

PREFACE TO RAYMOND DE SAUSSURE'S THE PSYCHO-ANALYTIC METHOD

(1922)

It is with great pleasure that I am able to assure the public that the present work by Dr. de Saussure is a book of value and merit. It is especially well calculated to give French readers a correct idea of what psycho-analysis is and what it contains.

Dr. de Saussure has not only conscientiously studied my writings, but in addition he has made the sacrifice of coming to me to undergo an analysis lasting several months. This has put him in a position to form his own judgement on the majority of those questions in psycho-analysis which are still undecided, and to avoid the many distortions and errors which one is accustomed to finding in French as well as in German expositions of psycho-analysis. Nor has he failed to contradict certain false or negligent statements which commentators pass on from one to another: such as, for instance, that all dreams have a sexual meaning or that, according to me, the only motive force in our mental life is that of sexual libido.

Since Dr. de Saussure has said in his preface that I have corrected his work, I must add a qualification; my influence has only made itself felt in a few corrections and comments and I have in no way sought to encroach upon the author's independence. In the first, theoretical part of this work, I should have expounded a number of things differently from him: for instance, the difficult topic of the preconscious and the unconscious. And above all, I should have treated the Oedipus complex far more exhaustively.

The excellent dream which Dr. Odier has put at the author's disposal may give even the uninitiated an idea of the wealth of dream-associations and of the relation between the manifest dream-image and the latent thoughts concealed behind it. It demonstrates too the significance that the analysis of a dream can have in the treatment of a patient.

Finally, the remarks which the author makes in conclusion on the technique of psycho-analysis are quite excellent. They are entirely correct and, in spite of their conciseness, leave aside nothing essential. They are convincing evidence of the author's subtle understanding. The reader should not, of course, conclude that knowledge of these rules of technique alone will make him capable of undertaking an analysis.

To-day psycho-analysis is beginning to arouse in a larger measure the interest of professional men and of the lay public in France as well; it will certainly not find any fewer resistances there than it has encountered previously in other countries. Let us hope that Dr. de Saussure's book will make an important contribution to the clarification of the discussions that lie ahead.

FREUD

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