

## Introspection

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I reach my junior year in college in a rather feeble condition—having barely recovered from a dreadful mental malady that opened up a whole new world of horrors to me.

It was just when I began to feel myself well on the way through the various college complexities that the blow came—in the form of a vague, snooping, underhanded something called psychology. Across my blissful adolescent horizon, it reared its ugly head, shattering with a grimace all that I had ever thought or hoped I was. The monster began to analyze everything I did. My actions were questioned; my character criticized; my emotions fairly mutilated. The time came when, before I could enjoy a good meal, I'd have to hide my psychology book. Even then I felt guilty, for I knew that it knew that I was hiding it, and surely that very act must have been (see Vol. II, page 46, third paragraph) some horrible and significant reaction to some equally horrible and significant stimulus. Inside of a month I began to feel that I was nothing but a bunch of associated atoms, breezing around to get myself stimulated, and then putting the psychologists in a panic by some silly, unheard-of reaction. This sort of thing gets a fellow's pride.

I soon began to wonder if things had always been thus—if I had always been the same sort of piffling environmental parasite that I seemingly was. Surely there was a time, thought I, when I led a normal, innocent life. There was a time when I was not having every breath, every twitch of my little finger checked up on by this wolf in sheep's clothing—psychology.

"Time was when the little toy dog  
was new  
And the soldier was passing fair."

"But that was before the psychologists knew that important reactions were there," I would dimly conclude. Which goes to show that my literary appreciation also was suffering. At these times I would console myself by recalling the bliss of my childhood days, when I lived in a huge red brick house, had a white pet rabbit and a dresser drawer full of doll clothes, could make a good mud pie, and played with a boy next door, who wore red stockings and threw rocks at me. But these soothing recollections soon fled. A sudden supposition came, as Keats would have said, like a knell. Could it be, said I, that even these innocent memories contain factors of deep psychological significance?

Could the memory of the red socks mean that I was going to grow up and marry a fireman? Since the mud pies were a very definite part of my reactional biography, were they by some complex interaction to possibly become a blot on the family escutcheon? I pondered. The rabbit, too, was it possibly to have any influence on my future? I was never able to answer this last question, however, for there drifted before my eyes the rows and rows of dull looking bunnies that filled my psychology text and my brain began to whirl in recalling the pages of statistics that went with them—that if mamma bunny was a blond and papa was a brunette, just what per cent of the little cotton-tails would have pink eyes—or something like that. After having spent an hour trying to remember whether or not my little bunny had had pink eyes, I awoke to the realization that the whole thing was a nasty mess and had gone too far, and that the more you thought about it, the more mixed up you got. So I didn't think about it.