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THE INFLUENCE OF JOY

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THIS LITTLE BOOK
WITH WHATEVER IT MAY MEAN
IS DEDICATED TO MY WIFE
DOMINI
EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

In a general way it has long been recognized that joy has a stimulating, tonic effect on the human organism. The so-called “New Thought Movement”, of which so much has been heard, has as its basic principle this revivifying power of joy, in contrast to the paralyzing power of such emotional states as fear, envy, worry, and anxiety. “New Thought” literature, to-day so abundant, rightly emphasizes the importance of joy as an aid in healthy and efficient living, and reinforces its insistence on this fundamental truth by the citing of numerous evidential instances from everyday observation. In the main, however, the literature of “New Thought” has generalized rather than specified with regard to the influence
EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

of joy. It has done this, not from choice, but from necessity.

For it is only of recent years that science has made any exhaustive use of its marvelous methods of research to ascertain the specific effects of joy and other emotions on bodily states. The great impetus to systematic investigation in this important field came from the experimental work of the late Professor Pavlov, appointed in 1891 chief of the then newly organized Institute for Experimental Medicine in Petrograd. In this institute Professor Pavlov fitted up a laboratory specially equipped for investigation of the processes of digestion, which, by ingenious devices, he was able to study, in the case both of animals and of human beings, more thoroughly than they had ever been studied before. A direct result of his studies, continued through a long term of years, was an increasingly precise demonstration of the manner in which the digestive mechanism