

In conclusion, Babinski dwells on the points of affinity between hysteria and hypnotism (contractions, varieties in attacks, alternation in phenomena, etc.), and looks upon hypnotism as belonging to the large family of neuropathies.

*Hypnotisme et hystérie ; du rôle de l'hypnotisme en thérapeutique.*  
Par J. BABINSKI. Paris : G. Masson. 1891.

This is a natural sequel to the preceding monograph, and the author dilates at greater length upon the similarity between hypnotism and hysteria :

α. As regards physical manifestations, motor paralysis, contracture, anæsthesia ;

β. Psychological phenomena, exaltation of suggestibility, etc. ;

γ. The therapeutic benefits of hypnotism are almost solely observed in hysterical cases ;

δ. Hysterical and hypnotic phenomena are often interchangeable or alternate ;

ε. Hypnotism may produce an hysterical attack.

Hence Babinski concludes : " We might almost say that hypnotism is a manifestation of hysteria."

Bernheim's views of hypnotism and hysteria are certainly widely different from Charcot's, and no doubt this explains much of the discrepancy in their results. Bernheim doubts the existence of hysteria in men, which is very common according to the Salpêtrière school. Bernheim defines suggestibility as " a condition in which the subject is influenced by an idea accepted by the brain, and realizes it." " But then," says Babinski, " we are all suggestible ; and if hypnotism is merely a degree of suggestibility, where are we to draw the line ? "

As regards the therapeutical effect of hypnotism in nervous cases (nearly always hysterical), Babinski arranges these in five groups :

1. Those in which there is no improvement ;
2. Those in which the improvement is slight ;
3. The improvement is rapid, but not permanent ;
4. The improvement is slow, but permanent ;
5. A few cases where the cure is rapid and complete.

In cases of organic disease associated with hysteria, the hysterical element may be cured by hypnotism, and occasionally certain symptoms of organic disease may be relieved by it, *e.g.*, the lightning pains of locomotor ataxy.

If we examine 208 cases mentioned by Bernheim (" De la

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