psychological data that seems absurd or scurrilous. And we must consider that the idea, emerging rapidly, often

vanishes and is lost just when it is received. But if we recall one of these ideas later, it often seems not only senseless and in bad taste, but without tangible connection, far-fetched. Although the idea as such has not then been drawn back into the unconscious, its origin in the conditions of the psychical situation has.

The voices of those around him, to whom he tells the strange idea or impression, will then sound to the analyst like an echo of what resists the surprising perception within himself, and will sometimes drown other voices. Everyday considerations will mount up, ironical reflections will block the way, sophisms will appear to check the action of reason, and the jugglery of consciousness will prevent penetration into the region of repression. In the external world ancient wisdom will unite with the most modern cocksureness to lure the analyst away from the blurred trail. And it needs moral courage to hold aloof from obvious " explanations ". But if the budding analyst, deaf to the seductions of exalted reason, cleaves obstinately to the track once found, like a hound set on the trail that is not to be turned from it by strangers calling him, then society will give him no encouragement, even if the trail brings him nearer to what he is seeking. He will feel the desolation, chill, and gloom of the man who dedicates himself to intellectual solitude and is soon alone. The comfort remains to him of the knowledge expressed in the proverb : " Se tu sarai solo, tu sarai tutto tuo." And this is the blessing of such loneliness : he who is always listening to the voices of others remains ignorant of his own. He who is always going to others will never come to himself.

Rejection by our neighbours and the absence of outward success, joined to our own doubts, is harder to bear than we like to admit. But if we have the hope of illuminating obscure mental relations, these reactions may perhaps make us lose our temper, but they cannot make us lose courage. That danger is nearer when the way we are seeking seems to lose itself ahead in the darkness or the far distance, whilst other

people seem to have reached the same goal long ago along the broad highway.

The course indicated by the line of least resistance in psychological cognition does not simply run between the general opinion and the analytical point of view. We shall find it in our own camp, nay, in each one of us. We, like other people, are exposed to the temptation to try and comprehend obscure psychological relations rapidly and according to formula. Indeed, there is one factor that occasionally brings the temptation nearer: analytical theories are no less susceptible to hasty and false application than other scientific assumptions. We must warn young people not to make such short work of the intellectual processes that precede the spoken word, and train them to postpone judgment and put up with doubt. Knowledge too hastily acquired assuredly does not imply power, but a presumptuous pretence of power.

I take it as a good omen of the scientific quality of an analytical worker who has only been practising for a few years, if the explanation of unconscious processes does not come easily to him, when he finds himself confronted with the confusing wealth of psychological data. Thus a young psycho-analyst lamented to me not long ago that he had failed to comprehend a relation, or to grasp the peculiar psychological character of a case he was observing. I advised him to wait and not yield to impatience. If anything is very easily comprehended, it may be that there is not much to comprehend in it. He said hesitantly that from his schooldays right on into the years when he discussed problems of his science with academic friends, he had envied those who rapidly and easily discerned intricate relations and could solve a problem with ease. The case may permit of a few remarks on something beyond the special circumstances.

Very many of us know these moods well. At congresses or meetings of societies when somebody has boasted how easily he had found the solution of a psychological problem, how deeply he had penetrated into the structure of a case of

neurosis in a short time, and discerned all its psychical conditions, we have felt nothing of calm assurance, but sometimes a strong sense of our own inadequacy. Whilst we had not yet really grasped where the problem lay, the other man had solved it long ago. We looked enviously upon a facility, a rapidity of comprehension that we ourselves could not hope to attain. Our intellectual inferiority seemed to be confirmed by the harsh—and still more by the mild—verdict which contrasted our own dullness and slowness of grasp, the " long-distance transmission ", with the other person's ease and rapidity of comprehension. We thought then that the intellectual standard of the individual was essentially determined by these qualities, and had the support of scientific psychology that had worked out, in its tests, methods of making these conditions appear the only important and unchangeable ones.

And then as our youth slipped away and we subjected this much lauded ease of comprehension to closer examination, our respect for it was considerably diminished. Was it, perhaps, experience that taught us to be suspicious ? I do not think so ; experience as such teaches us hardly anything, unless we want to learn from it. But that requires a coincidence of certain psychological conditions. One of them seems to be the capacity to resist the great defensive power of other people's experience, for the experience of others often enough prevents us from gaining any of our own. On occasion it is downright the protector of tradition and of false assumptions handed down to us.

I will not speak here of those cases in which such comprehension amounts to the acceptance of the opinions of predecessors or authorities, that have come superficially to our knowledge. Such cases are, indeed, of the utmost importance to the rising academic generation ; but what I mean here has nothing to do with these external considerations. It relates to another more serious kind of intellectual sacrifice. I am discussing the comprehension that comes after we have examined the facts and found a reasonable and sufficient

explanation. The temptation that is perhaps the most difficult to recognize as such, and to which we therefore so readily yield, is that of accepting an explanation because it is plausible, rational, and comprehensible. This easy comprehension is often the sign of intellectual haste, let us say the expression of an intellectual avidity that is content with the first intelligence that offers, instead of thinking the best obtainable just good enough.

We have daily illustrations in analytical psychology how liable we are to this temptation: there is a wholly logical connection between two elements in the manifest content of a dream; but it is only a shadow bridge across a hidden gulf. We hear a very reasonable inference, a logically unassailable reason for certain personal peculiarities, and yet it is only a well camouflaged superstructure in the system of a serious compulsion neurosis. All that, and much more besides, is only external, a logical façade, intellectual mimicry, set up in order to lure research away from more important things and keep it away from its real objects. Anyone who interprets a slip of the tongue as the absent-minded substitution of one letter for another, or dropping of a sound, need not go on with research. Anyone who regards the compulsion of a nervous patient to wash simply as the expression of intensified cleanliness, has allowed himself to be led astray by the logical tricks of a compulsion neurotic. If once we abandon ourselves to this deceptive logic and yield to the obscure urge to comprehend rapidly, then we cannot stop. We are soon convinced; it must be so, and nowise else. With less and less intellectual resistance, we shall then comprehend everything on the basis of false assumptions—strictly logically. Everything proceeds swimmingly; single contradictions and omissions are passed over, rifts unconsciously bridged. Any detail that does not fit is pushed into place, and conflicting elements are guilelessly forced into a new, artificial system. The advice that we must give to young psychological investigators must be: *Principiis intelligendi obsta!*

We hear the boast made on behalf of psycho-analysis, that behind the mental phenomena that have hitherto been regarded as absurd and senseless it has discovered a secret meaning, a hidden significance, and brought it to light. Confronted with this mighty achievement which has opened the road to the comprehension of the unconscious mind, I fear that we have too little appreciated the other achievement that preceded it, without which, indeed, it would not have been possible. Psycho-analysis has resisted the acceptance of mental associations simply because they were reasonable, or, indeed, because they were " the only reasonable explanation ". It has refused to recognize a chain of cause and effect in the inner life as the only one, solely because it seemed plausible and there was no other in sight. The theory of physical stimuli seemed capable of explaining the phenomena of dreams ; puberty was thoroughly accepted as the beginning of sexuality. In these cases nature herself obviously offered the explanation. Several physiological phenomena clearly indicated the etiology of hysteria, the phobias, and compulsion neuroses—everything was plain, there were no further problems to be solved. To hold these reasonable and sufficient explanations inadequate, to renounce such easy and convenient comprehension of psychical facts—that could hardly be called eccentricity—it was obviously either want of sense or else scientific *hybris*.

It must be stated more than once—it must be said three times—that not to understand psychological relations represents an advance upon superficial comprehension. Whereas such comprehension amounts to arriving in a blind alley, all sorts of possibilities remain open to one who does not understand. To be puzzled where everything is clear to others, where they merely ask : " What is there to understand ? "—still to see a riddle there, need not be a mark of stupidity, it may be the mark of a free mind. Obstinately, not to understand where other people find no more difficulties and obscurities, may be the initial stage of new knowledge. In this sense the much-lauded rapid apprehension may be sterile, since it

touches only the most superficial levels. Regarded thus, a certain mediocre intelligence, an intellectual mobility and capacity to be on the spot, which places, classifies, and establishes every phenomenon as quickly as possible, may have less cultural value than apparent intellectual failure, a temporary miss, which is sometimes the forerunner of deeper comprehension.

In the inner world, too, there are situations in which the cosmos, the ordered, articulated universe, seems so to speak to be turned back to chaos, yet from which a new creation emerges. We think, perhaps, that we fully understand such and such a psychical event, and then it suddenly becomes incomprehensible. We had worked our way to the opinion in question and made it our own. And then all of a sudden it is lost, without our knowing how. We had tested and examined everything and decided that it was all right; and then everything became uncertain again, in the midst of light we saw obscurity. Problems solved long ago become problematical again. Questions answered long ago show that there was something questionable in the answer. Surely everybody has had the experience of a carpet pattern seeming to change under his very eyes. We seem to see how gradually or suddenly it loses the familiar form, how the lines, combined so significantly and pleasantly in figures or arabesques, now part, now are tangled, now try to follow their own strange ways, darker than those of the Lord. As long as we have known the carpet, we have seen that arrangement of lines in it, that figure. Our eye was accustomed to trace the threads making that memorable form. We had expected to see nothing else. And then one day the accustomed order of the lines is dissolved, the old pattern is blurred and hazy. The lines refuse to combine in the old way. They arrange themselves in new, hitherto concealed figures, in new, hitherto unnoticed groupings. A like surprise in ceasing to recognize something may be the lot of many investigators, to be transformed later into the light of new knowledge. What has long been classified,

arranged, judged, and clearly known, may suddenly become incomprehensible to an individual investigator. That means that the conception hitherto current, according to which everything was clear, no longer seems to him worthy of the name of comprehension. The investigator in question might then say: "I am beginning no longer to comprehend."

It would seem that one of the most important conditions of this non-comprehension is an uncommon measure of intellectual courage. I do not here mean the courage to confess that we have not understood something that is as clear as daylight to everybody else. That kind of courage would denote something more external, something of a secondary character. What I mean is rather the courage in the world of thought which is able to draw back from what is universally comprehensible and reasonable, and not to join in the march into the region of the plausible. It requires courage to mistrust the temptation to understand everything, and not to be content with a perception because it is so evident. It requires courage to resist the wave of general comprehension, in the sense of superficiality, of common sense. It requires inner truthfulness to stand out against our own intellectual impatience, our desire to master intellectually that seeks to take associations by storm. It requires courage to reject this form, too, of belief in the omnipotence of thought, not to take the path of least intellectual resistance, of speedy and effortless comprehension.

Assuredly it is not true, as a group of scientific nihilists tell us, that man will have nothing to do with truth. On the contrary, I believe that mankind has a great thirst for truth. The greatest hindrance to the advance of knowledge is rather of a different nature; it is that people think they have long been in possession of the truth. The realms in which the human spirit will make new and surprising discoveries are by no means only those hitherto unexplored, but rather those of which we have very accurate and reliable maps. It is the problems already "solved" that present the most

numerous and difficult problems to the inquirer. If we want to attain new knowledge, we must look around amongst the old, familiar questions, just as Diogenes sought men in the crowded market place of Athens. But we need a measure of intellectual courage to raise and solve these problems, of that courage that will, sooner or later, overcome the resistance of the dull world.

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