

branches and leaves sway in obedience to my will, but by sympathy other leaves, other branches, become animated by motion. I quench the latter, pay attention to the former, and gradually from the complex of motion cut out all motions except that of one particular group of leaves. I perform the process of abstraction. I finally quench the motions of all the leaves save that of one leaf. I am now thinking of a point. The exertion I have to make to keep down the motion of all other leaves is known from experience to be very great. I cannot long sustain such an effort. One of two things will happen. Either the leaf upon which I had concentrated my attention will cease to move, neither my will nor the potential energy at the disposal of the will being sufficient to keep up the motion—I drop asleep—or other images will crowd upon the horizon of consciousness, and my abstraction is ended. From this it will be evident why, in the case of insomnia, it is recommended that we think of a point or line, or slowly count, for by this process we quench all other motions except those necessary for the limited image, and this process, as seen above, may possibly result in quiescence—sleep.

The phenomenon “hypnotism”—in popular language, magnetic sleep—admits of a similar explanation. Concentration of attention upon a single, not greatly extended, object, such as a silver piece, confines the vibrations of the brain molecules to a limited area. Weariness and exhaustion follow upon the effort, resulting in partial sleep.

The sum total of our experiences, co-ordinated by conscious effort, constitutes the basis of our identity. Let the meshes of our brain substance, woven under our direction, be plaited into other patterns, and our identity would be lost.

The contents of our consciousness are immense. To control and render them serviceable for communication between man and man, and for complex mental operations, man has co-ordinated these contents, grouped them, and for these groups has invented labels, which we call *words*. The different groups of brain molecules are classified and marshalled into companies, a single group being associated with them as their