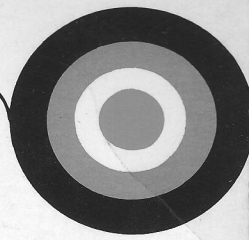


HYP NOTISM



A leading
psychologist
discusses
the principles
and practice of
modern
scientific
hypnosis

Hypnotism
by G.H.
Estabrooks

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PREFACE

SINCE THE days of Count Mesmer, discoverer of "mesmerism," the name originally given to the strange condition of the mind which we now call the hypnotic trance, this mysterious force has been exploited and discredited by pretense, preposterous claims and charlatanry.

The author believes that nothing but harm can come of allowing such an important field of human experience to remain shadowed by popular ignorance and suspicion. Genuine hypnotism actually stands in the same category as chemistry, physics or mathematics. It is based on definite basic laws and principles which have been discovered by patient experiment and research; and just as astronomy has evolved from the superstitions of astrology, and chemistry from the medieval search for the magical "philosopher's stone," so hypnotism has evolved from the "mesmerism" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries into a true science, a branch of the great subject of the human brain and human consciousness. The main facts and rules on which the science of hypnotism is based are known to all competent students of the subject, just as the general laws of chemistry are known to chemistry students; and those general laws of hypnotism are popularly presented in this book.

There are, however, certain specific and highly technical applications of these rules which are unsuited for presentation in detail in a popular book, and these the author has had to touch on lightly, especially on the practical uses of hypnotism in modern warfare. The intelligent reader of Chapter 9, "Hypnotism in Warfare," will sense that much more is withheld than has been told, but as much has been revealed as is compatible with public interest.

The writer wishes to acknowledge the invaluable help he has received, direct and indirect, from his many friends in psychiatry and psychology. Their articles and comments, especially in the

field of hypnotherapy, have led the writer to hypotheses and conclusions with which the men in question would not always agree. Their disagreement has always been courteous.

Men such as J. M. Schneek, M. V. Kline, Harold Rosen, Milton Erickson, S. J. van Pelt, L. F. Cooper, William Kroger, and many others have supplied basic theories and techniques in a field, psychiatry, with which the writer has had little direct experience. If his elaboration of, and deductions from, these theories and techniques seem at times a little imaginative, he presents his apologies. He would point out that the accusation against many a scientist "Lo, the poor, stifled imagination" could hardly apply to these men themselves.

The author has quoted from articles by himself in *The Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnotism*, *The British Journal of Medical Hypnotism* and *Personality*. He wishes to acknowledge these sources.

Finally he is grateful to the members of his own Department of Psychology. Their reactions have been searching, at times almost caustic, but always constructive.

G. H. E.

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CHAPTER I

Meet Hypnotism

LET us first look at a few facts about hypnotism. You may find some of these both amazing and disturbing. For example, will a person in hypnotism do things he would not do in the waking state? Very recently, in Denmark, there was a murder which bears on this question. An amateur hypnotist named Nielson had induced an hypnotic subject named Hardrup to commit a murder. The case was easy to solve, for Nielson was a blundering amateur. The chief state witness was a Dr. P. J. Reiter, an international authority on hypnotism. At the trial, he made the statement that in hypnotism any man is capable of any act.

The outcome of that trial may seem just a little strange from some viewpoints. Nielson, the hypnotist, got a life sentence, the maximum penalty in Denmark, whereas Hardrup, the actual murderer, received a two-year sentence on the basis of temporary insanity.

Several years back, I gave a little tea party at Oxford, England, in honor of an American guest who I knew was interested in certain aspects of hypnotism. To that party I invited two English friends. It had just got nicely under way when one of my English friends suddenly arose, went to the door and ushered in the Prime Minister of England. Needless to say, the Englishmen regarded the visit as a great honor. The party continued for about an hour. My English friends served whisky and soda to his excellency and had a wonderful time as they questioned him on all sorts of political issues. The Prime Minister seemed quite capable of taking care of himself and sent my friends into gales of laughter with some of his witty remarks.

This was exactly as it should have been with one little joker—there was no Prime Minister. My English friends, both excellent hypnotic subjects, were acting under posthypnotic hallucinations. To them, his excellency was very real. To the rest of us, the ex-

perience was just a little uncanny as they sat there carrying on an animated and brilliant conversation—with an empty chair.

Can a person be hypnotized against his will? That, to a hypnotist, is a silly question. No psychologist who regarded himself as an authority in this field would waste his time trying to do so. He would use the disguised technique, a device well known to the research hypnotist, a device as successful as any other means of producing hypnotism. The question that should be asked is, "Can a man be hypnotized without his consent?" The answer is emphatic "Yes."

Then what? That depends on the hypnotist and his plans. Should he be interested in the military application of hypnotism—as is the writer—he might at first proceed somewhat along the following lines. And please believe me, we shall talk in terms of scientific facts, not daydreams. First, the hypnotist would try for that amazingly quick control so essential to his line of research. After a little practice, a hypnotist can train a subject to go into the trance in literally one second, and to come out of it in the same time. The hypnotist would also remove from the subject all knowledge of having been hypnotized. If questioned on the matter, the subject would maintain that he had no interest whatsoever in hypnotism and had never been hypnotized in his life. This may seem hard to believe, but it is a mere chore to the practiced psychologist. Then he would probably make it impossible for anyone else to hypnotize the subject unless he, the operator, gave his consent—again, a little hard for the layman to believe, but a mere chore to the practitioner.

The procedure might develop somewhat along the following lines. During the Second World War, the writer introduced one of his best subjects to a visitor who was striving to master the fine points of hypnotism. We will call the visitor Mr. Jones and the subject simply Bob.

"Do you mind if I hypnotize you, Bob?" asked Jones.

"Go ahead and try. You will be wasting your time. No one can hypnotize me," Bob replied.

"The Professor here says you're a good subject."

"The Professor doesn't know what he is talking about," came the sarcastic reply.

So Jones worked on Bob for half an hour and got absolutely nowhere.

"I agree with you, Bob," he said. "The Professor doesn't know what he's talking about."

"Bob," said the writer, "are you sure you have never been hypnotized in your life?"

"I am," he replied.

"And you are quite certain that I couldn't hypnotize you?"

"That's correct," he snapped back.

In one second flat, he was in a deep trance.

Have you ever heard of, or seen, waking hypnotism? Probably not. Let us give a brief word of explanation before we describe the next case, otherwise you could be hopelessly lost. By the use of what we call posthypnotic cues, the skilled hypnotist dealing with a trained subject can shift from a trance to the waking state, or from a waking state to the trance, with bewildering speed. Moreover, if the subject has been trained with this end in view, it is practically impossible to tell from his looks whether he is hypnotized or whether he is awake—again a mere chore in the research laboratory.

Now let us illustrate what we mean by waking hypnotism. The setting was another tea party in a room of a college at Oxford. There were three people present, one of them a medical doctor who was interested in the medical aspects of hypnotism. As the tea drew toward its close, the writer winked at his doctor friend. Now see if you can follow this one.

"Tom," he queried, addressing the third man present, "where have you been for the last two hours?"

"I've been up on Boar's Hill playing golf," came the reply.

Tom had been hypnotized all the while and the doctor had not detected it. He had also been given the posthypnotic suggestion that when awake and questioned he would insist that he had been on Boar's Hill. We admit this gets a little complicated but try to follow it. The writer had used one of those subtle posthypnotic cues to pull Tom out of the trance.

My doctor friend looked at him hard and long.

"Listen, Tom," he said, "you know perfectly well you have been sitting right here having tea with us for the last two hours."