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Transactions of the Vrîl-ya Club.

REICHENBACH'S
RESEARCHES.

LECTURE DELIVERED BY

ARTHUR LOVELL,

AUTHOR OF "ARS VIVENDI," &c.

PRESIDENT OF THE VRIL-YA CLUB.

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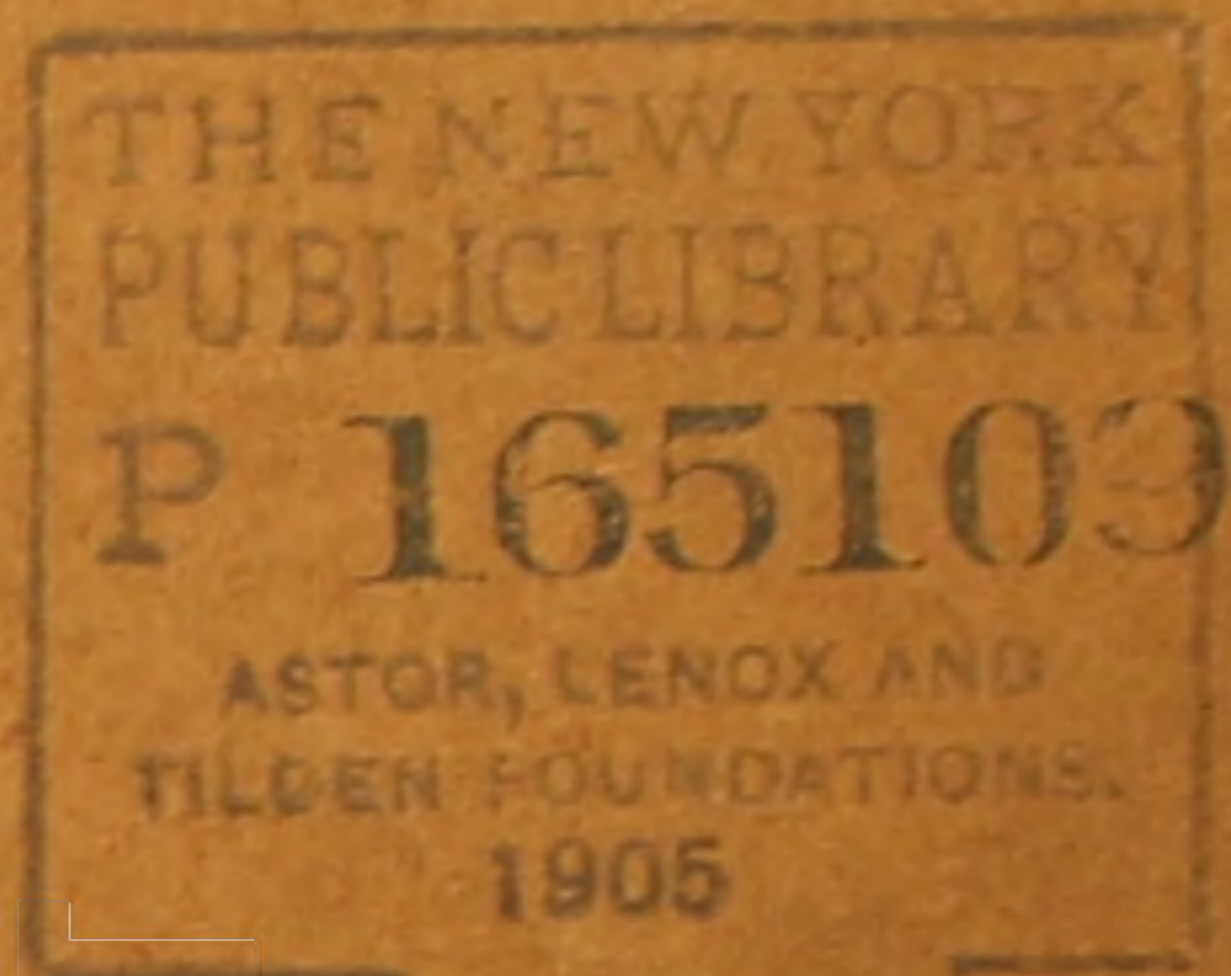
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TRANSACTIONS
OF THE
VRIL-YA CLUB.



EDITED BY

ARTHUR LOVELL,

AUTHOR OF

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PREFACE.

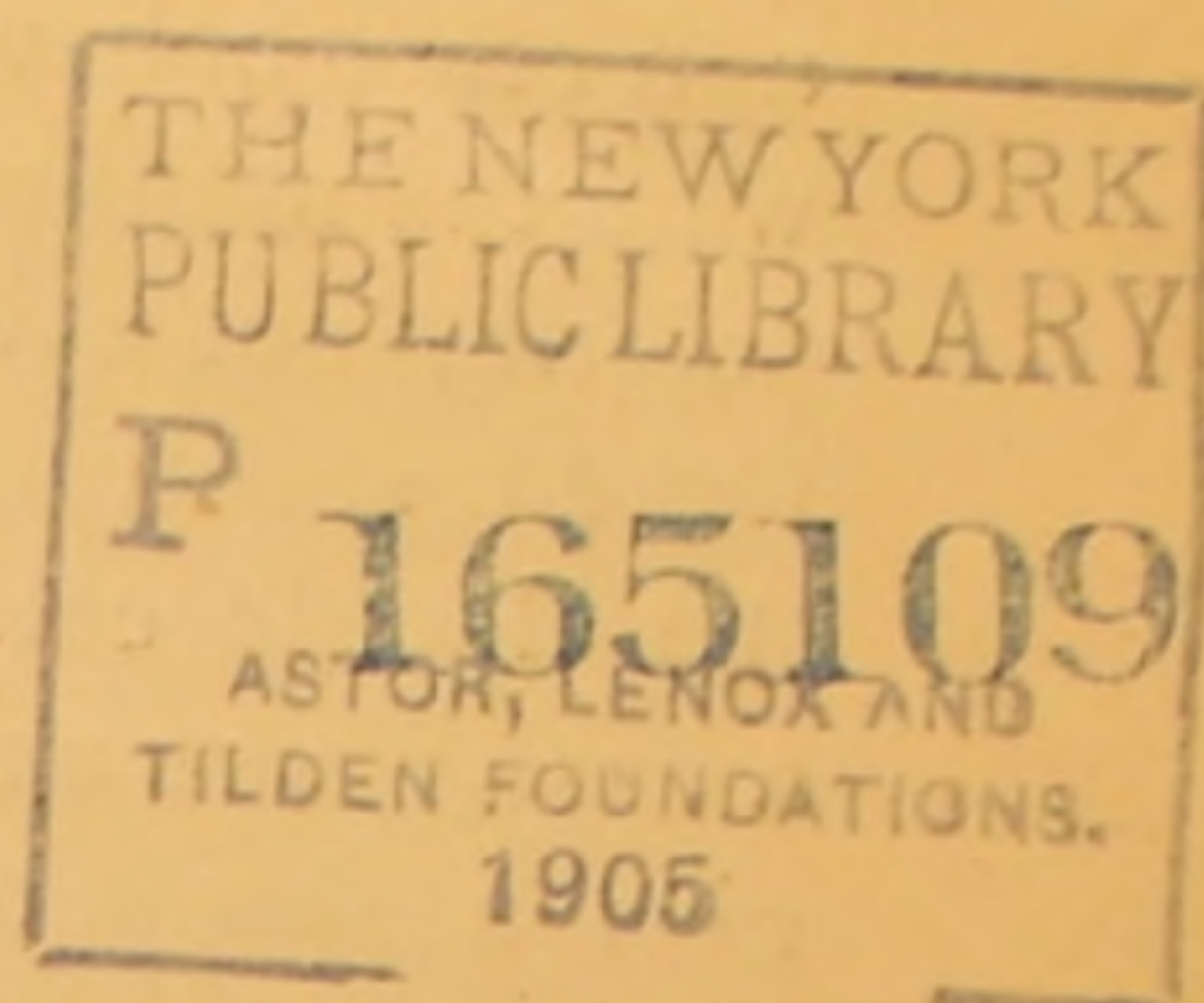


In issuing the second number of the Transactions of the Vrilya Club, which contains the record of our first Session, I take the opportunity of congratulating the Members on the successful inauguration of a movement which aims at presenting so-called "advanced" ideas in a rational manner, not in the illogical and hysterical fashion to which the public has been too long accustomed.

ARTHUR LOVELL.

94, Park Street,

Grosvenor Square, W.



The Opening Meeting of the Session, 1903-1904.

The first meeting of the regular session of the Vrilya Club was held on Wednesday evening, October 14th, 1903, at the Modern Gallery, 175, Bond Street. It was widely reported in the London and the Provincial Press, and the following three selections may be taken as a sample of the reports:—

(The *Daily News*, October 15th.)

THE CULTIVATION OF 'VRIL.'—The opening meeting of the winter session of the Vrilya Club was held last evening in the Modern Gallery, Bond Street. There was a good attendance of members, and Mr. Arthur Lovell, the President, was in the chair. The club, it may be recalled, was constituted for the purpose of the investigation and practical cultivation of vril, a force which may be likened to mesmerism, hypnotic power, or personal magnetism, which, it is claimed, is latent in mankind, and the possibilities of which are foreshadowed in Lord Lytton's romance, 'The Coming Race.' Last evening the President outlined the work of the club for the coming session, and remarked that they hoped to generate more vril than had hitherto ever been apparent, and he thought their success in this direction would mark a new departure in the history of the world. He said this not in a boastful spirit, but soberly and seriously. He discussed the phenomena which had been advanced by Theosophists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists,

and other believers in occult powers, and declared that they were the manifestations of one force, supporting his theory by pointing out how lightning displays itself in the three forms—forked, sheet, and globular. He instanced, too, the power of the electric eel of South America, remarking that here was a case where sufficient energy or force had been stored up to give a shock to another body even at a distance. In like manner all mankind was possessed of a latent force, but never accumulate enough of it to produce any results—or only occasionally. It was only in exceptional cases that the occult force was developed to a degree sufficient to exhibit its power.”

(The *Birmingham Post*, October 16th.)

“TO CULTIVATE ‘VRIL.’—A number of well-dressed men and women met, on Wednesday night, at the Modern Gallery, London, to hear Mr. Arthur Lovell describe the objects of the Vril-ya Club. This organisation has been formed ‘to draw together the best elements in the various schools of advanced thought,’ with the apparent object of studying force—not the much-advertised food, but ‘organic force in all its aspects.’ ‘Vril,’ said Mr. Lovell, would be a new departure in the history of mankind, for though it was indirectly connected with Christian science, theosophy, and psychic research, it eliminated their worst features. The ideal was the cultivation of a manly spirit on the lines foreshadowed in Lytton’s romance ‘The Coming Race.’ He confessed that ‘Vril’ was not an easy subject to deal with, but he thought that educated people would appreciate its value. The club promises ‘dramatic representations to illustrate the stages of individual and racial development,’ and for those members ‘who desire to penetrate more deeply into occult science, facilities will be afforded for theoretical and practical instruction.’”

(The *Lady's Pictorial*, October 24th.)

“The Vril-ya Club, which held its opening meeting in the charming room of the Modern Gallery, Bond Street, last week, is the outcome of an intellectual movement of quite

ceptional interest. It aims at a very high ideal, based on that foreshadowed in Lytton's 'Coming Race,' and will deal with vital questions of social and political reform. A very large number of members and their friends were present on Wednesday evening to hear the interesting address given by the President, Mr. A. Lovell. The club, which takes its name from vril, the name by which it denotes the force which is intended to study, will meet on every alternate Wednesday during the winter season."

Punch, of October 28th, had a very amusing and moderate-natured skit on the terrible possibilities in connection with the development of Vril, and the standing of the Vril-ya Club:—

We view the prospect with alarm, especially as the period 'Glek-nas,' or universal strife-rot, appears to be setting in for the average 'Tish' or Man-in-the-Crowd. If the injured 'Ana' and 'Gy-ei' elect to form a corner in 'vril'—a commodity which has not been greatly in evidence lately, especially at the War Office and in the Cabinet—where will *Punch* and the rest of us come in? . . . We cannot contemplate with equanimity the notion of being vrilled—no, vrilled—into applauding dramatic representations, which we should most decidedly ought to 'boo,' and which the Censor will have been constrained, against his better judgment, to pass. If the actor-managers and leading ladies will become members of the Club, and put on 'vrills' as they have never done before."

Ah! *Mr. Punch*, if it were as easy to put on "vrills" as to put on frocks, the club would not be lacking in leading ladies! To "put on vril"—that's the question! If Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, Heads of Departments, Generals, Admirals could "put on vril" when wanted, what a change would, more, what a surprise!

II.—Aims and Objects of the Vrilya Club.

A few weeks after the opening meeting, the President was the proud recipient of an all too flattering message from a Press Syndicate in the U.S.A., beginning as follows:—"Dear Sir,—We have just read that you are the inventor of a new system of living free from pain called Vrilya. We control several influential papers, and shall be much obliged for particulars of your invention from your own hands," &c.

I have seen and heard so many different versions of the aims of the Vrilya Club, that, perhaps, the best thing at the outset is to give a plain, unvarnished statement of its origin. The first three meetings were devoted to the elucidation of the main points of difference between the Vrilya idea and existing camps of so-called advanced thought. The next sections, therefore, will serve as a general account of the first three meetings and the subjects discussed, as well as an exposition of the main line on which the Vrilya Club will work. It will be observed that there are *important points in which the Vrilya Club differs from Christian Science, Theosophy, and Spiritualism.*

III.—The Vrilya Club and Christian Science.

The first and most important point of difference between the Vrilya standpoint and Christian Science, is that the former insists on strict reasoning, and practical common sense, whilst the latter regards common sense and logic as the most dangerous and bothersome things in the world. Mrs. Eddy, in *Science and Health*, very naïvely

points out that "no intellectual proficiency is requisite in the learner"—a remark which the thoroughness might have put, with advantage, in the shape of a universal proposition: "All intellectual proficiency is strictly forbidden in the learner of Christian Science." That would once for all have silenced criticism—I do not mean ignorant criticism, which passes judgment without pretending to have the slightest knowledge of the subject, and which is merely the animal instinct to bark and bite, or roar and rend. This animal instinct is so strong in the worst people, that I cannot sufficiently admire the profundity of Schopenhauer's exhortation that he who desires to improve mankind in any way should thank his stars if he escapes with a whole skin. Criticism of that sort is not what I refer to in dealing with Mrs. Eddy's *Science and Health*; but the criticism which is based on knowledge of the subject dealt with, and proceeds from a calm and impartial mind, desirous of pronouncing a verdict based on reason and justice.

Proceeding from this standpoint to examine the Christian Science of Mrs. Eddy, one finds it impossible to do anything but follow the example of Sir Ralph the Rover, who "tore his hair, and beat himself in wild despair." Such an amazing patch-potch of sense and nonsense; of profundity and shallowness; of wise remarks capped by childish conclusions; of occasional gleams of masculine strength obscured by a dense cloud of hysterical emotion! And it is all so simple! It is nothing less than a short cut to the *summum bonum*! Here is the highest good at the disposal

of the first comer! "Evil has no reality. It is neither person, place, nor thing, but is simply belief, an illusion of a material sense." This mischievous belief is nothing but "mortal mind" or error. That phrase, "mortal mind," is a great term. Under it is comprised the whole of Christian Science, which, in Mrs. Eddy's terminology, can be scientifically described as the product of the "Mortal Mind"—that is, false belief, or, more simply put, error.

But what about the cures wrought by Christian Science? Surely they would tend to show that there was something in the idea? Not only that, but there "something in it," but, when the nature of Nerve-Energy as a force akin to Electricity is understood, the explanation is very simple. *An exalted state of feeling or belief acts upon the Nerve-Energy in the organism by raising the Potential and increasing the Density.* The electrician knows that the same quantity of Electricity is very different in its effects when the Density is great and when the Density is small. Density, in the technical language of Electrical Science, corresponds to Concentration in "Ars Vivendi." The rise of Potential in Nerve-Energy is the scientific explanation of the wonderful cures wrought through Faith-Healing in all lands and ages. The Vrill-Club will thoroughly explain, as the manifestation of Vrill, all the cures that have been, and will be, performed. This without calling upon the bystander to begin by standing upon his head and playing childish tricks with Reason, Logic, and Order.

ii—The Vrilya Club and Theosophy.

The main difference between the Vrilya Club and the Theosophical Society is the relegation to background, of abstruse theoretical speculation of all things in general and nothing in particular. In a certain type of mind there is an irresistible inclination in getting cut and dried verbal solutions of problems which have exercised and perplexed deep thinkers in all ages of the world. The Vrilya Club is altogether more modest in its aims than the Theosophical Society. It will not profess to answer the riddle of the Universe by rules of re-incarnation and wearisome rounds of life after life. It will content itself with trying to *make its members stronger and wiser in actual life.* Theory is all very well in its way, but practice is as good as, and better than, a feast. There is one thing for which the world will never forget its indebtedness to Christian Science, and that is the discovery of "mortal mind." At a time when Theosophy was reducing the Universe to a treadmill of round after round of re-incarnation, Christian Science came to the rescue by demonstrating that everything unpleasant is "mortal mind." Even "mortal mind," when looked at closely, never really existed; consequently, everything unpleasant can be made short work of by putting it down to "mortal mind." Is not this a better solution of perplexing problems of Karma than the Theosophical practice of getting smothered by them?

iii—The Vrilya Club and Spiritualism.

The term "spiritualism" is used in so many

different senses, that it becomes necessary to define what signification is intended to be attached to in mapping out the boundaries of the Vrilya Club. Taking it in its broad signification of a belief in the survival of the personality after death, the majority of the members of the Club would probably be of opinion that the Ego survives the change called "Death." *But the dominant interest of the Club is improvement of the life we live here and now, and concentration upon the solution of practical problems connected with the immediate future of the human race.* True spiritualism is the development of man from a low to a high stage on the scale of creation—the seeking of the Kingdom of God within, and the conviction that this Kingdom of God will go on ever expanding and deepening within the individual soul. The desirability of the value of "mediumship" and of indiscriminate intercourse with the so-called "spirit world" in a seance-room, is quite another matter. On the whole, the less the average mortal has to do with this kind of "Spiritualism" the better; in the hands of the ordinary untrained experimenter, it can lead to little or no practical result, and in many cases it is productive of great harm to sensitive people, leaving entirely out of account the imposture and trickery it so frequently brings in its train.

VI.—Social and Political Reform.

The twentieth century will probably witness remarkable changes amongst civilised nations from the standpoint of social and political reform.

If we cast a bird's-eye view over the present aspect of the globe we inhabit, we cannot fail being struck with the enormous changes which the last few years have witnessed. The former idea of the superiority of the European over the Asiatic cannot be entertained for an instant in view of the emergence of Japan into the position of one of the great Powers of the world. Suppose China, with her teeming millions, were to suddenly wake up and follow the lead of Japan? The dullest mind will admit the significance of such a possibility in its bearing upon world politics. It is no longer possible, therefore, to fold our hands contentedly and exclaim, "Thus has it been in our fathers' time, and so it will be in ours." The stream of evolution is ever bearing us onward. Where? Is it the Coming Race of Mankind, who will embody in their lives, individually and racially, Reason, Justice, and Truth. This is the goal of Evolution, and every change is conditioned by this overruling necessity. "All things," wrote Plato in the *Phædo*, "desire to be of the same quality as the Highest Good." Lytton, in "The Coming Age," has given, with real prophetic insight, a rough sketch of what the ideal government is to be, with Liberty, Order, and Happiness as the objects in view. In this country, at the present moment, party government seems to have reached a point where its usefulness to the nation as a whole can be seriously questioned. Hardly a single measure is considered on its merits, but is immediately attacked or defended from the party standpoint. A Parliamentary election, with its

wilful exaggerations, its violent appeals to the worst instincts of human nature, its deliberate attempts to mislead and calumniate, is a national disgrace and an outrage on honesty and truth. In the House of Commons, again, the time of the nation is wasted by unnecessary talk and party obstruction. It is idle to pretend that this is an essential part of the machinery of government. Lytton aptly called it the Government of the Koom-Posh — in plain English, Hollow-Bosh. “It has placed the supreme bliss in the vying with each other in all things, so that the evil passions are never in repose; vying for power, for wealth, for eminence of some kind; and in this rivalry it is horrible to hear the vituperation, the slanders, and calumnies which even the best and mildest among them heap on each other without remorse or shame.”

The only way to suppress the party politician is to refuse to come down to his level, and to insist upon discussing political questions from the standpoint of Reason and Justice, and the general welfare of the community. There are vital questions that must be dealt with in the immediate future, such as the Physical Degeneration of the Race, the Reform of the Educational System from top to bottom, National Defence, Housing of the Poor, &c. These and other important questions require calm and mature deliberation from men and women who are emancipated from the yoke of party politics.

The Vrilya Club will aim at becoming a vast international organisation, and will play an im-

portant part in the promotion of peace and goodwill among the nations.

VII.—The “N” Rays and Reichenbach.

The preceding sections will convey a fairly comprehensive account of the subjects dealt with in the first three meetings. The next three meetings were devoted to the consideration of Sensitiveness. Mrs. J. Stannard gave an interesting address on the French School of Magnetism, and instanced the case of a boy with remarkable power of “second-sight” or “clairvoyance.” At another meeting, the President delivered a lecture entitled “Reichenbach’s Researches,” giving a *résumé* of the laborious investigations of that celebrated scientist. This was printed and published as No. 1 of the Transactions of the Vrilya Club.

In justice to Reichenbach’s claims as a discoverer, it is necessary to emphasise the fact, which has been persistently ignored, that many of the so-called new “discoveries” of recent years were well known to him. As an instance in point, the following extracts from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the beginning of January, 1904, will be interesting:—

(From the *Pall Mall Gazette*, January 6th.)

“M. Blondlot, of Nancy University . . . discoverer of the fact that the so-called X-rays are really part of the invisible spectrum of light. This he accomplished by polarising the rays, thereby showing that they consist of transverse undulations or waves, exactly comparable with, but much shorter than, those by which you are now enabled to see these words. M. Blondlot has done much remarkable work since he finally solved the problem of the Röntgen rays.

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He has discovered a new sort of radiation which promises to be much more interesting and much more useful than even the Röntgen rays. These newly-discovered forms of energy he calls the 'N' rays, in compliment to the University of Nancy. Now, just as the Röntgen rays are beyond the violet end of the spectrum of light, so the Blondlot rays are below the red end of that spectrum. The former are shorter than the waves which we can see, the latter are longer. All are essentially the same, of course, these new ones merely filling up, so to speak, another gap in the keyboard of light. And the question is, having found these notes, what new music may be expected from human manipulation of them? Well, the Blondlot rays will pass through aluminium or black paper, and can be focussed by an aluminium lens, just as rays of ordinary light can be focussed by a glass lens. And Prof. Charpentier, of Nancy, has just made the remarkable discovery—which opens up an entirely new vista for psychology, medicine, and physiology, not to mention the Society for Psychical Research—that *those rays are given out by living muscle and nerve*. It is possible, by using means to identify these rays, to trace the course of relatively superficial nerves in the forearm, such as the median nerve; and it is found that the amount of radiation *increases when the nerve is at work*. Already we know that the human nervous system produces electrical and other currents within it, when it is in action, but this new fact constitutes the first discovery of a *physical influence given out to the external world as the result of nervous action.*"

"SCIENTIFIC NOTES.

"To the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

"SIR,—In an article in your issue of January 6th your correspondent 'C. W. S.' makes the extraordinary statement that 'this new fact constitutes the first discovery of a physical influence given out to the external world as the result of nervous action.' Has your correspondent never heard of the *gymnotus electricus*, and other fishes? Reichenbach, in a series of beautiful experiments, demonstrated human radio-activity more than fifty years ago. To talk of this as a

new discovery is absolutely grotesque, and grossly unjust to men who laboured hard to demonstrate human radio-activity in the past, in the face of the most rancorous opposition from narrow-minded men.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

“January 7th.”

“ARTHUR LOVELL.

“To the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

“SIR,—My critic, Mr. Lovell, confuses many things. Indeed, I *have* heard of the electric fishes; but has Mr. Lovell ‘never heard’ that they possess an electric organ wherein the electricity is generated? The point is that the Blondlot rays—and I must really differ from Mr. Lovell when he says it is ‘absolutely grotesque’ to describe them as a new discovery—are given off *from the nerves themselves to the external world*. My critic then proceeds to say that ‘Reichenbach demonstrated human radio-activity more than fifty years ago.’ This is mere nonsense. Unfortunately, Mr. Lovell does not know what ‘radio-activity’ is, and confuses it with the power of giving off any ethereal waves. In his sense, the sun is radio-active. Radio-activity was discovered by M. Becquerel in 1896. In calling me ‘grossly unjust’ in this matter Mr. Lovell is grossly unjust, I am sure, to himself. Another time he should look up the facts and the meanings of the terms before he tackles a new subject. ‘Grossly unjust’ is a serious phrase.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

“January 8th.”

“C. W. S.

“HUMAN RADIO-ACTIVITY.

“To the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

“SIR,—‘C. W. S.’ is a trifle ‘too previous’ in assuming that I did not know what was meant by ‘radio-activity.’ I used the term in the strict sense in which it is now used by the scientific investigator when he speaks of radium as a radio-active body—that is, exciting activity by an emanation or radiation from itself.

“To let your readers judge for themselves as to the merit of Reichenbach’s investigations, I give the following quota-

on reflection, they will be admitted to be very important, for they deal with a point, "no larger than a pin's head," which is responsible for endless extravagances and absurdities. Mrs. Eddy claims that she "discovered" the ideas contained in Christian Science. As a matter of fact, however, the originator of that wave of thought which exaggerates, to the extent of caricature, the genuine influence of mind over body, was James Braid, the Manchester surgeon. Whether Mr. Braid would feel altogether flattered by being dubbed the father—or, at all events, the godfather—of Christian Science is another story. But it is an absolute fact that a far better explanation of the influence of "Faith" or "Belief" on the body, thereby accounting for extraordinary cures, is given in Braid's works than in Mrs. Eddy's metaphysical reasoning. Braid, with that stolid obstinacy of his, which renders it impossible for him to see a fact which clashes with his own theory, was, on his own lines, a master. He proved, beyond possibility of dispute, the great power of mental influence, pure and simple. This mental influence may be called by various names: "imagination," "belief," "suggestion," "psychic force," or any other name. The principle is the same—direct action of mind upon Nerve-Energy, which nerve-energy, be it remembered, is the motive force in the animal organism. To doubt the possibility of this direct action is merely to show ignorance of facts. To exaggerate the possibility of this direct action out of proportion to actual results that have been, and are always capable of being, attained under suitable condi-

tions, is to betray either an unbalanced mind or a stolid obstinacy on which all arguments are thrown away. Mrs. Eddy and Mr. Braid are two different types of mind, the former disdaining to argue, and the latter so certain in his mind that his position is the right one that to argue with him serves merely to deepen his conviction. Both these mental attitudes are fatal to science. Braid, by a few clumsy experiments which showed nothing more than the ease with which a sensitive person can be influenced by a strong idea or individual, jumped to the conclusion that the very fine and elaborate experiments of Reichenbach were entirely due to "suggestion," which is exactly the same as the cant phrase of Mrs. Eddy's "mortal mind." Following this notion out to its extreme length, an unbalanced mind can "discover" that "nothing exists."

It had been repeatedly demonstrated that the magnet has a peculiar influence on a delicate, nervous system. Not only Reichenbach, but various other experimenters had furnished abundant proofs of the reality of this influence. Braid entered the lists with his theory that "nothing exists" outside the mind, and, therefore, that there was no influence in the magnet apart from the mind of the sensitive. Braid had a very elementary knowledge of Electricity, and his arguments are extremely childish, so far as the attempt to disprove Reichenbach is concerned. Besides, in the time of Braid, the intimate connection between Magnetism and Electricity was not so well known as it is now. There was, to a

certain extent, an excuse for Braid himself—an excuse which cannot be offered on behalf of his followers, who, in spite of the strides made by Electro-Magnetism, still cling blindly to the foolish contention that a powerful magnet has no influence of any kind upon a sensitive, apart from “suggestion.”

It will be seen, thus, that a very important point was involved—whether Braid with his Hypnotism, and Mrs. Eddy with her Christian Science, were correct, on the one side, or whether Reichenbach, Elliotson, Gregory, Ashburner, Rutter and other calm experimenters were right in their statements that a sensitive person can feel the influence of a strong magnet without knowing anything about it beforehand. If Braid and Mrs. Eddy are right in saying that there is “no nothing,” then the Universe becomes a burlesque; but if the other side is correct, then the Universe becomes once more an orderly Cosmos, where Law and Order reign supreme, independently of individual suggestion, and the impertinence of “mortal mind.” In the former world, wisdom would be a fantastic will-o’-the-wisp; in the latter it is the steady light which illumines the path of the conscientious seeker after truth, and which ever grows stronger and stronger till it reaches the splendour of the mid-day sun.

HOW TO EXPERIMENT.

With such a delicate “instrument” as a sensitive, great care and skill of handling are required to get results that are of any real value. It is the easiest thing in the world to *suggest* this or that

idea, and have it faithfully reflected in the mind of the sensitive acted upon. In the Vrilya Club experiments, accordingly, care had to be taken to guard against this common mistake. After much deliberation, the following plan was adopted. The services of an independent electrical expert were secured. Appended is his report:—

Description of Apparatus, &c., used in the Electro-Magnet Experiments conducted by the Vrilya Club in March, 1904.

The iron core of the magnet was of a circular section of about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter. The centres of the pole-faces were about 3 inches apart and the length of the magnet, i.e. the distance from the pole-faces to the bend in the iron at the other end, was about a foot.

On the first occasion when the experiments were made, the magnet was wound with about 2 lbs. of No. 16 gauge copper wire, so that when a set of three or four accumulators were used, the current flowing was about 10 amperes. The pull between the magnet and its keeper was then well over half-a-hundred weight.

For the second occasion, two more pounds of the same wire were wound on the magnet so that a stronger battery of six accumulators could be used. The current was the same as before, but it must be remembered that the number of spirals of wire round the magnet was nearly doubled. The pull on this occasion was well over 100 lbs.

In conducting the experiments, the sensitive and the magnet (without its keeper) were screened

off and the current was switched on and off for definite periods at a distance of four yards from the screen, it being carried to and from the magnet by means of flexible wires.

H. W. TAYLOR.

The results of the first evening's experiments were not satisfactory, for the following reason:— The method adopted was to have the current turned on and off several times during the time given to each sensitive. These conditions were found to be extremely confusing to the sensitive (*vide* sections xxiv. and xxv. of No. 1 of the Transactions). The plan adopted in the subsequent experiments was found to be completely successful, and is hereby recommended to all independent investigators who wish to experiment for themselves.

Let A, the sensitive, sit or stand behind a screen. Place the Electro-Magnet on a support in front, with the poles directed towards the sensitive, at a distance of from 9 to 12 inches or more. The electric current is *turned on and off without the sensitive's knowledge* in another part of the room. The sensitive, as a rule, does not feel the magnetic influence immediately, and an interval of sixty seconds should be allowed. If, after the lapse of that time from switching on the current, no remark is made, the subject is considered a non-sensitive. From 30 to 40 per cent. of men and women will be found sensitive in this manner.

During the second evening of the Vrilya Club experiments fourteen subjects were tried. Of these

eight felt the influence of the magnet within the minute, as shown in the following table :—

TABLE OF EXPERIMENTS.

Time when current was switched on by Electrician, unknown to Sensitive.	Time when Sensitive made remarks.
H. M. S. 9 50 30 p.m.	H. M. S. 9 50 42. Miss E—r. Strong prickling. 9 51 30. Exceedingly strong. 9 52 25. Attraction towards magnet. 9 53 0. Cannot hold hand still. 9 53 50. Felt it off.
9 56 15 p.m.	9 56 20. Mr. P—n. Sharp shock at elbow. 9 57 15. Tingling in right hand. 9 57 40. Feel cold.
10 1 10 p.m.	10 2 5. Mr G—l. Beating in second and third fingers of right hand.
10 7 0 p.m.	10 7 40. Lady M—y. Feel cold and then tingling.
10 12 20 p.m.	10 12 40. Mrs. S—d. Shocks in thumbs when they touched.
10 15 20 p.m.	10 16 5. Miss B—n. Cold air felt.
10 18 25 p.m.	10 19 5. Mrs. S. J. H—l. Prickling.
10 26 40 p.m.	10 26 50. Mr. C—t. Tingling sensation.

X.—Education of Children.

The following paper, read in May, 1904, at the Vrilya Club, by the Comtesse de Brie, *deals with a subject which must appeal to everybody as of the very first importance.* In the second chapter of "Imagination and Its Wonders" I have cited a case, which came under my own observation, of a man whose will had been crushed by the despotism of a tyrannical mother. "His father was a sensitive individual, while his mother was a stern, unbending Puritan of the strict Nonconformist type, and ruled with a will of iron. Her intentions were excellent, no doubt, and she was very desirous of training her son in the way he should go, but her strong nature crushed every spark of spirit out of him, so that, now a man of 45, he was reaping the seed so diligently sown by his mother in his childhood. Parents often treat their children—sometimes through ignorance, sometimes through wilful disregard of the primary laws of Mental Science—with such cruelty and injustice, that a great deal might be said in favour of the Platonic idea that children should be brought up entirely by the State. In childhood and youth the mind is sensitive to all impressions, good and bad, and these impressions are often so firmly rooted, that it is extremely difficult to eradicate them in after years. Wise parents should take the greatest care in guarding their children from contact with vice or depravity, and even weakness in any shape or form, for the images stamped upon the sensitive brain may work havoc in later years.

Also, particular care should be exerted in never accustoming the child to fear by the recitals of gruesome stories, or by referring to the dark as something dreadful. *The earlier the training of the Coming Race is begun the better.*"

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

A Paper read in May, 1904, at the Vrîl-ya Club, by
the COMTESSE DE BRIE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I come before you to-night, not as a leader, but as a mother whose heart and sympathies are all in the education of children. This is my only excuse for daring to address so critical an audience as the one before me.

While master minds, such as the founder of the Vrîl-ya Club, are working for the redemption of the coming race, we, the mothers of future generations, have a most important part to perform in the great evolution. We are the *sculptors* into whose hands God has placed the material for moulding perfect forms. With what patient, loving care, and consummate skill must we labour to produce a masterpiece; and, alas! how often we fail through ignorance!

In order to fit oneself for any profession in life, a long and arduous apprenticeship is required; yet, for that most difficult and sacred position

of motherhood, no training or preparation is considered necessary. No wonder the world is filled with puny, wailing babes, living protests against the so-called advance of science and civilisation. *It is the right of every child to be well born* (not in a worldly sense, but *from a physical, moral, and spiritual standpoint*), to come into this world fully equipped for the battle of life, in which the strongest will ever be the winner.

Until it is legally recognised as a crime for diseased men and women to marry, and to bring into this world victims of their insensate selfishness, a perfect race cannot exist, but we may do much to lighten the burden which ignorance of hereditary laws brings upon our offspring.

I am convinced, from personal experience, that much can be done to counteract hereditary taints, and that such terrible scourges as scrofula and consumption may be overcome by proper conditions.

Prevention is always better than cure; and every mother should realise that most diseases can be prevented, and children kept in perfect condition through knowledge of the simple laws of their being. To live in harmony with these wondrous and beneficent laws ensures health and happiness; but their infraction entails misery, suffering, crime, and death.

Nature has placed at our disposal such wonderful curative elements that drugs are practically useless, and should be resorted to only *in extremis*. The skilful physician and surgeon are both necessary at times, but the less we have to do with the

materia medica, the better for ourselves and our children.

The true knowledge of the principles of life, and the conditions necessary to perfect well-being, are all contained in the "Ars Vivendi" series, and need not be dwelt upon here; I merely wish to emphasise the necessity of their application in the bringing-up of children.

Air, Exercise, Diet, Clothing, Sleep, and Congenial Surroundings are subjects of the utmost importance, meriting far greater space and time than I am able to give them this evening.

AIR.—Fresh Air is as essential to the human growth as to the flowers; yet children are confined for hours in stifling rooms, from which all life-giving properties have been exhausted, both at home and in school.

The Lungs, instead of receiving oxygen, by which the blood is purified, absorb poisons which sow the seed of disease. The cramped position of the lungs while the child bends over its desk in study also prevents free expansion and elimination. Children should be taught to sit upright while reading, and the position should be frequently changed to standing or walking during the study hours. The flushed, congested faces so often seen in schoolrooms would disappear if the blood were kept evenly circulating by a few exercises taken between each class.

EXERCISE.—Exercise in moderation is a potent factor to the well-being of children, but let me emphasise the fact that over-exertion is as harmful as none at all, and produces most serious conse-

quences. I decry long waiks, bicycling, match-games, and tests of strength, which excite the muscles to over-exertion or strain the nervous system.

A child should never be forced to exercise against its inclination; and its wishes in this, as in many other personal matters, should be consulted. A healthy child will enjoy games of all sorts, and disinclination to exercise points to some organic weakness which deserves serious attention.

SLEEP.—Sleep is Nature's method of recuperating expended vitality, and children need a far greater amount than adults. Peevishness is frequently caused by insufficient or disturbed slumber, and mothers who desire amiable children must give them a full allowance of perfect repose. A child put to bed at regular hours will form the habit of waking at the same time each morning, but should it over-sleep, care should be taken not to waken it suddenly, as all shocks to the nervous system should be avoided. Restlessness, starting, or crying out in sleep, is evidence of brain or stomach derangement, and parents must be careful not to excite the mind or overload the stomach just before bed-time.

A hearty dinner in the middle of the day, and a light supper at night is the best rule for securing peaceful slumber.

DIET.—On this subject no absolute rules can be laid down, as what is good for one may disagree with another. On one point, however, we may all agree, that the plainest foods cooked in the simplest

manner, given in moderate quantities at regular hours, will produce the best results.

Fruits, cooked or fresh, should be a part of the daily menu, but sweets, pasties, and stimulants of every description should be withheld. Tea, coffee, and wine are extremely injurious, as over-exciting the brain, and are frequent causes of sleeplessness. Diet alone will regulate all the digestive functions, and mothers who value their own and their children's health will never resort to drugs.

CLOTHING.—I believe few persons realise the importance of clothing in the care of children. Many cases of spinal curvature are caused by the absurd practice of weighing down their delicate frames by heavy frocks and wraps. Light, porous materials give greater warmth than closer texture, while admitting free inspiration and expiration through the pores of the skin. Personally, I am opposed to flannel worn next to the body, as it holds the moisture instead of giving it off, as do both cotton and linen-mesh materials. Wool, on account of its non-absorbent qualities, is an excellent material for outer garments.

I cannot too strongly condemn the practice of putting girls into corsets at an early age, when the vital organs should attain their most perfect development; it is the cause of much suffering later on in life, and women sacrifice to this tyrant of fashion much of their health and beauty.

It is to be hoped that with the Coming Race a pinched waist will be as rare as a narrow intellect.

CONGENIAL SURROUNDINGS.—This topic has been left to the last because, to my mind, it is

the most important condition to health. A seed must be planted in the right soil, and surrounded by congenial atmospheric influences to attain perfect growth; and children partake, in a larger measure than we realise, of the moral atmosphere by which they are surrounded. A delicate, peevish mother is no fit companion for her children, and until she is able to master her own conditions, she should transfer their care to abler hands.

The choice of a nurse or governess requires the greatest knowledge and intuition, for into their hands we confide the future happiness of our children.

No person who, by her manners and education, is unfit to be our own associate, is a proper companion for our children. The custom of selecting vulgar, even though kind-hearted, women as nurses is a fatal error to which many a child's health and moral purity is sacrificed. Only a true lady in heart, mind, and manners can realise the sacredness of the duties of nurse or educator; she should be strong in body and will, gentle but firm, and study to bring forth the finest qualities in the children under her care. There should be no nagging or scolding, and as few "don'ts" as possible. Freedom of action is essential to human development, and blind, implicit obedience should not be demanded on pretext of breaking the will.

A child's will is sacred, and a necessary element to future success; it should, therefore, be guided in the right direction, and self-mastery and control taught. Children should be reasoned with from

infancy ; appeals to their judgment, heart, intellect awaken self-reliance, right judgment, and intuition. Parents who have unmanageable children will find the fault to lie either with themselves, or with their system of training.

When mankind has grasped the true meaning of education, only men and women possessing, in an advanced degree, intuition, combined with finest mental and moral attributes, will be selected as teachers, and to them will be attributed the highest honour and recompense. The number will be limited to a select few who will be masters in the true sense of this word. *The present system of education is based on absolutely false principles, it is cramming instead of leading forth and developing the minds of the children.* The same curriculum is applied to the dullard as to the keen witted, to the timid and the brave, to the lazy and the plodder. No account is taken of the special nature or talents of the individual, while the Ego becomes a mere shallow meaning instead of the centre from which radiates all success.

Attention should be paid to the physical condition of each scholar, on which so much depends ; delicate children should have fewer hours of study and more exercise. Special courses in magnetic treatment, sun baths, massage, hydro-pathic remedies, and breathing should form part of modern educational institutions.

When this great work, which a master hand has sent spinning down the avenues of time, has gained such impetus that its voice becomes a rolling thunder heard to the farthest corners of the earth :

when the Vrilya Club has fulfilled its great mission, then we may hope for an educational institution based on logic and common sense.

Philanthropists, instead of spending millions on new libraries and public monuments, will feel impelled to create a fitting home for the Coming Race. A community will be formed in which each member will take his place in accordance with natural aptitudes or talents; young men and women will regard out-door work and household duties more honourable than professions for which they have no special gift; there will be no menial labour, *because all labour well done will obtain equal respect.*

Open-air lectures upon various subjects, science, art, poetry, and religion, all embraced under the one supreme science, *Ars Vivendi*, will take the place of stifling indoor cramming.

Girls about to assume the sacred office of wifehood and motherhood will be taught all that is required of them, and will enter upon matrimony, not with romantic illusions and physical imperfections, but strong in body and confident in their own knowledge, prepared for all the eventualities of life.

Young men will learn what is needed to ensure a happy home, devoted wife, and strong, vigorous offspring. Each will enter the dual existence, knowing what is required for mutual happiness, and the great problem, "Is Marriage a Failure?" will be solved; while that curse of our century, Divorce, will be unknown. For knowledge is power, and he who lives in harmony with the Divine laws has attained to wisdom and happiness.

is equally correct to speak of the sun and of right hand as positive, and of the moon and of left hand as negative. The chief fact to be borne in mind is that *blue and violet colours pre-
vinate at the right hand, and red and yellow at the*

A striking fact in connection with the polarity of the right and left side of the body is that sensitive persons can feel the difference between the two sides. Reichenbach mentions that a few sensitives could not bear taking hold of his crossed hands—*is, right hand in right and left hand in left.* Gregory corroborates this, "having been fortunate enough to meet with a highly-sensitive patient, who, when I tried the experiment, without saying a word to her, tore away her hands after a few seconds, and declared the sensation to be so intolerable that, had it continued a few seconds longer, she must have fainted and been convulsed. No entreaties or bribes could induce her to let me repeat the trial; indeed, her expressions were almost verbatim those of one of Reichenbach's most sensitive patients, and this poor woman had never heard either of him or his book, which, at that time, early in 1846, was not yet known in this country."

I have myself witnessed the same results in several instances. In one case, the result was very similar to that related by Gregory. The hands were snatched away in a few seconds, and the sensation was described as utterly painful.

.—Odised Water.

A sensitive can tell the difference between

glass of water that has been stroked by a magnet or crystal and one that has not. In short, every substance imparts its peculiar influence to surrounding objects. Reichenbach, with that wonderful clearheadedness which characterised his searches in the domain of Od, demonstrated the old-world idea of "magnetising" water, clothing, &c., for the cure of disease is in accordance with the law of Transference of Od from one object to another. Not only can sensitives detect water and other things "odised" by the human hand &c., but they can in many cases find a difference in water "odised" by different individuals.

XXII.—Modes of Motion.

Modern science has generalised the various forces with which we are acquainted, as modifications of one force. Thus Heat, Electricity, Magnetism, Chemical Action, Light, Nerve Energy, &c., must be nearly related to each other, for they are varieties of one fundamental force. Nevertheless, related as they are to each other, they are different in their spheres of activity, and man must always obey the law which differentiates them. Reichenbach was fully cognisant of the close relation of Od to the other forces of nature, and equally cognisant of the points of difference. He drew up a list of these points in so far as they affected Heat, Electricity, and Magnetism.

XXIII.—Difference between Od and Heat.

P. 1. Od causes sensations of heat and cold, but Divines does not affect the thermometer.

2. The sun and right hand excite a feeling of cold in the sensitive; the moon and left hand a feeling of warmth. Measured by the thermoscope, the right hand is warmer than the left. Chemical action, accompanied by heat, cause the sensitive a feeling of cold.

3. Od is conducted by metals much further than heat, and penetrates very readily through solid bodies. Sensitives distinguish, inside a building, a wall on which the sun is shining from another in the shade; and can feel the influence of a crystal, magnet, or man through thick walls, impermeable by heat.

4. Heat is a means of odic cooling.

XXIV.—Difference between Od and Electricity.

1. Od exists without electricity.

2. Od is distributed throughout the mass of matter; free electricity lies only on the surface of bodies.

3. Free electricity is discharged instantaneously from a charged body by contact with a conductor. Free Od is discharged only after some time.

4. Electricity can be condensed only upon isolated bodies. Od can be transmitted to unisolated bodies.

5. The transmission of Od by conductors is much slower than that of electricity.

6. The excitement of Od by electricity does not follow instantaneously, but requires an appreciable amount of time.

7. The duration of odic phenomena is longer than that of electrical transmissions.

8. Od, though excited by electrical action, appears afterwards to take an independent course.

XXV.—Difference between Od and Magnetism.

1. Od is found without magnetism.
2. Magnetism is always accompanied by Od.
3. Magnetism is not restrained by any interposing object. A cloud before the sun or moon weakens the effect of Od.
4. Magnetism can be conveyed to a few bodies only; Od to all matter.
5. The coercive power of steel over magnetism is great; over Od small.
6. Od may be conducted many yards on a long iron wire, magnetism cannot.
7. Od radiates further than magnetism.
8. Odic emanations are refrangible by glass, like the rays of light. Magnetism cannot be deflected.
9. Od has no attraction for iron filings.
10. Terrestrial magnetism has no directive influence upon odic bodies.
11. Odic flames have no mutual attraction.
12. Magnetic reaction ceases immediately on interruption of electric current, but odic effects last a good while longer.
13. Magnetic bar gains Od from the hand or crystal, but no magnetism. Its odic polarity may be reversed or extinguished by a more powerful odic body, while its magnetism is unaltered.
14. Magnetic and odic polarities are sometimes exactly opposite in the same magnetic substance.

XVI.—Vril-ya Club Experiments.

Inasmuch as great care, delicacy of handling, and, above all, thorough acquaintance with the scientific method of investigation are absolutely necessary to demonstrate satisfactorily the correctness of Reichenbach's conclusions, it is not at all surprising that superficial observers have denied the capacity of the Baron for scientific investigation, and put down the conclusions at which he arrived as entirely due to suggestion. This is very largely owing to the influence exercised by Braid, a man who cannot be compared for an instant to Gregory or Reichenbach. Braid was essentially a man of one idea. This monoideism became, with his followers, emphatically monomania. The warning, "Beware of the man of one idea," is peculiarly applicable to Braid and his followers. It is easy enough to prove any theory by wilfully shutting one's eyes to facts which will not fit in with that theory. Thus Braid was content to ignore, and even flatly deny, facts which were vouched for by such a high authority as Gregory, who, in every sense of the word, was a much more distinguished man than Braid. Gregory was a well-known man of science, and Professor of Chemistry in Edinburgh University; whilst Braid was an ordinary provincial surgeon, who did not even originate the theory of hypnotism. All Braid did was to harp on one string so persistently that he became himself the victim of auto-suggestion, and blinded himself to facts which could be easily proved to a disinterested inquirer. The medical men who looked upon Braid as the greatest authority on these

subjects are practically sensitives acted upon by suggestion. Thus a medical man contributed a paper on Braid to the Proceedings of the Society of Psychical Research, Vol. XII., in which it stated that "in Braid's time the mesmerists held that magnets, certain metals, crystals, &c., possessed a peculiar power, and, with sensitive subjects, were capable of producing attraction and other remarkable phenomena. . . . Many are fancied they saw fiery bundles of light stream from the poles of the magnet. All this was said to happen even when the subjects did not see the magnets, and did not know what was being done. Braid performed many experiments in order to test these statements, with the following results. The phenomena appeared when the patients had preconceived ideas on the subject, or when they were excited by leading questions, but were variably absent when they were ignorant of what was being done."

As a matter of fact, Braid proved nothing of the kind. He merely demonstrated that suggestion can act very powerfully on a sensitive subject, a fact which not even a tyro would think of denying. Both Reichenbach and Professor Gregory were well acquainted with the power of suggestion and auto-suggestion; and in Gregory's philosophic treatise full justice is done to suggestion, but it is his deliberate conviction that there were hard, so-called facts, which suggestion could not explain. Braid, with his preconceived ideas, was incapable of appreciating the value of these facts. In the hands of Braid and his followers suggestion has run to seed, and the

power of "hypnotic suggestion" has been so absurdly exaggerated that it is small wonder it has fallen in popular estimation as a therapeutic agency, a fact candidly acknowledged by Prof. William James in his Presidential Address to the Society for Psychical Research (Vol. XII.): "I should say, first, that we started with high hopes that the hypnotic field would yield an important harvest, and that these hopes have subsided with the general subsidence of what may be called the hypnotic wave."

There has been no systematic attempt on the part of the Hypnotic School to verify or disprove Braid's conclusions. On the contrary, there has been a passionate eagerness to ignore or sneer at the work of Gregory, Elliotson, Ashburner, and Reichenbach, and to apotheosise the one-sided provincial surgeon, who mistook obstinacy and personal conviction for scientific investigation.

The Vrilya Club will conduct a series of original investigations, the conditions of which will be stipulated beforehand, and recorded in the succeeding volume of the transactions. Only by investigations carried out on rigidly scientific lines can the vexed question of the alleged influence of magnets, crystals, the hand, &c., on a sensitive, quite apart from suggestion, be finally settled.