

Suggestion," etc.) we find only 32 entered under the head of hysteria; but Babinski points out, and apparently with very good reason, that many cases included in the groups traumatic neuroses, neuropathic affections, neuroses, dynamic paralysis, neurasthenia, organic affections of the nervous system, are purely and simply hysterical. And he adds: "Can we accept the statements that lateral sclerosis and cerebellar tumour are cured by hypnotism, or by the application of a magnet, without the evidence of a post-mortem examination?"

With regard to the treatment of mental diseases by hypnotism, many competent observers—Magnan, Forel of Zürich, Briand—are not sanguine about it; Percy Smith and others in England, we might add, are of the same opinion.

Dr. Babinski's monographs are well worthy of perusal by all who are interested in the question of hypnotism. Further researches are needed to place the subject on a surer basis, and, considering the wide divergence in the views of such observers as Charcot and Bernheim, the only attitude of the unbiassed scientific student must be one of expectancy and research.

Les suggestions hypnotiques au point de vue médico-légal.
Par GILBERT BALLET. Paris: G. Masson. 1891.

The main purpose of this pamphlet is to show that the dangers of hypnotism, the fear of crimes arising through suggestion—much spoken of in novels and in the press—have been enormously exaggerated. While admitting that attempts have been made upon the person of subjects in the state of lethargy, or catalepsy, and somnambulism, the author fails to see in the annals of crime any genuine instance of a person committing a crime suggested during the hypnotic state by another person. The cases of La Roncière, Benoît, Jacquemin, etc., analyzed by Liégeois (*De la Suggestion et du Somnambulisme*, etc.), he points out are not examples of suggestion.

"But as regards the future," Ballet remarks, "are suggested crimes possible? And, if so, can they be done with ease or with impunity?" From the experience of the laboratory we might reply in the affirmative; but the conditions here, we must remember, are different; moreover, the patients are never purely passive automata; most of them retain some individuality. Only one in twenty of hypnotizable subjects, Liébault observes, will faithfully carry out

post-hypnotic suggestions; and, to quote Bernheim, "education constitutes in itself a primitive suggestion capable of neutralizing ulterior ones." Certain subjects, when criminal suggestions are made to them, refuse to, or do not, wake; some fall into the lethargic state; others get a hysterical attack. The criminal must, therefore, choose a suitable subject for his purpose and train him. This in itself may lead to exposure; and, in addition, the passive criminal (the suggested person) would be more easily detected than an ordinary being.

With regard to the signing of cheques, of wills, the giving of false testimony by persons acting under hypnotic suggestion, here, again, Ballet thinks the dangers are more imaginary than real.

He questions the advisability of hypnotizing a criminal suspected of having acted under suggestion, to ascertain the truth. Can we be sure of the results? Many subjects are known to mislead and even deliberately lie under the circumstances.

When Bernheim says "la suggestion est dans tout," he alters, as Ballet remarks, the standpoint of discussion. If Troppmann, Gabrielle Fenayrou, Gabrielle Bompard, etc., are all irresponsible, where are we to draw the line?

One can imagine a clever criminal, familiar with the subject of hypnotism, making use of another person to accomplish a criminal act by suggestion, but the chances of eluding detection are only slight, and common sense will often come to the rescue in these cases in tracing the true culprit.

As a corrective to the credulity of many who see in hypnotic suggestion a new scourge to society, and as a clear and brief exposure of the medico-legal aspect of the question, Dr. Ballet's pamphlet is well worth perusing.

Uric Acid as a Factor in the Causation of Disease. By ALEXANDER HAIG, M.A., M.D.Oxon., F.R.C.P. London: Churchill. 1892. Pp. 272.

Nine years ago Dr. Haig set himself to investigate the causation and treatment of a headache from which he suffered periodically. But his investigations led him farther than he expected; the horizon gradually expanded until now it seems to him that if his conclusions are correct he has revolutionized a large part of the field of medicine, including epilepsy, mental depression, gout, rheumatism, diabetes, Bright's disease, high