

# ILLITERATE MAN BECOMES A DOCTOR WHEN HYPNOTIZED

## Strange Power Shown by Edgar Cayce Puzzles Physicians.



Leslie B. Cayce, Father of the Hypnotic Patient.

THE medical fraternity of the country is taking a lively interest in the strange power said to be possessed by Edgar Cayce of Hopkinsville, Ky., to diagnose difficult diseases while in a semi-conscious state, though he has not the slightest knowledge of medicine when not in this condition.

During a visit to California last Summer Dr. W. H. Ketchum, who was attending a meeting of the National Society of Homeopathic Physicians, had occasion to mention the young man's case and was invited to discuss it at a banquet attended by about thirty-five of the doctors of the Greek letter fraternity given at Pasadena.

Dr. Ketchum made a speech of considerable length, giving an explanation of the strange psychic powers manifested by Cayce during the last four years, during which time he has been more or less under his observation. This talk created such widespread interest among the 700 doctors present that one of the leading Boston medical men who heard his speech invited Dr. Ketchum to prepare a paper as a part of the programme of the September meeting of the American Society of Mental Research. Dr. Ketchum sent the paper, but did not go to Boston. The paper was read by Henry E. Harprower, M. D., of Chicago, a contributor to The Journal of the American Medical Association, published in Chicago. Its presentation created a sensation, and almost before Dr. Ketchum knew that the paper had been given to the press he was deluged with letters and telegrams inquiring about the strange case.

It is well enough to add that Dr. Wesley H. Ketchum is a reputable physician of high standing and successful practice in the homeopathic school of medicine. He possesses a classical education, is by nature a scientific man, and is a graduate of one of the leading medical institutions of the country. He is vouchsafed for by orthodox physicians in both Kentucky and Ohio. In both of these States he is well known. In Hopkinsville, where his home is, he is a physician of any school stands high, though he is still a young man on the other side of Dr. Osler's deadline.

Dr. Ketchum wishes it distinctly understood that his presentation of the subject is purely clinical, and that he attempts no explanation of what must be classed as mysterious mental phenomena.

Dr. Ketchum is not the only physician who has had opportunity to observe the workings of Mr. Cayce's sub-conscious mind. For nearly ten years his strange power has been known to local physicians of all the recognized schools. An explanation of the case is best understood from Dr. Ketchum's description in his paper read in Boston a few days ago, which follows:

"About four years ago I made the acquaintance of a young man 28 years old, who had the reputation of being a 'faker.' They said he told wonderful truths while he was asleep. I, being interested, immediately began to investigate, and as I was 'from Missouri,' I had to be shown."

"And truly, when it comes to anything psychical, every layman is a disbeliever from the start, and most of our chosen profession will not accept anything of a psychic nature, hypnotism, mesmerism, or what not, unless vouchsafed for by some M. D. away up in the profession and one whose orthodox standing is unquestioned."

"My subject simply lies down and folds his arms, and by auto-suggestion goes to sleep. While in this sleep, which to all intents and purposes is a natural sleep, his objective mind is completely inactive and only his subjective is working."

"By suggestion he becomes unconscious to pain of any sort, and, strange to say, his best work is done when he is seemingly 'dead to the world.'"

"I next give him the name of my subject and the exact location of same, and in a few minutes he begins to talk as clearly and distinctly as any one. He usually goes into minute detail in diagnosing a case, and especially if it be a very serious case."

"His language is usually of the best, and his psychologic terms and description of the nervous anatomy would do credit to any professor of nervous anatomy, and there is no faltering in his speech, and all his statements are clear and concise. He handles the most complex 'jaw breakers' with as much ease as any Boston physician, which to me is quite wonderful, in view of the fact that while in his normal state he is an illiterate man, especially along the line of medicine, surgery, or pharmacy, of which he knows nothing."

"After going into detail with a diag-

nosis and giving name, address, etiology, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of a case, he is awakened by the suggestion that he will see this person no more, and in a few minutes will be awake. Upon questioning him, he knows absolutely nothing that he said, or whose case he was talking about. I have used him in about 100 cases, and to date have never known of any errors in diagnosis, except in two cases where he described a child in each case by the same name and who resided in the same house as the one wanted. He simply described the wrong person."

"Now this description, although rather short, is no myth, but a firm reality. The regular profession scoff at anything reliable coming from this source, because the majority of them are in the rut and have never taken to anything not strictly orthodox."

"The cases I have used him in have, in the main, been the rounds before coming to my attention, and in six important cases which had been diagnosed as strictly surgical he stated that no such condition existed, and outlined treatment which was followed with gratifying results in every case."

"One case, a little girl, daughter of a gentleman prominent in the American Book Company of Cincinnati, had been diagnosed by the best men in the Central States as incurable. One diagnosis from my man completely changed the situation, and within three months she was restored to perfect health, and is to this day."

"Now, in closing, you may ask why has a man with such powers not been before the public and received the indorsement of the profession, one and all, without fear or favor? I can truly answer by saying they are not ready to receive such as yet. Even Christ himself was rejected, for 'unless they see signs and wonders they will not believe.'"

"I would appreciate the advice and suggestions of my co-workers in this broad field as to the best method of putting my man in the way of helping suffering humanity, and would be glad to have you send me the name and address of your most complex case and I will try to prove what I have endeavored to describe."

In further explanation, Dr. Ketchum gives this statement as obtained from the young man himself while asleep, when asked to describe his own powers and the source of his mystifying knowledge:

"Our subject, while under auto-hypnosis, on one occasion, explained as follows:

"When asked to give the source of his knowledge, he being at this time in the sub-conscious state, he stated: 'Edgar Cayce's mind is amenable to suggestion, the same as all other sub-conscious minds, but in addition thereto it has the power to interpret to the objective mind of others what it acquires from the sub-conscious mind of other individuals of the same kind. The sub-conscious mind forgets nothing. The conscious mind receives the impression



Dr. W. H. Ketchum, Who Vouches for Cayce's Powers.

from without and transfers all thoughts to the sub-conscious, where it remains even though the conscious be destroyed.' He described himself as a third person, saying further that his sub-conscious mind is in direct communication with all other sub-conscious minds, and is capable of interpreting through his objective mind and imparting impressions received to other objective minds, gathering in this way all knowledge possessed by millions of other sub-conscious minds."

In all young Cayce has given more than 1,000 readings, but has never turned his wonderful powers to his pecuniary advantage, although many people have been restored to health by following out the course of treatment prescribed in his readings while in a state of hypnosis."

President James Hyslop of the American Psychic Society has made suggestions in regard to the development of the subject's powers. Other psychologists in Europe and America are seeking information, and Dr. Ketchum's plan is to have a committee of scientists of the highest standing come to Hopkinsville and investigate in a most rigid manner and make a report as to the truth of what is claimed but not understood. That this will be done in the near future is certain. Several men in this city have attended Mr. Cayce's readings and are ready to testify to the truth of the representations made.

Recently Mr. Cayce was given for a second interpretation the case of a man living in Indiana, and when asked by his father to tell whether he had read the case before and to describe the present condition, he said:

"Yes, I have had him before. Some little difference in his case this time. Resting easy now; heart action not so bad; rest produced by an anesthetic. We find this body suffering from smothering spells, short breath, depression of the heart, and very weak at times. Pains in the head, especially through the base of the head, the first and second cervical, and front part of the head and eyes; circulation is very poor."

"In the first and second cervical we have a lesion there which is from the reflex action from the pain we have below, and gives off pains to the head at times and especially to the face and facial muscles. This all comes through a sympathetic nervous system."

"Now, at the seventh and eighth to the tenth dorsal vertebrae, reaching the solar plexus, we find a bad lesion, especially where it comes in contact with the nerves governing the heart and hepatic circulation just below the left lung. The trouble first began here. We see a congestion caused from a cold in the left lung contracted from the ex-



Edgar Cayce, Who When Hypnotized Is Able to Diagnose Diseases of Which He is Usually Ignorant.

terior, producing a choking up of the lung and treated locally and externally on the side.

"This filling up caused not enough air in the lungs and produced the lesion we have just above the solar plexus or nerve centre which controls the whole digestive organs of the body, and the congestion we have here in the lumbar region has produced locomotor ataxia and a withering away of the limbs; especially is this most noticeable in the right limb, and producing a very bad state in the pelvic region."

"We find the same thing through the circulatory system of the blood. The blood is very weak; the red corpuscles are more numerous than they should be, with not enough of the white tissue to build up the body. Where we have a loss of white blood tissue we have the same in the gray matter in the nerve force."

"Not all the nerve force of the body has been destroyed. We have weak and then strong spells, because the circulation is weak, especially the capillary, with a heart action strong at times, producing palpitation of the heart and smothering spells, dizziness of the head, and the same of the solar plexus system, causing the emitting from the stomach of the things taken into it."

"We have no organic heart trouble and very little of the lungs, but some enlargement of the liver. In the left lobe of the liver we find a granular substance from medicines taken in through the stomach and bowels. The

liver is not doing its work in throwing off the bile and waste matter of the body. That produces the enlargement of the liver."

"We have altogether a very weak and bedridden man, but he can be cured. To correct this trouble, first reduce the inflammation, then, by giving plenty of pure water, with alkaline treatment, the acid will be reduced. A tincture of iron for toning up the digestive organs and blood, and static electrical treatment along the spine, not very strong along the upper cervical, for this is near the brain, but very strong through the dorsal and lumbar regions. Give digitals and strychnine to tone up the nerves and heart. With plenty of rest and fresh air we will have the man improved."

Edgar Cayce was born in Christian County, Kentucky, March 18, 1877. His father is Leslie B. Cayce, who was at that time a farmer, but who moved to Hopkinsville in 1891 and has since engaged in the insurance business. The son was precocious as a child, and what education he has received in the common schools in the country.

His father says that even in his early childhood he manifested a strange aptness in his studies after coming out of a sleep. It was his father's custom to teach him his lessons at night, and sometimes he would fail to solve the problems presented and would say: "Papa, let me sleep a while and I will know it better," and often, reclining in a rocking chair, he would drop off into a little nap, and when he awoke his

mind would be clear and he would know perfectly what he had previously been unable to grasp. Sometimes he would go to bed at night puzzled in his mind over some difficult lesson, and would rise in the morning with the problem solved in his mind. This became noticeable when he was not more than 10 years old.

He was about 17 years of age when the family left the farm, and his first employment was in a book store, where he remained for four years, and then went to Louisville for one year, returning to Hopkinsville to accept a place in a dry goods store. Later he associated himself with his father in the fraternal insurance business.

Soon afterward, while visiting a neighboring town on business, he was taken with a severe headache. He sought a doctor, who prescribed for his ailment, and, securing the medicine, he took it without securing relief. In the evening he returned to his home about 10 o'clock very ill. A doctor was sent for, but gave him an emetic. He was ill for several days, and one morning awoke to find that he could talk only in a whisper. He remained in that condition for nearly a year, his health otherwise being good.

Being unable to talk, he became a photographer, which business he continued to follow. During this year a hypnotist visited Hopkinsville, and for several nights gave public performances. At one of his meetings Mr. Cayce accepted an invitation to go to the platform and be hypnotized. He proved to be an easy subject, and while in a state of hypnosis was told to talk by the hypnotist, and surprised everybody by speaking in a clear, strong voice.

Believing that it would benefit him he went again, but found that his voice was restored only while he was in a trance. Some time afterward a local man found that he was a hypnotist and began to experiment with young Cayce, and finally conceived the idea of asking Cayce to diagnose his own case. One day the young man asked his father to go with him, as the student was going to try to restore his voice.

The young man was put into a trance and asked to tell what he saw wrong about his own throat. He said there was to be seen a congestion of the vocal chords. The man said: "Watch it now and see if you cannot increase the circulation." He replied, "Yes, that's easy." He talked in his natural voice, saying: "It is gradually going away," then, "It is nearly gone," and finally said, "It is all right now."

He was then aroused, and after clearing his throat of an accumulation of phlegm found he could talk as well as he ever could.

This cure created much comment, but after a time it ceased to be talked about, some even holding that the loss of voice was a temporary affliction that had passed off as it had come and of its own accord.

In the succeeding years Mr. Cayce had occasional recurrences of the throat trouble, usually when suffering from a cold, but the loss of voice was of short duration. About this time he was urged to take up diagnosing as a business, but he refused to consider it, though he frequently gave readings without profit to himself.

During the last ten years he has followed the business of a photographer in several cities, but has been a good part of the time here in Hopkinsville. About eight years ago he married Miss Evans of this city, and they have one child, a boy, now seven years old.

At first Mr. Cayce was hypnotized by another, but he now goes to sleep of his own accord by what Dr. Ketchum has called auto-hypnosis. He comes out of the trance at the suggestion of some one else, usually his father, who has assisted in his development more than any one else.

His experience does not fatigue or exhaust him. On the contrary it seems to refresh him. Sometimes he will be feeling tired and will take up a case to read, dropping off to sleep for the purpose, and when aroused will feel greatly refreshed.

The question of distance is not important, as he has given successful readings with his subject a thousand miles away.

Mr. Cayce will not disclose the names of his patients, if they may be called patients, but says he is ready to submit any necessary facts in aiding the fullest investigation.