

# SUBMITTED TO ALL KINDS OF PAIN JUST TO SHOW HOW MUCH HE COULD STAND

## Striking Experiments Made by a Professional Faker Who Used to Hire Himself Out to Delude the Public as a Hypnotic Subject.

THOMAS J. MINNOCK, the "Prince of Horses," who has been a professional hypnotic subject for the last fifteen years, showed before a party of physicians last Tuesday night some of the remarkable tricks which he has been performing in public to the wonderment of credulous persons and the glorification of the men who have been making a profit out of their supposed hypnotic powers, says

ing an ounce of red pepper, and Dr. Edson produced a large teaspoon. Minnock dropped it into the hot stuff, opened his mouth and closed his lips on the spoon as he withdrew it. It took him some little time to swallow the whole dose, and it was evidently hard work. He got it all down finally, and there was no coughing or other effect apparent except that he was not smiling when he opened his mouth again.

"Of course, if I were getting paid for nock's little jokes, and as he seemed to enjoy it we all smiled politely." Dr. Edson took a stethoscope and put it up against Minnock's right lung, and Dr. Ransom used a phonendoscope against his left. At the end of a few minutes Dr. Edson announced that he noticed a roughened breathing, but did not find any lung lesion. Dr. Ransom reported there was not a clear breathing sound from the left lung, what the physicians term a clear vesicular breathing.

"But I can give you the tobacco heart now, doctor," he said, and Dr. Edson put his ear up close to the young man's shirt and burst out laughing when he withdrew it.

"That's the tobacco heart," he said. "It skips a beat occasionally—changes its rhythm, as it were." "We didn't ask Minnock how he did it, but the 'prince of horses' volunteered the information that he held his breath to make his heart drop an occasional beat. Dr. Edson nodded. He knew it.

"Who'll hold this cigarette on my skin?" asked the "horse," as he lighted one of the paper things and puffed the end into a hot ball. He rolled up his shirt sleeve and said, apologetically, that while he didn't mind the burning, he'd rather have it on the arm than on the hand or face, where the mark could show. Minnock turned his head and talked to me while Dr. Ransom pressed the burning cigarette on his flesh until the fire was smothered. The horse said he didn't mind it, as he rolled down his shirt sleeve.

Then he described the stage fall as he had done it on the road with the professional hypnotist before an audience. He said he managed to fall so as to hit his nose in just the right spot to set it bleeding freely, but he would cut the fall out in deference to the fact that he was in a private house, and the operation was a pretty noisy one when done properly. In place of that he doubled up his fist and began punching himself in the nose. This was really quite amusing to those of us who were looking on, but Minnock after one particularly hard blow was forced to exclaim:

"Ouch, that one hurt!" He started the blood at last, so that it showed crimson in the receptacle which had been provided for such an emergency, and then he remarked, "Now, I'll stop it, and it won't bleed again, either." Sure enough it stopped.

Minnock said this trick always took particularly well when he was under alleged hypnotic influence, because, in the first place, the fall and the resulting flow of blood were startling, and then the wonder of the onlookers was largely increased by his apparent ability to obey the hypnotic professor's demand to "stop bleeding."

When a call for volunteers was made nobody jumped at the opportunity to hold a lighted match while Minnock held his little finger to the flame. Dr. Edson finally had to be the torturer, and the "prince of horses" suffered his finger to be burned and blackened and scorched and blistered while he made remarks about a party of medical men in Bridgeport, Conn., who nearly burned his thumb off once with wax tapers.

"Of course I was supposed to be in hypnosis," he said, "and I had to laugh because the professor said they were tickling me. I tell you it is a hard business on the poor horse."

The 5-cent package of snuff which I had bought in Park row was opened and emptied out into a bowl. Dr. Edson

the breathing sound naturally. I'll bet I can go to one life insurance company and they'll reject me after examination, and I'll go across the street to another and they'll accept me. I've done that."

Minnock wanted to try some stunts with his heart now, and attempted to make it beat fast and slow. The previous experiments, however, had given the heart such a good, strong beat that it was with some difficulty he ran it down from 112 to 96, and then he decided to time his heart again later in the evening.

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care to climb upon his extended body. He stretched himself rigid on the carpet and two men lifted him up by the head and feet as they would a plank, depositing him across two chairs. His head and neck rested on the seat of one chair and only his feet and ankles on the other. The artist was the first to step upon Minnock's stomach, where he stood proudly for a moment or two without any effect on the support beneath. Then he gave way to Dr. Edson, who weighs 210 pounds, and Minnock, who was as stiff and apparently as strong as a steel rail, called loudly for more weight to be piled on his stomach.

Dr. Ransom took a surgical needle about the size of a common darning needle and disdaining a thimble, which stood conveniently by, used a needle holder and proceeded to sew up Minnock's lips with neatness and dispatch, likewise some black thread. He tied the thread in a knot, and Minnock murmured out of the corner of his mouth something to the effect that it would be a good thing to muzzle some of the hypnotic fakers in the same way. When the needle was withdrawn he announced himself in condition to show how he could destroy the reflexes in his body with ease.

He sat in a chair with one knee thrown over the other and Dr. Edson took a wand of light wood about the size and length of a policeman's night stick, without its weight, and proceeded

to rap Minnock's right knee. At the first attempt he hit the spot, and the subject's leg twitched and his foot went up in the air about two inches.

"That's too bad," said Minnock. "We'll have to try again." He got up and walked around his chair, and then reseated himself.

"Now, go ahead, doctor," he said, and Dr. Edson hit the spot that causes the reflex of the knee about twenty times with never a movement of the young man's leg.

Then Minnock leaned back in his chair, turned up his eyes, and Dr. Edson prodded the pupil of the right eye with his finger. Minnock said that by long practice he had been able to overcome the sensitiveness of the pupil. This practice, the exercise of considerable will power and concentration of thought, constituted the only explanation the subject could give. Cocaine probably would put another man's eye in the same insensitiveness condition, but no cocaine was used on Minnock.

After telling us that he could keep his respiration down to two or three a minute for several hours at a stretch we concluded to take his word for it, as the hour was drawing toward midnight. Minnock said that once when he was put in a coffin and was supposed to be in a hypnotic trance for seven days, so close a watch was kept upon him that he got no food for four days and a half. He believes he would have died of starvation except for the fact that he drew less than 12,000 breaths in all that time.

Twelve thousand breaths seems like a good many, but I don't think they would last the writer one day.

Minnock is very proud of the tricks he can do with his heart, and he ran it up and down for the doctors at such a surprising rate that after one such exhibition Dr. Ransom, who had been listening with his ear against Minnock's chest, remarked earnestly:

"Well, if you came into my office with that heart I'd put you to bed and charge you \$5."

Minnock said first that he would show what he could do in the way of making his heart beat fast. He fixed his eyes on the carpet, and after a minute or two of thought told Dr. Edson to time him. The heart showed 128 beats per sixty seconds.

"That was a great horse race I was thinking about," remarked Minnock when the result was announced. "Did you notice that the last few beats began to get slower, doctor?"

Dr. Edson said this was true.

"I tell you how that was," said Minnock laughing. "I had a good field of horses, and the one that my money was on had a bad start. He came up all right, though, and got away with the field, all except one horse, who made the running almost neck and neck with him nearly up to the wire. I had a lot of money on my horse and I was in a strange town, and if he lost the race I was broke. Just as they got to the wire I thought up the hottest finish that I ever imagined in my life, and my horse won by a nose. I guess my heart was going all right then, but the minute they passed the wire it was all off. And that was when the heartbeats began to go more slowly. If I could only have kept that finish up a couple of seconds longer I could have made 140."

This is Minnock's secret for making his heart gallop like a racer while he is sitting calmly in a chair apparently trying to go to sleep. The ordinary man can make his heart jump by taking a quick turn around the block, but it is given to but few men to possess Minnock's accomplishments. In describing his failure to keep his heart galloping the last couple of seconds of the minute because his imaginary race ended too soon, he remarked that he serves him equally well in keeping his heart down, as he showed a few moments later, when Dr. Edson felt his pulse and counted the beats out loud, with his eye on the watch.

Then came slower and slower as the sixty seconds waned, until finally Dr. Edson stopped counting and explained when he had snapped his watch.

"They got going so slowly they threw me out," Minnock's heart on this test ran a little less than seventy beats to the minute.

I asked Dr. Edson the next day what he thought of Minnock and his performance, and he said it was a very remarkable exhibition of will and of the power of the mind over the body.

Minnock himself says there is no such thing as hypnotism; but that is because he has been a trickster all his life, and the word itself with him is synonymous with trickery. One of the most rabid believers in everything which bears the brand of hypnotism whom I know told me the other day that Minnock, despite his own confessions, is really a pure hypnotic subject, and that all his feats of enduring pain and other performances are the result of auto-suggestion.

"He hypnotizes himself," announced my friend, decisively.

With such men as these I have no patience, nor with the myriads of fakers who practice on the credulity of the public with just such stool pigeons as Minnock.

Two-thirds of all the letters posted in the postoffices of the world are English.



THE BURNING MATCH TEST.



DR. EDSON, WEIGHING 210 POUNDS, STANDING ON THE SUBJECT.

the New York Press. Minnock was anxious to show his feats before some medical men, who, as he expressed it, "are not suckers."

"I want to have you people see," he said, "that I am not lying when I say that out of two or three thousand fellows in my line of business, I am the slickest. I have fooled hundreds of doctors in every State in the Union, and a whole lot of big men in the cities. But I am all through with it now, and I'd like to show some good scientific men just how I do it."

Dr. Cyrus Edson, the former Health Commissioner, than whom there is no better known physician in the city, was pleased to express some curiosity about Minnock, and so I got his consent to preside at the ceremonies, which were to include almost anything in the way of self-torture and endurance from eating cayenne pepper to nailing his hand to a board.

"Get some cayenne pepper at a drug store," said Minnock. "They call it capsicum. Then you want to get some snuff and a big needle and some black thread and a couple of your wife's hat pins, big fellows. Get a couple of nails about like a horseshoe nail. I guess that's all we need."

William Leary, the politician and friend of Governor Roosevelt, went along with us. Dr. Edson invited four friends to see the performance—Dr. Edward Mostert, Dr. H. T. Alexander, Dr. Charles T. Ransom and Assistant Corporation Counsel Harold S. Rankin. Theodore H. Lee, superintendent of the American Bank Note Company, called to see Dr. Edson professionally just before the show began, and he remained to watch the prince of horses eat pepper and do other stunts.

While we were waiting for somebody to bring in a hammer and piece of board Minnock divested himself of his coat and waistcoat, lighted a cigarette and stuck a hatpin about six inches long through the lobe of his right ear. When he drew it out there was no sign of blood.

"That's nothing," he said. "Won't one of you doctors kindly stick this pin through my lip?" So Dr. Ransom stepped forward and planted the hatpin down through the inside of Minnock's lower lip, the point coming out over his chin.

"There's an artery there, somewhere," said the subject jokingly. "Did you stick it through that, doctor?"

Dr. Ransom said he had avoided the artery, and then Minnock withdrew the hatpin and called for an ordinary pin, which he begged the doctor to "stick right through the artery." Dr. Ransom said he pierced the artery this time, but this was probably to please the "Prince of Horses," because no blood appeared.

"If one of you doctors will take my left pulse and the other the right," began Minnock. "I will run one up and the other down, just as you suggest."

He seated himself in a chair, and Dr. Edson took his left wrist and Dr. Ransom the right. Dr. Ransom remarked that if it was immaterial to the subject he would take a slow pulse. This left the fast pulse to Dr. Edson. Both physicians held their watches, and Dr. Edson, at the end of sixty seconds, reported 120, while Dr. Ransom had counted but 114 beats.

"I can do better than that when I'm in practice," said Minnock, "but I haven't done any 'horse' work for several weeks lately." Then he asked the doctors to explain how it was done, and they promptly replied that he had excited muscular contraction in one arm and interfered with the regular flow of blood from the heart pump into that wrist.

"I guess that's right," said Minnock, "but I have made a whole lot of people who are not doctors believe that I had two hearts. Of course, that was when I was hypnotized, you understand." And he laughed.

Recently the Indians in the northern part of the State have been holding dances. The Indians of Mendocino and Humboldt counties have always enjoyed the unique distinction of being the best dancers of all American tribes. This assertion may seem somewhat bold, for in all other respects they are not noted for their intelligence. Nevertheless the fact remains that they are the best dancers.

When "Captain Billy," the notorious Indian murderer, escaped from the authorities of Mendocino County he wandered up to the northern part of the State, where through his great ability as a dancer—all of which he had learned in

Mendocino—he was soon made a captain of the Indians in and about Yreka.

The illustrations here represent the Humboldt Indians in two of their celebrated dances. The red-headed woodpecker dance is one that has excited the admiration of all the "diggers" of the Pacific slope. It is held usually in the autumn, and the small bows and arrows carried by the performers mean that they are the superior marksmen of the tribe, for only the small weapon is used to kill the woodpecker and the yellowhammer, with which the head dress is decorated.

It takes a cunning eye and a steady hand to spot these little birds and drop one from a limb away up in a cottonwood tree, and the lucky fellow who succeeds is a hero indeed.

The "white deer skin dance" is held to commemorate the great deeds of the braves who have been successful as deer stalkers during the year. At the present time it is only symbolical, for none of the great hunters of the present generation have ever indulged in the scientific sport of deer stalking.

Every old timer in either of the two counties mentioned remembers the time when the Indians practiced this lost art, and it was most ingenious, too. The scheme was to dress themselves in deer skins with the head dress and all; conceal a bow and arrow under the disguise and creep through the wild oats, which

grew luxuriantly in those counties in the good old days, into a band of animals as they were feeding, then quietly loosen an arrow from the bow, down his game and bring the carcass home in triumph.

In the dance all this is done in pantomime and it is most intensely interesting, but quite difficult to understand to one who has not been previously informed as to the meaning of the performance. The strings of beads about the necks of the dancers mean "wampum," or Indian money. It is not earned through the chase, but through gambling, of which the Indians are passionately fond.

# DANCES THE INDIANS ARE HOLDING IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

The White Deer Dance. The Red-Headed Woodpecker Dance.



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