







M A G I C ,  
WITCHCRAFT, ANIMAL MAGNETISM,  
H Y P N O T I S M ,  
AND ELECTRO-BIOLOGY;

BEING A DIGEST OF THE LATEST VIEWS OF THE AUTHOR  
ON THESE SUBJECTS.

BY  
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*THIRD EDITION, GREATLY ENLARGED,*  
EMBRACING OBSERVATIONS ON  
J. C COLQUHOUN'S "HISTORY OF MAGIC," &c.

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"AMICUS PLATO, AMICUS SOCRATES, SED MAGIS AMICA VERITAS."

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## PREFACE.

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IN the first edition of these "Observations," I merely intended to shield myself against the more important points upon which I considered Mr. Colquhoun had misrepresented me. In the second edition I went more into detail, and quoted additional authorities in support of my theory of the nature, cause, and extent of hypnotic or mesmeric phenomena. In the third edition I have gone so much more into detail, as to furnish a periscope or vidimus of my views on all the more important points of the hypnotic and mesmeric speculations. By this means, after perusal of a mesmeric manual, any intelligent person can easily compare the two systems, and determine for himself which he most approves of; and by this means, moreover, I am making up, in some measure, for



## PREFACE.

the delay in the publication of another edition of my work on *hypnotism*, which has long been out of print, and so frequently called for. That call I hope shortly to be able to respond to, with such fulness of detail as the importance of the subject merits; more particularly as regards its practical application to the relief and cure of *some* forms of disease, of which numerous interesting examples will be adduced.

BURLINGTON HOUSE,

Oxford Street, Manchester, Feb. 20, 1852.

## OBSERVATIONS ON

### J. C. COLQUHOUN'S HISTORY OF MAGIC, &c.

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A work in two volumes has just issued from the press, entitled "An History of Magic, Witchcraft, and Animal Magnetism, by J. C. Colquhoun, Esq., author of 'Isis Revelata,' &c." The author has brought a flood of light to bear upon his subject, and has produced a book which will amply repay any one for its perusal, being agreeably and ably written, and embodying much matter which is both entertaining and instructive. Still there are some parts of the book which I must dissent from, both as to the matter and manner in which subjects are treated, and the inferences which the learned and ingenious author has drawn from certain premises.

There is one topic, in particular, which Mr. Colquhoun has undertaken to discuss, which, in my humble opinion, had better have been left in a profound magnetic slumber,—and that is his attempt to prove that there is no reality in the belief in the *mythos* of the *Devil*—that there is no such personage as his Satanic Majesty—and that his existence is a mere allegory of Pagan or Zoroastrian origin, borrowed by the Jews from that source, and introduced by them into the sacred scriptures. At pp. 258-9, Vol. I., Mr. C. says:—

"We formerly observed that the actual existence of such a personage as the Devil was not originally a Jewish, but a Zoroastrian notion—a

Chaldean or Babylonish hallucination—which had been borrowed by that people (the Jews) and transferred into their religious code at or after their captivity and exile. Even the doctrine of good and bad angels, and their continual interference in the affairs of this sublunary sphere, appears to have been derived from the same source. Ideas of this nature, however, besides being unwarranted, are calculated to pervert religion, and to embarrass and distort the minds of mankind. \* \* The metaphorical notion of the Devil himself, in the conceptions of mankind, is generally admitted, by all cultivated minds, to represent the evil and perverse dispositions which deform the nature of man, or the diseases, moral or physical, by which human beings may be afflicted.”

For my own part, I cannot see how these views can be entertained, without rejecting the obvious interpretation of various important parts of scripture. Nor can I approve of his contrasting cures by prophets and apostles with mesmeric processes and cures. Mr. Atkinson and Miss H. Martineau lately attempted to persuade mankind that their mesmeric researches had enabled them to come to the conclusion that there was no God, that man had no immortal soul, and that there was no future state of existence after death. For this, Mr. Colquhoun rated them right well, and most deservedly so, as I thought. Now, however, he himself, although a religious and Christian man, puts forth the above opinions, which will be startling to many, and may raise an unmerited prejudice in the minds of some against the whole inquiry, as leading to unchristian, unscriptural principles; and will, no doubt, ensure for the learned gentleman and his science, the *benefit of clergy*.

The great object of Mr. Colquhoun's investigations has been to prove, by drawing from the history of all people, and of all times, that phenomena, similar to those which have been recognised in later times as producible at will in certain individuals, by what have been termed the processes of animal magnetism, have existed and been recognised from



the earliest ages, in every clime, and amongst every people, under various designations; occurring spontaneously, or from unknown causes occasionally; at other times brought into play from religious or political excitement, and then diffused extensively through the power of sympathy and imitation; on other occasions and places, as the result of mystical processes, as in the temples, for the purposes of divination, soothsaying, or the cure of diseases, &c. &c. Having proved the existence of such conditions for so long a period, and occurring under such divers circumstances, and so universally diffused, the learned author contends that they ought the more readily to be admitted in our own time, when so much better understood, and more readily produced by known processes. Mr. C.'s examples, instead of opposing, actually furnish strong support to my subjective or personal theory. In the case of the Convulsionaries of St. Medard, in particular, I would beg leave to ask how a *nervous* or *vital* force could have passed from the *ashes* of the *buried* saint, and produced the effects realised at the grave of the Abbé Pâris? Mental emotion, imitation, and faith or confidence, however, were quite adequate to account for all which was there manifested.\*

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\* Allusion to this extraordinary epidemic has recalled to my mind certain reflections which occurred to me on reading Mr. Newnham's well-written work on "Human Magnetism," which was published in 1845. Whilst I willingly admit that Mr. Newnham's work was agreeably and pleasantly—indeed, *elegantly*, written, and that he made the most of the materials at his disposal for the support of the *magnetic* theory, still, I suspect that he was then more of a theoretic than a practical magnetist,—that he had read much on the subject, and taken for granted, as true, the *objective* theory of the mesmerists, and contented himself with merely substituting the phraseology, "communication of the *exuberant life* of the healthy, to repair and sustain the deficient vitality of the sick," for the old term, the transmission of a

In a little *brochure* which I published in 1850, entitled "Observations on Trance, or Human Hybernation," the following remarks occurred:—"I believe that the great

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magnetic or mesmeric fluid from the body of the operator to that of the patient. Thus, at page 17, Mr. Newnham says:—"Magnetism may be said to be the medicine of nature—to consist in the communication of the exuberant life of the healthy, to repair and sustain the deficient vitality of the sick. \* \* \* \* This is a most important principle (Mr. N. adds), and in various ways will come before us, in several stages of our future remarks; but as it is the key-stone of the arch upon which rests the security of all future reasoning, it is now especially mentioned, that at every subsequent page it may be carried with us as our guide through doubtful or intricate passages." Mr. Newnham was well aware of the scenes enacted at the grave of the Abbé Pâris, at St. Medard. He knew that it was notorious that numerous important cures occurred there to patients whose cases had resisted all *ordinary* treatment; and even after the cemetery was shut up, that cures occurred to patients at their own homes, simply by addressing fervent prayers to the Saint, in firm faith and confidence in his power and will to cure them; that in other cases the cures were effected by adding to the prayers the efficacy of some visible and tangible agency, such as a sacred relic, or a particle of earth said to have been taken from his grave, or by drinking a little water said to have been brought from a well near the resting place of the mortal remains of the Holy Deacon. Now, with a perfect knowledge of all this, did it never occur to Mr. Newnham to ask himself the question—How could there have been, in these recorded cures, a "communication of the *exuberant* LIFE of the *healthy*," passing from the *ashes* of the *DEAD saint*, "to repair and sustain the *deficient vitality* of the *sick*?" If "the key-stone of the arch upon which rests the security of all the future reasonings" of Mr. Newnham be what he has stated in these words—"the communication of the *exuberant* LIFE of the *healthy*, to repair and sustain the *deficient vitality* of the *sick*," then, most assuredly, the above-recorded cures by the *ashes* of a *DEAD saint* prove that the reasonings and superstructure must be frail indeed, which are reared upon such a fragile "arch," as one provided with *such* a "KEY-STONE."

But not only were many important *cures* effected, as above narrated, on individuals visiting the tomb of the Holy Deacon, but the *very*



cause of the opposition which has been offered to the acceptance of the truth of the genuine phenomena of *hypnotism* and *mesmerism*, has arisen from the extravagance of the

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*opposite* effects were also manifested to a much greater extent; for it is recorded that immense numbers of individuals who went to the cemetery of St. Medard, merely as spectators of the marvellous scenes being there enacted, although previously apparently in good health, became affected with the most violent convulsions. It is, therefore, obviously absurd to suppose that both a *sanative* and *pestiferous* influence of this sort could have flowed from the *same cause*—viz., from the *ashes* of the *dead saint*. The power of mental emotion, however, a lively faith, hope, and confidence were sufficient to account for the *cures* in the one class; whilst fear, terror, sympathy, and imitation were quite adequate to account for the *convulsions* in the other class. On this subject the learned Hecker observes,—“Every species of enthusiasm, every strong affection, every violent passion, may lead to convulsions—to mental disorders—to a concussion of the nerves, from the sensorium to the very finest extremities of the spinal chord. The whole world is full of examples of this afflicting state of turmoil, which, when the mind is carried away by the force of a sensual impression that destroys its freedom, is irresistibly propagated by imitation. “*Hecker’s Epidemics of the Middle Ages*.”—Page 142.

If Mr. Newnham would only condescend to consider the simple subjective theory which I have ventured to propound, I think he might readily comprehend how the new modes of excitement, or depression, or peculiar distribution of the nervous or vital influence *within the patient’s own body*, might arise through the influence of *his own mind acting on his own physical organism*, and might thus account for all which is realised without the transmission of any occult influence from one human being to another. I readily grant, however, that the looks, words, and actions of a second party may furnish suggestions influential upon others—just as a word of encouragement, spoken or written by a friend, may nerve our arm with greater power, and inspire our tongue with greater eloquence—and that a lively companion, or encouraging expression may excite us; whilst a grave companion, or doubtful expression, would chill and depress—and that hope and confidence, or the contrary in the means used, may modify, to a remarkable extent, the results under any mode of treatment. Still, I believe that there is no positive interchange or transference of *nervous* or *vital* force *from the operator to*



mesmerists, who have contended for the reality of *clairvoyance* in some of their patients—such as seeing through opaque bodies, and investing them with the gifts and graces of omniscience, mesmeric intuition, and universal knowledge—pretensions alike a mockery of the human understanding, as they are opposed to all the known laws of physical science.”

It appears that these remarks have excited the bile of my ingenious, learned, and esteemed friend Mr. Colquhoun, to such an extent as induced him to give vent to such “sensitive ebullitions” as compel me, in self-defence, to offer a few observations on his slashing lucubrations. Had the strictures referred to been of the ordinary character of legitimate criticism, or even had they exceeded these bounds to any reasonable extent, the great respect which I entertain for the author, as a scholar and a gentleman, and as one with whom I have personally, and more particularly by letter, had much agreeable intercourse, I should most willingly have allowed his remarks to pass without note or comment. These very circumstances, however, which would have induced me to be silent under an ordinary, a severe, or merited castigation from the pen of this gentleman, render it the more imperative a duty for me to repel the aggression, and endeavour to set

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the patient as the *actual cause* of these results, as has been alleged by the mesmerists. I do *not* believe that, in such instances, A loses an amount of power equivalent to what B gains. I do *not* believe that a preacher, an orator, or an author loses an amount of vital force in *exact ratio* to the *numbers* influenced by his spoken or printed ideas, sentiments, and illustrations,—which would necessarily be the case were the magnetic theory true. On the contrary, I *do believe* that the perusal of a posthumous work may be equally influential as if the book had been printed when the author was alive—and that the simple suggestion of new ideas to the mind of the reader, through the printed symbols of thought, is the *real* efficient cause of the future results. Such is the “keystone of the arch upon which rests the security of all my reasonings” regarding *hypnotism*.

myself right with the public, when he has gone so far as even to merge me with the materialists—namely, with those who maintain that the mental functions are a mere secretion of the brain, as the bile is of the liver. Now, that any man should attribute such opinions or sentiments to me—and more particularly a friend like Mr. Colquhoun—passes my comprehension, because, in *all* my writings—and Mr. C. has had presentation copies from me of the *whole* of them, I believe—I have ever stoutly contended for the *very opposite sentiments*.

In proof of this I beg leave to refer to pages 81, 87, 88, 89, and 91 of my work on “Hypnotism,” published in 1843, where I entered into a rather elaborate *refutation* of the *doctrine of materialism*, adducing various arguments as the basis on which my dissent from that doctrine was founded. I also quoted the opinions of Drs. Brown and Abercrombie, Dugald Stewart and Plato, in support of my *opposition* to the doctrine of materialism.

Now, in the face of all this, was it not an unwarrantable, inconsiderate imputation in Mr. Colquhoun to represent me as a materialist? And what else but this could he hope to convey by the inuendo contained in the following sentence:—“Does Dr. Braid, then, acknowledge no science but the merely *physical*?” After having promulgated in my writings such sentiments as those referred to, I am sorry to say that I cannot see how Mr. Colquhoun, or any one else, should endeavour to rank me amongst the materialists, unless from a reckless perversion of legitimate inference, or a determination to misrepresent and injure me, because I would not accept their transcendental notions about the *higher* phenomena, as they style them, of mesmerism or animal magnetism.

In July last I published a pamphlet, entitled, “Electro-Biological Phenomena considered Physiologically and Psychologically,” a copy of which was sent by me to Mr. Colquhoun



several months before the publication of his book containing the strictures of which I complain. The object of that publication was to prove the subjectivity of the hypnotic, mesmeric, and the so-called "electro-biological" condition, in opposition to the theory of the mesmerists and electro-biologists; the former of whom contended for an occult or special influence, or the "od force" of Reichenbach as the *cause*; whilst the latter attributed it to an electrical influence, excited and directed by the will and manœuvres of a second party. My theory was this—that the phenomena resulted from the concentrated mental attention of the patient acting on his own physical organism, and the changed condition of the physical action thus induced reacting on the mind of the patient. I contended, and endeavoured to prove that, by the patient concentrating his attention on any part of his body, the function of the part would, to a certain extent, be altered or modified, according to the predominant idea and faith which existed in his (the patient's) mind during the continuance of such fixed attention. I proved—and I had done so, indeed, more than five years previously—that these ideas might arise in the minds of patients, and become operative on them, through their own unaided acts, or from the mere remembrance of past feelings, without any co-operation or act of a second party; and that, in certain subjects, they might also be excited by audible, visible, or tangible suggestions from another person, to any extent whatever—even before they passed into the state of sleep. My object, then, was to prove, by these results, the wonderful "power of the *mind*" of the *patient* over *his own* body. Did this look as if I recognized "*no science but the merely PHYSICAL?*"

But, farther, had I not devoted three pages and a half of the appendix to the above-named pamphlet (an 8vo., small type, closely set,) to expose the folly and impiety of the



infidel, atheistical principles set forth by Mr. Atkinson and Miss Harriet Martineau, in their late publication "On the Laws of Man's Nature and Development," in which, as the enlightenment which they had drawn from their mesmeric clairvoyants, they denied their belief "in a God or the future," and declared that "philosophy finds no God in nature—nor sees the want of any;" in short, that they acknowledged "no science but the merely *physical*"? Was this of itself not enough to have convinced Mr. Colquhoun (whose daily avocation, as a Barrister and Sheriff of a county, is to sift evidence) or any other candid and rational man, that my sentiments were the very reverse of those of the materialists? It is therefore matter of astonishment to me, that a learned and ingenious man like Mr. Colquhoun—professing himself to be my friend too—should have been so excited by my remarks regarding the transcendental mesmerists, as induced him to publish such an unjust and injurious attack upon me, merely because my theoretical views, and limited extent of my confession of faith, as to the higher phenomena of mesmerism, were at variance with theirs, and I had presumed to say so. And, be it observed, my remarks were made with reference to the transcendental mesmerists as *a class*, whilst Mr. Colquhoun's attack is made against me as *an individual*, which, of course, greatly aggravates the injury, both as regards the apparent intention and the fact.\*

Had I not been compelled to defend myself against the

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\* That the sole cause of this attack was merely a splenetic ebullition as I have alleged, excited by the perusal of the observations above quoted from my work on "Trance," will be obvious to any one who shall take the trouble of comparing the style in which the author referred to me and my writings, at Vol. I. page 112, and Vol. II. page 118, which had been written *before* reading said remarks, with what he wrote in the preface *after* their perusal.

charge of being a *materialist*, I should not have deemed the other charges of my learned friend of sufficient importance to demand a formal reply. However, having been forced to enter the lists, it may be as well to take a brief glance at the *other* charges this gentleman has brought against me. He charges me with having been “uncandid, uncourteous, and unjust towards my fellow-labourers in the magnetic mine.” To the first count in this indictment I plead *not guilty*, and for this reason, that it cannot be “*uncandid*” to declare what one honestly believes to be the truth; and such, assuredly, was the case with me in all which I said on that occasion. To the second count, “uncourteous,” I must plead guilty, but with justification of the offence, in consequence of certain circumstances connected with my observations. I am aware that it may be considered “uncourteous,” on some occasions, to speak the truth; still, circumstances may arise to render it requisite that the truth should be spoken, and such I considered was the case in that instance. To the third count, “unjust,” I plead *not guilty*, because that the views which I have taken, in opposition to those of the animal magnetists, I believe to be much nearer the truth than theirs. I might, with much more propriety, apply the term “unjust” to the conduct of Mr. Colquhoun, in reference to myself, not merely on the point already discussed, but also when he says, “Is he (Mr. Braid) acquainted with *all* the laws even of physical science, with all their various modifications under peculiar circumstances?” Mr. C. had no right, by such an insinuation, to impute to me any such arrogant pretensions, seeing that, in the very words he had quoted from my work, only two sentences before this charge, I expressed myself thus:—

“Pretensions alike a mockery of the human understanding, as they are opposed to all the KNOWN laws of physical

science." I spoke only of "all the *known* laws," therefore it was both uncandid and unjust in the learned gentleman to impute to me any greater pretensions than I had actually alleged myself possessed of.

Mr. Colquhoun says he has not had the good fortune to meet with any scientific mesmerist who invested his patients "with the gifts and graces of omniscience." But what else, let me ask, is investing them with the clairvoyance which the mesmerists contend for (which Mr. C. declares, at page 47, he conceives "equally capable of being demonstrated as any other portions of the science,") but investing them "with the gifts and graces of omniscience?" The grand scope of Mr. C.'s book is to prove, by drawing from the records of all people and of all times, that the phenomena of catalepsy, trance, somnambulism, extase, the gift of prophecy, magic, witchcraft, the second sight, divination, universal knowledge by intuition or inspiration, thought-reading; the power of *seeing* from the pit of the stomach, or any other part of the body, without the use of the eyes; of seeing through opaque bodies; of tasting and feeling through the physical organs of others instead of their own; of enabling them to see and describe what may be transacted at any moment of time, past, present, or future, by any party, at any part of the habitable globe, or even throughout any part of creation; to invest parties uneducated in medical science with the faculty or power to discover the nature, cause, and cure of any disease, even without seeing or touching the patient, but merely by sending the clairvoyant a lock of the absent patient's hair, or his hand-writing—such as the address of a letter written by him—to the entranced Sibyl;—all these marvels, and much more, Mr. Colquhoun endeavours to prove have existed in all ages and in all countries, arising spontaneously occa-



sionally, or from unknown causes; and he contends that a similar condition may be produced, in certain subjects, at any time by the mesmeric processes. Now, if this really is a *fact*, that the mere exercise of the silent will of the mesmerist, or the wafting of his hand through the air, so as to make a few mesmeric passes, can impart to his patients all these alleged wonderful powers, is it not very like investing their subjects “with the gifts and graces of omniscience?” And, be it remarked, Mr. Colquhoun repudiates the notion that any of these wonderful feats are accomplished by a process of reasoning from known facts to probable results, but seems to suppose that they acquire “universal lucidity” (‘Clairvoyance,’ page 108,) as an instinct, or “immediate intuition of the soul, without any assistance from the reasoning faculties.”—P. 51.

I cannot better express my views regarding the presumed mesmeric-clairvoyance than by the following quotation from my recently published pamphlet. At page 27, I said:—

“Professor Gregory thinks that I have gone too far in denying the existence of clairvoyance and what are called the higher phenomena. It is quite possible that it may be my misfortune to have such a constitution of mind as requires too great an amount of evidence before I can be convinced that certain phenomena are facts; still, when I state *this* fact, that I have had many opportunities of investigating the pretensions of alleged clairvoyants of the first water, and, from knowing and attending to the sources of fallacy requiring to be guarded against, that I found *every individual clairvoyant wanting*, even including trials by myself and others, on several occasions, with a subject who has been adduced by the Professor, in his recent work, as *one of the most lucid examples on record*; under such circumstances, I think few can feel surprised that I should still be somewhat sceptical as to the *bonâ fides* of these transcendental phenomena, which are said only to manifest themselves *occasionally*; and that, again, only *in a few individuals*; and, moreover, before those *only* whose foregone conclusions incline them, unwittingly, to overlook sources of fallacy of vital importance in such an investigation, and to accept vague generalities as clear and

satisfactory replies, on points which ought to be determined with the utmost rigour and unmistakable accuracy. To say that ninety-nine negatives will not gainsay or disprove *one* positive fact, as many argue, I readily admit; but I admit it only on the following conditions—provided always that the assumed *positive fact* can be clearly and satisfactorily proved to be a *fact*. In such a case as that, however, I would look very charily at the solitary alleged fact, from a fear that, after all, it might not be a *real*, but only a *spurious* result—a mere illusion—arising out of the numerous chances of error, having deceived me, in some way, in this solitary successful case. From all which I have seen, read, and heard, on the subject, I think I am fully entitled to say that, if we are not warranted to pronounce the things supposed to be performed by clairvoyants *impossible*—feats which never *can* be proved by any possible amount of evidence—still I consider myself justified in saying, that it is highly improbable that such a power or faculty will ever be realized so as to be satisfactorily proved to the conviction of mankind at large.”

It has always appeared to me as a strong argument against such a power being delegated to man, that it would upset the whole fabric of society, in the present state of its existence—in which so much depends on each individual being able to confine a knowledge of the state of his affairs and intentions to himself and his friends only, and give his chief attention to his own concerns.

However, I most cordially agree with the judicious remarks of the reviewer of Mr. Colquhoun's book in the “Critic,” of the 15th January, page 32, where he says—“Obviously, science is a question of *fact*. It is useless to assail asserted facts by *reasons* for their non-existence. There is but one way of disproving them, and that is by trying the experiment. \* \* \* Verbal controversy is a most wasteful method of trying physical truths. It takes so much more time. The *experiment* may, probably, be tried in a few hours; an *argument* at probabilities and possibilities may extend over years.” In reference to the veritable clairvoyance of the mesmerists,

according to the above canon of the reviewer, I am entitled to offer an opinion, because “ I *have* tried, and found them to *fail*. I *have* put the asserted experiment to the proof, and it has *not* yielded the result.” And, moreover, I have made these experiments honestly and fairly, and frequently, with *my own patients and friends*, as well as with some of the most noted clairvoyants of others ; still nothing satisfactory was realised by such investigations.

The following was the result of a trial with a noted clairvoyant—so noted, that her fee, when in London, was *five guineas for a single consultation* when she called on the patient, or three guineas when consulted at her own residence. In order to prove to my satisfaction, and induce me to give a certificate of her wonderful powers at detecting and prescribing for diseases by mesmeric-clairvoyance, her husband offered to put her to sleep ; and, when in this state, she voluntarily offered to prove her clairvoyant powers, by describing and prescribing for *my own complaints*. As she had never seen me before, I considered this was an unexceptionable offer. She then made the examination by applying the tips of her fingers to various parts of her own person, raising them again and again before her face, as if reading the required information from the points of the fingers. I determined to watch carefully all that was said and done, and say nothing which could either *lead or mislead* the clairvoyant sibyl. She detected and described minutely, and prescribed for, *three grave complaints*, which she discovered me labouring under ; but, more satisfactorily for myself than the clairvoyant and her husband, I was bound in candour, at last to declare, that neither then, nor at any period of my life, had I suffered from any one of the three grave diseases she alleged I was afflicted with.

But what, after all, let me ask, would be the value of the



clairvoyance contended for by the mesmerists, in a *practical* point of view, even if they could satisfactorily prove its existence in certain cases? For, according to their own showing, the capriciousness and uncertainty of this alleged faculty would render it worthless, because of the difficulty of determining when the enunciations of clairvoyants were true, and when they were erroneous. Even Mr. Colquhoun admits this at page 216 of volume II., where he says,—“We cannot always depend upon the same accuracy of instinct; for there are many confused magnetic states in which truth may be mingled with error; and such annunciations, therefore, may mislead the by-stander; and, for this reason, they ought always to be received with great caution!” And, again, at pages 218-19, he says,—“The conclusion, therefore, to which we are disposed to come, in regard to this matter of instinct of remedies, is this—that, in many cases, this instinctive feeling is natural and just, and may be depended upon; but that, in other cases, it may be impure and merely fanciful; and that it requires a great deal of tact and experience on the part of the observer, in order to enable him to distinguish the true from the false.”

This is also fairly admitted by Dr. Haddock, regarding his subject Emma, who is held up for admiration by Professor Gregory and others, as being one of the most remarkable clairvoyant subjects who has been met with; and the reports of her alleged visits to Sir John Franklin at the North Pole, of course, invested her with no ordinary degree of notoriety. At page 114 of the second edition of his work, entitled “Somnolism and Psychicism,” the author says,—“I would by no means wish the reader to suppose that Emma was always successful. In some cases there have been no means of proving or disproving her statements; in others, she has apparently mixed up the *past with the present*, and thus

presented a confused and erroneous picture." Then, after enumerating other sources of error in her revelations, the doctor adds:—"The reader will thus see the difficulties attending these inquiries, and observe the many sources of error. Clairvoyance has its *uses*; and, unfortunately, from the enthusiasm of some parties, and knavery of others, its *abuses*. But it ought, by no means, to be considered as equalling, much less of superseding, the investigations and conclusions of the normal, rational faculty."

Such an admission as the one contained in the last sentence of the above quotation, coming as it does from a gentleman who makes constant professional use of said clairvoyant, for the purposes of diagnosis, prognosis, and the treatment of diseases, is highly significant, and fully justifies the humble estimate which I made of its *practical* value at the beginning of the paragraph, page 17. It is, obviously, merely a dream spoken and acted out, directed and modified by suggestions of those present, and partakes of the peculiar character of dreaming, which is to accept every idea arising in the mind, or suggested to it through impressions on the senses, as present realities, with a tendency, as in insanity, to reason correctly, occasionally, from the erroneous premises which had been assumed as true. Like dreaming and fortune-telling, moreover, the answers, like those of all oracular predictions, are given in very vague phraseology; so that they may admit of any variety of interpretation which may best suit the fancy of the parties interested in the issue of the inquiry.\*

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\* Another point in which it seems to resemble dreaming is this, that through the multiplicity of ideas rushing through the mind in a confused manner, it is easy for the person who remembers his dreams on awaking to allege that such and such occurrences are foreshadowed or revealed to him in this manner; or to imagine to himself, after their actual occur-

The observations contained in the paragraphs pages 36-7 of Mr. Colquhoun's "Preface," are calculated to convey most erroneous notions regarding me. They implicate me in making undue attempts to claim for myself the credit of being an "original discoverer," and endeavouring to supplant mesmerism by its younger brother, *hypnotism*. Mr. Colquhoun was as well aware as myself that the method devised by me for demonstrating the fallacy of the mesmeric theory, about

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rence, that such and such things really had been prefigured to him. Moreover, there are not wanting occasional instances of individuals having in their sleep exercised a process of reasoning, so as to solve difficult problems, or complete and perfect literary compositions, with which they had been puzzled and perplexed and were unable to accomplish during their waking moments. This actually occurred with myself, when I was a school-boy; and it has also occurred to several of my friends, and to others of whom I have read accounts, some of whom had recorded in their sleep, or spontaneous somnambulism, the result of their labours, unknown to themselves on awaking, whilst others remembered all which had occurred during their sleep. Still, these are such rare exceptions to the general stuff of which dreams are made up, that I believe few individuals would be rash enough to hazard important enterprises by a minute and strict adherence to the revelations communicated to them in dreams. Just as there are always some who attach great importance to ordinary dreams, through the occasional coincidences and alleged successes which occur, so will the like occasional coincidences and apparent successes always secure a certain class as believers in the importance and truth of clairvoyant revelations. Even mesmeric clairvoyants, however, with all the aids which they enjoy over the natural dreamer, by suggestions caught from the leading questions, observations, looks, and gestures of those around them (for many of them are seeing through their *partially closed eyelids*, and scrutinizing all which is going on, by the aid of the ordinary organ of vision, and other organs of sense, whilst the bystander is not at all aware of this important fact)—I say, even with all these aids, one of the most noticeable things about the *instinct* of mesmeric clairvoyants, compared with that of animals, is this—that the *instinct* of animals is *generally right*, whereas the *instinct* of mesmeric clairvoyants is *generally wrong*.



a magnetic fluid or force being the *cause* of the phenomena educed by these various processes, *in as far as I was aware at that time*, was entirely new—or, if he prefer that term, it was a *discovery* ; for I was not then aware of it having been resorted to by any one else. However, having undertaken the investigation of the habits of the Hindoos and Magi of Persia, in 1844-5, I was enabled to publish a series of papers in the *Medical Times*, on “ Magic, Mesmerism, Hypnotism, &c., Historically and Physiologically considered.” In these papers I stated that I had found in the writings referred to, “ many statements corroborative of the fact, that the eastern saints are all self-hypnotizers—adopting means essentially (but *not identically*, I wish it specially to be observed,) the same as those which I had recommended for similar purposes.” I added, that it was “ a curious and important fact, clearly demonstrated by my investigation, that what *observation and experience* had led me to adopt and recommend as the most speedy and effectual mode of inducing the nervous sleep and its subsequent phenomena, had been practised by the *Magi of Persia* for ages before the Christian era—most probably from the earliest times ; was known to Zoroaster, who followed in their steps, 550 years before Christ ; and from this found its way into India in those days, where it has been employed by the Hindoo saints and religious mendicants, Jogees, Fakirs, and others.” I farther added :—“ Whilst there is this remarkable coincidence, however, between my own views and theirs, as to the mode of *inducing* the *sleep* and *some of the phenomena*, in the sequel it will be found that our theoretical views as to the nature and cause of the *subsequent and ulterior* phenomena, ‘ are wide as the poles asunder.’ ” Now, these are the very papers which Mr. Colquhoun has referred to in such flattering terms at page 112, vol I. ; and can he really think,

under such circumstances, that he was warranted in making such remarks as those contained in his *Preface*, imputing to me a desire to conceal what I knew had been long ago done by others, in order that I may appropriate to myself what belongs to them?

Strictly speaking, perhaps there is really nothing new under the sun—that is to say, there may be no idea of the present day which may not, in some shape or other, be alleged to have occurred to the mind of some other human being, long deceased or still alive. But it is not the vague, and confused, and dreamy idea which is of importance and of real practical value. It is only when an individual has been enabled, in some measure, to explain the nature and cause of certain phenomena, or at least to devise means for gaining such certainty and precision to processes and their sequences and relations, as shall give a definite form and practical bearing to the ideas, that they really come to merit the appellation of *a discovery*. Now, all which I have ever laid claim to, was simply the discovery of more certain and speedy modes of producing the hypnotic state, and of applying it with the more advantage for the relief and cure of disease, than by “the old-established modes of mesmerising;” and also that my method has enabled me to demonstrate that the influence is subjective, or personal, and *not objective*, or the result of the transmission of an occult, magnetic, or odyllic, or vital, or nervous influence or fluid, passing from the operator to the patient. In respect to the attempts of mesmerists to give the merit due to me in this matter, and to this extent, to any dead or living man, rather than to the author of *hypnotism*, I may be consoled, perhaps, by reflecting on the following shrewd remark:—“In the progress of improvements, it is always a good sign of their appreciation when attempts are made to rob the authors of the merit due to them.”

Throughout the whole of my inquiries my chief desire has been to arrive at what could be rendered most practically useful for the relief and cure of disease; and I hesitate not to say, that, in the hands of a skilful medical man, who thoroughly understands the peculiar modes which I have devised for varying the effects in a manner applicable to different cases, *hypnotism*, besides being the speediest method for inducing the condition, is, moreover, capable of achieving *all the good* to be attained by the *ordinary mesmerising processes*, and MUCH MORE.

However, after the susceptibility has been fairly stamped upon patients who are naturally highly impressionable, I adopt either my own usual process, or the common mesmerising modes indifferently, because either will so speedily induce the state favourable for varying the mental and physical conditions, according to the indications in each particular case. After the susceptibility has been engendered, the modes of working out the subsequent results, so as to produce the specific effects required in each case, I consider the most important part of the whole affair. There is obviously one remarkable result of a fixed act of attention, and which I insist on, if it does not arise spontaneously, from the simple act of gazing steadily at some unexciting and empty thing, and that is—the suppression of the respiration which accompanies such act. The influence of suppressed respiration on the state of the oxygenation of the blood, and in preventing the elimination of carbonic acid, I doubt not, plays an important part in making the slight organic changes on which the hypnotic and mesmeric condition is at *first* engendered. Subsequently, however, habit and expectation play the most important part for inducing the sleep.

Of course there is one point which renders *hypnotism* less



an object of approbation with a certain class of society—viz., that I lay no claim for it to produce the marvellous or transcendental phenomena; nor do I allege that the phenomena manifested have any relation to a magnetic temperament or some peculiar or occult power possessed in an extraordinary degree by the operator. These are all circumstances which appeal powerfully to the feelings of the lovers of the marvellous, and therefore tell in favour of mesmerism; and, moreover, seeing that, for conducting the hypnotic processes with any degree of certainty and success, I contend that, in many cases, a knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology, and therapeutics are all requisite, it is obvious that such requirements must be less calculated to secure the approbation of *non-professional* mesmerists and amateurs, whose magnetic creed taught them to believe that the mere possession by them of the magnetic temperament,—of a surcharge by nature, within their own bodies, of a magnetic fluid, or odyle,—is quite sufficient to enable them to treat any case as efficiently as the most skilful medical man in the universe, simply by walking up to the patient with the *will* and *good intention* of doing him service, or by adding thereto, occasionally, the efficacy of mesmeric touches, passes, or manipulations.

All I claim for hypnotism is now willingly admitted by the great majority of scientific men, who have investigated the subject without previous prejudice in favour of mesmerism; and even Mr. C. himself admits, at page 188, vol. ii, that, in the course of my researches in hypnotism, I have brought forward “many curious facts and illustrations which well deserve the attention of all who take an interest in the investigation of the subject.”

But further, in reply to Mr. Colquhoun’s remarks at pages

36-7 (preface), I beg leave to state, that the sole object which I had in view, in undertaking the experimental investigation of animal magnetism, was to devise a simple and satisfactory mode of demonstrating that the real cause of the phenomena manifested was subjective or personal, and not objective, or the result of any magnetic fluid or force passing from the operator to the patient ; and, as I succeeded by this attempt in producing all the *ordinary* and *useful* phenomena, (useful in a curative point of view, I mean) more speedily and certainly than by the ordinary mesmerising methods, whilst I never succeeded in producing clairvoyance and the higher phenomena, I thought it better to discuss the phenomena producible by my method under a new name, and adopted the term hypnotism, or nervous sleep.\* By this means I hoped that hypnotism might be prosecuted quite independently of any bias or prejudice, either for or against the subject as connected with mesmerism, and only by the facts which could be adduced. Like the originators of all new views, however, hypnotism has subjected me to much contention ; for the scèptics, from not perceiving the difference between my method and that of the mesmerists, and the limited extent of my pretentions, were equally hostile to hypnotism as they had been to mesmerism ; and the mesmerists, thinking their craft was in danger—that their mystical idol was threatened to be shorn of some of its glory by the advent of a new rival,—buckled on their armour, and soon proved that the *odium mesmericum* was as inveterate as the *odium theologicum* ; for they seemed even more exasperated against me for my slight divergence from their dogmas, than would have been the case had I conti-

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\* The original term which I had adopted was “Neuro-Hypnotism ;” but, for the sake of brevity, I proposed to omit the prefix “Neuro.” My adopting the term ‘hypnotism,’ therefore, could be no intended plagiarism.

nued an entire sceptic, denying the whole as a mere juggle or imposture.\*

Notwithstanding all the opposition which I have had to contend against, however, I have persevered in my course, with firm determination to hold to that which I believed best and nearest the truth ; and I shall now adduce a few quotations from our leading reviews and other sources, which will show the relative position in which the two theories or systems now stand, in the estimation of men in all respects well qualified to be arbiters in this scientific strife.

In a review of my work "On Trance," which appeared in the October number of "The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal," 1850, they say :—

"Some four years ago, Mr. Braid published a very ingenious treatise on what he denominates hypnotism ; that is, a state of induced sleep, different from natural sleep. Mr. Braid rejects altogether the doctrine of what is called animal magnetism and mesmerism ; but he admits the facts such as they are observed to take place, and these he refers to the state to which he gives the name of hypnotism, or nervous sleep, by

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\* I could furnish ample proofs of the persecution and misrepresentation to which I have been subjected by the mesmerists, but the following example shall suffice. In consequence of my *hypnotic heresy*, and my honest endeavours to protect myself and hypnotism against the most unfair and wilful misrepresentation by a chief in the mesmerie school, this gentleman, who, as well as his friends, had raised a mighty outcry against the cruelty and injustice, illiberality and persecution which the medical profession had manifested towards *him*, in consequence of his having adopted the mesmerie notions and practice in some cases, carried his spleen and persecuting spirit against me to such a pitch, that he raised such determined opposition at head quarters as deprived me of an official appointment, which had been most kindly and voluntarily offered to be secured for me by the chairman of a public board ; and which election, I have good reason to believe, would have been decided in my favour, but for the implacable opposition to me, for the above-named cause, of this illiberal, vindictive, and persecuting mesmerie Autocrat.



which he understands a peculiar condition of the nervous system, into which it may be thrown by artificial contrivance, and which differs, in several respects, from common sleep, or the waking condition.

"Since the publication of that essay, Mr. Braid has been considering all those facts, and classes of facts, which might illustrate the doctrines therein proposed."—Page 421. \* \* \* \*

"Mr. Braid has also evinced great ingenuity in referring the alleged facts to a general principle. \* \* \* His book deserves attentive perusal, both for the statements which it contains, and for the reasonings with which the author has connected them."—Page 443.

Then in "The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review" for October, 1851, which gives an elaborate and able article, embracing the whole speculations of animal magnetism, mesmerism, hypnotism, the "od" force of Baron Reichenbach, and electro-biology, &c., the following passages occur in support of my views:—

"Although many of the phenomena are real, the 'od' force is imaginary, and the scientific basis altogether unsound."

"Animal magnetism presents to the medical practitioner a new means of investigating the functions of the brain and nervous system, and of elucidating their physiology, pathology, and therapeutics; and, therefore, the phenomena and alleged phenomena are most deserving the notice of the profession." \* \* \* \*

"We cannot omit this opportunity of congratulating Messrs. Braid, Bennett, and Wood upon their efforts to place mesmerism and mesmeric doings in their true position, in a way calculated to reach and enlighten the popular mind."—Page 383.

"It cannot be doubted that 'electro-biology' (that is, the power of suggestion, and expectation, and belief) is not only amply sufficient to show that all the phenomena described by Baron Von Reichenbach as objective phenomena are really subjective, but that *all* the phenomena of animal magnetism belong to the same category."—Page 406. \* \*

"We ask Dr. Gregory, with ample reason for the inquiry, *why HE has not pointed out the striking similarity between 'electro-biological' and 'odalic' methods and phenomena?*"

"Yet a greater fault remains to be noticed. Mr. Braid had already, in 1846, demonstrated, in his essay, entitled 'The Power of the Mind

over the Body,' that the phenomena of the 'od' force, as described by Von Reichenbach, *could be produced to any extent by suggestion alone*. Now, Dr. Gregory not only has omitted to notice the analogies referred to, and neglected to analyse and investigate those phenomena by the light which the experiments of Dr. Darling and others have thrown upon them, but has made no reference whatever to these conclusive experiments of Mr. Braid. In the 'Edinburgh Monthly Medical Journal' for June, 1851, Mr. Braid has published a very interesting paper on this subject, recalling attention to his researches, and restating the results of his experiments. We subjoin one or two illustrations; and first as to the 'od' power of magnets:—"

'With nearly all the patients I have tried, many of whom had never been hypnotised or mesmerised, when drawing the magnet or other objects slowly from the wrist to the points of the fingers, various effects were realised, such as a change of temperature, tingling, creeping, pricking, spasmodic twitching of muscles, catalepsy of the fingers or arms, or both; and reversing the motion was generally followed by a change of symptoms, from the altered current of ideas thereby suggested. Moreover, if any idea of what might be expected existed in the mind previously, or was suggested orally during the process, it was generally very speedily realised. The above patients being now requested to look aside, or a screen having been interposed, so as to prevent their seeing what was being done, and they were requested to describe their sensations during the repetition of the processes, similar phenomena were stated to be realised, even when there was nothing whatever done, beyond watching them and noting their responses.'

"Then as regards the odylic light and the aurora borealis:—"

'A lady upwards of fifty-six years of age, in youth a somnambulist, but now in perfect health, and wide awake, having been taken into a dark closet, and desired to look at the poles of the powerful horse-shoe magnet of nine elements, and describe what she saw, declared, after looking a considerable time, that she saw nothing. However, after I told her to look attentively, and she would see fire come out of it, she speedily saw sparks, and presently it seemed to her to burst forth, as she had witnessed an artificial representation of the volcano of Mount Vesuvius, at some public gardens. Without her knowledge, I closed down the lid of the trunk which contained the magnet, but still the same appearances were described as visible. By putting leading questions, and asking her to describe what she saw from *another* part of the closet (where there was nothing but bare walls), she went on describing various

shades of most brilliant corruscations and flame, according to the leading questions I had put for the purpose of changing the fundamental ideas. On repeating the experiments, similar results were repeatedly realised by this patient. On taking this lady into the same closet after the magnet had been removed to another part of the house, she still perceived the same visible appearances of light and flame, when there was nothing but the bare walls to produce them; and two weeks after the magnet was removed, when she went into the closet by herself, the *mere association of ideas was sufficient* to cause her to realise a visible representation of the same light and flame.'"—Page 410-11

"Mr. Braid details, in his essay just mentioned, a number of experiments like those made on persons in the waking state, to the complete overthrow of all the more important experiments and observations of Von Reichenbach, and the extinction of the whole odylie philosophy based thereon; yet Dr. Gregory takes no notice whatever of them, so that he has neither experimented crucially himself nor noticed the crucial experiments of others."—Page 411.

"It now only remains for us to draw the general conclusion, that the phenomena described by Von Reichenbach and Dr. Gregory *afford no proof whatever of the existence of the new force*, and that, consequently, all the theories and hypotheses founded upon the assumed demonstration of its existence are altogether baseless. The phenomena themselves have long been recognised, more or less, by those physiologists and pathologists who have specially directed their researches to the nervous system; and although curious and interesting, they have never been thought inexplicable, provided *all the conditions* under which they occur be stated. Mr. Braid, Professor Simpson, Dr. Bennett, Dr. Wood, and others, who have carefully investigated the matter, all agree in this. Mr. Braid very justly observes," &c.

Here a quotation is given from my essay, limiting the extent of phenomena which I have met with to those "in accordance with generally admitted physiological and psychological principles." The reviewer then adds:—

"Dr. Gregory, indeed, allows this, as it respects the greater proportion of the phenomena (as we have already seen), but, at the same time, he maintains that in those of clairvoyance there are a number of residual phenomena, to the explanation and classification of which modern neurology is unequal. Now, this conclusion we not only altogether



deny, but we assert that it is reached by the same unsatisfactory method by which Dr. Gregory has attained to other conclusions, palpably erroneous.”—Page 412. \* \* \* \* \*

“The slightest consideration of this matter will excite the deep conviction that a duty has devolved on the medical profession which has hitherto been foreign to it. The medical practitioner must now be so fully acquainted with the physiology and pathology of the nervous system as not only to treat its diseases, but to demonstrate the origin of the popular delusions, which those diseases (when artificially excited) will (with the general circulation of the works before us) inevitably cause, even in the minds of otherwise highly-educated persons. He must be able to demonstrate the scientific and pseudo-scientific fallacies, and to assign good and sufficient reason for a large number of phenomena, that to the non-professional person appear nothing less than supernatural; he must be equally able to say when the practices by which those phenomena are produced are dangerous to the healthy action of the cerebrum; when beneficial to the cerebrum, if functionally or structurally diseased; when applicable to the alleviation of pain. The three essays last on our list (Wood’s, Bennett’s, and Braid’s) have each their respective value for these ends, and will be useful to the practitioner. We here propose to add something to the views their writers have advanced, and to criticise others.”

“Mr. Braid has given the most useful index to the causation of these phenomena by his special inquiry into the physiology and pathology of *attention*. In looking at the methods by which that morbid condition of the cerebrum is produced, which Mr. Braid designates *hypnotism* (a term we propose to use generally, in place of the words mesmerism, animal-magnetism, &c.), it is obvious that they all, without exception, are calculated to *excite the attention*. This point Mr. Braid has seized, and has expanded and elucidated views respecting the physiology of attention, and its influence on the cerebrum and system generally, which had been already advanced by several writers, but especially by Dr. Holland. The examination of the matter is, however, only cursory and superficial. Dr. Alexander Wood notes another point in the methods by which hypnotic phenomena are excited, namely, that the *volition* or will, of the individual is particularly brought into action; omitting, however, to consider the concurrent influence of attention. Dr. Bennett considers the influence of both the attention and the will but very generally. Dr. Mayo, we ought to add, now and then gets a glimpse of the true state of things, although, unfortunately, he quickly runs off

after some will-o'-the-wisp of an 'od' force or mesmeric influence. He can see the nature of the relations which attention bears to ordinary sleep; but when we hope he will carry out the analogy so as to illustrate the tranec-sleep, he stops. The following passage regarding sleep is interesting—page 416:—

“‘The attention alone slumbers; or, through some slight organic change, it is unlinked from the other faculties, and they are put out of gear. This is the basis of sleep. The faculties are all in their places; but the attention is off duty—itself asleep, or indolently keeping watch of time alone.’”

“Each nerve having special endowments, and each portion of the encephalon its appropriate powers, the phenomena will vary according to the nerve upon which attention is concentrated, or the class of ideas which are suggested or attempted to be realised.”—Page 424.

“The group of diseases induced by hypnotism (for diseases they are” in the same sense as any alteration of the normal action by medicine may be called so), “is constituted of a well-marked class of cerebral affections, long known to pathologists. The novelty regarding the majority is, that they can be artificially produced; and regarding several, that they can be excited temporarily and evanescently by operating on the brain by means of the attention. This is a real and solid addition to the physiology and pathology of the nervous system.” —Page 425.

As my article on “Electro-Biology” was written as the basis of a *conversazione* at the Manchester Royal Institution, I was compelled to compress my observations so that the whole could be read in little more than an hour, which will account for the subject of *attention* having been treated by me much more cursorily than its importance merited.\* I have,

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\* Whilst this little tract was going through the press, an interesting report of an “Examination of Mr. Lewis’s Experiments on Mesmerism, at the Medical School of the University and King’s College, Aberdeen,” has come under my notice in the “Monthly Journal of Medical Science.” The committee consisted of three professors, two medical men, and a clergyman, who undertook the investigation at the earnest solicitation of the pupils at the medical school, for whose benefit the inquiry was instituted. The experiments seem to have been conducted in a

therefore, great pleasure in referring the reader to the above very able article, from which I have made so many extracts, where he will find the author has gone into a minute analysis of the hypnotic phenomena, as well as of the normal phenomena of *attention*; and this he has done with so much ability, as will amply repay any one for a careful perusal of what he has written on this curious and important subject.

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fair and liberal spirit, due care being taken to guard against all obvious sources of fallacy, but with every desire to give ample justice to the experimentalist. Three of the committee remained in the class-room where the patient was seated, whose duty was to consist in recording the time and the character of the movements performed by the patient, whilst the other three were in an adjoining room with Mr. Lewis, to suggest the various movements they wished him to execute by his silent will and physical gestures at different times, which were also correctly recorded. When the round of experiments was finished, these three gentlemen and Mr. Lewis returned into the room where the patient and audience were, and then both reports were read aloud and compared. The results I give in the words subscribed by the whole committee:—"There was a total want of correspondence in point of time and character between the volitions and acts of the operator and of his subject, when in different rooms, which shows at once that Mr. Lewis exercised no influence whatever over the person whom he had deliberately chosen for that purpose, after he had tested his susceptibility. It is only necessary to point to Mr. Lewis's attempt to overcome the influence of gravitation, in his effort to make Mr. M. stand on one leg, with the same side of his body and his foot pressed close to the wall, to prove that in this case, at least, not the slightest influence of the kind was exerted. These experiments, therefore, afford no ground whatever for the opinion, that either Mr. L. or any other person can influence another at a distance from him, or in the least degree counteract the influence of physical laws." These results and inferences are in entire accordance with my own experience and deductions on this branch of the inquiry, as may be seen recorded in various parts of my published observations. Regarding the pretensions of Mr. Lewis to *overcome gravity*, so as to enable him to raise a man from the ground, and hold him suspended in the air for a short time, simply by



“The North British Review” for May, 1851, contained a very able article on animal magnetism, in which the writer supported my views in the warmest manner, in preference to those of the mesmerists; and he narrated the results of experiments, made by himself, which completely disposed of the self-deceiving “Odometer” of Dr. Mayo.

In fact, in the whole of their experiments, the mesmerists are never in a position to be able to prove that the expectant

holding his hand above the man’s head, and willing such a result, in my publication of July last (page 27), I distinctly stated that, for the reasons there adduced, such pretensions involved “a *physical impossibility*,” and that such attempts would fail, whenever the experiment should be “fairly tested, before *sceptics as well as converts to this odylic faith*.” To the Aberdeen committee’s report I am now enabled to refer for a complete confirmation of this prediction. Moreover, according to Mr. Lewis’s own admission to the committee, as recorded by them at page 172, the indications which he and others had mistaken for his power of overcoming the laws of gravitation, so as to enable him to suspend a man in the air by his odylic power, simply by elevating his hand over him, turns out to be precisely as I had alleged at page 27 of my last publication, viz., “purely subjective or personal acts.” In proof of this, I may remark that, after failing in his trials in the above experiment, Mr. L. admitted “that he had no such power, and that he could only influence a person lying on the ground so as to make him start up, though others were endeavouring to hold him down.” The inference, therefore, is obvious.

In reference to the *first* experiment, I may remark that only *one act* was proposed by the committee, namely, that Mr. Lewis should “make Mr. M. lie on the floor, with his face on the floor.” Instead of exhibiting this characteristic act, however, which was proposed exactly at three o’clock, before any other manifestation was proposed by the committee, Mr. M. had made *fourteen* movements, not one of which corresponded, either in time or character, with that desired, as will be seen by the following extract from the report:—

h. m.

3 1½, P.M.—Raised himself up in the chair, and shook himself.

3 2. —Slipped down a little—got up and sat down—changed his seat.

idea, or influence of habit, in the patient, may not be the *real* producing cause of the phenomena realised; because the crucial experiments of myself and others have satisfactorily demonstrated, that these subjective influences *alone* are quite adequate for their production, without any influence whatever passing to the subject from another person; whereas the mesmerists *cannot* prove that these subjective influences are *not* in operation *during* the exercise of their mesmeric processes.

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h. m.

- 3 2½.—Rubbed his hand (on his thigh), and his left arm with the right hand.
- 3 3¼.—Stamped on the floor and moved his feet sideways—then got up and changed his seat again.
- 3 3½.—Folded arms—put left hand behind.
- 3 4½.—Rocked his body from side to side.

At five minutes past three, and at nine minutes past three, other suggestions were proposed by the committee, with like results—fully warranting the inferences above quoted from the report of the committee, that “there was a total want of correspondence, in point of time and character, between the volitions and acts of the operator and of the subject, when in different rooms,” &c. It is worthy of remark, moreover, that when Mr. Lewis left the class-room, the audience was desired to remain quiet for a little, as another experiment was about to be tried. Hereupon most of the company directed their attention to Mr. M. and Mr. H., who having been previously acted upon, it was therefore conjectured that they would be the parties acted on in that instance. At twelve minutes past four, being seven minutes after the time Mr. L. was to mesmerise Mr. M. from a distance, Mr. M. went down to the chair on which he had previously been seated, and having gone through certain manœuvres, he rushed out of the room and went to Mr. L.’s apartments, impelled, as he believed, by the irresistible and silent *will* of Mr. L. to draw the patient to him, from such a distance as he could neither be seen nor heard through the physical organs. It was proved, however, that the intended experiment was quite different from what Mr. M. manifested. Mr. H. also became affected in a peculiar manner, and could not be induced to go home without paying a visit to Mr. L.’s lodgings, feeling himself irresistibly drawn thither by the *silent will* of Mr. L. It was ascertained, however, that *all this occurred without*

The "Critic" for the 1st November, 1850, in reviewing my work on "Trance," says:—

"As Mr. Braid is rather opposed to the mesmerists, whom he accuses of going too far, and asserting too much, our readers will feel the more confidence in the following statement of *his* experiences of the condition of patients in the mesmeric sleep."

After a long quotation, describing the extraordinary exaltation of the senses of smell, touch, hearing, and the muscular sense, and the gift of phonic imitation, which enabled an uneducated girl to imitate Jenny Lind in singing songs in Swiss, German, and Italian, catching the sound of both words and music, and imitating them so quickly, that it was scarcely possible to detect that both were singing, so perfectly did they accord in giving both words and music simultaneously—as if each had previously been equally familiar with the songs, the reviewer adds:—

"Such statements are the more valuable, as coming from such a quarter. It is the testimony of one who has at least looked into the subject with an impartial eye. Some other cases collected in this volume are extremely interesting and curious, and will reward perusal by all who desire to unravel the mysteries of existence."—Page 526.

In like manner I could refer to many of the most scientific and able writers of the day, in support of my views. Amongst these, I have much gratification to know that Professors Alison and John Hughes Bennett, men of world-wide reputa-

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*Mr. L. having directed his mind to this patient at all!* It was known to many present, as well as to Mr. H., that Mr. Lewis had, on former occasions, presumed that certain individuals had been drawn to him, at his lodgings, *by the power of his silent will*; and hence the origin of the idea in the mind of the patient, as also of many of those present on this occasion. The result, however, proved how readily some enthusiastic parties may be deceived, through overlooking very obvious sources of fallacy. These are certainly remarkable *proofs* of Mr. L.'s alleged power of influencing patients at a distance, simply by the power of his *silent will* and physical gesticulations.



tion, are to be ranked. The latter gentleman has said in his published lectures, *vide* page 175:—

“In all these and various other cases which might be cited, it must be evident that the effect is produced by operating on the mind of the individual, and through that on his bodily powers. In short, predominant ideas, whether originating spontaneously, or suggested by the words and actions of others, seem to be the exciting cause in individuals affected with a peculiar condition of the cerebral functions. As regards the nature of this condition, it seems analogous to that of sleep or dreaming, in which certain faculties of the mind are active, and may be stimulated into excessive action, whilst others are suspended. Hence, it has been very appropriately called hypnotism by Mr. Braid.” \* \*

“The labours of Dr Esdaile in India, and of Mr. Braid, of Manchester, exhibit a worthy commencement in the rational treatment of disorders by the means now alluded to; and there can be little doubt that in no long time its influence, when further studied, will be acknowledged.”\*—Page 178.

Having been constantly engaged in the study and practice of the medical profession for nearly forty years, I presume I ought to be as competent to express an opinion upon the matter referred to in the note below, as Mr. Colquhoun, whose chief study has been law, literature, and science. Under

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\* Whilst I have had the most satisfactory proof of the value of the hypnotic mode of treating some forms of disease, when it is judiciously applied, I repudiate the notion of holding it up as a panacea or universal remedy; or believing that the efficacy of medicines mainly depends upon “the peculiar idiosyncrasy, or magnetic temperament,” of the prescriber, as alleged by Mr. Colquhoun, in the following extraordinary paragraph:—“For our own part, we are disposed to be of opinion that, in many cases of disease, much less of the ultimate effect depends upon the character of the medicines prescribed than upon the peculiar idiosyncrasy of the physician who prescribes them. The magnetic temperament is of more efficacy in the cure of diseases than all the drugs enumerated and classified in our pharmacopœias; and the magnetic method of cure is of far more general use in practice, in as much as it may be employed in almost all the diseases to which the animal frame is subject.”—Vol. II, page 226.

the terms "literature and science," I ought to include an intimate knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the nervous system, which I understand Mr. Colquhoun has studied with great care and attention, and, consequently, must be intimately acquainted with. Moreover, having devoted a considerable share of his time and attention, for many years past, to the study of mesmerism, with the aid of his splendid collection of books on that subject, he may safely be pronounced one of the best informed, as far as regards the literature of that science, of any magnetist in Europe. I am not aware, however, that Mr. Colquhoun has devoted so much attention as myself to the study of the therapeutic effects of medicines, therefore, I venture to say, whilst I most readily admit that the efficacy of medical treatment may be greatly aided by the peculiar manners, looks, and language of the person who prescribes the medicines, and the confidence engendered by these means in favour of his prescriptions, still, I feel assured that there is *a positive and obvious effect to be expected from some medicines, altogether irrespective of the physical or mental qualities and manners of the individual who prescribes them.*

Were I not thoroughly convinced of this, as a matter of course, I should consider it quite unnecessary for *me* to prescribe active medicines in *any* case ; since it is alleged by the mesmerists themselves that, by nature, I possess an unusually powerful *magnetic temperament*, and that it is through the influence of *this peculiar temperament* that I have been so successful in producing the hypnotic or mesmeric state with my patients.\* According to this theory (to which, however, I

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\* In proof of this, I may mention the following anecdote:—On calling, for the first time, on a chief in the mesmeric ranks—one who applauds the speculations of Baron Von Reichenbach to the echo, urging every mesmerist to procure and read his work, and who was

by no means subscribe) and Mr. Colquhoun's expressed opinion in the note above quoted, and the theory of other mesmerists referred to by him at pages 292-3 of vol. I, the whole efficacy of the means used is attributable to the *magnetic temperament* and the *energetic Will and good intentions of the mesmeriser or medical prescriber*. Mr. C. writes thus at page 292-3, vol. I:—

“The magnetists hold it as a fundamental principle, that the intention of doing good is the very soul of their art. The verbal formulæ (and passes and manipulations also, of course) are merely the accessories which ignorance, quackery, and superstition have elevated into real causes.”

I say then, according to these theories of the mesmerists, all which I ought to have occasion to do in any given case, in order to insure the recovery of my patient, would be merely to approach him and exercise my *will and good intentions in his behalf*. This assuredly would be making short work of it, and would save me a vast deal of mental labour, as well as pecuniary outlay, in devising, as well as procuring, the requisite medicines for my patients. It is well known, however, that I use *hypnotism ALONE in a certain class of cases ONLY*, to which I consider it adapted; and that, in some other

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willing to stand sponsor for it, having distinctly recorded that he felt that every word said by the Baron must be true, and that every one of the phenomena had been confirmed by his own experience years before—this gentleman told me he had read accounts of my doings and remarkable success in hypnotizing patients. He then added, moreover, that, on reading the results of my experiments, he had attributed my success to the possession by me of an unusually powerful magnetic temperament; and that he had expressed himself sure that I had a large brain, a large, capacious chest, and great mental energy, *i. e.* that I possessed a determined *will*. He farther added, as a proof of his sagacity,—“And now that I see you, you are just the person I supposed, for you have them all.” I attributed my success, however, to a very different, and less mystical or special cause.



cases, I use it *in conjunction with medical treatment*; but that, *in the great majority of cases, I do not use hypnotism at all*, but depend entirely upon the efficacy of active medicines, which I prescribe in such doses as are calculated to produce sensible effects. I can honestly say that, whichever of these modes I am adopting in any given case, it is always done, not merely with the *will*, but also with the *earnest intention and desire*, for the speedy relief or recovery of my patient; still, notwithstanding all this, I am bound to admit that, with *neither* method, nor even with *all* these means combined, can I always succeed in curing some of my patients. Like other medical men, I have found that death will come at last, in defiance of all human efforts to oppose it; for it is the law of nature—man is born to die.

“*Nascentes morimur, finisque ab origine pendet.*”

Nevertheless, I feel convinced that with implicit faith, hope, and confidence on the part of the patient, many disorders may be recovered from, even whilst the patients are merely taking a drop of plain water occasionally, or a particle of bread, or *any other harmless substances*, which shall suffice, as visible and tangible agents, to keep their minds involuntarily fixed on the idea that the innocent ingredients used, are agents fraught with great virtues for effecting certain purposes. The stronger the intellect, the more certain are the results to be realised, provided the imagination is sufficiently brilliant, and the faith proportionately fervent, to fix the mind steadily on the confident and pleasing contemplation of the certainty of the cure. Every strong mental impression produces a concussion on the centres of the nervous and circulating systems, and by thus changing physical action, in many instances, acts as an alterative; but, whether for good or for evil to the individual, depends very much upon the character and persistency of the pre-

dominant idea. I believe that this is the real philosophical explanation of the temporary success of certain medicines and fanciful modes of treating some disorders,—they rapidly rise in the estimation of a certain class of society, whilst novelty and ardent faith inspire their votaries; but, at length, having attained to the culminating point of their fame and favour, as they have no root in them, they speedily wane, to give place to some fresh novelty or nostrum.

Still, all patients are not susceptible of being so influenced, and hence the inefficient visible appliances, which, through fixed mental impression, and giving time for nature to manifest her powers of conservation, prove successful with the former, would utterly fail with the latter and *larger* class. Nor is it wise in the former exceptional class to hazard their safety, in important cases, in such a frail bark, when they might, in addition to the influence of the mind and fixed attention, hope, and confidence, add thereto the certain aid of active medicines. Those who act in this manner are still more indiscreet than the other class, who content themselves with simply prescribing drugs, without paying the slightest attention to the management of the minds of their patients. For my own part, it is always my endeavour to combine *both* agencies, so far as is consistent with truth and honour, and a sincere desire to benefit my patients. I am aware that, in some cases, it might be possible to enhance the effect and apparent importance of hypnotic processes, by involving them in mystery, and alleging that I could bring some occult or special influence into play, and thereby produce extraordinary effects; but, inasmuch as I entertain no belief in the existence and transmission from the operator to the patient of such an agency, I could not honestly do so; and I therefore prefer trusting to the simple explana-

tion and modes of changing physical action already advanced by me, which are so much more susceptible of definite control, and are level to the comprehension of most men, and consequently are the more likely to secure the approbation of those who are not hopelessly enamoured by the love of the marvellous and transcendental. The advantages of combining moral and medical means have been well expressed in the following remarks—the first paragraph by Professor Alison, the present eminent Professor of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh :—

“However minutely the physician may have examined the anatomy of the brain and nerves, and however accurately he may have noted the effects of injuries of these parts in experiments on animals and in observations on disease, still, unless *he has carefully considered and generalized the MENTAL PART OF THE PROCESSES, of which the brain and nerves are the instruments*, HE HAS DONE BUT HALF HIS WORK.” \* \* \*

“The generality of medical men attach too exclusive an importance to the mere drug. They deal with people as if there were nothing psychical in them. If their diagnosis be correct, they write their prescriptions, and there is a stop to their operations. If part of the frame be diseased, there is no reason why the whole should not combine against the enemy. Faith saves physically as well as morally ; and to lull the trembling mind to ease is to stay the heart’s rapid pulsations, to allay the blood’s fever, and to stop life in its quickening flight, with strengthened wings from the human tenement.”—*Medical Times*.

Many sceptics have endeavoured to throw discredit on the importance of hypnotic processes as a means of cure, by attributing the whole results to the power of *imagination*. They are willing to admit that certain effects are produced, and are content if they can only damage the importance of the facts, by associating them with what *they* consider a *bad name*. Their admission of the *facts*, however, is something ; and we shall now devote a few moments to the consideration of the power of imagination over the physical organism of man. Those who suppose that the power of imagination is



merely a mental emotion, which may vary to any extent without corresponding changes in the physical functions, labour under a mighty mistake. It is notorious to those who have carefully studied this curious subject, that imagination can either kill or cure; that many tricks have been played upon healthy persons, by several friends conspiring, in succession, to express themselves as surprised, or sorry, or shocked to see them looking so ill; and that very soon a visible change has come over the patients, and they have actually gone home and been confined there for days from bodily illness thus induced. Not only so, but there are even cases recorded, in which we have the best authority for the fact, where patients who were previously in perfect health, have actually died from the power of imagination, excited entirely through the suggestions of others. Nor are the suggestions by others of ideas of health, vigour, hope, and improved looks less influential with many people for restoring health and energy both of mind and body. Having such a mighty power to work with, then, the great desideratum has been to devise the best means for regulating and controlling it, so as to render it subservient to our will for relieving and curing diseases. The modes devised, both by mesmerists and hypnotists, for these ends, I consider to be a real, solid, and important addition to practical therapeutics; and not the less curious and important that it is done simply through appeals to the *immortal soul*, to assert and demonstrate its superiority and control over the *mortal body*.

The following remarks upon this subject, from the pen of that eminent philosopher, Dugald Stewart, are interesting and important:—

“It appears to me, that the general conclusions established by Mesmer’s practice, with respect to the physical effects of the principle of imagination (more particularly in cases where they co-operated together), are incomparably more curious than if he had actually demonstrated

the existence of his boasted science : nor can I see any good reason why a physician, who admits the efficacy of the *moral* agents employed by Mesmer, should, in the exercise of his profession, scruple to copy whatever processes are necessary for subjecting them to his command, any more than that he should hesitate about employing a new physical agent, such as electricity or galvanism.”—*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*.

The experiments in what has been so absurdly styled “electro-biology,” lately exhibited publicly, fully demonstrated that, with some individuals, predominant ideas and fixed attention, whether arising spontaneously or from the suggestions of others, are sufficient, of themselves alone, even in the waking condition, to change physical action, and produce the expected results ; whilst they also demonstrate the important fact, that, through the influence of suggestion, existing predominant ideas may be removed, and *any other ideas whatever produced in their stead*, which the operator chooses to indicate by word, look, or gesture. This at once points to an important practical fact, as regards the the most rational, simple, and successful mode of treating *monomania*—viz., by engaging the mind of the patient so strongly on some *new* idea, as shall, as much as possible, withdraw it from the previously existing morbid delusion. By the temporary suspension of the morbid delusion thus effected, its activity and power become less and less enthralling, and the mind more and more capacitated for entertaining new and healthy trains of thought. In this manner, I have succeeded very speedily in curing several cases of monomania and delirium tremens. Of course, there are some cases which will not yield to this method ; but, I believe that, in almost all cases of monomania in patients who pass into the second-conscious state of hypnotism, a far more speedy cure may be calculated on by this mode of treatment than by any other.

It is a curious fact, and tells strongly in support of my subjective or personal mental theory, that, whilst many insane

patients, particularly cases of monomania, may be readily enough hypnotized, I have never yet been able to affect an *idiot*. Where there was no mind capable of being aroused to an act of sustained, fixed attention, I have never succeeded in hypnotizing the patient, although I have made many persevering attempts to do so. The following is also an important fact, bearing on the same point :—In the case of a patient, who was highly susceptible, and had been frequently hypnotized with decided benefit, on one occasion, when she was delirious from fever, and had not slept for several nights and days, as it was highly desirable to procure sleep for her without the administration of opiates, I made a persevering attempt, with the strongest desire on my own mind to put her to sleep ; but it was all in vain—the mental chord of the patient was unstrung, and hence there was not the wonted harmonious response, even to *my most anxious and strenuous efforts*. Could a better proof than this be adduced, that success depended neither upon *my will and intentions, nor physical efforts*, but on the influence which could be produced by the *mind* of the patient over her *own* body ?

The truth of all the above statements was demonstrated by my experiments, published in 1845, and still more extensively in 1846.\*

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\* After the amount of evidence which has been furnished, both through the press and by public exhibitions, for any one to deny the power of audible suggestion, sympathy, and imitation to affect *some* individuals irresistibly, according to the import of the words they have heard spoken, or the physical acts they have witnessed exhibited before them, no man with a candid and competent mind could deny the fact *after fair investigation*. The power of influencing patients at a distance, however, where they can neither see nor hear, in the common acceptance of these terms, the suggestions intended to be conveyed to them, is entirely a different affair, and it would require much clearer and more unexceptionable



In the *Psychological Journal* for July last, in a most able and acute article on “The Progress of Thought, or Electro-Biology,” the following quotations from my writings with comments by the reviewer occur, in refutation of the doctrines of Von Reichenbach:—

‘It is an undoubted fact,’ “observes Mr. Braid, and *the profession will agree with him,*” ‘that with many individuals, especially with the highly nervous, imaginative, and abstractive, a strong direction of inward consciousness to any part of the body—especially if attended with the expectation or belief of something being about to happen—is quite sufficient to change,’ “or rather, we should say, to *modify* the physical action of that part, and produce such impressions from this cause alone as Baron Reichenbach attributes to the new force.”—Page 357.

Then regarding the alleged odylie lights, and their different sizes and colours, as seen by different patients, the author comes to the same conclusions as myself, viz.:—

“That there would clearly not have been this discrepancy had there been a physical reality in the alleged flames and colour.” He then adds: “All doubt on the subject is, however, set at rest by the fact, that, in several of Mr. Braid’s experiments, when he deceived the patients by pretending to use a magnet, all the abnormal sensations were produced by the mere imagination of the patient; as in Dr. Haygarth’s case—the key of his portmanteau—when the patient imagined it to be

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evidence to establish the existence of such a faculty than has yet come under my notice, either by reading or personal observation. The report of the Aberdeen committee, referred to at page 30-4, is a good illustration as to what value is to be attached to the *alleged facts* of less cautious and searching inquirers. I by no means wish to deny that the Almighty may cause an influx of ideas into the minds of men through spiritual agency; or that, on special occasions, and for important purposes, he may exhibit remarkable manifestations of a sort of inspiration—far exceeding the ordinary current of events—but, for my own part, I cannot, without indubitable evidence to the contrary, bring myself to believe that the Almighty Creator of the universe would condescend to confer such gifts, as alleged, upon a few individuals, for such paltry purposes as those for which they are generally represented as called into requisition.

a magnet, produced effects as singular as if it had been endowed with the new imponderable magnetic force discovered by the Baron's patients."

In like manner, my *mental* theory of explaining the cause of hypnotic phenomena has the unqualified support of this able writer, in preference to the special-influence theory; and he gives, as an example, the experiment tried by me before 800 people, when I invited strangers to come forward who had never submitted themselves to any mesmerizing process, of whom ten out of fourteen male adults were reduced to a state of sleep more or less profound—some even remembering nothing of what had happened during their sleep; and all this was accomplished simply by their gazing at inanimate objects, and the subjects fixing their attention as much as possible upon the simple act of looking attentively at the end of corks tied on their own heads, so as to project horn-ways from the middle of the forehead of each; and some others of the patients were desired to fix their gaze and attention on points of the gas apparatus, or other parts of the room, by which means, all commencing the operation at the same time, ten of the fourteen went to sleep, although I never touched any one of them until their eyelids had closed involuntarily. None of them seemed able to open their eyes; some became cataleptic, others were insensible of pain from the prick of a pin, and one or two forgot all that had occurred. Moreover, during these proceedings, three more of the audience threw themselves, of their own accord, and without my knowledge, into a state of profound sleep, by fixing their gaze and thoughts in the same way, upon other single points in the room. The reviewer, then, very justly remarks:—

‘But supposing, instead of the piece of cork, a disc of zinc, or a common brass button were substituted, and the same attention to it enjoined, would it be at all wonderful if the same effect were produced?’

Certainly not. Nay, we can easily understand that, when the vision becomes confused and the mental faculties bewildered, erroneous impressions and illusions, ocular and aural, [and tactual, motorial, olfactive, and gustative, he might have added,] may easily be suggested."

In the numbers of *Fraser's Magazine* for June, 1844, and July, 1845, two very able articles appeared on the subject of "Animal Magnetism and Neuro-Hypnotism," from which essays I might make many quotations furnishing most important support to my views. I prefer, however, referring the reader to a careful perusal of the *entire articles*, where much will be found both to amuse and instruct him regarding the subjects brought under consideration. In my book on "Trance," at pages 38-9, I cited from these dissertations some remarks which, to me, appeared lucidly expressed, and were in exact accordance with my own convictions, as to the mode of explaining, upon natural or generally recognised principles, many results which, by the magnetists, are alleged as clairvoyant feats, or direct "intuitions of the soul," instead of being the results of a process of reasoning, regarding the natural relations of things, presented before the mind during their entranced state. Mr. Colquhoun took occasion, in his *Preface*, to animadvert upon the quotation referred to with far greater severity than, in my opinion, legitimate criticism warranted, on a careful consideration of the real import and obvious meaning of that part of the said articles which I thought so appropriately illustrated my views. Inasmuch as Mr. Sowler, barrister-at-law, is known to the public as the real author of these papers in *Fraser*, and many remarks have been made to the prejudice of that gentleman, in reference to the sharp castigation which Mr. Colquhoun had dealt out to the alleged *anonymous* author from whom I had quoted, I should be wanting in the duty which I owe to Mr. Sowler,



as a scholar and a gentleman, and one who is well versed in the science of *hypnology*, and who had been drawn into the affray by my having quoted and announced him as the author of said articles in *Fraser*—he being, moreover, as well as Mr. Colquhoun, a personal friend of mine, of many years standing—were I not to afford him an opportunity of saying a word or two in vindication of himself, (as I have done in my own behalf,) by publishing the subjoined letter which he has addressed to me on the subject:—

“Clarkshill, Stand,

“February 2nd, 1852.

“MY DEAR BRAID,—I am very much obliged to you for affording me an opportunity of perusing Mr. Colquhoun’s brace of volumes on “Magic, Witchcraft, and Animal Magnetism.” I have read them with pleasure and profit—as I always read everything from the pen of Mr. Colquhoun. He appears to me to have produced, out of his large and varied experience, in this particular branch of physiological and psychological investigation, a very valuable “History,” that must be read with intense interest. The only part of the book to which I object is the *Preface*. You did me the honour, in the course of your very admirable “Observations on Trance,” (a *big* book in a small compass,) to refer to certain observations which I made in *Fraser’s Magazine*, in June, 1844, and July, 1845, and to mention me *by name* as the author of those articles. This was a compliment to be appreciated, coming, as it did, from a “master” in the empire of psychological science, whose theories have been most triumphantly sustained in practice. You made some extracts from the articles in question, and proclaimed your assent to the principle and the reasoning therein contained. This appears to have given Mr. Colquhoun great offence. He thinks that I have not shown sufficient gallantry towards the *Pythoness*, and that I have treated her rather peculiar blandishments with undue contempt. I can only very deeply regret that her ladyship does not live in the days of Alexis and Mr. Colquhoun; for I imagine that, if she had been bodily amongst us, you and I *might* have been able to detect and rout her sorceries—even if Mr. Colquhoun had been her first lieutenant. I regret deeply that Mr. Colquhoun has not given me an opportunity of replying to his attack upon me under my own name and by my own authority, for he

has carefully avoided any mention of me by name—although you, in your book, had given my name, as the author of the obnoxious articles—and although he had written to me a very handsome letter on the subject of the first article, and inscribed to me a copy of his book, “*Isis Revelata*.” I cannot imagine that “professional courtesy” has deterred our Edinburgh friend from addressing his strictures directly to me, because I do not see in what respect the subject he has taken so ably in hand is related either to the law or to private intercourse. Surely I may attack Mr. Colquhoun, or he may attack me, on an abstruse subject of curious investigation, without violating the rules of the one or the courtesies of the other! and my deliberate opinion is, that he has not treated either of us with that fairness and candour which his high character, as a scholar and a gentleman, entitled us to expect. However, I am glad to hear that *you* intend to answer him. I should have done so too if he had attacked me by name. I am prepared to do so whenever he shall think fit to transfer his strictures and his sneers from the shoulders of an *incognito* in *Fraser’s* (not an *incognito* to *him*!) to the shoulders of the real “Simon Pure.” Even a giant in this particular department is not entitled to play such tricks as he has played in his *Preface*; and that he *is* a giant I most loyally confess—reminding us of Homer’s and Virgil’s monster—

“Οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξε κάρη, καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει.”

*Iliad*, Δ. 443.

“—— Mox sese attollit in auras,

“Ingrediturque solo, et capit inter nubila condit.”

*Æn.*, lib. iv., 177.

“I give you leave to make what use of this note you may think fit. I hope to receive an early copy of your reply to “*Magic, Witchcraft, and Animal Magnetism*.”

“Believe me, my dear Braid,

“Ever yours faithfully,

“ROBERT S. SOWLER.

“To James Braid, Esq., &c., &c.,

“Burlington House.”

No man knows better than Mr. Colquhoun that the ancients believed in *two* modes of divination—one “by means of the intellect, the other by inspiration;” for, in Vol. I., page 50,



he has referred to Plato, and Cicero, and the Stoics, in proof of this, as the following quotation will show :—

“ Plato, in his *Phædrus*, as is well known, distinguishes two modes of divination—the one by means of the intellect, the other by inspiration. Cicero mentions that the Stoics also assume two modes of the exercise of this faculty: *unum (genus) quod particeps erat artis, alterum quod arte careret*; the former derived from observation of the present, and a conjecture founded upon this observation, in regard to the future; the latter being produced solely by a peculiar exaltation of the mind, or spiritual faculties, to a *presentiment* of futurity: *i. e.*, either a conclusion drawn from given premises, or an immediate intuition of the soul, without any assistance from the reasoning faculties. The latter—the immediate intuition of the future—was the most highly appreciated by the ancients, as the most pure and infallible—the more immediate and more precious gift of the gods. *Carent autem arte ii,* says Cicero, *qui non ratione aut conjectura, observatis ac notatis signis, sed concitatione quadam animi, aut soluto liberoque motu futura præsentiant.*”

Now Mr. Sowler was cited by me, because he had so well expressed opinions which I had long avowed, and *still believe to be true*—viz., that the *whole* of the really striking achievements of mesmeric clairvoyants—which were not simply occasional coincidences and shrewd guesses—were merely results of concentrated attention, quickened memory, exaltation of the natural organs of special sense, with self-confidence, and accurate deductions as to what might be calculated upon regarding the future, from contemplation of the circumstances in the existing case, compared with what was known from past experience. *We* believe that the whole is derived from observation of the past and present, and that all regarding the future—and what of the present is not cognisant to the quickened organs of special sense—is mere conjecture, founded upon these observations, from a process of reasoning—in fine, that they are conclusions drawn from given premises, when contemplated with a quickness of perception,



conception, and memory, and with a force of reason, unknown to us during the ordinary diffused, and distracted, or ever-varying state of our attention during the ordinary waking condition. Mr. Colquhoun, however, and the magnetists generally, who contend for clairvoyance and the higher phenomena of mesmerism, seem to wish us to infer that these achievements are accomplished by a sort of inspiration,—or through “an immediate intuition of the soul, without any assistance from the reasoning faculties.” Having thus endeavoured to set both views fairly before the public—for I wish, as far as possible, to do full justice to Mr. Colquhoun and all who coincide with him—I leave it to my readers to decide which theory is more likely to be true.

That eminent philosopher, Sir David Brewster, has expressed his *entire* concurrence with the explanation given by me of the phenomena of “electro-biology.” Sir David also informed me, in confirmation of the correctness of my views, that he had lately had occasion to talk over the subject with Sir Benjamin Brodie and an eminent London physician, both of whom most willingly admitted the wonderful power of fixed mental attention in changing physical action in some abnormal conditions of the nervous system. This is entirely in accordance with my views, as stated at page 10. Mr. James John Garth Wilkinson, in his interesting book, “The Human Body,” after giving certain details, adds—

“We presume it is evident to the reader what a power Mr. Braid has methodized and called into play for the treatment of disease. As a curative agent, hypnotism contains two elements, each valuable in its kind:—1. Where it produces trance, it has the benefits of the mesmeric sleep, or furnishes so strong a dose of rest, that many cases are cured by that alone. But 2. The suggestion of ideas of health, tone, duty, hope, which produce dreams influential upon the organization, enables the operator by this means to fulfil the indication of directly ministering to that mind diseased, which always accompanies and aggravates physical

disorders. We have a direct proof of the continuation of the mind through the body, in the way in which suggestions, directed to the mind, respecting the organs, operate upon the latter. In the hypnotic state, the operator can play upon the emotions by a variety of suggestive means, and in this way give power to impotent parts, and hand them over to the will. Mr. Braid's devices for these ends stamp him as a man of inventive genius; and we are surprised that such a piece of combined intellectual and scientific sagacity as hypnotism has not placed him, long ago, in the first rank of metropolitan physicians. The virtue of hypnotism, where it succeeds, is just this, that for the moment it unweeds the human soil so completely, that whatever faith is impressed can work and grow. We regard hypnotism as the most intellectual phenomenon which has yet been produced by the *phrenopathists*."—Pages 476-80.

Without at all wishing to arrogate to myself that I deserve the amount of approbation and praise Mr. Wilkinson has here accorded to me, still, I have quoted these remarks with those of others, as a set off against the observations respecting the prospects of hypnotism which Mr. Colquhoun had presented to my consideration, in the passages of his "*Preface*," pages 36-7, above referred to.\* Regarding Mr. Wilkinson, however, I may observe that he possesses a mind of the *very highest order*, and was, therefore, peculiarly fitted for dealing successfully with the *psychological* part of the question. Another circumstance which

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\* I cannot deny myself the pleasure, and Mr. Colquhoun the justice, of publicly acknowledging that gentleman's great liberality and kindness to me on all former occasions, and of thanking him for the respectful terms in which he alluded to my labours in what he terms "the magnetic mine," both in his works and his private correspondence—which latter has been most interesting to me. I have also to thank him for presentation copies of all his valuable and highly interesting works, including his lately published "*History of Magic, Witchcraft, and Animal Magnetism*," which was heralded by a very kind letter from the author, received some time before the arrival of the book, in which he intimated to me that, in his *Preface*, he had



gives so much greater value to his opinions, is his *practical* experience of *hypnotism* in his *own person as well as in others*. Mr. W. not only carefully watched many cases when operated upon by me, and has continued ever since to practise the art when suitable, but he also submitted himself to me several times to be hypnotised; and, as he is one of those who remember when awake all which occurs during the condition, he was enabled to describe, with the greater accuracy, not only what he *saw* but also what he *felt*.

Mr. Wilkinson is the gentleman to whom reference is made in the following remarks by Dr. Carpenter, the eminent physiologist (Examiner in Physiology and Professor of Medical Jurisprudence, in University College, London), in his article on sleep, in the "Encyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology." After describing my experiments and confirming my views on *various* points, Dr. Carpenter adds: "It is one of the most curious and important of Mr. Braid's discoveries, that the suggestions conveyed through the muscular sense are among the most potent of any in determining the current of thought. Not only have we witnessed all these effects repeatedly produced upon numerous 'hypnotised' subjects, but we have been assured by an intelligent friend, who has paid special attention to the psychological part of this inquiry,

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made some strictures on my "Observations," which he hoped I would take *good-naturedly*. There are few men to whom I should be disposed, *good-naturedly*, to submit so much as to Mr. Colquhoun, for reasons already stated at page 8; still, the nature of the charge in which I was implicated—unintentionally or inadvertently, probably, on his part—was of such a grave character, that justice to myself, to my family, and friends, compelled me to endeavour to refute it as publicly as it had been diffused by its publication in the work of a gentleman of the high position, and great talents and attainments, of the ingenious and learned author of "*Isis Revelata*."



that having subjected himself to Mr. Braid's manipulations, and being only partially thrown into the 'hypnotic' state, he distinctly remembers everything that was done, and can retrace the uncontrollable effect upon his state of mind, which was produced by this management of his muscular apparatus."

Dr. Carpenter gives his testimony still further in favour of hypnotism thus:—"We consider that the experimental researches of Mr. Braid throw more light than has been derived from any other source upon the phenomena of *Mesmerism*.

"That there is much of reality mixed up with much imposture in these phenomena is a conclusion to which most candid persons have arrived who have given their attention to them; and we have little doubt that a searching investigation, carried on under the guidance of his results, would lead to something like a correct discrimination between the two."

With such testimony in support of my views, I feel no great anxiety for the fate of *Hypnotism*, provided it only has "a fair field and no favour." I am content to bide my time, in the firm conviction that truth, for which alone I most earnestly strive, with the discovery of the safest, and surest, and speediest modes of relieving human suffering, will ultimately triumph over error.

I feel pretty confident that whoever will undertake the investigation of hypnotic phenomena with a candid mind, and untrammelled by any previous prejudices in favour of the mystical and transcendental, may very soon satisfy himself that the real origin and essence of the hypnotic condition, is the induction of a habit of abstraction or mental concentration, in which, as in reverie or spontaneous abstraction, the powers of the mind are so much engrossed with a single idea or train of thought, as, for the nonce, to render the individual unconscious of, or indifferently conscious to, all other

ideas, impressions, or trains of thought. The *hypnotic sleep*, therefore, is the very antithesis or opposite mental and physical condition to that which precedes and accompanies *common sleep*; for the latter arises from a diffusive state of mind, or complete loss of power of fixing the attention, with suspension of voluntary power.

“The attention alone slumbers; or, through some slight organic change, it is unlinked from the other faculties, and they are put out of gear. This is the basis of sleep. The faculties are all in their places; but the attention is off duty—itself asleep, or indolently keeping watch of time alone.”—*Dr. Mayo*.

The following remarks, from the pen of Mr. J. J. G. Wilkinson, are interesting, as well as elegantly and lucidly expressed :—

“The atom of sleep is diffusion; the mind and body are dissolved in unconsciousness; they go off into nothing, through the fine powder of infinite variety, and die of no attention; common sleep is impersonal. The unit of hypnotism is intense attention, abstraction—the personal *ego* pushed to nonentity. The unit of mesmerism is the common state of the patient, caught as he stands, and subjected to the radiant ideas of another person; it is mediate—or both personal and impersonal. Patients can produce the hypnotic state upon themselves, without a second party; although a second will often strengthen the result by his acts or presence, just as one who stood by and told you that you were to succeed in a certain work would nerve your arm with fresh confidence.”

The state of mental concentration, however, which is the basis of the *hypnotic sleep*, enables the subject to exhibit various passive or active manifestations, such as insensibility or exalted sensibility, rigidity or agility, and entire prostration or inordinate energy of physical power, according to the trains of ideas and motives which may arise spontaneously in his mind, or be addressed to it by others, through impressions on his physical organs.



“The preliminary state (of hypnotism) is that of abstraction, and this abstraction is the logical premise of what follows. Abstraction tends to become more and more abstract, narrower and narrower; it tends to unity, and afterwards to nullity. There, then, the patient is, at the summit of attention, with no object left,—a mere statue of attention,—a listening, expectant life,—a perfectly undistracted faculty, dreaming of a lessening and lessening mathematical point, the end of his mind sharpened away to nothing. What happens? Any sensation that appeals is met by this brilliant attention, and receives its diamond glare, being perceived with a force of leisure of which our distracted life affords only the rudiments. External influences are sensed, sympathized with, to an extraordinary degree; harmonious music sways the body into graces the most affecting; discords jar it as though they would tear it limb from limb; cold and heat are perceived with equal exaltation, so also smells and touches. In short, the whole man appears to be given to each perception; the body trembles like down with the wafts of the atmosphere; the world plays upon it as upon a spiritual instrument finely attuned.”—*Wilkinson*.

The above is a beautiful description, painted in elegant and most felicitous language, of the phenomena manifested by a *certain class of patients*, and *at a certain stage of the sleep*; but, at another stage, the very opposite state manifests itself: for the abstraction may be so intense as to render the patient unconscious even of inflictions the most severe; and the muscles may be locked in immovable, cataleptic rigidity, or dissolved in the most entire passive flaccidity, according to predominant ideas or impressions on the senses, which immediately preceded the full intensity of the all-absorbing abstraction.

As is the case in reverie or abstraction, so also is it in the hypnotic state—there are *different degrees* of mental concentration; so that, from some of them, the patient may be aroused by the slightest impression—whilst, in other stages, he can only be influenced by very powerful impressions on the organs of sense. Moreover, in the hypnotic condition,



as in the state of reverie or abstraction, the subject may be so partially engrossed in his train of thought as to be susceptible of receiving suggestions from others—through words spoken or movements made in his presence—which shall involuntarily or unconsciously change his current of thought and action, without entirely dissipating his condition of mental abstraction.

My usual mode of inducing the sleep is to hold any small bright object about ten or twelve inches above the middle of the forehead, so as to require a slight exertion of the attention to enable the patient to maintain a steady, fixed gaze on the object; the subject being either comfortably seated or standing, stillness being enjoined, and the patient requested to engage his attention, as much as possible, on the simple act of looking at the object, and yield to the tendency to sleep which will steal over him during this apparently simple process. I generally use my lancet case, held between the thumb and first two fingers of the left hand; but any other small bright object will answer the purpose. In the course of about three or four minutes, if the eyelids do not close of themselves, the first two fingers of the right hand, extended and a little separated, may be quickly, or with a tremulous motion, carried towards the eyes, so as to cause the patient involuntarily to close the eyelids, which, if he is highly susceptible, will either remain rigidly closed, or assume a vibratory motion—the eyes being turned up. with, in the latter case, a little of the white of the eye visible through the partially closed lids. If the patient is not highly susceptible, he will open his eyes, in which case request him to gaze at the object, &c., as at first; and, if they do not remain closed after a second trial, desire him to allow them to remain shut after you have closed them, and then endeavour to fix his attention

on muscular effort, by elevating the arms if standing, or both arms and legs if seated, which must be done quietly, as if you wished to suggest the idea of muscular action without breaking the abstraction, or concentrative state of mind, the induction of which is the real origin and essence of all which follows.\*

There is great difference in the susceptibility to the hypnotic impression, some becoming rapidly and intensely affected, others slowly and feebly so. Moreover, those who are naturally highly susceptible, at length become so much so as to be liable to be affected entirely through the power of imagination, belief, and habit, *i. e.*, the expectant idea will produce it in such subjects when no process whatever, either near or distant, is going forward; whereas, if they are made to believe the contrary, through the requisite attention and expectation being otherwise engaged, they may not

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\* My first experiments were devised for the purpose of proving the fallacy of the magnetic theory,—of the phenomena of the sleep depending upon the transmission from the operator to the patient of some peculiar influence during his processes of thumbing and staring, pointing with his fingers at the eyes of the patient, or making passes near to his person. By causing patients to produce the sleep on themselves, by maintaining a steady, fixed gaze at any inanimate object, it appeared to me that this was clearly demonstrated; for not only were single individuals thus thrown into the sleep, at first trials, but, on one occasion, before eight hundred people, out of fourteen male adults, ten were so affected,—all commencing at the same time to fix their thoughts and sight, some upon corks, bound so as to project from their own foreheads, others by looking at fixed points in the room. Within ten minutes, the eyelids of ten of these subjects became involuntarily closed; some remained conscious, some were cataleptic, others insensible to pain from the prick of a pin, and some forgot all which had occurred during their sleep. Three more of the audience sent themselves to sleep, unknown to me, by the same process of fixed gazing at points in the room.—*Vide* pages 10 and 45.



become affected by processes which would naturally throw them into the sleep.

Whatever mode is adopted for producing sleep at first trials, whether my usual mode just described, which is the most speedy and most generally successful method, or that of causing the patients to look steadily and attentively at fixed points, or the ordinary mesmerising processes may have been resorted to, there can be no doubt of the fact that they will be rendered much more efficient by previously affording the patients an opportunity of watching others when submitted to the processes. The influence of sympathy and imitation are thus brought into play, and increase the susceptibility in a marked degree. Of this fact I have had many striking proofs. Where patients exhibit considerable resistance, therefore, it is always desirable to bring the power of sympathy and imitation to bear upon them, as well as the influence of direct auricular suggestion and expectation, excited by the confident tone and deportment in the operator, so as to inspire them, as far as possible, with the conviction that the influence cannot be resisted.

I am satisfied that all the mesmerizing processes produce their effects from what is essentially the same exciting cause as that which induces hypnotic phenomena, viz., by producing a state of mental concentration, through the attention becoming so engrossed by watching the manœuvres or suggestions of the operator, as, for the nonce, to render the subject dead or indifferent to all other sensible impressions or trains of thought.\*

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\* The ordinary magnetizing processes are very numerous. Those most commonly resorted to are—laying hold of the patient's hand after he has been comfortably seated in an easy-chair, or of the two hands, or the thumbs—the operator and patient maintaining a steady, fixed



In this condition the whole attention of the subject is given to every existing or suggested idea ; and thus it works wonders in changing or modifying the existing condition of the physical frame. Moreover, suggestions may be given, either through words spoken or sensible impressions made on

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gaze into the eyes of each other until the eyes of the patient become dim, the sight confused, and the eyelids drooping. When this period arrives the two first fingers of the right hand, extended and held a little apart, are darted towards the eyes ; and, when they have closed, the operator commences making passes—that is, he draws one or both hands slowly, and with a tremulous motion, over the head, face, chest, or upper extremities, or even over the legs also. They may be near to, but not touching the body ; or they may be gently pressed on the body ; in which latter case they are called contact passes. Or the patient and operator may simply stare into each others' eyes until the tendency to close the eyes supervenes ; or he may desire the patient to look steadily at the operator's fingers, pointed at his eyes ; or he may simply make passes with the fingers drawn slowly from the head down before the face, or behind his back ; or this may be done whilst the left hand is held on the patient's head. The patient is to be a consenting party, or, as much as possible, to remain passive, which greatly aids the result—the operator concentrating his energies and will, apparently with great determination to produce the effects. So soon as sleep manifests itself, the passes are resorted to ; and when the passes are made, whilst the patient remains awake, they are still considered, by the magnetists, to be influential on the patient by the transmission to him, from the body of the operator of the exuberant life, nervous or odylie influence, so as to modify and sustain the deficient vitality or morbid condition of the patient. My mode of explaining the influence of passes is set forth at pages 10 and 61-2 ; to which I beg to refer my readers. By calling muscles into play by elevating the limbs, or touching, or tickling, or making sensible impressions upon the integuments over them, by passes or otherwise, they become rigid or cataleptic—then the circulation becomes quickened in a ratio corresponding to the class and number of muscles so affected ; and the intensity of the rigidity or the cataleptic condition can generally be more readily produced, at first trials, when the hypnotizing methods are adopted, than when they are acted on in the less active state of mental concentration which results from the ordinary mesmerising processes.

any of the organs of special sense—for the mind is naturally drawn to the part signified or impressed, and thus ideas are excited connected with, or corresponding to, the function of that organ or part; and the appeal being made to the mind at the very summit of its abstraction, every sensation is met by the “diamond glare” of this “brilliant attention,” and consequently is “perceived with a force of leisure of which our distracted life affords only the rudiments. External influences are sensated, sympathized with to an extraordinary degree.” In this stage of the sleep the power of suggestion on the patient is excessive. Whatever idea is suggested to his mind, whether by the natural import of the words spoken, or modified by the tone of voice in which they are uttered, is instantly seized upon by the subject, and interpreted in a manner to surprise many, and lead them to believe it has been accomplished by a sort of intuition or inspiration. In this way you may vary or modify the ideas suggested in the most remarkable manner, and the patient sees, and feels, and speaks of all as real, without the slightest desire to impose upon others. Thus, if you say,—

“‘What animal is it?’ the patient will tell you it is a lamb, or a rabbit, or any other animal or thing. Does he see it? ‘Yes.’ ‘What animal is it *now*?’—putting depth and gloom into the tone *now*, and thereby suggesting a difference. ‘Oh!’ with a shudder, ‘it is a wolf.’ ‘What colour is it?’—still glooming the phrase. ‘Black.’ ‘What colour is it *now*?’—giving the *now* a cheerful air. ‘Oh! a beautiful blue,’ spoken with the utmost delight. And so you lead the subject through any dreams you please, by variation of questions and of inflections of voice, and he sees and feels all as real.

“Another curious study is the influence of the patient’s postures on his mind in this state. Whatever posture of any passion is induced, the passion comes into it at once, as well as into the mind, and dramatizes the whole body.

“Moreover, the patient’s mind, directed to his own body, does physical marvels: he can do, in a manner, what he thinks he can. Place a



handkerchief on a table, and beg him to try to lift it—observing, however, that you know it to be impossible—and he will groan and sweat over the cambric as though it were the anchor of a man-of-war. On the other hand, tell him that a fifty-six-pound weight is a light cork, to be held out at arm's length on his little finger, and he will hold it out with ease. Tell him that a tumour on his body is about to disappear, and his mind will often realize your prophecy.

“A patient in the full state obeys all motives in the most natural direction. If the arm is placed up, there it will stay; but a waft of air will cause it to fall down. Why? Because it is already up, and the new motive changes the direction. If the arm be down, another waft or touch will raise it. If down, and prevented from moving up, the impression will send it sideways. When the frame is erect, a touch behind the bend of the knees will send it into genuflexion, which will at once suggest prayer, as noticed before, &c.”

The last four paragraphs are all but verbatim quotations from Mr. J. J. G. Wilkinson's interesting book, “The Human Body,” as descriptive of what he saw manifested in some of my hypnotized patients, as illustrations of what I had told him could be exhibited according to the theoretical views which I had propounded to him.

From all this it may readily be perceived that the efficacy or influence of mesmeric passes and touches,—of the *tractim tangere* of the Romans,—does not arise from any special influence or virtue passing from one human being to another; but that they act merely as sensible impressions, assisting the patient in concentrating or drawing the mental attention vividly to parts, and thus increasing their action beyond the natural activity of their functions, or diffusing or withdrawing it from certain parts, and thus diminishing the natural activity of function of such organs or parts from which the attention has been withdrawn. Curiously enough, however, these results, which should naturally be calculated on to arise according, as I have here stated, may each and all of them be modified or subverted by a spontaneous or suggested *predominant idea*;



so that the result shall be in accordance therewith, rather than with what otherwise would be the natural or spontaneous result. The instinctive feeling which every one has to rub any part which has sustained a blow or other injury, and by which the pain is moderated, does not produce its soothing or salutary influence from any special virtue imparted to the injured parts from the hand, either of the patient or other party who rubs it, but from making a sensible impression on an *extended* surface, and thus *diffusing* or *withdrawing the attention* FROM the injured point. Such is my mode of explaining the efficacy of the *tractim tangere*, or gentle rubbing, or touching with the human hand.

To quote from a former publication of my own on this subject:—

“That there is nothing occult or specific in the pass with the hand, is manifest from this, that a similar agitation of the air by the blast from a pair of bellows will produce precisely similar results as the like current of air from the wafting of the human hand, as I have proved to the satisfaction of hundreds of intelligent individuals.

“A pass, therefore, as a visible or sensible impression, aids the patient in concentrating his mental attention to a given organ or part, and thus influences the function, through giving a special direction to a power residing within the patient's own frame; but it no more imparts a virtue of an occult nature from the operator to the patient, than the lens *produces* the light and heat which it makes visible and perceptible to the senses, through concentrating the luminous and calorific rays of the sun, and drawing them to a focus. Both the pass and the lens aid in concentrating and manifesting the respective influences; but neither the operator nor the lens is the *source* or *origin* of the *power* or *influence* so manifested.”

It is quite possible, however, to subvert the whole of these *natural* suggestions, by a system of training—such as by speaking aloud in the hearing of the patients, and in a language known to them, the idea you wish to make predominant in their minds, by suggestions associated with

certain sensible impressions. The associations once formed will always thereafter come up and be predominant, whenever the like sensible impressions are made. Whatever faith is imprinted, at the proper stage of the sleep, will work and grow, either for good or for evil to the subject, and will be recalled to mind, in the most susceptible, as mere acts of memory (according to the law of double consciousness), when in that stage of the sleep subsequently. And in this way, also, some patients having predicted that certain effects will be manifested in their persons, at a certain time specified, the predominant idea will often realize the prophecy.

If tranquillizing is the object in view, let the patient remain in a recumbent and easy posture, with all the muscles relaxed to the utmost, and let the mind be sustained by encouraging expressions, and such as shall withdraw attention *from* the part most requiring to be tranquillized. If stimulation is required, then the limbs must be extended, and they will speedily pass into a rigid state, during which the circulation and respiration become much quickened, and by directing the patient's attention and expectation to any organ of sense, its function will naturally be quickened; and so of the function of any other organ or part of the body. Still, even in the state of excitement of the circulation and respiration, a suggested idea may be made so completely to engross the patient's attention, as to subvert results which ought to have followed, and would have followed, but for this all-absorbing suggested idea.

The first point to be determined, therefore, in this hypnotic mode of treating suitable cases, is the same as is required in any other mode of treatment—viz., to endeavour, by careful examination, to ascertain what is the real nature and cause of the existing symptoms, and whether they



require stimulating or depressing measures to be adopted, locally or generally ; and to what extent, in either direction, the excitement or depression ought to be carried. It is also requisite, in order to determine this, to make out whether the disease is of an acute or chronic character ; for, in such cases, not only have we *similar* symptoms arising from *different* causes, but they can only be successfully treated by the *very opposite* modes of acting. It must, therefore, be obvious, to any sensible person, that the superintendence and direction of medical men are as requisite for conducting the hypnotic mode of treating disease, with anything like precision and general success, and adapting it in the best manner to each individual case, as for treating them by ordinary medical means. Not but that those ignorant of medical science could be made to stimulate or depress locally or generally, according to the methods which I have devised for that purpose, when they had been instructed *how* and to *what* extent they were to conduct the processes *in each individual case*, under the superintendence and direction of some skilful medical man, who understands the hypnotic system, the pathology of the disease, and the therapeutic indications to be fulfilled. Until a number of assistants have been provided, who could be employed by medical men to act under them in this manner, I have no hope of the hypnotic mode of treatment having a fair trial ; because it takes up *too much time* for medical men in general to adopt it, even in suitable cases, when they must operate personally ; and, for those ignorant of medical science to do so, without professional superintendence, is a mere haphazard mode of procedure, which never can be expected to become so successful as it might be, when conducted on scientific principles. This is one of the very reasons why I have ventured to say that when skilfully conducted, hypnotism



is capable of producing *all the good* to be effected by the *ordinary mesmerising processes*, and *much more*; and the other is that they have so much reliance upon the efficacy of their alleged magnetic or *odylic* influence, that they overlook the important effects, and the certainty of their production, which are attainable by regulating the state of the circulation in the various modes which I have methodised, through the influence of the muscular system and management of the minds of the patients, effected by sensible impressions and auricular suggestions.

These various modes of suggestion are most successful when resorted to with patients who pass into the full or double conscious stage of the sleep; but they influence all, to a greater or lesser extent, who submit themselves honestly and fairly to the processes for inducing a state of mental concentration, whether they remain with their eyes wide open, or have their eyes involuntarily closed, but retain their consciousness, and remember, on awaking, all that was said or done; or pass into the double conscious stage of the sleep. By the latter term, I should observe, is meant, a condition in which they forget, on awaking, all which was done or said during the sleep, but which they will have a perfect recollection of when they pass into the sleep again. I have had striking instances of this in most respectable and intelligent patients, who have a minute recollection of what took place during the sleep six years ago, and have remembered and described the same facts many times since, when hypnotized, but who have never had the slightest recollection of the subject, when awake, during these six years.

The most curious and important fact of all, however, is this,—that by engendering a state of mental concentration, by a simple act of sustained attention, fixed upon some unex-

citing and empty thing,—“for poverty of object engenders abstraction,”—the faculties of the minds of *some* patients are thereby thrown out of gear, (*i.e.*, their ordinary relations are changed,) so that the higher faculties—reason, comparison, and will, become dethroned from their supremacy, and give place and power to imagination, (which now careers in unbridled liberty,) easy credulity, and docility or passive obedience; so that, even whilst apparently wide awake, and conscious of all around, they become susceptible of being influenced and controlled entirely by the suggestions of others, upon whom their attention is fixed. In fact, such subjects are in a sub-hypnotic condition,—in that intermediate state between sleeping and waking, when the mind becomes wavering, the attention off duty, or engrossed with a predominant idea, so that, in reality, the subjects are only half conscious of what is passing around; and their minds, therefore, become easily imposed upon by any suggestion, audibly expressed or visibly exhibited before them. Thus they may be made to perceive, and mistake for realities, whatever mental illusions or ideas are suggested to them. In common parlance they *see* and *feel* AS REAL, and they consider themselves *irresistibly* or *involuntarily fixed*, or *spell-bound*, or *impelled to perform whatever may be said or signified by the other party upon whom their attention has become involuntarily and vividly rivetted* until a new idea has been suggested, by which the spell is broken, and the subject is left in a condition again to be subjugated and controlled by other suggestions of his temporary fascinator. This is just similar to what we see occurs to any one spontaneously engaged in deep abstraction, who is instantaneously aroused to consciousness of all around by a tap on the shoulder, or by a word sharply addressed to him.

It requires considerable tact to manage this, adroitly and suc-

cessfully, with *some* patients ; for the will and belief of certain subjects can only be successfully subjugated and controlled by an earnest and energetic, and confident and authoritative manner, on the part of the operator ; such as by his *insisting* that *such* and *such* MUST be the case, according to his audible suggestions, or visible manœuvres for influencing the subjects through the power of sympathy and imitation. I have had ample evidence to convince me of the fact, that, in cases where these waking illusions and delusions could not be excited by giving the suggestions in an apparently doubting tone of voice, or with a hesitating manner, they became quite efficient for the purpose, the instant I assumed a commanding and confident tone of voice and deportment. By these means the *Reason* and *Will* become temporarily paralysed ; they lose their freedom of action, through the mind being so much engrossed by the suggested thought, as to allow every idea which has been vividly and energetically addressed to such individual, to assume all the force of present reality,—just as we know occurs, spontaneously, in cases of *monomania* and *delirium tremens*.

Such are the effects realized in this sub-hypnotic or partial state of the nervous sleep ; but with all who pass into the full or second-conscious stage, the power of suggestion is still more prompt and almost unlimited. Curiously enough, however, (and, as it appears so ordained by a special providence.) any suggestion involving a grave assault upon a moral principle, in persons with well constituted minds, will instantly arouse consciousness and self-control, and induce and enable the subject to protect himself against the real or imaginary moral assault or suggestion.

Nor, after all, is this power of suggestion, or persuasion, or concealed fascination, so remarkable or unaccountable as at



first sight it appears to be. The secret of success with all sophistical writers and orators is of a similar nature. They make repeated appeals to the feelings, as well as to the reason, until the minds of their readers or hearers get bewildered and withdrawn from the true bearings of the main points of the case ; and the assumed, and apparent sincerity and energy, of the writer, and still more so of the orator, who, to his other aids of words and arguments, adds that of his physical manifestations, to captivate and carry his entranced hearers along with him, through the power of sympathy and imitation, and fixed attention, at last irresistibly moulds them to his will. In support of this I might appeal to the personal feelings and experience of most people who have watched the effect upon a jury of a powerful and eloquent special pleader ; or observed the effect of an accomplished actor or actress on the stage, over an audience excited and entranced by the felicitous impersonation of fictitious dangers and difficulties, pains and perils, joy or sorrow, fear or courage, compassion, hatred, or revenge. The historical fact, however, recorded of the powerful effect of eloquence upon the whole House of Commons, by the brilliant speech of Sheridan, in the trial of Warren Hastings, is more than sufficient for my purpose ; for it is recorded that, in that instance, it was deemed requisite to suspend the sitting of the house, and postpone it till another day, as it was felt that no one could be expected sooner to have the power of emancipating himself from the spell thrown over the senators by such a flood of eloquence, and prepare himself for exercising sober judgment, in voting upon that important case.

All who have duly considered the workings of the human mind must have observed that, for forming a correct judgment upon any important matter, it is requisite that an individual

should be able so to control his attention, that it can be constrainedly fixed on any one point, and from that directed to any other, and *every point in succession*, bearing upon the issue of the inquiry, as he may consider requisite for forming a correct appreciation of the bearings of the whole. The intense abstraction of hypnotism, therefore, which, at one stage, rivets the attention to a *single idea or train of thought*, without the power of voluntarily directing it to the various points in succession, is obviously as inimical to correct reasoning and the exercise of sound judgment, as the discursive state of mind, which renders it impossible for the person to fix his attention sufficiently on any given point of the subject, but permits it to roam, hurriedly and vaguely, or inattentively from one idea to another.

When in that stage of the sleep, however, which gives a more healthy tone to the power of fixing attention than obtains in the waking condition, or in that which gives a degree of brilliancy to the imagination, and more rapid flow of ideas, with a revivification of memory, which thereby recalls thoughts and actions long forgotten—all these circumstances, combined with the self-confidence in their own powers, which such patients generally possess, may prove mighty aids in enabling them intellectually to trace out the relation of things and circumstances with so much greater facility and felicity than in the waking condition, as to lead many to imagine such feats are achieved through intuition or direct inspiration. So is it as regards their powers of writing correctly without the use of their eyes, entirely through the quickened muscular sense, and their attention firmly fixed on the one subject in hand. So also the power of phonic imitation, by which one of my subjects, who, when awake, was even ignorant of the grammar of her own language, and had very little knowledge of music,

but naturally possessed of a good voice, was enabled, when in the hypnotic sleep, to imitate Jenny Lind so accurately, in songs sung by that lady in different languages, never before heard by the somnambulist, that she caught the sound so promptly as enabled her to give both words and music so correctly and simultaneously, that several parties present could not discriminate whether there were only one or two voices, so entirely did they accord, both in tune and vocal enunciation of the foreign languages. This patient has frequently done so with equal success before others, and I have had other patients who could do the same; but *not one of them comprehended the meaning of the words which they uttered so correctly in the foreign language.* Such is my experience on these points.

I am well aware that *all* subjects are not susceptible of being affected in this manner, either in the partial or complete hypnotic state; for some are speedily and intensely affected—others slowly and feebly so. Moreover, compliance with certain conditions is generally required at first trials. Enough, however, has been ascertained, incontestably to prove, that there is a considerable number of individuals, in every community, who may be thus *completely* subjugated and controlled; whilst there are many more who may be influenced in a slighter degree. I wish, however, particularly to record, as my own present conviction, that these means can only prove efficient for producing such results when the patients *hear the ideas suggested when uttered in a language known to them*; or when they see them written; (which is sufficient to affect many,) or when they can see, by ordinary vision, the movements made in their presence which it is intended they should be forced to imitate, through the power of sympathy and imitation; or when they feel sensible



impressions, associated with certain ideas or previous feelings, or which call subjacent muscles into action, or direct attention to the special organs of sense, which excites ideas corresponding with the functions of these different organs, or arouses former ideas arbitrarily or accidentally associated with such and such sensible impressions. Of the power of influencing patients at a distance, however, through *silent willing*, I have had no satisfactory proof in my own patients; nor, from all which I have seen, read, and heard on the subject, do I believe such a power is possessed by others. I am familiar with so many sources of fallacy, requiring to be guarded against in such inquiries, from the power of imagination, habit, and the expectant idea over certain susceptible subjects, that, without the least desire to impugn the testimony either of patients or operators who have alleged that such influences have been manifested in *their* cases, I beg respectfully to say, that I consider it far more probable that they have been deceived, in some of the ways which I have pointed out, than that the phenomena manifested were *bonâ fide* the product of the *silent will* and gesticulations of the operators, on patients at considerable distances from them.

The following is the *resumé* of the result of my experience on these points, which was quoted with approbation in the article in the "British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review," page 412, from my Essay on "Electro-Biology;" after the remark, "Mr. Braid very justly observes:"—

"I have never yet seen any phenomena during either the hypnotic or mesmeric sleep, or during the state for manifesting vigilant phenomena, which were not in accordance with generally admitted physiological and psychological principles. The senses and mental powers may be torpidified or quickened to an extraordinary degree; but I have never seen anything to warrant a belief that individuals could thereby become gifted with the power of reading through opaque bodies, \* \* \* and

other transcendental phenomena, called by the mesmerists the *higher* phenomena. The power of a strongly fixed attention, vivid imagination, and self-confidence, however, enables them to perform some extraordinary feats of phonic imitation, and writing and drawing by touch, without the use of their eyes; discovering parties who own certain articles worn by them, through the quickened sense of smell; overhearing conversation in a distant apartment, which they could not do in a waking condition; of recalling to mind things long forgotten when awake; and also of deducing conclusions, manifesting uncommon shrewdness, from premises suggested to them, or arising in their minds spontaneously from recollection of past events, to which they have directed their concentrated attention."

Having described the modes of inducing the full condition of sleep and the sub or partial condition for manifesting the waking phenomena, I must now state the modes of *arousing patients from these states*. If I wish any predominant idea, or *physical* change which has been induced, to be carried strongly into the waking condition, I arouse the patient *abruptly*, by a clap of my hands near his ear, when at the full height of the desired condition; if tranquillizing is intended, then he had better be aroused slowly and softly—such as by gently wafting with the hand, or a fan, or open handkerchief, over the face, or by placing the thumbs gently on the eyes of the patient, or on his eyebrows, and carrying them laterally a few times, so as to produce gentle friction, to which may be added gentle fanning when required. If the patient is in the sub or half-waking condition, a word spoken, or a visible movement of any sort made, so as to break his abstraction, excited temporarily by previous suggestion, will suffice.

The mesmerists divide passes into mesmerising and demesmerising passes—those made longitudinally, from the head or face downwards, over the body and extremities, being called *mesmerising passes*, those made crossways, *demesmerising*

*passes*. The first are considered to induce certain effects; the others, to remove them when existing. I have reason to believe that the patient may be aroused as readily by one sort of pass as by another, unless when he has got a mental impression, somehow excited, that there is a speciality in each. In that case the result will be according to the faith of the individual.

One decided advantage in favour of hypnotism is this—that I have never experienced the slightest difficulty in arousing any of my patients, even from the most profound stage of the sleep which they may pass into; nor do they experience any annoyance from other persons than the operator approaching to, or touching them, during the sleep—both of which inconveniences frequently manifest themselves, in a marked degree, in the ordinary mesmeric state; for some mesmerised subjects will be thrown into the most violent agitation, with intense catalepsy or convulsions, merely by another person touching them—which is called cross-mesmerism—or they may remain for many hours, and sometimes even for *days*, in the sleep, without being able to be aroused. I consider this merely arises from a predominant idea or conceit in the mind of the patient, and, the operator not knowing the key to the puzzle, presents the great difficulty of unlocking him from the condition.

I was once called upon to arouse a mesmeric lecturer from the sleep induced in him by a friend, who became alarmed when he could not arouse him after he had been twenty-four hours in the condition. After some trouble, I succeeded in arousing him, for twenty minutes, from his maniacal excitement; but he spontaneously passed into it again, and remained so, with only one or two short snatches of consciousness, for nearly two days more. No such distressing event ever occurred to any of my hypnotized patients; they have always been capable of being aroused almost instantly.



I am not ignorant that there are many men with great abilities, distinguished alike for their high rank and superior attainments in literature and general science, as for their moral worth, who avow their belief in magnetic or mesmeric clairvoyance. But, inasmuch as the feats alleged by them as facts are of such an extraordinary nature, so much opposed to the generally recognized laws of mind and physical organization, I consider it is the imperative duty of every man to investigate such a subject with great care and caution, before accepting as facts, what, from the difficulty of the inquiry, and the numerous sources of error with which it is surrounded, are very likely to be fallacies or illusions. Such has been the case with myself; for, knowing as I do, so many of the fallacies requiring to be guarded against, I have soon been enabled to prove the alleged clairvoyant powers of some of the most noted of the class, were mere illusions, shrewd guesses, or ingenious frauds on the part of the entranced subjects, contrived by them from a passion for notoriety, and a desire to excel and astonish others by their apparently wonderful powers. Moreover, some of them may actually resort to these artifices, during the sleep, without any recollection, on their awaking, of such tricks having been perpetrated by them during their entranced condition. Amongst the marvels alleged by the Hindoos, as resulting from this condition, was the power of walking on the water; and Professor Gregory has recorded his belief that Mr. Lewis could suspend a man in the air, through his magnetic powers, merely by holding his hand above the patient's head; and Dr. Ashburner has declared, in print, that the material force emanating from his brain, by the power of his *will*, is such as to enable him to compel the precious metal, gold, to ignore the vulgar law of gravity, and actually advance towards him when,

in the form of a ring, it has been suspended by a thread from a glass rod, securely attached across the top of two upright glass rods fixed in a table. These experiments admit of easy proof, if rightly set about; and combining the two first would be the most clear mode of determining whether any man could suspend another in the air, through the mere force of magnetic attraction; for there could be no doubt of the fact, if he could so elevate and hold him suspended above a good sized eight-feet-deep water-cistern.

The remarkable discrepancies in the mesmeric camp, however, and that even amongst some of the chief officers, on points of vital importance as regards the first principles of their science, certainly do not inspire one with the notion of their infallibility. Thus Baron Reichenbach lays it down as one of the remarkable properties of *odyle*, that it is so subtile as to pass through every form of matter, including *glass*, in which particular it differs from *electricity*. To all this Professor Gregory, the translator and sponsor of Reichenbach's work, gives in his adherence; whilst Dr. Ashburner, the other translator (?) and expounder of the Baron's views, declares that he can, by the mere power of his silent *will*, extrude *odyle* from the points of his fingers, or send it direct, by the force of his *will* "into a wide-mouthed phial of a pint capacity," in which he can carry it into another room; and pour the fluid or substance upon the body of a patient and thereby produce its specific effects. It is certainly ludicrous to hear this gentleman gravely telling us that he can *will* this fluid into a vessel, and carry it into another room, in what, according to Reichenbach and Gregory, must have been a *bottomless vessel*—a mere *sieve*—since they declare that, unlike electricity, it passes *through GLASS and every other substance!*

An unsuspected but fertile source of fallacy is this, that we

all receive suggestions, both when asleep and when awake, from impressions in the waking state so slight as never to have aroused consciousness ; or from suggestions of others, or ideas arising spontaneously during sleep, which have long lain dormant, but become active when certain exciting causes or correspondences come into play to arouse the silent chord to harmony. This will frequently resemble prevision or intuition. It is quite certain that suggestions may be given during the hypnotic or mesmeric sleep, of which the subject shall have no remembrance on awaking ; but, through the influence of which, nevertheless, when the time fixed on for the manifestation arrives, he will feel a sort of desire or instinctive impulse to act according to previous suggestion. Nor is this more wonderful than the fact that some individuals can go to bed and sleep soundly, and awake at the exact moment which they had determined upon the previous evening.

There may, no doubt, be some self-sufficient, dogmatic seepies who, glorying in their shame—for they avowedly speak and write authoritatively, without having practically investigated the subject regarding which they set themselves up as censors or judges—who will be ready to poo, pooh,—all this alleged power of producing either the *major* or the *minor* phenomena, especially the waking phenomena, unless upon credulous, ignorant, and weak-minded men, and *hysterical women*. I take the liberty to tell such individuals that their *merely theoretical* notions are not worth a rush, when brought to oppose the stern facts of cautious experimentalists. I have myself hypnotised a noble lord, who, for intellectual attainments and moral worth, is one of the most distinguished and influential of the British Aristocracy ; and I have both succeeded in producing the full or double-conscious condition, and the sub or waking state, for eliciting the vigilant or



waking phenomena, in some of the most intellectual and strong-minded men and women in the kingdom; whereas, I never yet could hypnotise an *idiot*! The boasted power of resisting such influence, therefore, may be of a very *equivocal character*, and the very opposite of what such individuals wish should be inferred, from their vain-glorying about *their* non-susceptibility.

As a proof of the unmitigated folly, and presumption, and thoughtless inhumanity of those self-conceited obstructors of human progress in the relief and cure of their suffering fellow-creatures, I shall adduce a single example, about which there can be no reasonable ground of cavil, as the whole proceedings to which I allude took place in a public hospital, where there was free access to all honest inquirers; and the operations and experiments were not performed upon paid servants, or those known to the intrepid and excellent man who so gallantly fought and so nobly triumphed over every obstacle which prejudice, cabal, and combination had raised against him and his humane efforts. The most important surgical operations were performed on utter strangers, and that even from distant provinces throughout a great part of British India. Dr. Esdaile is the gentleman to whom I refer—a man who, by his intrepid and indomitable courage and success, in introducing painless surgery into India, on a large scale, by operating upon patients reduced to the state of mesmeric unconsciousness, has raised for himself “a monument more enduring than brass.” In a most interesting and friendly letter which I received from Dr. Esdaile last October, he kindly furnished me with a *resumé* of his mesmeric experience in India, with permission to make any use of it which I chose. I therefore gladly avail myself of this privilege on the present occasion; and as that gentleman’s theoretical notions, and

the extent of his confession of faith in the *higher phenomena*, are more in favour of mesmerism than of hypnotism, (although he admits the influence of hypnotism too, but has not tried it extensively,) the reader will thereby perceive that the principle by which I am swayed in conducting scientific inquiries is—"Nought conceal, nor set down aught in malice."

After acknowledging the receipt of some of my publications on hypnotic phenomena, and thanking me for them, Dr. Esdaile says :—

"I shall find much in the books to interest and instruct me, as I did in your first work on Hypnotism ; but I shall not wait to read them before replying to your communication.

"I have not seen any of the papers you allude to in the journals ; but am glad to hear that the doctors are, at last, condescending to turn their attention to one of the most interesting and important subjects ever submitted to the consideration of the physiologist, the metaphysician, and natural philosopher. \* \* \* Regarding the reality and cause of the mesmeric phenomena, if I venture to differ from you even, who are so much better prepared to investigate the subject [than certain individuals to whom the Doctor had referred], it is for reasons which I hope you will consider worthy your attention. I am fully aware that there are various modes of inducing the mesmeric symptoms, to a certain extent, without the probability, or even possibility, of any vital force proceeding from the operator being concerned in the matter. But I have never (except for experiment) produced the mesmeric state of the system by the exhaustion of any organ, such as the eye, [here the Doctor has overlooked the important part which the mental act of *fixed attention* plays in this matter, *vide* page 53—7,] or by acting strongly on the imagination, or by any means that could favour self-mesmerization, as you will perceive from the following *resumé* of my practice :—

"During the last six years I have performed upwards of 300 capital operations of every description, and many of them of the most terrible nature, without inflicting pain on the patients ; and, *in every instance*, the insensibility was produced in this fashion.

"All knowledge of our intentions was, if possible, concealed from the patients ; and if they had never heard of mesmerism and painless operations, so much the better. They were taken into a darkened room, and

desired to lie down and *shut their eyes*. A young Hindoo or Mussulman then seated himself at the head of the bed, and made passes, without contact, from the head to the epigastrium, breathing on the head and eyes all the time, and occasionally resting his hands for a minute on the pit of the stomach. This often induced the coma deep enough for the severest surgical operation in a few minutes; but the routine was for me to examine the patient at the end of an hour, and if he was not ready, the process was repeated daily. Taking the average, the operation, of whatever description, was usually performed on the fourth or fifth day.

“Probably as many more cases were subjected to the trance for medical purposes, and were usually treated in the same way, for its convenience to both parties.

“The enclosed remarkable case of clairvoyance, with transference of the senses to the epigastrium, will shew that the mesmeric control of the system may be obtained, when the patient is not only asleep, but in a state of *intense natural coma*.

“I have also entranced a blind man, and made him so sensitive, that I could entrance him *however employed*, (eating his dinner, for instance,) by merely making him the object of my attention for ten minutes. He would gradually cease to eat, remain stationary a few moments, and then plunge, head foremost, among his rice and curry.

“Numbers of madmen have been entranced in the lunatic asylum of Calcutta; and I performed a mesmeric operation on one man who had cut his throat.

“I frequently desired the visitors of my hospitals to pretend to take the portraits of patients, and to engage their attention as much as possible, by conversing with them. I then retired to another room, and reduced them to statues, without the possibility of their suspecting my intentions.

“How such phenomena can be accounted for, without presuming the existence of a physical power transmitted from the operator to the subject, passes my comprehension. That the mesmeric virtue can be communicated to inanimate matter, is a physical fact, of which I am as well convinced as of my own existence. It was my common hospital practice to entrance patients *for the purpose of having their sores burned with Nitric Acid*, by giving them mesmerised water to drink.

“Community of taste, and thought-reading, are among the most common of the higher mesmeric phenomena; and how they are to be explained, except by the transmission of the operator’s sensations, through



his *thought-stamped*, nervous fluid, sent to the brain of the subject, I cannot conjecture.

“‘Important, if true,’ you will probably say. I can only say, that healthy senses, a natural power of seeing things as they really are, and an earnest desire to know the truth, whatever it may be, are perfectly useless for the acquisition of knowledge, if all I have related is not perfectly true.

“Till such facts are known to medical men and natural philosophers, it is surely premature to dogmatise about the *only* source of the mesmeric phenomena.

“It happened, curiously enough, that the sleeping Faqueer of Lahore had attracted my attention about the very time your interesting account of him appeared, and I had actually written to Sir Henry Lawrence, begging him to procure us information on the subject; but my departure from India, shortly after, prevented my prosecution of the subject.”

Such was the experience of Dr. Esdaile, whose firmness of nerve, and dexterity of hand, and scientific skill, in every way stamped him as a man eminently qualified for being a leader in his profession. Most sincerely do I wish that the like processes could be rendered equally available in this country as they were in India, for annulling the pain incident to surgical operations. I am well aware, from my own experience, as also from what I have read as the results with others, that mesmerism, or hypnotism, may be successful for this end with *some* patients; but, I fear it will not become so generally successful in this country as in India, or as chloroform has been proved to be in Europe. Mesmeric *anæsthesia*, however, has this great superiority when it succeeds—that no injury has ever resulted to the patient from its use; for the recoveries under mesmeric surgical operations in Dr. Esdaile’s hospital were far beyond the average success. Why, therefore, should it not be fairly tried in this country as well as in India, when no danger to the patients can result from such trials? My own convictions, from trials of both methods, are in favour of chloroform, as being *more speedy and certain in its effects with*

*patients in this country* ; and I know that, with due care and caution, it may generally be used with safety in surgical operations, as well as in midwifery ; but I should think it interesting, in every point of view, that the mesmeric or hypnotic modes should be fairly tested, so that we may know how far Dr. Esdaile's method, described above, can be made available in this country, with British subjects on British soil, for suspending the anguish of mind and body, during surgical operations, by such a safe and simple process.

Agreeing, as I so cordially do with Dr. Esdaile, as regards the great value of the practical application of mesmerism, I am sure he will forgive me if I venture to differ somewhat from him, theoretically, in the conclusions which I have come to regarding some of the results which he has particularised, as proofs of "the existence of a physical power transmitted from the operator to the subject" ; because it is only by examining and comparing with each other, the different modes of explaining phenomena, which occur to different minds, that we can hope to arrive at a true solution of such difficult problems.

In the case of the blind man, I am so well aware of the remarkable quickness of hearing which many acquire from *loss of sight*, and being compelled to rely upon that, and the sense of touch and smell, that I can easily imagine that he might perceive the doctor's presence, and fixed position, and suppressed respiration, concomitant upon a fixed act of attention, and thus catch the idea of his intention, and then the power of imagination and habit would produce the result named. Then, in respect to entrancing the patient from another room, many such patients become so quick in catching the requisite ideas from the slightest peculiarity in the looks and tone of voice and manners of those around them, that the individual

referred to might readily have caught the idea of something being intended, from the manners and looks of the *pretended artists*, and then the usual result would naturally follow. The efficacy of “mesmerised water” admits, if possible, of still easier explanation; for there is an aroma peculiar to every individual, both as regards the exhalation from the lungs and skin; hence the dog can trace his master through a crowd, by smell, or any one else he has been set on the trail of. Either breathing on water, or wafting over it with the fingers, therefore, might readily impart a physical quality to suggest, by means of smell, ideas connected with some individuals, such as the doctor’s mesmerisers and the ideas thus excited, through the laws of association, would produce the wonted results. Nay, even the very *mode* of *presenting* it might be sufficient, of itself alone, to produce the sleep in highly susceptible subjects, after having been impressed. Hearing, and sight, and smell, would require to be annulled, before I could readily believe in community of taste and feeling, which all will easily comprehend, who have closely observed the powers of suggestion, in giving such vividness to ideas as shall delude the patients, even in the wide-waking state, and make them mistake mere ideas for realities.

The above are merely *my opinions* on these points; but I shall now state what I know to have been a positive fact. I had heard much of an interesting case of a highly susceptible lady—so susceptible to ordinary mesmeric processes, that she might be sent off into the sleep by the most simple attempt to produce it—and so sensitive of the influence of magnets, that she was quite uncomfortable if a magnet were near her, in any room; and in the dark she could point out any part of the room where a magnet of very moderate power was placed, from her *seeing* the light it produced, streaming all around it.



I was kindly invited to spend an evening at this lady's house, to afford me an opportunity of seeing and hearing more particulars of these wonders. I had the pleasure of sitting very near the lady, and of enjoying a long and interesting conversation with her and her husband, who was a most respectable and intelligent gentleman, and no manifestation whatever took place during the whole time, until after I had explained my views regarding the power of an *act of fixed attention*, directed to any part, in modifying the natural condition of the part so regarded. She was requested to direct her fixed attention to her hand, and watch the result, without anything being done, either by her husband or any one else. She did so, and very quickly fell asleep, and the arm to which she had directed her attention became rigidly cataleptic. Some time after being aroused, and when the shades of deep twilight had set in, the most interesting experiment was proposed, which was this,—that she should walk round the room and find a magnet, which had been hidden behind some pictures when she was out of the room, in order to prove to me her power of *seeing* its light, and thus detecting it. She walked cautiously round the room (wide awake, for she did not require to be asleep to manifest this faculty), her husband repeatedly urging her to seek about and persevere until she should find it. I feel satisfied that *he* had no intention of aiding her; but, from his long silence when she approached the place where the magnet was hid, *I* should myself have caught the suggestion that I was *near to it*, or, in nursery phraseology, that it was then getting *very hot*. After she had passed it a little, she sat down on a chair, but said she could not *see* it to-night, and then came up to where we were, shortly after which we sat down to supper. The lady showed no symptom of being uncomfortable from the proximity of a magnet, until requested to look at, and fix her attention

upon, her hand; and, after being aroused, all seemed right again, until she was told that the *dreaded magnet was hidden somewhere in the room*, and she was requested to go round in the dark and endeavour to find it. The husband thought her sitting down in the chair proved that she *felt* the influence of the magnet, although she could not *see* the *light* from it; but, what seemed conclusive evidence to *my* mind that it was the *mere idea*, and *not* any *physical* influence in the magnet, which affected the lady, was this,—that all the time I had been sitting so close to her, conversing with her and her husband, I had had a *fourteen-pound lifting magnet*, with the armature unattached, *in my side pocket next to the lady*,—and that was a magnet of *more than double the power of her husband's*; and yet *no visible* effect was produced by *my powerful*, but *unsuspected* magnet.

As regards sympathy and imitation, every medical man is well aware of their wonderful power, especially on certain temperaments. From the wag who sets a whole company a yawning, against which the very dog below his master's table cannot protect himself, to the recent public exhibitors of experiments in "electro-biology," we have abundant proofs of their power, as well as of the influence of audible suggestions. In particular, we have the history of its extensive prevalence in the middle ages, in the dancing mania, the St. Vitus's and St. John's dancers. Again, the dancers who had the disease, induced by the alleged poisonous bite of the Tarantula, or venomous spider, likewise spread extensively in Italy, "where, during some centuries, it prevailed as a great epidemic."

"From the middle of the fourteenth century, the furies of the *Dance* brandished their scourge over afflicted mortals; and music, for which the inhabitants of Italy now, probably for the first time, manifested susceptibility and talent, became capable of exciting extatic attacks in those affected, and then furnished the magical means of exorcising their melancholy."—*Hecker's Epidemics*.

I have already referred to the convulsionnaires in Paris.\* Even in recent times, however, and in our own country too, the power of sympathy and imitation was vividly portrayed in the south and west of England, where, from this influence, within a short period, about 4000 people became affected by a violent convulsive malady. It is recorded of this epidemic that “hundreds of people who had come thither, either attracted by curiosity, or a desire, from other motives, to see the sufferers, fell into the same state.” The like condition was also manifested very lately in the Shetland Isles; and the power of suspending moral and physical maladies of the sort, by *moral* means, is beautifully illustrated by the following anecdote:—

“An intelligent and pious minister of Shetland informed the physician (the late Dr. Samuel Hibbert Ware), who gives an account of this disorder as an eye-witness—that, being considerably annoyed, on his first introduction into the country, by those paroxysms, whereby the devotions of the church were much impeded, he obviated their repetition by assuring his parishioners that no treatment was more effectual than immersion in cold water; and as his kirk was, fortunately, contiguous to a fresh water lake, he gave notice that attendants should be at hand, during Divine service, to ensure the proper means of cure. The sequel need scarcely be told. The fear of being carried out of church and into the water acted like a charm. Not a single naiad was made.”—*Hecker's Epidemics*.

Let those who deride the notion of *their* being susceptible of such impressions, from *such* causes, have a care that they do not trifle too confidently at the attempt to prove how far *they* can surrender their self-control, for a time, for the purpose of imitating others. They may very probably, in the end, find to their cost and sorrow, that the *will* having been for a time surrendered into another's keeping, may not return

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\* For an interesting account of the convulsionnaires, and cammisards and nuns of Loudun, *vide* Mr. Colquhoun's “History;” also, Hecker.



at their bidding ; and that what they believed to be a mere delusion or fraud in others, has proved to be a grave reality with themselves. They ought to remember the fate of the distinguished prelate, Jo. Baptist Quinzato, Bishop of Foligno, who “ having allowed himself, by way of a joke, to be bitten by a tarantula, could obtain a cure in no other way than by being through the influence of the tarantella, compelled to dance.” Now, it is fully ascertained that the bite of the tarantula is not at all poisonous, and the bishop was fully persuaded of this when he perpetrated the joke ; still, the idea having at length taken possession of his mind, that it possibly *might* be poisonous after all, he became a victim to this *imaginary* poison. From the state of public opinion in that age, it has, moreover, been recorded, “ that even the most decided sceptics, incapable of guarding themselves against the recollection of *what had been presented to the eye*, were subdued by a poison, the powers of which had been ridiculed, and which *was IN ITSELF INERT in its effects.*”

Even at the end of the seventeenth century, Tarantism “ showed such extraordinary symptoms, that Baglivi, one of the best physicians of that time, thought he did a service to science by making them the subject of a dissertation. He repeats all the observations of Ferdinando, and supports his own assertions by the experience of his father, a physician at Lecce, whose testimony, as an eye-witness, may be admitted as unexceptionable.”—*Hecker's Epidemics.*

“ Against the effect produced by the tarantula's bite, or by the sight of the sufferers, neither youth nor age afforded any protection ; so that even old men of ninety threw aside their crutches at the sound of the tarantella (the name given to the music played to those seized with the dancing mania, excited through the bite of the tarantula) ; and, as if some magic potion, restorative of youth and vigour, were flowing through their veins, joined the most extravagant dancers. Ferdinando saw a boy of five years old seized with the dancing mania, in consequence of the bite of the tarantula ; and, what is almost past belief, were it not supported by the testimony of so credible an eye-witness, even

deaf people were not exempt from this disorder—so potent in its effect was the very sight of those affected, even without the exhilaration caused by music.”—*Ibid.*

The powers of sympathy were also strikingly manifested, in 1787, at Hodden Bridge, in Lancashire, where a girl put a mouse into the bosom of another girl, who had a great dread of mice. The girl was instantly thrown into a fit, and continued in it, with the most violent convulsions, for twenty-four hours. On the following day three more girls were seized in the same manner; and on the second day there were six more attacked. The alarm was now so great that the whole works—where from 200 to 300 hands were employed—were totally stopped, and the idea prevailed that the plague had been introduced among them from opening a bag of cotton. On the two following days fourteen more were seized—making, in all, twenty-four victims to this excitement of terror in sport. Of this number, twenty-one were young women, two girls under ten years of age, and one man, who had been much fatigued by holding the girls. The symptoms were so violent as to require four or five persons to hold the patients, so as to prevent them from tearing out their hair and dashing their heads against the floor or walls. So soon as the public became assured that the complaint was merely a nervous disorder, easily cured, and not introduced by any poison from the cotton bale, no other person was affected, although previously several persons had become affected when at several miles distance from the centre of excitement, merely from hearing reports of the symptoms manifested in others.

“To dissipate their apprehensions still further,” it is added, “the best effects were obtained by causing them to take a cheerful glass and join in a dance. On Tuesday the 20th, five days after the first case occurred, they danced, and the next day they were all at work, except two or three, who were much weakened by their fits.”—*Hecker's Epidemics.*

The beneficial effects of dancing, for dissipating the baneful influence of fixed morbid impressions and associations, is proved by the experience which has been had on this point, since this mode of amusement and exercise has been introduced into some of our public lunatic asylums.

The effects of sympathy and imitation and excessive excitement, manifested amongst certain religious sects at their camp meetings in North America, in recent times, prove that, with all our boasted advancement in civilization, beyond those who inhabited Europe during the middle ages, the human mind is still susceptible of these strange mental delusions and physical manifestations, excited entirely through the power of sympathy and imitation in those who place themselves in circumstances favourable for their development.

The following curious and exciting scene occurred, a few years ago, in a maritime town well known to me:—Two captains of merchant vessels arrived in port at the same time, and both went to take up their quarters in their usual lodgings. They were informed by the landlady of the house, however, that she was very sorry that she could not accommodate them on that occasion, as the only bed-room which she could have appropriated for their use was occupied by the corpse of a gentleman just deceased. Being most anxious to remain in their accustomed lodgings, almost on any terms, rather than go elsewhere, they offered to sleep in the room wherein the dead body was laid out. To this the landlady readily gave her assent, considering it better, so far as *she* was concerned, to have *three* such customers in her room than only one, and he a dead one. Having repaired to bed, one of the gentlemen, who was a very great wag, began a conversation with the other by asking him whether he had ever before slept in a room with a corpse in it, to which he replied, “No.”



“Then,” said the other, “are you aware of the remarkable circumstance, that always, in such cases, after midnight, the room gets filled with canaries, which fly about and sing in the most beautiful manner?” His companion expressed his surprise at this. But no sooner said than realized; for, the candle having been put out, presently there was a burst of music, as if the room really was full of canaries, which were not only *heard*, but at length the horrified novice in the chamber of death avowed that he both *saw* and *felt* the birds flying in all directions, and plunging against him. In a short time he became so excited that, without taking time to do his toilet, he rushed down stairs in his night-dress, assuring the astonished household of the fact, and insisting that the room really was *quite full of birds*, as he could testify from the *evidence of his senses*, for he had not only *heard them*, but also *seen* and *felt them, flapping their wings against him*.

The origin of this extraordinary and exciting scene was simply this: his companion had provided himself with a straw or small reed, cut so as to imitate the notes of the canary, when blown through, the end of it being dipped in a glass of water. Here, then, the ear alone was impressed, but the mind superadded thereto illusions of *two other senses*,—sight and touch,—and that in the case of a brave sea captain too.

The powers of sympathy, imitation, and suggestion were remarkably evinced in the extraordinary delusion which occurred to a multitude of people, on the banks of the Clyde, below Lanark, Scotland, in 1686, when

“Many people were gathered together, for several afternoons, where there were showers of bonnets, hats, guns, and swords, which covered the trees and ground; companies of men marched in order on the water side—companies meeting companies, going all through each other, and then falling to the ground and disappearing; other companies immediately reappeared, marching the same way.”

Now it is recorded that *two-thirds of those who went to witness these strange sights bore testimony to their reality*, not merely by their words, but also by their physical manifestations of fright and trembling, which were visible to those who could see nothing of such apparitions and martial array themselves. No doubt all this apparent marvellous appearance resulted from excited imagination, and the confusion of vision consequent on overstraining the eyes, by constant and persevering efforts, to see the invisible phantasms. Had there been any *reality* in the objects of observation, they ought to have been obvious to the *whole* spectators. The concluding remark in Walker's history of the transaction merits particular attention:—

“Those who *did* see them *there*, whenever they went abroad, saw a bonnet or a sword drop in the way.”

I shall now advert to one of the most important points connected with my hypnotic investigations, and that is, to record the result of my experience, corroborated as it is by the experience of others who have fairly tried my method, as regards the most simple, speedy, and certain, and safe mode for inducing *sleep at will*, without the use of opiates. It is well known that there are many who dare not use opiates in any form, from their baneful influence, in some way or other, on their constitutions, their damage, in other respects, being greater than can be compensated for by the disturbed sleep induced by their aid. As I have already said, I consider the hypnotic mode of treating certain disorders is a most important ascertained fact, and a real solid addition to practical therapeutics, for there is a variety of cases in which it is really most successful, and to which it is most particularly adapted; and those are the very cases in which ordinary medical means are least successful, or altogether unavailing. Still, I

repudiate the notion of holding up hypnotism as a panacæa or universal remedy. As formerly remarked, I use *hypnotism* ALONE *only in a certain class of cases*, to which I consider it peculiarly adapted—and I use it *in conjunction with medical treatment, in some other cases*; but, *in the great majority of cases, I do not use hypnotism at all*, but depend entirely upon the efficacy of medical, moral, dietetic, and hygienic treatment, prescribing active medicines in such doses as are calculated to produce obvious effects. A method of producing *sleep at will*, however, *without the use of opiates*, may be most advantageously resorted to, on certain occasions, by *most people*; and I shall, therefore, briefly describe the method devised by me for that purpose.

In my work on hypnotism, published in 1843, I explained how “tired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,” might be procured, in many instances, through a most simple device by the patient himself. All that is required for this is simply to place himself in a comfortable posture in bed, and then to close the eyelids, and turn up the eyeballs gently, as if looking at a distant object, such as an imaginary star, situated somewhat above and behind the forehead, giving the whole concentrated attention of the mind to the idea of maintaining a steady view of the star, and breathing softly, as if in profound attention, the mind at the same time yielding to the idea that sleep will ensue, and to the tendency to somnolence which will creep upon him whilst engaged in this act of fixed attention. Or it may be done with still more success, in certain individuals, by their placing some small, bright object in a similar aspect, with a distant light falling thereon, the party looking at the object with open eyes, fixed attention, and suppressed respiration. Other modes of producing a state of mental concentration, directed



to some unexciting and empty thing, and thus shutting out the influence of other sensible impressions, may also prove successful for inducing calm sleep, by monotonizing the mind,—just as we see effected in the case of children, who are sent to sleep by rocking, patting, or gentle rubbing, or monotonous, unexciting lullabies,—but none are so speedy and certain in their effects, with patients generally, as the modes which I have briefly explained. Mr. Walker's method of procuring "sleep at will," by desiring the patient to maintain a fixed act of attention, by imagining himself watching his breath issuing slowly from his nostrils, after having placed his body in a comfortable position in bed—and which was first published to the world by Dr. Binns, a few years ago—is essentially the same as my own method, which I had promulgated some time *prior* to the publication of the *first* edition of Dr. Binns's work on sleep.

In reference to my hypnotic devices, Professor Gregory makes the following gratifying observations, at page 200 of his "Letters to a Candid Inquirer:"—

"Let us now attend for a moment to the hypnotism of Mr. Braid. I have had the pleasure of seeing that gentleman operate, and I most willingly bear testimony to the accuracy of his description, and to the very striking results which he produces."

After describing my usual process for hypnotizing, the Professor adds:—

"In a short but variable time, a large proportion of the persons tried are not only affected, but put to sleep. Nay, there is, as I have proved on my own person, no plan so effectual in producing sleep, when we find ourselves disposed, in spite of our wish to sleep, to remain awake in bed."

After describing the induction of sleep effected by reading a class of books of a dry, unexciting character, he adds:—

"But let these persons try the experiment of placing a small, bright object, seen by the reflection of a safe and distant light, in such a posi-

tion that the eyes are strained a little upwards or backwards, and at such a distance as to give a tendency to squinting, and they will probably never again have recourse to the venerable authors above alluded to. A sweet and refreshing slumber steals over the senses; indeed, the sensation of falling asleep under these circumstances, as I have often experienced, is quite delightful, and the sleep is calm and undisturbed, though often accompanied with dreams of an agreeable kind. Sir David Brewster, who, with more than youthful ardour, never fails to investigate any curious fact connected with the eye, has not only seen Mr. Braid operate, but has also himself often adopted this method of inducing sleep, and compares it to the feeling we have when, after severe and long-continued bodily exertion, we sit or lie down and fall asleep, being overcome, in a most agreeable manner, by the sollicitations of Morpheus, to which, at such times, we have a positive pleasure in yielding, however inappropriate the scene of our slumbers."

Such testimony, from two such philosophers, regarding the efficacy of my method of inducing *sleep at will*, in their own persons, by such a simple process, I consider a boon to the public, as well as gratifying to myself to have had it recorded by Professor Gregory, and thus diffused so much more widely than when confined to my own publications alone.

Before concluding these "Observations," I shall briefly record the results of two classes of experiments, which must convince any unprejudiced person that the changed or modified action which takes place during hypnotic processes, is due entirely to the influence of the mental concentration of the *patient over his own physical functions*. At the same time, however, I fully admit that another person being present may modify the results produced by audible, visible, or tangible suggestions, in the manner explained at pages 61-2.

I requested four gentlemen, all in perfect health, and varying from 40 to 56 years of age, to sit down, and lay their arms on a table, with the palms of their hands upwards, and each to look at the palm of his own hand for a few minutes with

fixed attention, and watch the result, entire silence being enjoined. In about five minutes, the first, one of the present members of the Royal Academy, stated that he felt a sensation of great cold in the hand; another, who is a very talented author, said that, for some time, he thought nothing was going to happen, but at last a darting, prickling sensation took place from the palm of the hand, as if electric sparks were being drawn from it; the third gentleman, lately mayor of a large borough, said that he felt a very uncomfortable sensation of heat come over his hand; and the third, secretary to an important association, had become rigidly cataleptic—his arm being firmly fixed to the table. Now, here all commenced the operation at the same time, and all were sitting round the same table, and not a word was spoken, not a movement made by any one, to aid or influence the results which followed. In this instance, therefore, of the four senses in the hand, viz., common feeling, heat and cold, and the muscular sense, the one which was naturally most active manifested itself in each case; but, had I suggested what should be expected in each case, the probability is that, in some of them, the *suggested* idea might have been realised instead of the natural one. It is obvious that my will could not have produced four such different results at the same instant of time, and at first trial too.

At page 58 of my book on “Trance” I recorded the case of Mrs. —, thirty years of age, married, and the mother of three children, whom I had speedily cured, by hypnotism, of epilepsy of a most formidable character, and of four years’ standing. All ordinary treatment had previously utterly failed. I stated the fact that, within four days of my first hypnotizing her, one of the most important of the female functions, which had been suspended for many months,



reappeared, and recurred regularly every month subsequently for the next six months ; and when it again became suspended, the value of hypnotism was beautifully illustrated, as the following quotation will show :—

“ At six successive periods I had occasion to resort to hypnotism, for this purpose, and in *every* instance with *entire success*, by a *single operation of from ten to eleven minutes each*. Moreover, I ascertained that this important result could be effected without either touch or pass, but by mental concentration and direction of the *mind of the patient*, and the management of the circulation alone, without farther mental or physical aid on my part, beyond simply requesting her to put herself to sleep, and elevate her limbs—her attention being directed to the expected result. On two or three other occasions, when I hypnotized this patient for neuralgie or rheumatic pain in a leg or arm, through the mode of managing and directing the attention and expectant idea, the pains were immediately removed, without exciting any visible manifestation on *any* special organ or function.”

Subsequently to the publication of that report, on six other occasions I resorted to the same process in this case, and with the like success on *every* occasion. It now occurred to me that, inasmuch as it was my opinion, that the change in the physical action resulted *entirely* from the fixed mental attention of the patient, with a predominant idea and her faith in the power of the processes, it would be interesting to ascertain whether the result might not be realised by mental concentration alone, when she remained wide awake. On the 4th of April, 1851, I proposed to test this. The requisite means were had recourse to for determining, with the utmost accuracy, the actual physical condition of the patient *before* commencing the experiment. Four ladies and one gentleman were present. Having requested the gentleman to note the time accurately, the patient being seated in an easy-chair, I addressed her in the following words, which were heard by all present :—

“ Now, keep your mind firmly fixed on what you know should

happen." All remained silent; and, in order to withdraw my own mind as much as possible from the patient, I took up a volume of "Southey's Life," and engaged myself in reading it. At the end of eleven minutes I asked her if the desired effect had been produced—to which she replied she did not know; but, upon proper examination, I had incontestable proof of the success of my experiment. Next month she did not require a repetition of the process; but, on the 2nd of June, it was again tried, in the presence of two professional gentlemen, and with equal success as on the 4th of April. On the 28th of July, I again had occasion to resort to the process with this patient; and I was then *particularly* anxious that it should succeed, as a lady was present who required similar aid, and a good example in point was likely to assist me considerably in influencing her the more certainly. My mind, therefore, was unusually intent on the accomplishment of the desired result. At the expiration of eleven minutes I inquired if it had taken effect, when she replied she could not tell. On examination, however, it was ascertained that it had been a failure on this occasion. The patient hereupon remarked that, before sitting down, she thought it would *not* ensue *that night*. I enquired, why? to which she replied, "Because I could not *fix my mind* on it *to-night*, from having been put out of my way just before I came here." To this I replied, "Well, if you cannot fix your mind on the idea when awake, I know that I can command the requisite attention when you are asleep, and therefore I will hypnotize you. This I did, at the same time exciting the circulation. It very soon became apparent, from the expression of her features and the movements of her body, that the spell was in active operation; and on arousing her in eleven minutes, there was positive proof adduced that the experiment had not been tried in vain; and all went on satisfactorily subsequently.

It merits special attention that, notwithstanding my mind was particularly active in *willing* the desired effect when the patient was awake, no success followed, because the requisite *mental* condition of the *subject* was wanting. This failure, therefore, was as positive proof in support of my theory as the successful results; in fact, it was even more so. For, on other occasions my mind had not been so intently desiring the immediate result, and now I was most actively engaged in willing it, and even with greater confidence, because of former successes; but I was doomed to be disappointed, because the requisite *mental condition* of the *PATIENT* was *absent*.

Next month my assistance was not required, but on the 8th of October, in the presence of her mother, the waking experiment was again tried with complete success. On the 8th of November, 1851, her mother, and my esteemed friend Dr. William Stevens, well known as the author of the *Saline Treatment of Cholera and Yellow Fever*, being present, I once more tried the experiment, with most complete success, in eight minutes. From that period it has never required to be repeated, as all has gone on in the natural course. *u/f to May 6*

It appears to me that nothing could be more conclusive and interesting for determining the correctness of my subjective or personal, psychical or mental theory, than the evidence furnished by these cases; nor more important than the last for proving the value of hypnotism for curative purposes. I may also add that, on the 2nd of June, after exciting the function by mental concentration, whilst the patient was simply reposing in an easy chair, by causing her to try it for two minutes more with the legs and arms extended, so as to quicken the circulation, a greatly increased effect was produced; proving the importance of regulating the circulation, for modifying the subsequent results.



Another point worthy of remark, in support of my subjective or mental theory, is this—that not only may the requisite mental concentration be induced by the personal acts of the patients alone, as already explained,—such as by keeping their minds engaged in the continuous act of contemplating some part of their own bodies, or some ideal or inanimate objects, or the mere remembrance and expectation of the recurrence of past sensations,—but I have caused patients to hypnotize themselves, or each other, at the same instant of time, simply by staring at each other, or joining hands, &c., after the fashion of the ordinary mesmerising processes. On one occasion I requested twenty-two patients to lay hold of each others hands whilst standing in a semi-circle, and watch the result, and the whole twenty-two subjects speedily passed into the sleep, which is decidedly subversive of the *polar* theory of the magnetists; for, according to that theory, those only should have passed into the condition who had become surcharged with their alleged occult force passing from one set of patients into the others; and, consequently, those who supplied this mesmeric, magnetic, odyllic, nervous, or vital charge to the others, having thereby sustained a *diminution*, and thus being *under* par, ought to have remained awake. It is obvious that the same effect of sleep ensuing in every case, at the same time, could not have flowed from two such *opposite* PHYSICAL causes.

Another proposition of Baron Von Reichenbach is this—that sensitive patients sleep better when in bed, and feel more comfortable in other places, when nestled in bed with their heads towards the north, or when seated elsewhere, such as in church, in a similar aspect. In my work on “The Power of the Mind over the Body,” I stated that I had tried this experiment with a highly sensitive patient—and I know

of others who have been so tested—without any such result following as the Baron had indicated. At the same time, I directed attention to the strange anomaly which this would present in the constitution of man, if proved to be true; because his most agreeable posture would be in direct opposition to what it ought to be, according to the physical constitution of his nature. For, according to Faraday, the very highest authority we have upon such speculations, the body of man is *dia*-magnetic, so that, were it hung up by the middle, it would naturally point east and west, instead of north and south, like the mineral magnet. A predominant idea or conceit, however, in the patient's mind may, no doubt, cause some individuals to realise such results as the Baron supposed; but were it a physical and physiological fact, as he alleged, what an amount of misery must people have entailed upon themselves, especially in large towns, where they nestle themselves in bed in all points of the compass! Is it conceivable that experience would not have taught them better, in the course of six thousand years? Moreover, would it not seem strange that the clergy, with all their learning and natural sagacity, should have built their churches in the very opposite direction which they ought to have placed them in for comfort and attraction, according to the Baron's views? and that public halls and private dwellings should have been built without due regard to the Baron's alleged natural laws?

Baron Reichenbach has given the result of two experiments with the daguerreotype, by Carl Schuh, as a physical proof of the optical nature of the odylie flames, threads, and smokes, described as seen, by sensitives, issuing from the poles of magnets. Regarding these experiments, the reviewer in the *North British* says they are—



“Utterly unsatisfactory. Certainly these two poor experiments prove nothing. The experiment with two plates lasts a few hours ; the experiment with only one, and therefore without a check, lasts sixty-four ; the check in the former was rendered null by want of care about the box and the drawer, and there was no check provided in the latter. The experiments of Mr. Braid are much better.

“They were made with nine plates, prepared by Mr. Akers, of the Manchester Photographie Gallery—a man professionally engaged in daguerreotype experiments, and therefore quite as likely to be an adept as Herr Schuh. Three of the plates were exposed to the action of a powerful horse shoe (originally able to lift eighty pounds, but somewhat reduced by use) in seclusion from light. Other three were treated precisely in the same manner—only two sheets of black paper were placed between the magnets and the plates, so as to intercept the real or supposed radiance of its poles. A seventh was confined in a box at a distance from the magnet. They were all kept in these several circumstances from sixty-six to seventy-four hours ; but in no instance was there any appearance of the photographic action of light—the only changes being such chemical modifications of the surfaces ‘as generally arise from keeping prepared plates for some time before exposing them to mercury.’”

The other plates were inclosed in a camera, and exposed at such distance as must have given a picture of the poles of the magnet, and flames issuing from them, according to the Baron’s statement regarding the focal distance of *odyle*. One was left sixty-six, the other thirty-five and a half hours so exposed ; but no photographic indications were manifested.

“Now,” adds the reviewer, “it is to be noticed that these are three (four) positive results. Those of Schuh, such as they were, were at the best only negative ones. In his two experiments, it is not the least impossible but that common light reached the plates ; and it does not appear that he was on his guard against those chemical changes which ‘generally arise from keeping prepared plates for some time.’ But in the experiments of Braid and Akers, metallic sensitives were positively and indubitably submitted to the prolonged action of a powerful magnetic force, but no photographic effects ensued. This is the positive observation, not that ; although, at first sight, it seems to be the reverse. In every point of view, in fact, the experiments of the Manchester surgeon are greatly superior to those of the Viennese authority on meteoric stones ; and they settle this part of the question in the meantime.”—Pp. 145, 146.



Regarding the experiments with the lens, the reviewer raises a very reasonable objection to them, as embracing such vagueness of testings as are "far below the mark of scientific accuracy, as it is practised and demanded in these days." And he then adds: "But here appears the avenging Nemesis of Reichenbach's contempt for the older mesmerists. If he had studied their works, he could neither have made nor published this set of his experiments. Braid, the hypnotist, would more especially have furnished him with both facts and thoughts for his guidance. Dr. Holland, who is neither hypnotist nor mesmerist, would have put him on his guard against the effects of expectant attention on certain exceptional nervous systems. In fine, our otherwise accomplished investigator would have been all the better for a little more knowledge of the physiology and pathology of the cerebro-spinal axis, considered as the instrument of the mind, and a little less knowledge of meteors. At all events, these experiments with the lenses will carry conviction into the judgment of neither physicist nor physiologist, especially if he is cognizant of the phenomena to be evoked in the mesmerised nervous system by a word, by a sign, by absolutely next to nothing; and still more especially if he have seen how perfectly self-conscious the possessor of such a nervous system may appear to be, even when seeing water become white, a handkerchief turning into paper, and so forth."—P. 147.

According to Baron Reichenbach's own admission, a magnet suspended from one end of a beam, and balanced by weights at the other end, never moved when a cataleptic hand was advancing towards it with much force, even when allowed to approach close to it, and was hindered from touching and clinging to it only by the stronger arm of the operator or others holding the patient. It must be obvious that, were the attraction mutual, the magnet would advance towards the hand when the latter was restrained, after being near it. I, therefore, quite concur with the reviewer, when he says—

"It is astonishing that, knowing, as he does, that there is no mutual attraction between the magnet and the cataleptic limb, he should not have defined it as an irresistible following of the removed magnet on the part of the limb. This phenomenon, in fact, considered as a phenomenon of motion, is altogether subjective in the patient. The magnet

does not draw the hand, but the hand seeks towards the magnet ; and an experimenter's fist, or a large crystal, is as good as a magnet."

I have hitherto omitted to advert to the alleged mesmeric influence of certain metals and the non-mesmerising quality of others. Dr. Elliotson had set forth that nickel was powerfully magnetic, so that drawing it along the palm of the hand would send a patient to sleep, and produce catalepsy ; whilst lead had no such quality—in short, that one class of metals enumerated would produce specific effects, whilst the others would reduce them, or prove neutral. He offered to prove this to the satisfaction of T. Wakley, Esq. M.P., by giving him the respective metals into his own hands to operate with. According to this gentleman's statement, when he operated with the lead, the patient believing it to be nickel, the effect of nickel came ; and when he used the nickel, the patient supposing it to be lead, no effect followed. The effects were thus active or passive, according to the expectation or belief of the patient ; and this exactly coincides with my own experience on this point—either that there are no such opposite effects in the different metals, or that the difference is so insignificant that it may be entirely superseded by the power of suggestion, or by a predominant idea. By this means I could, with most patients, invest metals, or any other substance, with whatever qualities I might imagine and audibly suggest to them. These experiments of Mr. Wakley have always appeared to me as well devised and adroitly managed, for determining the physical fact, as to whether or not Dr. Elliotson was correct in maintaining that nickel was powerfully mesmeric, whilst lead was wholly inert ; and they clearly proved that Dr. Elliotson's hypothesis was erroneous in this respect. It was an unwarrantable, hasty conclusion, however, for Mr. Wakley to assume that the patients gave



the manifestations realized from sheer deception, and, consequently, that the whole of what has been designated the mesmeric state and mesmeric phenomena, was a tissue of unmitigated imposture. Even supposing the Okeys had been impostors in what resulted in these trials, (which I believe was not the case, but that the manifestations resulted from the powers of belief, habit, imagination, and the influence of predominant ideas over them, as explained elsewhere), surely it would have been a most unwarrantable deduction that there could not be an honest person in the world, merely because Mr. Wakley had met with two rogues? It was perfectly natural, however, for a person of enthusiastic mind, to impugn the honesty of the patients, and draw inferences unfavourable to the *bond fides* of the whole phenomena, when the results were so subversive of Dr. Elliotson's theory or explanation, and when the real state of the matter was then so imperfectly understood. Now, however, that we have so much clearer a comprehension of the real nature and cause of these phenomena, it behoves every candid minded man, and honest inquirer after truth, to modify his hostility and opposition accordingly.

My investigations, supported as they are by the researches of many men of the highest rank and intelligence, fully prove that the solution of the problem is this—that many patients, who are naturally highly susceptible of such influence, become, at length, liable to be affected entirely through the force of imagination, belief, and habit, and that they do not exhibit these manifestations from any desire to deceive others, but because they are self-deceived. through their implicit credulity, belief, and fixity of their attention on the ideas suggested in their hearing, or in any way associated in their minds with certain processes and combinations of



circumstances. The late public experiments, on a large scale, in what has been called "electro-biology," and of which I gave examples, as well as my *rationale* in 1846, in my work on "The Power of the Mind over the Body," fully demonstrated this influence over many patients, even in the waking condition; and my own experiments on a mesmerised patient, recorded in that work, in which every variety of result which I audibly suggested was manifested on the said patient, merely by touching her with my portmanteau key, or placing it in her hand, or suspending it from her fingers, all proved the same fact. In Mr. Wakley's experiments in 1838, he used *different* substances, and the results changed according to his suggestions or the expectation of the patient; in Dr. Haygarth's experiments with the wooden tractors in 1799, results were realised similar to those when Mr. Perkins's metallic tractors were used, whatever variety of wood was tried, painted so as to represent the metallic tractors; but, in my experiments with my portmanteau key, in 1846, many different results flowed from using the *same article*, and these effects were always in exact accordance with my audible suggestions. All these three classes of experiments, therefore, although tending to prove the same ultimate fact, viz., the power of expectation, belief, and a predominant idea, over certain patients, were, in themselves, essentially different from each other.

In conclusion, I beg leave to remark that, from ample experience, I feel pretty confident that all the phenomena alleged by me as producible in the above-named manner are veritable *facts*—that they are NOT *fallacies*. I believe, moreover, that the explanation which I have endeavoured to propound is quite adequate to account for all which I represent as true, without violating any of the

recognized laws of physiology and psychology. From a consideration of the whole, therefore, I am led to infer that my subjective or personal theory is, at all events, a step in the right direction, and somewhat nearer the truth than the theories of the mesmerists and electro-biologists. Even the mesmerists themselves are willing to admit that, in the production of the phenomena of "electro-biology," there is no more *electricity* than there is in all the operations of nature; and that there is nothing of a special influence, a magnetic fluid, an "od" force, or transmission of a nervous or vital force from one human being to another, as the *efficient* CAUSE, either of the phenomena of "electro-biology" or the ordinary phenomena of mesmerism, I consider the experiments and observations which I have published during the last ten years, together with the experience and opinions of others quoted in this little treatise, should be sufficient to demonstrate, to the conviction of all whose minds are not sealed by dogmatic scepticism, or *biologized* by some previous predominant idea about the existence of an "od" force or mesmeric influence. For my own part, however, I am quite open to receive instruction and guidance in my search after truth, from whatever quarter it may be presented for my consideration; because I believe that, *as yet*, we are only on the threshold of this curious, interesting, and most important inquiry.

"It is the great rule of the inductive hypothesis, that the investigator invent nothing new if possible; it is the second, that he adduce the minimum of causation for the maximum of effect; and it is the third, that he proceed from the known to the unknown. It is humbly submitted that the doctrine now explained fulfils these conditions."—*North British Review*.

## APPENDIX.

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It has been remarked by some one, and frequently repeated by others, that the most important part of a lady's letter is generally to be found in the postscript. Whether or not such may be the fact in respect to the letters of the fair sex, I pretend not to decide ; but I have no hesitation in saying, that the most pleasing part of the duty which has devolved upon me connected with the subject of this discussion, will be found in my concluding remarks, which are written for the purpose of fully and freely exonerating Mr. Colquhoun from the imputation of having published the remarks which I have criticised, with any *desire* or *intention* whatever, on his part, to injure me. In the note at page 52, I had alleged it as probable that the charges of which I complained might have been written by him "unintentionally or inadvertently," merely from a little momentary irritation, arising out of my remarks against what appeared to me to be extreme views of the mesmerists, of whom he was one of the most distinguished, and which had roused his enthusiasm, and excited him to take up the gauntlet and fight in support of a theory which he had long espoused, and ably and warmly supported. Now, I have that gentleman's earnest and candid declaration to that effect, which was so promptly given (for he wrote the moment he heard I considered that he had misrepresented me), and so frankly expressed by him in the subjoined letter, as to require neither note nor comment from me to bespeak for it a favourable reception and due appreciation, by every honourable-minded man, as it does equal credit to the heart as to the head of the *ingenuous*, as well as ingenious and learned writer:—

"Edinburgh, 14th February, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—Our friend, Mr. S——, has just mentioned to me that you are displeased with what I have said of you in my last work. I regret this very much, if it be so. But you must recollect that you had, upon different occasions, made certain pretty severe remarks upon the magnetists for believing in the higher phenomena of their science ; and I thought it fair to defend myself, and those who entertain the same views. Nothing could be farther from my intention than to give you serious cause of offence ; for, besides the friendly terms which have always subsisted between us, I have ever been disposed to look upon your labours as valuable, and always expected that you would ultimately



arrive at the same results as the mesmerists. Mr. S—— mentioned that you seemed to think that I had charged you with being a materialist. I am not aware of this, and certainly had no such intention. You had said, when speaking of the *pretensions* of the mesmerists, that they were “alike a mockery of the human understanding, as they are opposed to all the known laws of *physical science*.” I then asked, “Does Mr. Braid, then, acknowledge no science but the *merely physical*?” I never thought of such a thing as charging you with being a materialist. I merely wished to remind you that there are *moral* as well as *physical* laws; and, it appears to me, that both are co-operative in producing the higher phenomena of animal magnetism. I trust, therefore, that you will take no offence at these expressions. They are surely less severe and objectionable than those you have used in speaking of the mesmerists, of whom I am one. Let there be no quarrel, then, between you and me. I should sincerely regret such a thing.

You are probably aware that the higher phenomena of *clairvoyance* have recently been most clearly and beautifully developed in this city. My friend, Mr. Napier—whose first case I printed, at his request, in the appendix to my late book—has since, in association with Professor Gregory, brought out similar, and even more striking phenomena in other cases, of which, perhaps, you may be aware.

From a conversation I lately had with Dr. Esdaile, of Indian celebrity, I find that he is perfectly convinced of the reality of *clairvoyance*—has himself produced the phenomena in many instances—and laughs at those who deny them. I think it likely that he will publish something upon this subject before long.

I repeat, then—let there be no dryness or coolness between you and me. Let each prosecute his own researches, and I have no doubt that the truth will ultimately emerge out of free and open discussion; and I sincerely trust, without any breach of friendship. I should be exceedingly sorry to have any quarrel with you upon this or any other subject.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

J. C. COLQUHOUN.”

Most heartily do I reciprocate the kindly feelings and desire expressed by Mr. Colquhoun, that there should be no coldness or diminution of friendly feeling between us, arising out of our doing battle for the support of our respective theories, or modes of explaining the nature, cause, and extent of magnetic or hypnotic phenomena. Notwithstanding Mr. C. had no unfriendly intention against me in publishing his remarks—particularly the unfortunate query which, by *in-endo*, implicated me in the charge of being a materialist—still, that would not have been enough to shield me against the evil effects which might result therefrom, in the minds of those who perused what he had published. It would, therefore, have been requisite for me to have replied, in

self-vindication of the erroneous impressions regarding me, which might have originated with those who perused Mr. Colquhoun's interesting and learned book, (the great merits of which will insure for it an extensive circulation and eager perusal,) even had I privately received that gentleman's letter before I had gone to press. Had I received that letter sooner, I certainly should have modified some expressions made use of by me when criticising Mr. Colquhoun's remarks regarding myself and hypnotism; but it is particularly gratifying that the said letter came to hand before the present edition was completed, and, although it was not written with the intention of being published, that I was able to obtain Mr. C.'s permission to publish it as an appendix to my "Observations" on his History; because it exonerates *both* parties from any desire, wantonly and intentionally, to misrepresent or injure each other personally, whilst entering into free and open discussion upon scientific subjects. For my own part, I believe that truth, in such inquiries, can only be arrived at through the collision of intellect, and the different points of view from which the subjects are contemplated by different minds.

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I shall now cite from a paper published by me in the *Medical Times*, for December 28, 1844, a few of the wonders recorded in Ward's "History of the Hindoos," which they represent as *facts* and as special gifts imparted to them in token of the great superiority of their religious system, of inducing a state of self-hypnotism, or ecstatic trance. They produce this condition by certain postures or modes of sitting—the minds of the devotees being engaged in acts of fixed attention, by looking at some parts of their own bodies, or at inanimate or ideal objects; at same time holding their breath, *i.e.*, suppressing their respiration. My modes of explaining these alleged marvels are given within parentheses. I may premise, however, that whatever idea occupies the mind of the subject before he passes into the condition, or whatever may have occurred to it accidentally or through the suggestion of others subsequently, will ever after be realised, under similar combination of circumstances, in consequence of the power of suggestion and double-conscious memory, as manifested in some patients even in the sub-hypnotic or waking condition, when what have been called the vigilant or waking pheno-



mena are producible ; and still more certainly during the full, active, double-conscious condition. These principles alone, and the vivid state of the imagination, explain most of the marvels ; but, with the parenthetical explanations, I trust to make them sufficiently obvious to any candid and intelligent person.

“The Yogee who has perfected himself in the three parts of sungyam obtains a knowledge of the past and of the future (quickened memory and excited imagination) ; if he apply sungyamu to sounds, to their meaning and to the consequent results, he will possess, from mere sound, universal knowledge (hypnotic patients imitate, with the *utmost precision* and with the greatest facility, the vocal enunciation of any language, but do not understand the meaning of the words which they utter). He who applies sungyamu to discover the *thoughts* of others will know the thoughts of all. (He will believe and talk as if he did so.) He who does the same to his own form, and to the sight of those whose eyes are fixed upon him, will be able to render his body invisible, and to dim the sight of the observers. (Through the force of imagination, or fixed attention, or suggestion.) He who, according to these rules, meditates on his own actions; in order that he may discover how he may most speedily reap the fruits of them, will become acquainted with the time, cause, and place of his own death. He who, according to these rules, meditates on the strength of the powerful, so as to identify his strength with theirs, will acquire the same. (Through concentrated attention and conviction of their physical energy, there is a most amazing manifestation of increased muscular power.) He who meditates, in the same manner, on the sun as perfect light, will become acquainted with the state of things in every place. (He will believe and speak as if he really did.) By similar application of sungyamu to the cup at the bottom of the throat, he will overcome hunger and thirst ; by meditation on the basilar suture, he will be capacitated to see and converse with deified persons, who range through the aerial regions ; by meditation on extraordinary presence of mind, he will obtain a knowledge of all visible objects ; by meditating on the seat of the mind, or on the faculty of reason, he will become acquainted with his own thoughts and those of others, past, present, and future ; by meditation on the state of the Yogee who has nearly lost all consciousness of separate existence, he will recognise spirit as unassociated and perfect existence. (Belief and vivid imagination.) After this he will hear celestial sounds—the songs and conversations of the celestial choirs ; he will have the perception of their touch in their passage through the air, his taste will become refined, and he will enjoy the constant fragrance of sweet scents. (All this I can easily cause hypnotic patients to realise, through suggestion and their fervid imagination.) When the Yogee, by the power of Sumadhee, has destroyed the power of those works which retained the spirit in captivity, he becomes possessed of certain and unhesitating knowledge ; he is enabled to trace the progress of intellect through the senses, and the path of the animal spirit through the nerves. After this he is able to enter into any dead or living body, by the path of the



senses—all the senses accompanying him, as the swarm of bees follow the queen bee; and, in this body, to act as though it were his own. (Now, all this extravagance I can easily make hypnotic patients *imagine* themselves accomplishing—but, of course, it is *only imaginary*, just as such feats are accomplished in dreams.)

“The collected power of all the senses is called the animal soul, which is distinguished by five operations connected with the vital air, or air collected in the body. The body of the Yogee who, according to the rules of Dharanu, Dhyanu, and Sumadhee, meditates on the air proceeding from \* \* to the head, *will become light as wood*, and will be able to *walk on the fluid element*. He who, in the same manner, meditates on the ear and its vacuum, will hear the softest and most distant sounds, *as well as those uttered in the celestial regions, &c.* (This accords with my proposition, that calling attention to any organ or function will exalt the activity of the function positively, as well as excite ideas connected with such organ or function.) He who meditates on vacuum will be able to ascend in the air. (Imaginary ascent.) He who meditates, by the rules of sungyamu, and in a perfect manner, on the subtile elements, will overcome and be transformed into those elements; he will be capacitated to become as rarified and atomic as he may wish, and proceed to the greatest distance; in short, he will be enabled to realise in himself the power of Deity, to subdue all his passions, to render his body invulnerable, to prevent the possibility of his abstraction being destroyed, so as to subject himself again to the effects of actions.

“By applying sungyamu to the division of the four last minutes of time, he who perfects himself in this will obtain complete knowledge of the separate elements, atoms, &c., which admit not of division of species, appearance, and place. This knowledge brings before the Yogee all visible objects at once, so that he does not wait for the tedious process of the senses. (Imagination, lively faith, and fixed attention, until ideas became too vivid to be corrected by an appeal to the senses and sober reason.)

The following paragraph is from the “Dabistan:”—

“The Sipasian and the historians relate that, whoever carries this process to perfection, rises above death; as long as he remains in the body, he can put it off and be again reunited to it; he never suffers from sickness, and is fit for all business.”

So much for the lively fancy and fervid faith of these religious enthusiasts, during their dreams, in the state of self-induced hypnotism, through fixing their thoughts or sight upon some part of their own bodies, or on some ideal or inanimate objects, and holding their breath, or suppressing their respiration. By an appeal, therefore, to the feats of the Hindoos, I might claim for hypnotism, or self-induced trance, quite as high pretensions for its capability of inducing clairvoyant marvels as anything adduced by the animal magnetists or mesmerists, with all the exoteric or alleged aid which they profess to

communicate or impart to their subjects, by whatever name they may call it—whether magnetic, mesmeric, odylic, nervous, or vital force transferred from the operators into the bodies of their subjects.

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“A chiel’s amang you takin’ notes,  
And faith he’ll prent them.”

I append the following narrative, believing that it may be interesting to some of my readers, especially as it has a direct bearing on the question regarding the truth or error of what has been asserted as the special gifts of mesmeric clairvoyants. It may also aid them in conducting similar investigations in future, so as to guard against some of the many sources of fallacy with which such an inquiry is necessarily surrounded.

Whilst the last sheet of this little book was passing through the press, Mons. Lassaigne and Mdlle. Prudence Bernard, of Hungerford Hall notoriety, made their appearance in Manchester, to astonish us by their wonderful mesmeric, clairvoyant, and supersentient feats. In their circulars, Monsieur Lassaigne was heralded as “The First Magnetiser in Europe,” and Mdlle. Prudence as “the best Clairvoyante known ;” and, in support of these high pretensions, thirty-two paragraphs were appended from the London Newspaper Press.

Under these circumstances, and having been urged by an Edinburgh friend to test this lady’s wonderful pretensions, I did not see how I could refuse to go and witness at least *one* of their public exhibitions, without subjecting myself to the charge of acting like the philosophers in the days of Galileo, who refused to look through his telescope, from a dread that they might thereby be compelled to admit the alleged fact, which they had so strenuously denied. I, therefore, went to the *séance* announced for Friday, the 27th of February, 1852, and secured one of the best seats on the platform, so that I might have an opportunity of observing, with the greater accuracy, all which might be said or done by Mons. L. and his mesmeric clairvoyante.

I was perfectly well aware that many of the feats announced in the programme were capable of being accomplished by a system of collusion, so devised that it might be difficult to detect the sources of fallacy, particularly on a public platform ; but there were others, and those the more important pretensions, which I knew that I could



test in such a simple and satisfactory manner as must convince every one in the room, either that she possessed the supersentient gifts asserted, or that she possessed them not; and I, therefore, went prepared to test this fairly, should a favourable opportunity offer.

The first point which arrested my attention, after the lady was announced as being in the mesmeric state, was this,—that she was one of those subjects who, during the mesmeric condition, have the use of their eyes, *i.e.*, seeing through, or rather from under, their partially closed eyelids. I am quite aware that many of the mesmeric phenomena may be feigned, as, indeed, every other condition may be, and daily is, on the stage; and it is, therefore, quite *possible* that Mdle. Prudence Bernard was not in the mesmeric state at all, which some seemed to suppose was the case. For my own part, however, I think it much more *probable* that she *was* in the so-called mesmeric state, and for this reason,—that during the state of mental concentration peculiar to that condition, all the organs of sense which are called into action become prodigiously quickened, so that they can hear at much greater distances than when awake; and some have the sense of smell so exalted that they can readily detect the owner of a glove in a room full of company, by *smell*,—for, if their nostrils are stopped, they cannot do so. (The blind boy, Mitchell, recognised people by smell in his ordinary state; and he formed a favourable or an unfavourable opinion of them when first introduced to him, according to the peculiar odour from their persons.) The sense of touch and resistance, and of heat and cold, and no doubt taste also, are in like manner greatly quickened.

Many of the first experiments of the evening were, in my opinion, quite vitiated, from the requests to do such and such feats having been given to M. Lassaigne, or the interpreter, in a whisper, which, I well knew, any attentive mesmerised subject might over-hear, from their quickened sense of hearing. I called attention to this source of fallacy, and suggested that all future requests should be conveyed to M. Lassaigne in writing. This proposal was at once most readily acceded to; and she still continued to give proofs of her power of understanding M. Lassaigne,—although both myself, and others near me, observed, in certain instances, that suggestions were *now* given which were “not in the bond”—such



as, "you are near him," audibly expressed, before she gave the flower to the reporter—which was the order proposed on this occasion, and was to have been conveyed to the clairvoyante silently, and by the mere force of Mons. Lassaigne's will. At first she passed by the reporter, and went up to several other persons seated behind him, and fenced about as if she expected it should be some of them; but, at length, judging from their looks and manners that she was off the proper scent, she drew back and stood still for a little, as if quite at a loss what to do next; but the instant the words "you are near him" were audibly uttered, she turned round and gave the flower to the reporter, who was the person nearest to her at that moment. It was, therefore, easy for her to fix upon the reporter, seated at a table by himself, and near to where she was standing, when the audible suggestion was given regarding their proximity. A similar hesitation took place before giving a book to the proper person; so that, instead of what I saw, being *clear* seeing, I considered it *dim* seeing and artful dodging. Moreover, Mons. L.'s mode of walking behind his clairvoyante when he wished her to advance, and standing still when she had gone to the extent desired, was a mode of suggestion which did not escape observation. When to all this is added the mode of giving suggestions through watching the eye of another, and signals communicated through slight movements felt and heard by the patient, though unobserved by the audience, there is no difficulty in comprehending how Mons. L. succeeded with almost all the experiments tried by him and his clairvoyante whilst I was in the room, without the possession by her of any supersentient gift of the nature which he alleged. Even Mons. Robin's experiments with the bell, with his blindfolded clairvoyante, were still more remarkable; and yet he avowed that they were done *entirely by collusion*, and by means so simple, too, that he could scarcely restrain himself from laughing outright when thinking of the ease with which the audience could be deceived by those experiments.

But now arrived the experiment which I considered by far the most interesting of all on the programme, viz., playing at cards and reading, when her eyes were to be so securely blindfolded that not a ray of light could reach them, in the common acceptation of the term. To effect this, folds of

cotton wadding were placed across the forehead, eyes, and nose, and over the face as far as the point of the nose, and then a white handkerchief folded several times, so as to be about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, was bound round the head and eyes, so as to maintain the cotton in its place. This done, M. Lassaigne triumphantly asked any one to examine his subject, and say whether it was *possible* for her to see through all this apparatus. Some one having exclaimed "no," the lady sat down at a table to challenge any one present to play a game at cards with her. Whilst they were making arrangements for the game, even without being mesmerised, I was sufficiently clairvoyant to observe the lady pensively lay her face upon her hands, so as to enable her very conveniently, and *by mere accident no doubt*, to give the proper twist and finish to the apparatus for *excluding* light from her eyes. I observed this manœuvre by the lady *twice*, and called the attention of some friends to it, who can also testify to the fact. The clairvoyante now became very lively; described the personal appearance of her opponent, played dexterously, and beat him. She also did the same by another gentleman who tried a round with her; and with a third gentleman, a friend of my own, who, by my suggestion, had taken a *new* pack of cards with him, she proved her power of describing his personal appearance correctly, and playing well, but she lost on this occasion from having bad cards.

As the lady was now considered to have proved her clairvoyant powers to the satisfaction of all present, I stepped forward and announced my desire to have the privilege of applying a test which would be far more satisfactory to *my* mind, because I had no confidence in the supposed efficacy of the blindfolding then in use, for effectually accomplishing what it professed to do. I told the audience that I felt convinced that the patient was seeing through interstices between the cotton and the face, near the side of the nose. My proposal for guarding against such a source of fallacy as this, was simply to place a thin sheet of brown card board under her chin and round her neck, so as to guard against the possibility of the deception which I suspected. This I intended to have accomplished by tying the sheet of pasteboard around her neck, proceeding from the bottom of the throat upwards in a conical form, after the fashion of the Elizabethan frill, extending considerably higher than the head, so as to prevent



the possibility of her raising her hands or lowering her head sufficiently for seeing over it, without exciting the attention of the audience. Indeed, whoever had had the opportunity of observing the clairvoyante, as I did, during this card scene, must have felt that he would be permitting an insult to be perpetrated upon himself and upon the whole audience, were he not to endeavour to expose what appeared to me to be such an absurd farce. I was aware that my test would be objected to, on the ground that she did not profess to read *through card board* (although I must confess my surprise that a person who can see and read through stone or brick walls, should not be competent to penetrate through thin card board), so I, therefore, offered to remove that objection, by cutting out a piece of the card board, and covering the hole with the cotton wadding and folded handkerchief, which *she actually professed to see through*; but, although the audience were almost unanimous in their opinion that my proposed test was a fair one, and such as they wished to see tried, M. Lassaigne well knew that it was too certain and obvious a mode of testing to answer his purpose, and, therefore, under various pretexts, and in a most rude manner, he obstinately refused to try it. I therefore withdrew from the platform and left the room, feeling the force of the remark,—“*Ex uno, disce omnes.*”

Had Mr. Lassaigne, like M. Robin, admitted that his feats were done by ingeniously contrived collusion, I should have considered it perfectly fair for him to refuse submitting to any mode of testing which might destroy the interest of his *future* public exhibitions. Here, however, we had a different sort of pretensions to deal with, for M. Lassaigne represented that there was no collusion in the matter, but that all was accomplished by supersensient gifts imparted to his patient by his mesmerising processes. According to this notion, that the mind of the subject could hold intercourse with the outer world without the aid of the physical organs required for such purposes during the waking condition, I consider the audience not only had a right to expect, but to *demand*, that they should have satisfactory proof adduced, that all chance of the subject deceiving us by using her natural physical organs of sight, hearing, feeling, and smell, when we thought these excluded, should be clearly demonstrated to be impossible, under existing circumstances. Such was the sole purport of my



test, which was perfectly fair, and would not have been refused had she really possessed the power alleged; for, be it observed, I was willing to cut a hole in the pasteboard, and cover it merely with the wadding and handkerchief which she really *professed to see through*; that is, to take them *off* the eyes and cover the aperture in the mask with the *same materials*. Inasmuch, then, as the objects to be seen and described and the light were still to remain in the same relative position to the eyes, wherein existed a difference between the mode she professed and the one I suggested—unless in the facility for deceiving us by the *former* mode, and the impossibility of doing so by the latter?

At their first *séance* at Manchester, on the 24th of February, 1852, a gentleman went prepared to test the lady's power of reading without seeing through interspaces. He had written a short sentence from a French book, in a plain hand, and folded and enclosed it in a common letter envelope, so that, including the envelope, four folds of paper would have required to be read through. The gentleman has written to me, and enclosed the test unopened. After detailing various alleged clairvoyant feats done by the lady, such as playing at cards, and reading written words with the eyes covered with cotton and a handkerchief, he adds, "When these experiments were concluded, I rose and said,—Now that the balls of cotton and the cloth are removed from the lady's eyes, will she read a few words, plainly written, on a slip of paper, and enclosed in a common envelope? 'No,' replied the interpreter, 'that is a very difficult experiment.' 'But some of Dr. —'s patients have done it.' 'It cannot be done, except light falls in some way on the words to be read.' 'O!' said a gentleman in another part of the hall, 'that throws *light* on the proceedings.' I was of the same opinion, and did not again interfere."

This gentleman's test was really not a very severe one, had she possessed any remarkable quickness of vision, for I find that, with the aid of *transmitted* light, I can myself see to read the writing through *two* folds of the paper, and surely *four* folds ought not to be impossible for a clairvoyante who pretends to see through stone or brick walls innumerable, or even through mountains, and to the other side of the globe, or what is being transacted by living men or their departed spirits, throughout any part of illimitable space. Middle.

Prudence Bernard, moreover, had the double chance of reading the silent *thoughts* of the *writer*, which was one of her *professed feats*.\*

As my object in attending Mons. L.'s *séance* was neither simply to be amused, nor to be deceived by mere illusions, but to investigate what was proposed for our consideration with some degree of philosophical accuracy—although a public platform is by no means a favourable place for doing so—when I found the latter was to be peremptorily denied us, I could not condescend to remain and countenance a mere *sham* investigation, which might be set forth to the world, hereafter, as having been exhibited before me and not demurred to. Had fair and full investigation been permitted, there were several other experiments in the programme which I wished to have tested, with as much accuracy as a public platform would have permitted; but I must have a fair field and no favour when testing, or totally decline being a party to any proposed scientific, but merely *sham*, investigation.

I understand, moreover, that, after I had left the room, it

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\* Many years ago reports were published of a remarkably clairvoyant boy, in ———, who could see through a mask of nine folds of silk stuffed with cotton wadding. Through all this his opties were said to enable him to penetrate, when mesmerised; so that he could play cards and read any book, or print new from the press, more fluently and elegantly than when awake. I wrote to the gentleman whose book this account appeared in, told him what I suspected, and how he was deceived. He could not believe it possible to trick him, and the hundreds of respectable people who had seen the boy, in the manner I supposed; but offered me an opportunity of testing him, by a friend who was visiting that city. The boy having played cards dexterously, as usual, with his mask on, my friend took him in hand according to the plan suggested by me, which was—to guard against interspaces near the nose. The boy read the superscription of my letter to him, then opened it and read on with fluency; but the moment my friend placed his card over the writing, or below the nose, the clairvoyance was gone—but returned when he withdrew it, the same with a sheet of paper interposed; and, finally, by carrying his hand, holding the letter, sufficiently high to prevent any ray of light getting to the eye by the side of the nose, it was a dead pause, without covering the writing with any substance. This opened the eyes and understanding of all present to the source of fallacy through which they had been deceived; and they wrote and begged I would not publish the case, because the boy's father was such a respectable man, being one of the town council. I consider that Mademoiselle Prudence Bernard was clairvoyant on the evening when I saw her through the same means, and the object of my test was simply to prove this to be a fact.



was represented to the audience that Mons. Lassaigue had been so polite as to invite me to his *séance*, and that, in return for that kindness, I had rudely come and interrupted the harmony of the meeting. The audience must, naturally, have inferred from this, that Mons. Lassaigue had presented me with a free ticket of admission, but such was not the case. The only civility of the sort which I am aware of was this—that one of his circulars was left at my house, as they were at other houses in Manchester, in order to tempt me to go and pay the usual admission fee, which I did pay, and therefore was under no such obligation to Mons. Lassaigue as he wished the audience to believe.

From my anxious desire to guard against every chance of misrepresenting, in any respect whatever, what really occurred at said *séance* of Mons. Lassaigue, before going to press, I submitted a proof of the above narrative to the inspection of three of the most intelligent gentlemen who engaged in testing Mdle. Prudence Bernard, that evening, who are ready to vouch for its accuracy on *every point*.

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In conclusion, I would beg leave only farther to observe, that the advanced state of physical and chemical science has now enabled us to explain, on scientific principles, many phenomena which, in former days, were looked upon as the results of Magic and Witchcraft. When to these are added the peculiar manifestations of nervous diseases, and the power of imagination, sympathy, imitation, predominant ideas, easy credulity, fixed attention, habit, and suggestion in all its various forms, in changing or modifying mental and physical phenomena in many individuals, even in the waking condition, and their almost unlimited control over those who pass into the second-conscious stage of hypnotism—as explained in the foregoing pages—the whole of the well-ascertained apparent marvels of Magic, Witchcraft, Animal Magnetism, Hypnotism, Electro-Biology, Crystal-seeing, &c., become level to our apprehension, and admit of explanation without violating any of the recognised laws of physiology and psychology.



An accidental circumstance having caused delay in printing off the last sheet of this little book enables me to add the following valuable testimony in support of my views, which I extract from the newly published volume entitled, "Chapters on Mental Physiology, by Henry Holland, M.D., F.R.S., &c. &c., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, Physician Extraordinary to the Queen, &c." That gentleman has long been well known as one of the most ingenious, scientific, and learned writers, as well as accomplished practical physicians, in Europe; and his recent work fully maintains his high reputation, being one of the most valuable and masterly productions which has issued from the press for a long period, both as regards the important topics discussed by the author, the facts adduced, and the ingenious reasonings and philosophical deductions with which he has connected them. At page 30, the learned author acutely and justly observes:—

"Are these phenomena—admitted by all to be singular and striking—derived from a peculiar agent or influence, transmitted from one human body to another by certain modes of communication? Or are they the effects of various external excitements on the sensorium and nervous system of persons of a peculiar temperament, analogous in nature and origin to phenomena with which we are more familiar in sleep, trance, hysteria, and other forms of cerebral or nervous disorder?"

"These questions, involving the very reality of the Mesmeric theory, must ever be kept before us in all observation or reasoning on the subject. It is singularly important that this should be done wherever experiment is concerned; inasmuch as they suggest those particular tests which are essential to complete evidence, but which have been, for the most part, unaccountably neglected. In putting these questions, moreover, we indicate the absolute need, for the right prosecution of this inquiry, of familiarity with the natural phenomena of health and disease just adverted to. Without this knowledge, and without the just perception of what constitutes scientific evidence, we might as well be gazing at the feats of a conjurer at a public exhibition, as on those of animal magnetism in similar assemblies.

' Another point in this question, not sufficiently kept in mind, is the vast distinction between the two classes of Mesmeric phenomena—sleep, reverie, trance, and certain acts arising from them—and the miraculous assumption of clairvoyance, prophecy, and other powers, superseding all the physical laws of time and space of which we have any knowledge. These things are presented to us as parts of the same phenomenon, and produced by the same manipulations or personal contact. But they are in truth of very different nature, and totally incommensurate with each other. There is less distinction between the intellect of an infant and that of Bacon, Newton, or Laplace, than between the conditions thus brought into pretended connection. If the miraculous powers in question, for they admit no other name, be proffered to our belief, it must be upon evidence far more searching and stringent than

is needed to verify those other conditions, which are so closely allied to the ordinary changes in health and disease. It is unnecessary to dilate on the importance of a distinction which every man of understanding will admit and appreciate."

Again, at page 34 :—

"Applying these facts to the more mysterious exhibitions of this influence, they cogently suggest the question, how it can happen that such manifestations of new and exalted power—the knowledge of events far distant in space and time—the instant recognition, without inquiry, of the seat and nature of internal disease and of the befitting treatment—vision, or that perception which is equivalent to it, through other organs than the eyes, &c.—how it happens, I say, that faculties so marvellous should be given to those of feeble, vague, or distempered mind, and wholly denied to men of the highest mental energy and intellectual powers?—given, moreover, by persons who themselves possess none of the faculties which they thus miraculously bestow? This question, though stated merely as such, is in effect pregnant with argument; and deserves to be well weighed by all who incline to this separate and more mysterious part of Mesmeric belief."

At pages 9, 10; 24—35; 83—94; 123—128; 155; 160; 169; 172, 173; 223; and 280, Dr. Holland has given many admirable observations bearing on this subject, to which I beg to refer, in addition to the following quotations :—

"The observations of Mr. Braid, more especially, have done much to establish this fact of the altered character of sleep in effect of the manner in which it is brought on; and this may be regarded as a valuable part of his researches."—P. 89.

"We must not quit this topic without noticing the striking results of what has been termed *Hypnotism*—the sleep or trance produced, not by mesmeric means, but by the act of the individual himself, made to concentrate his vision fixedly for a certain time upon some one object. It apparently facilitates the effect if this object be of small size; and Mr. Braid's interesting experiments would seem to show what may well be understood, that the posture of the head further favours the results. The simple fact, that the various physical character of the object gazed upon does in no way alter the effect, will readily be received as sufficient proof, that the trance induced arises from causes *within*, and not from influences *without*, the body of the person thus affected.

"The evidence, indeed, furnished by these experiments in relation to mesmeric sleep, is simple and convincing as respects the main assumption, that this state is brought on by the influence of one human body on another. The effects are less in degree, inasmuch as the means employed less powerfully excite the imagination. But they are expressly the same in kind; and justify the conclusion, that all these states depend on affections of the nervous system, in persons of a certain temperament, and under certain modes of excitement.

"These researches of Mr. Braid on Hypnotism well deserve careful examination; as do also his valuable experiments connected with Electro-Biology; each inquiry illustrating the other by analogous facts and inferences."—P. 92.



# INDEX.

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- Aberdeen Committee's report in refutation of Mr. Lewis's assumption of suspending a patient in the air by his magnetic power, and of influencing patients at a distance, pp. 30—34, *note*.
- Alison, Professor, pp. 34, 40.
- Ashburner, Dr., the alleged power of his will, pp. 74, 75.
- Attention, its effects on the respiration and state of the blood, p. 22.
- Bennett, Professor John Hughes, his opinions in support of Hypnotism, p. 35.
- Braid, Mr., his *subjective* or personal mental theory of Hypnotism, in opposition to the *objective* theory of the Mesmerists and Electro-Biologists, pp. 5—8, 10, 20, 21, 24, 43, 45, 53, 57, 93—97.
- Object of his first experiments, and success of the method, pp. 45, 57.
- Reason why he adopted the term "*Hypnotism, or nervous sleep*," p. 24.
- His refutation of various charges by Mr. Colquhoun, pp. 8—14, 20.
- His experiments in refutation of the alleged "od" force of Reichenbach, pp. 26—29, 99—102.
- Limited extent of his belief in the curative efficacy of Hypnotism, pp. 35—37, 90, 91.
- His usual mode of inducing Hypnotism, pp. 56—8.
- His opinion of the importance of combining moral with medical means, pp. 39, 40.
- His *rationalé* regarding the power of suggestion, pp. 66—9.
- His limitation of this power to audible, visible, or tangible suggestions, when seen, heard or felt, in the ordinary acceptance of these terms, pp. 70, 71.
- *Resumé* of the result of his experience regarding the extent of phenomena, pp. 71, 72.
- His methods of arousing from the Hypnotic state, p. 72; always speedy and certain, p. 73.
- His proposed test for walking on the water or suspending a man in the air by magnetic attraction and mere power of the human will, pp. 74, 75.
- His estimate of the relative value of Chloroform and Mesmerism or Hypnotism for suspending pain, in this country, during surgical operations, pp. 80, 81.
- His mode of procuring refreshing sleep at will, without the use of opiates, pp. 90—93.



- Braid, Mr., his opinions regarding Clairvoyance and the higher phenomena, pp. 14—19, 71, 72, 81, 82, 108—110.
- Sources of fallacy, pp. 73, 74, 81—84.
- His object chiefly the practical application of Hypnotism to the cure of disease, pp. 22—24.
- His mental theory proved by the non-susceptibility of idiots and delirious patients, pp. 43, 77.
- His *rationalé* of influence of passes, touches, and suggestions, pp. 59, 60—62.
- of mesmerising and demesmerising passes. pp. 72, 73.
- His criticism of Mr. Newnham's Theory of Mesmerism, pp. 5—8, *note*.
- His experiments with his portmanteau key, to prove the power of imagination, belief, and habit, over certain susceptible subjects, pp. 44, 100.
- His observations on, what is "a discovery?" p. 21.
- His observations on Mr. Wakley's testing the Okeys, p. 100.
- Brewster, Sir David, pp. 50, 92.
- Carpenter, Dr. W. B., pp. 52, 53.
- Colquhoun, Mr. J. C., his "History," chief object of, pp. 4, 5, 13, 14.
- Extent of his faith in the efficacy of Magnetism and magnetic temperament in the cure of disease, p. 35.
- His opinion of the importance of will and good intentions, p. 37.
- His firm conviction regarding the reality of supersentient clairvoyance, pp. 13, 14.
- His admission regarding the uncertainty of the answers of clairvoyants, p. 17.
- His letter to Mr. Braid, p. 110.
- Critic—Opinion as to proper mode of investigating physical facts, p. 15.
- Opinion of Mr. Braid's work on "Hypnotism," p. 34.
- Differences amongst Mesmerists regarding Odyle, pp. 74, 75.
- Electro-Biology, or waking phenomena, pp. 26—28, 42, 66, 67.
- Esdaile, Dr., his interesting letter, giving *resumé* of his mesmeric experience in India, pp. 78, 79, 80.
- Fakirs, self-hypnotists, p. 20.
- Gregory, Professor, his testimony to the efficacy of Hypnotic processes, pp. 92, 93.
- Habit, belief, and imagination, their influence over certain patients—real cause of success of certain fanciful modes of practice, pp. 22, 57, 58.
- Haddock, Dr., his admission regarding the uncertainty of "Emma's" clairvoyant responses, pp. 17, 18.
- Haygarth, Dr., experiments with fictitious tractors, p. 104.
- Hindoos, self-hypnotists, pp. 20, 112.
- Hypnotism, reasons for adopting that term, p. 24.
- Approval of term by Professor Bennett, p. 35.
- *British and Foreign Review*. p. 29.
- Usual modes of inducing it, pp. 56, 57.
- Object of first experiments, p. 57.

- Hypnotism, essentially a state of abstraction, or mental concentration, pp. 10, 53, 54.
- The opposite condition of mind and body from *common* sleep, p. 54.
- Different degrees of susceptibility, pp. 57, 70, 71.
- Influence of habit, expectation, and sympathy, pp. 57, 58, 80, 81.
- Natural phenomena of, may be subverted by a system of training and suggestion, pp. 62—67.
- State of mind and body during, and mutual action and reaction upon each other, pp. 59—61.
- How to direct it so as to soothe or excite, p. 63.
- Can only be applied scientifically to individual cases by medical men, or under their direction, pp. 63, 64 ; trained assistants desirable, p. 64.
- Reasons why it may prove more powerful and successful than the ordinary Mesmerising processes for curing disease, p. 65.
- Various modes of suggestion, pp. 59, 60—63 ; most influential in the full or double-conscious state, p. 65.
- Double-conscious memory, pp. 65, 67.
- Sub-condition of, when patients may be controlled by suggestion whilst apparently awake, p. 66.
- *Rationalé* of Phenomena, pp. 66, 67 ; particular manners and deportment of operator requisite, p. 67.
- States of mind favourable or unfavourable for exercising correct judgment, pp. 55, 69.
- Why at one stage certain functions are impaired, and why at another stage they may be exalted, illustrated by writing without the use of the eyes, and a girl imitating Jenny Lind singing correctly both words and music of songs unknown to her, pp. 69, 70.
- Sources of fallacy regarding the higher phenomena, and *resumé* of Mr. Braid's experience of genuine phenomena, pp. 71, 72, 81—84.
- Modes of arousing from sleep according to intention, p. 72.
- Never experienced difficulty in arousing from, as occurs to some Mesmerised patients, p. 72, 73.
- Power of resisting influence may be no compliment to the boaster, p. 77.
- Folly and inhumanity of obstructors of such investigations illustrated, pp. 77—81.
- Favourable opinions of, by *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*. pp. 25, 26.
- ———— *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, pp. 26—30.
- ———— *Psychological Journal*, pp. 44—46.
- ———— *Fraser's Magazine*, pp. 46—50.
- ———— *North British Review*, pp. 32, 100.
- ———— *The Critic*, p. 34.
- ———— Professor Bennett, p. 35.

- Hypnotism, favourable opinions of, by Professor Gregory, pp. 92, 93.  
 ————— Sir David Brewster, pp. 43, 50.  
 ————— Dr. W. B. Carpenter, p. 52, 53.  
 ————— Mr. J. J. G. Wilkinson, pp. 50—55.
- Imagination, its power and importance, pp. 40—42.
- Imitation and sympathy, pp. 58, 84—92.
- Magnetism or Mesmerism, ordinary processes for inducing, pp. 58, 59.  
 ————— More acceptable to certain classes than Hypnotism,  
 and why, p. 23.  
 ————— Dr. Mayo, pp. 32, 54.
- Mesmerism, cross, p. 73.
- Magnetists or Mesmerists never in a position to prove that their *objective*  
 influence is acting alone, and why, pp. 32, 33.
- Metals, their alleged Mesmerising and Non-mesmerising qualities tested,  
 by Mr. Wakley, pp. 102—104.
- Monomania curable by Hypnotism, p. 42.
- Newnham, Mr., his Theory of Mesmerism criticised, p. 5—8. *note*.
- Odometer, Dr. Mayo's, p. 32.
- Passes, their nature and influence explained, pp. 61, 62, 72, 73.
- Reichenbach, Baron Von, his speculations impugned as *subjective* in the  
 patient instead of being *objective*, as he alleged, pp. 10, 26—30,  
 32, 44.
- Sceptics, unenquiring dogmatic, a few remarks and remonstrances  
 addressed to, pp. 66, 67.
- Sleep, common, its nature and cause, p. 54.  
 ————— Wherein it differs from Hypnotic or Magnetic sleep,  
 pp. 54, 55.  
 ————— Refreshing, at will, without the use of opiates, Mr. Braid's  
 method of producing, pp. 90—93.
- Sowler, Mr. R. S., letter, pp. 47, 48.
- Stages, different, and their peculiar phenomena, p. 55.
- Subjective influence of concentrated attention in changing physical  
 action illustrated by four gentlemen trying the experi-  
 ment at the same time, pp. 93, 94.  
 ————— By an epileptic patient, pp. 94—97.  
 ————— By twenty-two patients Hypnotizing each other by joining  
 hands, p. 92.
- Suggestion, its power on certain individuals, pp. 62, 63, 65, 66.
- Susceptibility, different degrees of, pp. 57, 70, 71.
- Sympathy, imitation, imagination, and predominant ideas, their power  
 with certain patients, pp. 83—93.
- Wakley, T., Esq., M.P., his testing the Okeys, and inferences, pp.  
 102—104.

THE END.





