

edge as a basis, to define its scope and provide precise indications for its use. Close investigation of a therapeutic measure that has empirically been found to be effective frequently yields important information about the nature of the malady itself; suggestion constitutes no exception to this rule.

The study of this process is one of especial importance, for on the one hand suggestion has of late years been invoked to explain a great many phenomena in sociology and pathology as well as in therapeutics, and on the other hand it is of all therapeutic agents perhaps the most widely used, either consciously or unconsciously; in the case of the psycho-neuroses, many writers sum up the discussion of treatment in the one word "suggestion." It is probable that the eager readiness of the medical profession to employ the term "suggestion" is due, not so much to the propagandism of the Nancy school, as to the comforting discovery that by it a great economy in thought could be effected. To be able to attribute a given occurrence to "suggestion" is with many a complete solution of the problem, and they do not find it necessary to pursue the matter further, or even to acquire any clear idea of what they actually mean by the term.

It is expedient to distinguish two different connotations of suggestion, one conceptual, the other affective. In the first place, the term is used to denote the effective conveyance to a person's mind of any idea—Bernheim's definition. This may conveniently be described as "verbal suggestion," though it need hardly be said that the process may be brought about quite apart from the use of actual words. In the second place, the term denotes the acquirement by a person of a given affective state, such as when one person responds to the "personal influence" of another. The difference between the two connotations may be illustrated by referring to a criticism that several writers, with no knowledge of the subject, have made concerning the successful results of psycho-analytic treatment, namely, that "the cures are due to suggestion."