



## Psychology a la Carte

The car rattled along over the bumptious, dusty, macadam roads, leaving cities and towns behind as it moved uncertainly in a southwesterly direction; at times it reached the alarming speed of twenty-five miles an hour. It was one of those electric buggies of early twentieth century manufacture with eccentric gadgets and coils, a brake that was notional as a Missouri mule, and a steering attachment that required firm and constant attention.

The M. D. at the wheel and the Ph. D., his guest, exchanged glances occasionally—one expressive of joy in adventure; the other of perplexity. Apparently the physician knew where he was going, for he had said there would be something of unusual interest at the end of the journey; but he had kept the nature of his visit a dark secret, and his companion, Dr. J. J. Savitz, a bit weary of travel and disturbed at the loss of a day from his duties as Superintendent of Westfield Schools, suspected that his unpredictable friend, Dr. Joseph Wright, was taking him on a fool's errand. "Soon be there," assured the doctor, between vain attempts to puff life into his half-chewed cigar.

The scene shifted so suddenly that the educator scarcely could believe his eyes. After a jolting turn, they rode down a long driveway, between rows of fall flowers and trees shaped like parasols of many contrasting hues. A gardener was at work among the dahlias; a peacock lifted his vain head and spread his tail in the grand manner at their approach. Here was an unexpected prospect—a lovely home, on the east bank of the Raritan, the seat of an affluent country squire, no doubt. But no, the one who came forward to greet them on the veranda was an elderly lady with snow-white hair, large discerning blue eyes and a warmth of manner which seemed to say "I'm happy to see you, gentlemen"; though she said scarcely a word but bowed graciously and led them into the house.

Here, too, was taste and an atmosphere of self reliance. Never was Dr. Savitz more delightfully entertained. In the great living room they listened to tales of many lands and people she had visited. During the din-

ner, in mid-afternoon, she directed a remark to Dr. Wright which implied that he had accompanied her on one of her trips. The professor noted, also, that her attitude toward him was motherly. Could it possibly be that he was her son?

Shadows were gathering over the Somerset hills when they set out for home. After a short ride along the river, the doctor made another surprising turn into a driveway. Where now was he going? This was an odd-looking place. Here was evident plenty, but waste and disorder; and the woman to whom Prof. Savitz was introduced was no less slovenly-looking than her surroundings. She had large, staring brown eyes; her face was deep lined, her movements tense, her speech halting and disconnected. Dr. Wright seemed deliberately to ask her disconcerting questions. "She's easily thrown out of gear," he explained afterwards. On leaving, he gave her an envelope. "Remember!" he cautioned.

It was after nine when they reached Prof. Savitz's door. "Well," said his host cheerily, "what do you think of those two women?" The professor reflected: "Opposite in every respect, I should say." The doctor removed the cigar from his tobacco-stained mustache and pursed his lips. "That first woman," said he, "gave me my education. I'm one of seven boys she put through medical college. We've been friends all these years. Guess I'm her favorite. She had no children of her own." A studied pause, then: "That second woman—h—m! There's no accounting for her. Hopeless!" The doctor reached for the clutch. "Now, there's a study in comparative psychology for you, Prof. Savitz: Those two women are full sisters! Think it over—Good night!"

Prof. Savitz has thought it over many times since, else this tale would never have been written. Those two women of the same heredity and environment, yet unlike in every respect; and this man who stood between them, boy to the one, physician to the other—this doctor of medicine with the insight and eccentricities of genius! For the educator, it had been a day well spent, a lesson well learned.