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INFLUENCE

HOW TO EXERT IT

By YORITOMO-TASHI

Annotated by B. Dangennes

AUTHORIZED EDITION

Translated by Dora Knowlton Ranous and Herbert G.
Wintersgill

"The mastery of the Art of Exerting Influence is that
greatest element of Success"

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Contents

ANNOUNCEMENT.....	3
FOREWORD	5
I. BY THE INCREASE AND SPREAD OF PSYCHIC FORCES	7
II. BY PERSUASION.....	14
III. THE INFLUENCE OF THE EYES.....	20
IV. THROUGH CLEARNESS OF SPEECH.....	25
V. BY SETTING GOOD EXAMPLE	30
VI. BY PSYCHIC INFLUENCE.....	36
VII. BY DECISION.....	42
VIII. BY RATIONAL AMBITION.....	48
IX. BY PERSEVERANCE.....	55
X. BY THE PRESTIGE GAINED FROM CONCENTRATION	60
XI. BY CONFIDENCE	68
XII ACQUISITION OF DOMINATING POWER	74

ANNOUNCEMENT

Yoritomo-Tashi, whose precepts are presented in this book, ranks as one of the three greatest statesmen that Japan has ever produced. He was her most illustrious and wise Shogun, and, as founder of the first Japanese dynasty of Shoguns, the reviser of the Empire's code of laws, and the organizer of military feudalism, he rescued his native land from the slough of demoralization into which it had sunk. In 1186 he established the seat of his government at Kamakura, where he organized an administrative body similar in its methods and operation to the metropolitan government. From what is known of his public career, it is evident that the great Shogun exercised a dominant influence over the minds of his people. To him the art of influencing others was the key to Success. The great philosopher believed that the spirit of the individual continuously exerts influence, even as the flower also exerts influence by spreading its fragrance in the air. But just as the blossom can not tell whither its fragrance spreads, so none of us can say how far our influence may reach. To an anonymous writer we owe the thought that "Influence never dies." Every act, emotion, look, and word make it felt for good or evil, happiness or misery.

In the twelve lessons that Mr. B. Dangennes has drawn from the writings of Yoritomo Tashi, and presents in this book, the manner in which Influence may be exerted and the means by which it may be exercised are considered. On a lesson is devoted to the increase and expansion of psychic forces to awaken the dormant energies within us; another explains how influence may be exerted by persuasion and suggestion; a third shows the value of the fixed idea when supported by logical arguments; a fourth treats of the magnetic influence of the human eye and provides exercises for its development; a fifth deals with the power of good example; a sixth points to value of perseverance--the achievement of great things by the utilization of spare moments; a seventh emphasizes the power of concentration, and provides exercises for its acquisition, and an eighth shows that by exchanging confidence one may exert a mighty influence that can benefit even those suffering from mental and physical ailments. "Confidence," says Yoritomo, "is the foundation of courage and the mainspring of action." How much our own Emerson believed in this aphorism he has told us--"Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great." To confide in another, even though one be betrayed, is better than to conceal. The man who suspects evil is seeking in his neighbor for the very thing that he sees in himself, while he who exerts a useful influence is the man of strength and initiative who consecrates his energies to the achievement of that which is good.

Throughout the following pages the Editor has provided suggestions, examples, and exercises as aids to the Reader in the acquisition of this, the desirable art of knowing how to influence others in the world at large.

The Publishers.

FOREWORD

The success that has attended the publication of "Timidity Overcome" has encouraged me to print the precepts of Yoritomo-Tashi.

The attention of the public is now turned toward the old Shogun, whose doctrine, ringing with truth, is as applicable to the needs of our own day as in the time when it was first revealed.

Moreover, it is embellished with legends, gentle or austere, which suggest the sight of a smooth, grassy slope on which appear, here and there, scattered among rough oak trees, the rarest and most exquisite flowers.

Thus it is with a deep and serious joy that I have again opened the manuscripts of my friend, the deceased Commandant B-----, to transcribe in our own beautiful language the precepts and reflections of him who was at once a leader of men and a spiritual guide.

We find them veiled, as it were, under a robe of gray velvet, a dull vestment which the years wove of the writings of men; but, without fearing the light cloud which soon will powder my own locks, I reread his vibrating phrases of persuasive clearness and convincing sincerity.

Again, little by little, I feel myself swayed by the charm already experienced; and the influence of these words, which seem to spring from the very beginning of time, and to have been diffused throughout the world, attract me and enthrall me with the doctrines of his philosophy in ever-increasing admiration.

Influence! that almost magical word, what things it suggests!

To influence others! "What a marvelous gift, and what assured success to him that possesses it!

He will know only by name the torments born of antipathy and of the loneliness of self isolation from the rest of mankind.

The weaknesses of the will, the terrors that cause the rise of the phantom of agonizing doubt, will be strangers to him.

Both the spirit and the body will be under his command.

The griefs of life never will completely overwhelm him, for, having foreseen them, he will know how to mitigate them.

He will have the joy of seeing that men's hearts, under the influence of his word and his example, will open to pure and noble sentiments.

The art of succeeding will become familiar to him, for he will know how to attract to himself voluntary collaborators.

In short, his power will set him apart as a being different from others, and, to use an ancient Japanese saying, filled with dominating power: "He will build his palace on the bones of the timorous."

Little by little, the radiating action of this expanding will acts on me; why not try, through Yoritomo, to speak of this art, more magnificent than all others, since it renders contagious the cult of proselytism and shows us how to prevent it from becoming sterile ?

To influence others! is it not to play the part of creator, since it brings to life in the minds of men an idea which without its aid never would have germinated?

Is it not to become a sort of providence, since good influence buries vice, the source of unhappiness and restlessness, to install instead perfect calm, the joy of living, and the security which always precedes happiness, or at least allows us to maintain ourselves in that state which most nearly approaches it.

"With fervor, then, I have once more unfolded the writings of the philosopher, to transcribe the maxims and the luminous legends that make the study of his work so special and so attractive.

Although all truth is eternal, I trust that in this book, as in others that have preceded it, the reader will feel the undeniable and peculiarly genial attraction of the doctrine which the ancient Shogun exercises over the minds of those that know how to grasp and comprehend it.

B. Dangennes.

I. BY THE INCREASE AND SPREAD OF PSYCHIC FORCES

"There is a country situated not far from the River Yet-Sin," said Yoritomo, "wherein certain villages are renowned for the curative property of the air.

"With the lightest breezes are diffused balsamic odors, which pour into weak lungs the restoring breath they pant for. At the coming of spring invalids gather there to install themselves temporarily in tiny houses which, seen from a distance, look like huge birds resting for an instant before retaking flight.

"My venerated master, Lang-Ho, took me one day to visit this privileged country, and, while admiring the beauty of the landscape, I could not refrain from actions that showed clearly my surprise.

"In the gardens that surround the small houses I see blooming the amaryllis, opening its gorgeous chalices, from which spring pollen- laden pistils, looking like a woman's long eyelashes that have been made heavy with paint; in the flower-beds bloom roses, delicate or pronounced in odor; while large convolvuli climb the roofs and fall in jagged clusters.

"The fields extend monotonously in the distance; strips of land were planted with solid banks of chrysanthemums, whose bitter odor we could plainly detect.

"But above all other odors rose the balsamic fragrance of the resinous trees, vivifying and persistent. Yet, though I looked around carefully, I could perceive no sign of these trees, whose odor filled our lungs.

"Then my master looked at me and smiled:

" 'I thought that you would be surprised,' said he; 'that is the common experience of those that visit this country for the first time; but how few among them are wise enough to draw a lesson from what they observed.'

"Pointing at a low hill, whose silvery verdure appeared to stand out like a luminous mass against a sky of tenderest blue, he continued:

“‘Look! Behind that light screen of bushes is a grove composed of resinous trees. We can not see them, but their beneficent influence diffuses itself throughout the surrounding country.

“‘Do not neglect the lesson this teaches, my son! That little grove of regenerative power happily illustrates a man whose influence radiates upon and extends itself over those that approach him, in pouring out upon them the balm it distils.

“Just as the light and frivolous birches hide the rough branches and roots whence proceed health and life, the art of influencing must learn how to surround itself with an aspect of amiability, and, in order to reach men's souls, it must abandon the idea that it must be composed merely of the rougher and more rugged virtues, so much extolled by many philosophers.

“Influence must know how to enter the most thoughtless spirit, after the manner in which the balsamic odor penetrates these gew-gaw little houses, with their gardens filled with useless flowers.

“Most invalids recoil at the mere notion of the boredom of living in the woods; but they come with pleasure to establish themselves among flowers, and yield unconsciously to the restoring influence that radiates around them in the vivifying balsamic atoms.

“With the coming winter they will depart. They will take up their old way of life, detaching themselves completely from that which has given them a new birth, so to speak; but they will bear within themselves this principle of new life, which has implanted itself without their will, and which will by slow degrees develop itself in the form of a desire to return.

" ' Be not blind, my son, but receive seriously the lesson given to you by the immensity and simplicity of Nature.

“As she influences the body, know that she influences souls also; and your earthly sojourn should contribute to the instruction of a strong and supple race, whose power will assert itself throughout the centuries.

" ' That man never really dies who knows how to assume sufficient empire over others to be able to trace lasting marks of his energy and power over the minds of those who, under his influence, bend their steps toward the highest.'

"While he discoursed," Yoritomo continued, "I glanced around mechanically, and saw some of the inhabitants of these little pleasure-houses. Some among them occupied themselves with light tasks of horticulture; others strolled about, chatting; the women, whom one could discern among the shadows of the terraces, were preparing tea with a cheerful rattle of cups; no one appeared to give a thought to the neighboring grove, yet every one felt its beneficent influence.

"An imperious and passionate desire arose within me to allow the expansion of the forces which energy, always working and always increasing, had put in my brain, that their powerful rays might penetrate weak souls and temper them for the bitter struggle of existence by reawakening in them a resolution toward good and a hatred of evil, simultaneously with the dauntless courage which is the keynote of all success based on noble ambitions."

A single word struck me in this last phrase of the Japanese philosopher.

He did not say "to create," but to "reawaken" in men's souls a resolution toward good and a hatred of evil.

It is this theory that our modern psychologists support so strongly; the plurality of types which one may see verified in a single individual.

"Dominating power," Yoritomo proceeds, "is developed especially by an apostolate the exercise of which, by creating a mental current between the master and those whom he is teaching, wards off opposing currents."

In the cant of modern science it is said in fact that material builders, drawn by the attractive force of thought, are always displaced in feeble minds by a stronger influence, but that the converse does not hold good.

Such is the comment of the Japanese philosopher when he tells us:

"Do not rub shoulders with a commonplace mind except with the intention of raising him to your own level, but do not think of entering into mental communion with such before making it worthy of it."

This luminous sentence may serve as a commentary on Yoritomo's entire teaching, for every line of his writings is an appeal to energy, an invitation to the practice of the cult of moral beauty, and an encouragement to that advance toward the Better, which should guide our steps toward the enchanted temple on the facade of which are emblazoned these eternal words: Truth, Courage, and Cheerfulness.

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