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## HYPNOTISM AND CRIME.

To What Extent Can Their Resolutions be Made?

There is a good deal of discussion these days about how far hypnotism can be made responsible for crime, to what extent an innocent person can be made to work the will of the evil minded through the power of suggestion. In a recent article in the Hypnotic Magazine, Dr. X. La Motte Sage, A.M., Ph.D., LL.D., writes:—

"From deductions made from long practical experience, I am inclined to believe that the ability of the hypnotist to cause the hypnotee to perform criminal acts is very small. Every day I am more impressed with the fact that it is impossible to cause one to do anything which is contrary to any well-settled moral principles. A recital of a few incidents may be more interesting than general inferences. A number of times I have had people under the hypnotic influence and suggested to them that they were drunk, and they absolutely refused to accept the suggestion. I insisted; but they argued that they never drank anything intoxicating, and it was folly to suppose that they were drunk. Try as hard as I would—and I did try very hard—I found myself utterly unable to impress the suggestion upon them. In one case I offered the hypnotee a glass of water, telling him it was wine, and that he was sick, and that he must drink it; but he would not. I told him it would save his life. He said he would die, then. I kept insisting, and finally he was thrown into his waking state. It is only fair to say, however, that in many other cases I have succeeded in making people think they were drunk who never drank in their lives, and who never touched intoxicating liquors, but they did not possess the prejudice of those previously referred to.

"If a man has firmly made up his mind in his waking state he will not do a thing; the suggestions of the hypnotist avail practically nothing. I remember a young resident of Philadelphia whom his mother brought to me to hypnotise and to create in him an appetite for vegetables. He ate only meat and bread, and his physician thought this to be injurious. The young man was willing to be hypnotized, and very readily entered a deep stage of hypnosis, but, before going in, he stated that it would do no good; and I could not compel him to eat vegetables, even under hypnosis. When I would insist too hard he was thrown into his waking state, even in the face of my suggestions that he could not awaken. Subsequently, however, I reasoned with the young man in his natural state, and eventually got him to promise that he would endeavor to eat vegetables. I then hypnotised him, and my suggestions had better effect, though it was ten days or two weeks before I could create the desired appetite which I eventually succeeded in doing. Each time after I awakened him, however, I talked with him in his natural state, and told him how much better it would be for his health, etc. Hundreds of cases of this kind lead me to think that you must secure the willingness of the hypnotee before you need expect to accomplish much.

"I remember a case which came to me in Pittsburg. A young man had been hypnotized by some friends, who were experimenting, and given the suggestion that the next day he would take ten dollars out of the safe of his employer at a certain time. He could easily have accomplished the act, as the cash was entirely in his hands, but he came to me shortly after the time he should have taken the cash, and stated he felt such a desire, but that he would not do it because he knew it was wrong, but he wondered why he should so feel. He stated he had been hypnotized, but did not think criminal suggestions had been given. I put him under, however, and ascertained that they had, but dispelled the idea. When he was awakened, he thanked me and went on his way. I do not think that hypnotism can interfere with the free moral agency of an individual. It may create a desire, but in my judgment it is always within the power of the man hypnotized to resist, that is, if the suggestion is post-hypnotic. Just what might be accomplished in some cases when the person is actually in a deep state of hypnosis is a question of some doubt in my mind.

"There are, possibly, some people who would do some things (under hypnotic influence) which they would not do if they had entirely their own way, though I must plead some ignorance here, as through motives of prudence I have never experimented, except on simple things; and we must concede that, while the hypnotee might carry out some suggestion which was productive only of slight evil, still, when a suggestion were given that really amounted to much, he would refuse. I cannot conceive why any man who has had practical experience with this subject can maintain that when a party is hypnotized he is reduced to a mere automaton; I can readily see why a novice might infer as much, but not an experienced hypnotist."

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"Fixed" by a Mesmerist. Several prominent people were talking together recently in the billiard room of the principal hotel in a large provincial town in the north when a well known conjurer and mesmerist came to see if the billposter had left any of his programmes. Two or three gentlemen began to poke fun at the professor and intimated that there was some trickery in his performance. Finally the mesmeric professor stood upon his dignity and offered to give a free exhibition of his skill there and then. He said that he would so place one of the party under his influence that when he had caused the subject to grasp his own nose he could not leave the room without taking his fingers from his nose. The wager was accepted, and one of the party, an alderman, gave himself up to the influence of the mesmerist, who placed him by the side of an iron column at the end of the room, told him to close his eyes and made a few passes over his face. He then took the alderman's arm, brought it round the column and put his nose between his fingers. After a few more passes the professor said: "Now, sir, you cannot leave the room without taking your finger from your nose." The victim opened his eyes and at once saw the point of the joke.—Scottish Nights.

His Grief. Funeral Director (to gentleman entering the door)—Are you one of the mourners, sir? Gentleman—Yes. He owed me \$500.—Boston Transcript.

Led the Orchestra. Sageman—I used to think it was very difficult to lead an orchestra, but I have learned that it is one of the easiest things in the world. Seeker—Have you tried it? Sageman—Tried it? Why, I was around to the Globe last evening, and when the leader introduced me to the musicians I hadn't any more than said, "Come and take a ball with me," that they followed me to a man.—Boston Courier.

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## AN OLD BANKING RULE.

Bankers Eighty Years Ago Took No Chances With Untrustworthy Depositors. There were eight banks in New York in 1817, and business was conducted by them on a somewhat primitive scale. Most of these banks are still in business. The City bank, incorporated five years before, was one of them. The Bank of New York, incorporated in 1784, was another. The Bank of America, chartered in 1812, was a third. The Merchants' bank, founded in 1803, and the Mechanics' bank, founded in 1810, were the fourth and fifth. The Phoenix, the Union bank and the New York branch of the United States bank represented the others. They agreed upon a plan for excluding from banking privileges those depositors who were accustomed to or liable to overdraw their accounts. On Aug. 12, 1817, they announced their policy as follows:

It shall be understood and declared as an express condition between these banks and persons having or opening accounts with them that no draft shall be made beyond the balance of account. If any person or firm shall overdraw his or their account with either of the above banks and shall not within seven days after having notice thereof pay up the amount or secure its payment to the satisfaction of the bank overdrawn, it shall be the duty of the cashier of the bank to report the name of such person to the other banks. No note or bill drawn, accepted or indorsed by the person or firm so reported, or by any house of which he or they may then be or at any future time shall have become a partner or partners, shall directly or indirectly be discounted by either of these banks, nor shall an account ever be kept by either of these banks with any person or persons so reported or with any house with which he or they may then be or at any future period shall have become a partner or partners, or with any person which the bank may have reason to suppose is for his or their benefit or convenience.

This cast iron arrangement is what would be called nowadays commercial blacklisting, for not only was the delinquent depositor precluded from ever doing business with any of the banks, but if he was a member of a firm maintaining a private account the firm would be deprived of its banking privileges even after he had withdrawn from it, and a man who overdraw his account would have hanging over him at all times the serious threat that any firm which gave him employment would lose its banking facilities in New York and could secure or recover them only by liquidating his debt, even if contracted long before the date of his employment. By this method of mutual protection the banks of New York, few in number at that time and transacting what seems today to be an almost infinitesimal business, were able to exclude from their customers those who failed to make good an overdraft, and the effect of such a rule was to make an overdraft on one bank a reason for exclusion from the rights of commercial intercourse with all banks, a condition which in the course of speculation as it exists today would be a barrier to the ordinary hazards of business.

The New York bankers of 80 years ago did not believe in taking "snap judgments" on delinquent depositors, for, though their rules of exclusion were rigid and even pitiless for the unfortunate business man, they gave every depositor seven days' grace to make good a deficiency in his account. The theory appears to have been that it would take him about a week, on horseback or in carryall, to reach his friends in order that the sum required should be contributed, many of these friends keeping their surplus savings in stockings hidden under the kitchen hearthstone, in strong boxes, in cupboards or under the floor of the cockloft. The Manhattan company, the second oldest of the banks of New York, chartered in 1799, Aaron Burr acting as attorney, took no part in the blacklisting. It is not recorded in any of the financial histories whether many of the casual depositors in the United States bank were so far forgetful of their patriotic obligations to Uncle Sam as to overdraw their accounts and to put him under the necessity of informing them that if within seven days they did not make full payment of the shortage they would be turned adrift forever more.—New York Sun.

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