

# **NERVOUS ILLS THEIR CAUSE AND CURE**

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## CHAPTER XXV

### **TRANCE SERVILITY**

Dr. C., a known psychoanalyst, on whom I carried on a series of experiments, goes into a deep somnambulistic state. He is an excellent visualizer and takes readily visual hallucinations. Being a physician and psychiatrist the subject's account is all the more valuable. Now Dr. C. describes his hypnotic hallucinations as "mental pictures," as "auditory memories," which "lack exteriority, are not located in space." He aptly characterizes his hallucinations, visual, auditory, and others, as "*fixed ideas*."

Mr. M. goes into deep hypnosis. When in one of the deep trance-states a suggestion is given to him that on awakening he shall see a watch. When awakes he claims he sees a watch. He was asked: "Do you really see it?" He replied, "Yes." The interesting point here was the fact that the subject did not even look in the direction where the suggested hallucinatory watch was supposed to be placed and where he himself

claimed that the watch was located. When tested by automatic writing the hand wrote: "Yes, I see the watch." The subconscious then was also under the influence of the suggested hallucination. It is well to bear in mind this point.

Re-hypnotized, and suggested that on awakening he would see two watches. One was a real silver watch and the other was suggested hallucinatory. The subject claimed he saw both, but he only handled the hallucinatory one, and when asked which of the two he would prefer he pointed to the hallucinatory watch. When asked why, he replied that the suggested watch was bigger. He was really indifferent to the chosen watch and paid no further attention to it, as if it did not exist for him. He tried to please the master hypnotizer of whom he was subconsciously in awe.

He was again put into the hypnotic state and was suggested to see a flower. On awakening he claimed he saw a flower and smelled it in an indifferent, perfunctory fashion. The subconscious was then tested by automatic writing and the writing was to the effect that he saw it. "I see a flower." The subconscious then had also the same hallucination. A series of similar experiments was carried out with the same results. *The subconscious claimed automatic writing that the suggested hallucination was real.*

The subject was again put into hypnosis and was given the suggestion that he would see a watch on awakening, but here made some modification. "When

you wake up you will be sure to see a watch," I said, emphatically. "Look here; I want you to write what you really see and not what you do not see." When awake he saw a watch, but he immediately wrote: "I do not see anything." *Here the subconscious disclaimed the suggested hallucination which it had claimed and insisted on before.*

Re-hypnotized, and was given the suggestion that on awakening he would see three watches. He was awakened and a real silver watch was put before him; the other two were suggested hallucinatory. He claimed he saw all three. Meanwhile, in automatic writing he wrote: "One silver watch, real, the others golden, not real; nothing there." A series of similar experiments was made and with the same results. *The automatic writing disclaimed the hallucinations, although before, under the same conditions, it most emphatically insisted on their reality.*

The subject was put into hypnosis and a post-hypnotic suggestion was given to him that he would see his wife and child. When awoke, he began to smile. When asked why he smiled he said: "I see my wife and child"; but he wrote "I see nobody." When put again in hypnosis he still continued to smile and said: "I see my wife and child"; but he wrote (in hypnotic state): "I really do not see them; I see nothing; I see my child, but I really see nothing." That was when the psychopathic patient got the inkling that I wished to know the truth rather than to be misled by his slavish

obedience and fears by complying with my orders. "What do you mean," I asked, "by 'I see my child, but I really see nothing?'" To which he replied in automatic writing: "I mean that I see my child in my mind only, but I don't see anything."

I then gave him a post-hypnotic suggestion to see a snake. He claimed on awaking that he saw a snake. He manifested little fear. He certainly did not behave as if he really saw a snake and instead wrote "I see a snake. I see it in my mind." A great number of similar experiments were carried out by me, varying the suggestions, and all with the same results. I shall not burden the reader with a detailed account, as they all gave identical results.

At first the automatic writing claimed emphatically the presence of the hallucinatory object and when the truth of the automatic writing was insisted on, the writing disclaimed fully the perception of the hallucinatory object. Finally we came on the real character of the suggested hallucination; "I see my child, but honestly, I do not see anything; I see my child in my mind only, I don't see anything." In other words, if we take the facts plainly and do not play hide and seek with the subconscious, we come to the conclusion that in the suggested hallucinations the subject does not perceive anything as is the case in an actual hallucination. He does not *perceive*, but he simply *thinks* of the suggested hallucination.

As long then as the automatic writing was

regarded by the subject as independent, for which he was not responsible, as long as the suggestion of the hallucination was not taken as directly addressed to it, the subject himself frankly acknowledged the fact that he did not see anything. When this truth of automatic writing was brought home to the subject he was bound by suggestion to claim that he actually saw the suggested hallucination, although he really did not see anything at all.

This clearly shows that the hypnotic consciousness, from the very nature of its heightened suggestibility, clings most anxiously to the given suggestion, and insists on the reality of its fulfillment. We must, therefore, be on our guard and not trust the subject's introspective account, unless it is well sifted by good circumstantial evidence. It is because such precautions have not been taken in the close interrogation of the subject's actual state of mind, and because of the deep-rooted psychological fallacy as to the relation of ideational and perceptual activities, that the prevalent belief in the validity of suggested hallucinations has passed unchallenged. If not for those factors, it would have been quite evident that the *hypnotic and post-hypnotic suggested hallucinations are not genuine, but are essentially spurious. Hypnotic hallucinations, unlike actual hallucinations, are not really experienced. Hypnotically suggested hallucinations are only forms of delusions,* attempts to appease the master hypnotizer of whom

the subconscious stands in awe and fear.

The state of hypnotic subconsciousness is a state based on the will to conform to the master hypnotizer's commands. At bottom the subconscious trance-will is one of slavish obedience to the authoritative, fear-inspiring will of the master hypnotizer, whom the hypnotic subconscious attempts to please and obey slavishly. The hypnotic state is a fear state of a primitive type. It is the fear state of the Damara ox obeying the herd, or the leader of the herd.

Man is hypnotizable, because he is gregarious, because he is easily controlled by *self-fear*, because he easily falls into a *selfless* state of complacent servility. Man, subconscious man, is servile, in fear of his Lord. The independent, free man is yet to come.

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