REVIEW

SUGGESTION IN EDUCATION. By *M. W. Keatinge, M.A., Reader in Education in the University of Oxford.* London, A. & C. Black, 1907. Pp. viii, 202.

THIS is a noteworthy example of a sort of book whose advent into English print has long been awaited: namely, the application to elementary general education of the ideas and methods that in re-educating adults have proved so successful. The forbidding conservatism of the ancient university herein certainly belies itself and offers something almost more than timely.

The scheme and scope of the monograph may perhaps be best learned from a recital of its chapter headings, plus in each case a summarizing word or two (in parentheses), thus: Hypnotic suggestion (discussing its nature, phenomena, and usefulness in general); suggestion in the waking state (arguing the dynamogeny of associated ideas); experimental study of suggestion in the waking state (Binet's work on school children and the well-known experiments of Sidis); operations preliminary to suggestion (auto-suggestion through expectation and interest); the process of suggestion (further conditions of suggestiveness); suggestion and imitation (between master and pupil); character, method, and suggestion (character-formation ethologically considered); education as creative (the training energetics of the subconscious); some practical applications (moral behavior through imitative suggestion); and the sanction of suggestion (in the competency of the teacher especially). The brief appendix is devoted to Binet's "Mlle. R. L.," Morton Prince's "Miss Beauchamp," and to the "Mr. Hanna" of Sidis and Goodhart, in showing "The Relation between Mental Dissociation and the Symptoms of Hypnosis and Suggestibility."

The second chapter is a far-reaching although simple discussion of the important similarities of hypnotic suggestion to the inevitable ordinary suggestion always occurring in the waking state. It affords just the kind of information that the public at present craves and partly needs, the educating public above all. (One always admires the text's straightforwardness: "an honest tale speeds best being plainly told"). Thus: "In the waking state, then, we find the very same phenomena that are noticeable in the state of hypnosis. Ideas tend to produce vasomotor changes or to actualize themselves as sensations or perceptions; there is a strong tendency

to imitate movements and to accept ideas that are in the air; the dissociation of psychological states seems to be an essential for sound mental processes; and, finally, when once it has been introduced into a mental system, an idea tends to persist and to overflow into action or belief after a considerable period of inertness." Somewhat more recondite but not less true there appears later on in the chapter: "The more efficient the mind, the more complete is the dissociation of its parts, while at the same time the firmer are the bonds by which relations of unity knit it together. For its wholesome growth each fresh stage in organization, each tendency to split up the total complex, must be accompanied by an equally strong tendency to unification. The maximum of discreteness must co-exist with the maximum of homogeneity." Again, "A suggestive idea is one which exercises a disintegrating influence on the mind in such a way that cortical and inhibitory ideas are rendered ineffective." The present reviewer believes that from a physiologic viewpoint this is about all of importance that can at present be said toward the actual neurology of suggestion — the cutting-off (in the neuronal switchboards of the brain's internal nuclei) of the inhibitory cortical influences that usually restrain the impulsive vegetative processes guided below in the central nervous system.

Mr. Keatinge notes and discusses seven conditions which, he well considers, determine the efficiency of educational suggestion. These conditions as follows appear to be as applicable to therapeutics as to pedagogy. The suggested idea-complex must be massive, either in extensity or by repetition. It must stand in a certain opposition to other ideas present in the recipient mind, being heightened by the contrast. It must be expected or desired. It must convey a meaning. It must bring with it intensive pleasure or pain [affective tone is what the author probably means]. It must be introduced by a person who is trusted, loved, or feared; or under circumstances that inspire these sentiments; or in a tone of voice or with a manner that the subject has always associated with the ideas that are to be acted on or believed. Finally, it must be introduced so that reaction is not set up (that is, not too directly or too persistently), suddenness often aiding the effect. In a somewhat similar way Mr. Keatinge discusses the characteristics of the successful, i.e., suggestive, teacher.

One chapter (the sixth) examines into the influence of mass imitation from the viewpoints of Tarde, Espinas, and Stoll. An

other deals largely with character and temperament (along the well-known lines of Paulhan, Fouillée, F. Jordan, and Ribot), and with the pedagogic applications of these surely important but still vague abstractions. It is from the study of the subconscious aspects of mind apparently that we can expect the quickest and best analysis of the temperaments, as obviously of the moods.

It is the next chapter, the eighth, however, "Education as Creative," that brings out best the great value that possible discussions of this sort may have, based on the dynamogenic influence of the subconscious. One finds in this chapter a dim but sublimated echo of certain sentiments in Eduard von Hartmann's awful but priceless work. "The conception of the subconscious is necessary for the explanation of mental process; it is still more necessary for the explanation of conduct." One finds, too, hereabouts in the book excellent neurology, although it is easy to miss a large amount of important matter in the relation of body and mind recently brought out, especially in the most advanced courses in physical education.

The ninth chapter discusses certain ethical appreciations of suggestive education, while the short last chapter is in its effect a plea for physical, mental, and moral competency in secondary educators, thus affording the sanction that every sort of suggestion between individuals requires.

The general impression that this small book bestows is one of timely depth and breadth in a timely field, with a lingering demand for *more*. One can scarce escape the feeling that there is premise enough in the former half of the work for much more conclusion than the latter half affords,—applications to many conditions and with much profit that, because of brevity, are here ignored. As a theoretic discussion of the principles of successful suggestion and as a sanction for all kinds of deliberate suggestion in general (still demanded by so many conservative folk) Mr. Keatinge's book is of value to every one, although especially to the teacher and to the mental therapist.

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