

A N
E S S A Y
O N
SOMNAMBULISM,
O R
SLEEP-WALKING,

PRODUCED BY
Animal Electricity and Magnetism.

AS WELL AS BY SYMPATHY, &c.

AS PERFORMED

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MUSEUM AT PARIS, AND THE ONLY PERSON
AUTHORISED TO TEACH AND PRACTISE
THAT SCIENCE IN GREAT BRITAIN,
IRELAND, &c.

The foul's dark cottage batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light through chinks which time has made.

WALLER.

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P R E F A C E.

I WAS not initiated in the Science of Animal Electricity and Magnetism, until I was introduced to the Augustin Convent at Paris, where the celebrated Father Harvier, attended daily a great number of patients, of every rank and degree, gratis. I was instantly struck with astonishment by the Magnetical Somnambulism, which I saw constantly performing before crouds of the most respectable and dignified clergy, who assembled every day, all of whom were thoroughly convinced that the art was practised by men of integrity, without any deceit. I was soon after presented to the famous and learned Marquis de Puységur, and to several other noblemen, distinguished in the literary world; who took delight in shewing those phenomena to their friends. Scarcely had I acquired a knowledge of the science, before I put one person in a state of Somnambulism, which made me exult on the success, as my tutors in the science were present, viz. General Meziere, Chevalier Justamond, who encouraged me to persevere. In a little time I produced numbers, who in that state answered my questions; found out the diseases of the people present, and prescribed infallible cures for them; they are called Malade Medecin, concerning whom I shall speak at large, in my Treatise upon the Doctrine of Somnambulism.

That it is practicable to put certain persons into this state, need be no longer doubted, without touching or giving them any previous operation. It is a matter strange to persons unacquainted with the science, but that will vanish when the mind receives instruction and becomes familiar with it ; in order to the attainment of which, I invite all persons of every sex, rank and degree, to come, see, and judge for themselves. I shall soon publish one Number on Theory, and another on the Practice.

AN

A N
E S S A Y

ON THE PROBABILITIES OF

Electrical and Magnetical Somnambules,

OR

SLEEP-WALKERS.

OF all the novelties which are created by Animal Electricity and Magnetism, Somnambulism is, doubtless, the most interesting.

By Somnambulism is meant that peculiar state when the senses are suspended between sleeping and waking; partaking of both, and is also productive of many phenomena, which each are strangers to.

The patient being reduced to a state of Somnambulism, without touching him, is deaf to all that is near him: Motionless amidst the greatest motions; he seems separated from nature, as if it were, to communicate only with the person who put him into that state.

The latter, owing to Magnetisation alone, has an intimate analogy with the patient; by the means of a kind of an invisible lever, he causes him to move at his pleasure; and such is the power of his influence, that he not only makes himself understood by speaking and signs, but even by the very thought itself; and what is still more extraordinary, the Magnetiser can, by a single contract, communicate

icate his faculty to other people ; and from that moment there is a constant communication between the Somnambule and his new director.

The patient being put into a state of Somnambulism, there is in him a want of organization, which breaks the equilibrium of his senses ; so that some experience an extreme degradation, whilst others acquire a prodigious degree of subtlety.

Thus, some have their hearing entirely lost or weakened, and their sight becomes prodigiously penetrating. In others, the privation, both of sight and hearing, are amply compensated by an incredible delicacy both of feeling and taste.

And in many, a sixth sense appears to declare itself by an extreme extent of the intellectual faculty, far superior to the common altitude of the human mind.

In a word, the phœnomena, attending on the state of Somnambulism, daily offer new subjects of astonishment, even to those who ought to be more familiar with them.

It remains to consider, whether those pretended phœnomena are such as is propagated ; or, whether on the contrary, they are nothing else but illusions, kept up by the imposition of some ill designed persons and the credulity of others.

For it is well known that the human mind, naturally bent towards every thing marvellous, eagerly seizes on whatever is flattering to the taste ; and there are exalted geniusses to be found that employ both their head and talents to realize mere chimeras.

Among the persons who have been witnesses to the singularities attending on Somnambulism, some struck with astonishment and admiration, have given full credit to its influence, and look on it as an irresistible proof of Animal Electricity and Magnetism.

Others, though convinced of the reality of its phœnomena, are yet incredulous with regard to the cause which produced them. They had rather suppose in this affair some secret spring productive of illusions ; and, though incapable of comprehending those means of intelligence, they have, nevertheless, supposed their existence ; alledging, for example, those cunning tricks which a subtle philosopher * made use to astonish all Paris and London during many years.

As

* Caumus and Pinetty.

As to the Physicians, most of them have disdained to prove witnesses to the effects of Magnetical Somnambulism, under the pretence that it was sufficient for them such a phenomenon was contrary to those notions consecrated in physic and physiology; they have considered those pretended marvels as mere chimeras unworthy a serious examination.

There was even a learned body who went so far as to forbid their members to entertain the least doubt on the subject, and expelled from their society whomsoever have given themselves up to the study of this new doctrine †.

However, on the other hand, Magnetical Somnambulism becomes daily more and more consistent; a great number of people remarkable for their learning, probity, sound judgment and sagacity, certify beyond a doubt the reality of Magnetical Somnambulism; and that contradiction of respectable authorities on both sides, leave the public in suspense, who, to take a decisive part in the contest, impatiently wait until the matter is more fully investigated.

The following impartial reflections may serve to fix the opinion of impartial people on the subject of Magnetical Somnambulism. To treat this object with the more success, I think it is necessary to divide the discussion into three parts.

The first point to be considered, is to know, in fact, the public have been witnesses of phenomena of some importance, well deserving to excite their curiosity, and of which the cause ought to be investigated.

Secondly, suppose the effects spoken of deserved to be enquired into, it is proper to examine whether they cannot reasonably be suspected of artifice.

Lastly, admitting it impossible to find out the artifice, it will remain to examine whether they are contrary to common notions already received.

1st. Are Magnetical Somnambulism phenomena of such an importance as to deserve the curiosity of both the public and the learned?

The object of this question is, I believe, very plain and obvious; I mean to say, that previously to our being at the trouble of examining whether Magnetical Somnambulism be an illusion, or reality, we must establish, that, there
exist,

† A decree of the faculty of Paris, 1784, which is the same as they give for inoculation, which is now adopted by them.

-exist, at least seemingly, some singularities which concern both the public good and the improvement of learning.

Many people, however, might have a right to doubt it, because they had no occasion to know the truth of the assertion. They have a right to require to be satisfied, previously to the discussion of the two following propositions, viz. "That there are either at Paris, Dublin, &c. in the provinces, or any where else some people, who being naturally "forced into a state of sleep, really offer the phenomena "which we are about to examine."

For if it was not certain that such a scene is not to be met with somewhere, it would be a loss of time to enquire into its principle.

It is, therefore, a preliminary obligation for any body else, to establish well the existence of Magnetical Somnambulism, whether right or wrong.

This point was, for a long time, a matter of general incredulity. They plainly denied that there were any such individuals existing any where, and the very discourse held on the subject, was looked upon merely as a fable to amuse the public.

The first writing, which treated of Magnetical Somnambulists, was, if I am not mistaken, a letter from Mr. Cloquet, paymaster of rents at Soissons, who, relating what he had seen at Buzanci's treatment, by the Marquis de Puységur, insinuated something which seemed to characterise Magnetical Somnambulism.

Since that letter, a gentleman, whose candor is above all suspicion, has consigned in a writing, which is, in every respect, interesting, several phenomena he had observed in Buzanci's treatment, still more wonderful than those which Mr. Cloquet had given a sketch of.

The perusal of this performance having inspired some people of the first rank with the eager desire of being witnesses to a like Somnambulism, the author of the above found an opportunity of gratifying their curiosity at Paris, in the winter of 1785.

More than 5000 people have been at liberty to see those phenomena true or false, of which notice was taken both in the national and foreign prints. These Somnambules underwent repeated trials, which all met with more or less success.

Besides

Besides those mentioned, many more were made at Paris, or in some other provinces. This Somnambulism example having induced the Magnetisers to adhere to that part of Magnetism, they applied themselves to it with more zeal, as it seemed to be a sure way towards a remedy. Thus, the concern of Magnetism, and that of the patient, uniting both to prescribe that mode of proceeding, it is become the common object of all Magnetisers attempts, and in all treatment they gloried in shewing some patient more or less improved.

It is evident then that there exists many individuals struck with a seeming Somnambulism; and I begin to establish the question, in order to proceed methodically, after settling constant and notorious facts, which might lead to infallible consequences.

It is then certain and indisputable, that there are pretended Somnambules, which offer wonderful phænomena to the spectators, as compensative gratification for excited curiosity.

Now, the question is to know what opinion we should form concerning those Somnambules; if it be not a feigned state, by the means of which they endeavour to impose on the credulity of those whom they are surrounded by.

2d. How far are Magnetical Somnambules to be believed?

Among the Somnambules I am here speaking of, I do not include that multitude of persons of both sexes among the common people, *who are to be seen at some impostors*, and may reasonably be suspected to perform Somnambulism, through imitation, or to make themselves interesting, and others who are paid for it.

It is a misfortune, constantly attending on good things, that they can never be preserved in their native purity, nor escape that mixture which malice or cupidity seldom fail to blend with them.

Those who, either through prejudice or interest, endeavour to display the discovery, take care to examine it on that side only, which seems to convey an idea of apparent quackery, and never fail to present it to the public in that view.

But those who sincerely wish for information, pay but little regard to such a consideration, and throwing aside quackery and exaggerations, carefully penetrate as far as the

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principle

principle itself. Thus, a botanist, desirous of procuring the fruit of an Almond to be enabled to discern its true quality, is not discouraged by the putrid flesh which surrounds it; but cheerfully lopping all nauseous superfluities, he finds at last the fruit which is to be the rule of his study.

In that manner should every unbiassed man act, who sincerely seeks for truth, without having interest or design to destroy it.

Let us contemptuously disregard those suspicious apparent Somnambules, and attend to those who, by their civil existence, their character, manner, &c. are above suspicion; and in whom, besides Somnambulism, the science is portrayed, and brought to the highest degree of perfection.

I think those ought to be chosen among patients, in whom Somnambulism appears to be in a higher degree of perfection, and such a caution is, in my opinion, very material.

In fact, the more imperfect the Somnambule is, the easier it is to impose; if he badly answers your signs, and follows your motions in an untoward and ill contrived manner, he apologizes by saying he is not, as yet, arrived to a state of perfect Somnambulism, and the observer, who really conceives that such a state must have its degrees, is puzzled, on account of his not knowing whether the bad success he has experienced is to be attributed to the untowardness of the Somnambule, or the imperfection of his state.

But when I fix on a Somnambule, recommended as a perfect being, it is evident that this task is very painful. In that case, there is neither excuse nor pretence; the observer is easy, and Somnambulism has a trial to undergo, which is to prove either his shame or his triumph.

Such perfect Somnambules have not been wanting last year in France; and among those who have tried my experiments, there is one with whom I staid more than half an hour, and who has before me, and at my pleasure, executed such motions as I prescribed him.

Being at my own disposal, without witnesses and contraditors, left nothing untried to discover the fraud, if there had been in the case; but the swiftness of his evolutions, the precision of his movements, a vast number of facts which it would be too tedious to relate, disconcerted all my attempts.

Many

Many other experiments, which had their intended effects with regard to other perfect Somnambules, have all given me the same satisfaction.

There are at Paris, and in the provinces, more than 600 persons, who are in the same predicament.

Therefore, to overthrow the consequences resulting from such experiments, there is no other resource left, but to persevere in giving out that it was a deceitful trick on the part of Somnambules.

But such a supposition carries with it the greatest difficulties, and is accompanied by improbabilities still more shocking than Somnambulism itself.

To admit that the phenomena in question are the result of imposition, two things are absolutely required :

1st. Somnambules must have an intention of deceiving.

2d. They must be endowed with an address to do it. But, we must first confess, that, among those who have already been or are daily inspired with Somnambulism, there are many above all kind of suspicion. They are respectable women of family, men of stability and known integrity, people of a plain and simple turn of mind, children, &c. in whom we cannot reasonably suppose to exist any design or interest, to feign a like situation.

Should they be led by any faction, or the intention of performing Animal Electricity and Magnetism with any seeming reality ? But most of them have no concern at all, as to the fortune of Animal Electricity and Magnetism ; nay, many of them had no notion of it at the moment they were confirming Magnetical sleep.

Shall it be said, that, it is possible some of those individuals are encouraged by the partisans of Animal Electricity and Magnetism, and that they are but a mere instrument in the hands of the latter to favour the success of that system ?

But, for what purpose should the partisans of Animal Electricity and Magnetism have recourse to so capricious a stratagem ? The supposition, would, at the best, be admissible, if Somnambulism had originally been announced as a necessary effect of Magnetism ; so that they must have been forced to resign Animal Electricity and Magnetism, had they been deprived of the resource tendered them by Somnambulism : but the case is very different.

Animal Electricity and Magnetism was originally announced without the attendance of Somnambulism. This

singularity is a later discovery, the result of the habitual practice of Magnetism. Even now, there are many Magnetisers who do not look on Somnambulism as being an essential part of the science, but only as an accessory which may indifferently be united to, or separated from Magnetism.

From whence it plainly follows, that if the partisans of Animal Electricity and Magnetism were in want of a resource to impose on the public, surely they must have been very destitute of penetration to embrace so strange a manœuvre, which carried with it a prodigious complication of springs, and insuperable difficulties in its execution.

And, that had it been an artifice, it would have been sufficient to deter every honest man from entering or associating with it.

They must then, have only dealt with, and chosen people of profligate manners, and of the worst sort, to invest them with that confidence, at the risk of seeing it betrayed, and made public on the very next day. That is not all, they must have found in those individuals an extraordinary address to act so difficult a part, and deceive the experiments of an enlightened and incredulous people, at whose tribunal appearance must be made.

Had things been thus transacted, Somnambulism could not have lasted long, and far from gaining credit, time would soon have discovered the illusion and deceit, by the difficulty of finding actors capable of perpetrating the imposture. But the contrary has happened; every day Somnambulism gets new partisans, and the credit which it constantly obtains, plainly contradicts every idea of deceit.

Patients are daily seen in that condition, in the very bosom of their family, under the inspection of their nearest relations, and those who are the most interested to verify their situation.

Who could believe that such patients, surrounded with the very horrors of death and most painful sufferings, could dissemble for the sole interest of Magnetism? Their relations, fathers, husbands, wives, children—are they then concerned in the plot?

Shall it be said that their illness is feigned? It is another supposition no less admissible; for besides that it is no easy matter to feign a malignant fever, a fluxion, dropsy, and other diseases of that kind, there are some so well averred

that

that no man in his senses could possibly doubt their existence.

Another consideration may be added here, that is, even in supposing that a healthy man could long act the part of a sick man, or the patient take upon himself to act the Somnambule; and, that people hidden before the curtain, should preside over this mummery, I maintain would be impossible in the execution; and whatever address may be supposed to exist on both sides, the deceit must soon be discovered, and, indeed, after a few moments, I would defy the most nimble buffoon, the most expert of all, and the most inured to bodily exercises, to affect Somnambulism before scientific persons, or execute any such thing as is observed among the Somnambules, whom I am now treating of. I defy any one to remain during eight or ten hours, having his eyes shut, and his eyelids quite close together, without one eyelid separating from the other during that period of time. Such a perseverance seems to be much above the reach of human power and patience. Who is the man that could remain five or six hours in a motionless attitude, without shewing the least sensation of what passes round him, inaccessible to every emotion, and all the sudden and unforeseen shocks of noise which his attention shall, at periods, be gratified with? Who is that histriion, subtle enough to imitate, with his eyes closely shut, the different signs which will be presented him, and describe the lines which will be traced with a justness and acuteness, that no interval shall be found between the order and the compliance. A few experiments of this nature would be sufficient to discourage the most consummate Saltimbank, and make him give up his undertaking in two hours time.

Now, when we see the same effects constantly repeated, without the least effort, and multiplied in the presence of a prodigious number of persons of all sexes, age, and rank, we must necessarily acknowledge that they act through a natural impulse, without any assistance of art: for it is well known that nature can easily perfect what is impossible for art to execute.

Thus, physical probabilities concur with moral ones to establish the reality of Magnetical Somnambulism.—Somnambulism cannot be rejected, without supposing it a deceit too palpable to credit, and in whatever manner you act, it will prove a phenomenon, either moral or physical; and I confess

confess the latter is, by far, easier to be conceived than the former; for a natural phenomenon, after all, is susceptible of an explanation; and the plot of a deceit, without interest and motive whatever, is no less complicated in its execution.

A number of people are to be found over whom such considerations, striking as they are, can never triumph. Whatever difficulties may be encountered with, to make those stratagems succeed, they suppose that such an address takes place, because they say in the things hurtful to reason, the authority of testimonies is of no value.

That evident impossibility is a kind of resentment on that part of the public who have not seen the phenomena in question, and inspire those who have actually seen them, with a certain degree of diffidence.

If a common fact, consistent with the usual proceedings of nature, was only agitated, it is in general confessed, that there would be more proofs than requisite to establish its credit, on bare words and without having seen it. But as to a phenomenon, so little consistent with nature, which is neither explicable nor conceivable, and overthrows all received notions, we are authorised not only to refuse the testimony of others, but even that of our own senses. It is after such an absurdity that many learned have been heard to say, "That they would not believe it if they saw it."

Now then it remains to consider, whether Magnetical Somnambulism, and the several phenomena usually attending on it, are as inconceivable as those gentlemen would insinuate.

Are Magnetical Somnambulisms phenomena repugnant to the order of nature?

Physicians by affecting the greatest incredulity in Magnetical Somnambulism, under the mere pretence that such phenomenon is inconceivable, give no satisfactory account of their disbelief, because, that the identical difficulty they attempt to condemn, cannot withhold the victorious testimonies which militate in favour of Magnetical Somnambulism.

The difficulty of conceiving a phenomenon, by no means destroys its reality; we are surrounded with a multitude of natural marvels, which no one has the least doubt about, though they are incomprehensible; for it is evident that
nature

nature has prescribed certain limits which are inaccessible to human conception.

But, perhaps, some will say, "From such a mode of reasoning it will then follow that we must give credit to every absurdity we hear, and believe the greatest oddities in the world; and those who will exact such a belief, shall only have to invoke the great power of nature, and the immense extent of its resources."

"That way of reasoning would deprive arts of their rules, and banish principles from sciences, in order to make room for rash assertions, &c. our learning, instead of being susceptible of improvement and enlargement, would fall again into chaos and confusion."

But that objection is, by no means applicable; for the question is not to admit a phenomenon under the single consideration that nothing is impossible to nature; it is, on the contrary, recommended that we should submit to the trial of contradiction, experience, and reasoning itself, a fact certified by a multitude of persons of every denomination who have been eye witnesses to the same.

Thus, till now, presumption is still in favour of Somnambulism, since being grounded on the strongest considerations; those considerations are neither overcome nor weakened by the pretended improbability urged against them.

But what will then be said, if we were to discover that Magnetical Somnambulism? far from offering to the learned an inconceivable phenomenon, incompatible with all notions admitted both in physic and physiology; it is on the contrary, a natural consequence from those very principles, accessory of the common notions with which it is blended and united in a very natural manner?

It is what I propose to demonstrate, and in order to proceed methodically, I shall first successively examine the two articles of Magnetical Somnambulism, which have excited the reclamation of the doctors. 1st. The facility of putting a patient in a state of Somnambulism. 2d. The phenomena usually attending on such a state.

Article 1st. The Somnambulism's communication is in the order of the already admitted notions in physiology.

It is something remarkable to hear many learned men obstinately declare it to be absolutely impossible for a patient to be put in a state of Somnambulism, by any art whatever, when

when we consider that it is one of the favourite maxims in physic, that by the assistance of art all natural revolutions may be imitated in the human body. It is on that principle that the partisans of inoculation chiefly relied to defend both the practice and success of that proceeding.

All physicians agree, that the art of inoculation consists in preventing by a factitious indisposition in an individual, the real one which nature would have soon or late occasioned.

It is still according to the same maxim, that physicians attempt to inoculate many kinds of distempers, either to prevent them, or to make them serve as a counterpoise to other diseases; and now the art of curing one disease by another, is esteemed in medicine as a compleat knowledge of physic.

The case being thus, and since it is acknowledged that nature is liable to imitation, by introducing such or such maladies in the human body, is it so strange, so inconceivable, that Somnambulism should also be transmissible through artificial means?

Somnambulism is by physicians entitled a disease; it is, therefore, in that quality as in the number of those revolutions which the power of art introduces. To that effect one more step is to be made in the career of distempers, and inoculation: but such an extension, far from contradicting the principles of physiology, only confirms them.

It is expected, however, that physicians will oppose this similitude, in establishing some differences and distinctions; nay, they will perhaps forget themselves so far as to take Somnambulism from the number of maladies, by disowning their nosologists in this point.

That no pretence may be left for subterfuge, we shall be intent on maladies and discourse solely on sleep.

Neither doctor, or natural philosophers, have as yet been able to explain the cause of sleep, nor the manner by which it is produced.

Whatever has been said on the subject offers nothing but mere conjectures, the work of imagination; one thing only is certain, that sleep comes on whenever the body is in any disposition to produce it, and is put in such a disposition by the assistance of art. Such is the evident effect of narcotical plants, as opium, cockle-weed, &c.

Now,

Now; if there exists any art whatever conducive to put the body in a disposition to sleep, it is not surprising at all that Magnetical proceedings might also produce the same effect. Will they say that there is a want of similitude, because in Magnetical proceedings neither decoctions nor infusions are employed to create sleep? I answer that there is no need at all to have recourse either to drink, or any drug whatever, to convert any one into the state of sleep; the same effect is produced by a multitude of other means and proceedings; and it is even one of the particular singularities inherent to sleep, that it is produced by an infinitely different number of causes, and which are all contrary to each other. For example, if excessive heat causes sleep, it is also the effect of excessive cold. Soldiers have been seen to fall asleep on the snow, and even perish with cold in that state of drowsiness.

If gentle and soft friction invite to sleep, exquisite sufferings act the same; which is proved by the example of those wretches, who being put to the torture, fall asleep at the very moment of their most poignant sufferings. Others are said to have yielded to sleep while lying on the wheel.

Gemelli Carreri relates, that when in China he travelled with a Tartar, who, every night, was obliged, in order to procure sleep, to desire somebody to beat him for a while on the belly, as they do a drum.

Hunger and the excess of food, fatigue and rest, and cool and warm refreshments likewise produce sleep; it is also the result of the increase or decrease of the blood running in the brain. It is the effect of bathing as well as bleeding: fever, which causes insomnies, likewise creates drowsiness; a small difference in a dose of wine awakes or makes a man sleep. It would be an endless talk to sum up all the various causes, which induce man to that state; whether because these causes produce themselves, or that many different combinations are likewise capable of producing sleep, or because, notwithstanding the seeming difference, the result is the same.

But in both cases, one must confess that the means productive of sleep are infinite, and that we are unable to determine on their nature or quality. This consideration alone, doubtless, suffices to destroy the improbability of a sleep arising from Magnetical feelings.

Those means, which at first seem so extraordinary, appear

pear far less marvellous when compared with others still more strange, concerning which, not a doubt can be reasonably entertained, such as those as have just now been mentioned.

The efficacy of simply touching to create sleep, seems besides to be a necessary consequence, flowing from the general law of nature, that has designed the five senses to serve as an introduction to sleep. If touching could not produce it, it would be the only one deprived of that faculty.

Indeed, if we consider but a moment the four other senses, hearing, smelling, sight and taste, we shall perceive in *them* as many conductors to sleep. No one can deny but the ear is a very efficacious way to sleep: the noise of a mill, the murmur of a river, the spouting of waters, a lingering conversation, the monotony of the voice, a slow and melancholy music organize the body, more or less quickly, in a manner fit for sleep.

The smell of aromatical and narcotical plants occasions a drowsiness, and some chymists have in their works given the receipt of somniferous essences, which criminals have often abused.

Taste is another introducer to sleep, and medicine establishes those means in administering narcotical physicks, either to procure sleep to those who naturally want it, or to render patients insensible to painful operations.

It is to be observed that most of the drugs productive of that effect, display their power, before they have been decomposed in the stomach, even before they are come down to it, merely by contract of the palate, or tongue; which plainly shews that such an effect belongs to the taste.

Lastly, the sight is no less productive of sleep. Too bright a light, by inviting the eyelids to shut themselves, insensibly encourages and causes sleep.

It is also well known how far reading contributes to invite sleep. Many people never resist that impression, and even they make, upon occasion, a sure resource of it.

And it must not be said that sleep is then the effect of tediousness, since sleep is, for the most part, involuntary, and comes on in the middle of the interesting lectures we could hear other people deliver, without feeling the least propensity to sleep.

It is then, doubtless, sight, which in that case, serves as a vehicle to sleep.

From

From whence it follows, that it is clearly proved that sleep comes in through five of our senses ; now that observation naturally leads us to think that touching is endowed with the like power, because the constant uniformity which is visible in all nature does not permit us to suppose that sense alone would have been made particular exception of.

Moreover, a little reflection will shew that the above faculty ought to belong to feeling more specially than any other sense. It is agreed, that, generally speaking, there is but one sense, which is feeling, and that the other four are only a modification of it.

The sight, hearing, taste and smelling produce no sensation in us but through the means of contact. The light, sound, flavours and smell only act upon us by shaking the nervous tufts of our organs, and such a shaking can never be obtained before they have touched them. This is an uncontrovertible truth.

Feeling, properly so called, only differs from other senses by its great energy and vast extent. The other senses occupy but a very narrow place, and are only susceptible of a local impression ; but feeling, by experience, is spread over all the surface of the body : and this is sufficient to shew that feeling ought to enjoy, in a superior manner, the faculty of opening a way to sleep : for being the chief sense, and almost to say the principal one, from which the others are derived, how is it possible to conceive it deprived of a power which the subordinate senses are endowed with ?

Lastly, it is so certain that sleep is introduced by feeling, that the faculty prescribe opium taken in topic and applied to the skin, which really produces sleep. The touching * of an organized body may then, without any marvel, occasion sleep ; and it is the point I want to clear and answer fully the objection of improbability. But, will they say, supposing the Magnetisers to be endowed with the power of producing sleep, there is not the like reason to lead us to think that they can likewise produce Somnambulism ?

The answer is plain and obvious.

* We may even recollect on that account the manner of touching made use of in India, by which means slaves procure sleep to their masters ; which is called *Masser*.

Somnambulism itself is nothing else but a mere modification of sleep. There is no Somnambulism without sleep.

We might even add that there is no sleep without Somnambulism, and that every man is born a Somnambule.

This proposition, which is apparently a paradox, is no less incontestable, provided too much extent is not allowed to the meaning of the word Somnambule. Perfect sleep is a time of rest, during which, sensations are reduced to a state of concentration, which discovers seemingly no other sign of life but respiration and the motion of the pulse.

Imperfect sleep is that in which such a concentration is not complete, so that it still leaves some access for the interior display of organs. We seldom enjoy the former kind of sleep.

In a sound and natural sleep, the person whose mental powers were absolutely in suspension, preserves still a more or less active portion of watching, by the means of which divers motions are performed: Who does not know that during our very sleep, the body is agitated and combines itself, in order to chuse an advantageous position; the hand is continually assisting the incommoded parts, properly adjusts the bed clothes, destroys insects, &c. All these things doubtless belong to the watch, and of course constitute a kind of Somnambulism. For we must comprehend, under that denotation, the exercise of every motion whatever occasioned during sleep.

Most men carry still farther the effects of Somnambulism, since there are many people who speak during their sleep, make different gestures, hold discourses of a considerable length, address those whom they think themselves in company with, get out of their beds and in again, &c.

So common are such practices, that they are to be met with almost in every house.

Whenever Somnambulism acquires a more extended penetration, it produces wonderful things.

Then the sleeper is seen writing, working, opening the doors, lighting the fire, ascending the tops of houses, swimming over rivers, currying horses, &c.

But you must observe that Somnambulism in this last degree is no new state, nor contrary to the nature of sleep; it is singly a reinforced modification of a state natural to man and inherent to sleep; which naturally leads us back to the following

following proposition, "That every sleeper is in the commencement of Somnambulism;" that whoever gives himself up to sleep is in a near state of Somnambulism, which is to display itself in a more or less striking manner, according to the physical constitution of the sleeper, the nature of his distemper, and especially according to the different causes which have produced, preceded, or accompanied his sleep.

From thence it is easily conceived that a sick person already inclined, either by his constitution, or the nature of his disease, to a Somnambulism in its juvenile state, is liable to receive with Magnetical sleep a greater determination towards Somnambulism.

Is such a state useful in curing the disease? Such a question is not now to be discussed. Whether Somnambulism be salutary or not, it is however certain, that it is a dependent on sleep, introduces itself with it, and ought consequently to predominate more or less.

There are people whose Magnetical drowsiness is attended by no very striking signs of Somnambulism, who are only drowsy, and possess a continual somnolency not insensible to any thing that may be transacted round them.

Others are only drowsy for a short time, then awake, and fall again into a state of drowsiness. The nuances are infinitely multiplied from the very sleepers, who display nothing but what usually appears in a common sleep to those who perform the wonderful things so much spoken of in all the world.

It is those very marvels that remain to be explained: for having fully proved that Magnetical proceedings, or a contact graduate and combined according to principles, can produce sleep and then Somnambulism; I shall be obliged to reduce Magnetism to that rule which is already known. But the Animal Magnetism's adversaries will not fail to object that Magnetical Somnambulism extends still further, by offering the spectacle of a Somnambulism of which we can have no idea, is attended with phenomena never before observed in natural Somnambulism.

Such is the last allegation, which serves as a refuge to the incredulity of those who never saw any Somnambule, and the disbelief of them who had it in their power to see and be convinced. But it will, in a moment, be deemed surprising, to observe that Magnetical Somnambulism has no
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thing superior to the effects of natural Somnambulism; that, on the contrary, it exactly agrees with the phenomena of the latter state, which is nothing more than a mere discovery; and such a consideration might be, by many people, looked on as a victorious argument in favour of Magnetical Somnambulism.

ARTICLE 2d. Magnetical Somnambulism's phenomena, far from being inconceivable, are, on the contrary, a necessary consequence of Somnambulism.

According to the virulent declamations thrown out against Magnetical Somnambulism, representing it as a base and deceitful trick, unworthy the least credit, it would be natural to suppose that such Phenomena are without precedents, and only concentrated in Magnetical Somnambulism.

Such is the prevalent opinion with the public, even among the sensible part, composed of people no less remarkable for their virtues than their learning; but who, not being familiar with physiological phenomena, must necessarily have adopted that way of thinking.

Those very persons might, perhaps, have had a different opinion on that matter, if it had been in their power to know that there exists in nature a state absolutely the same as that given out merely as a feigned one; and, that, the same phenomena, which are, in the one, pronounced to be chimerical, impossible and inadmissible, are, in the other looked upon as incontestable, and certainly beyond any manner of doubt.

Such a circumstance makes a material difference; for they only refuse to give credit to the phenomena of Magnetical Somnambulism, because reason will hardly admit of facts by which it is hurt, and which are grounded on no precedents.

But if credit ought to be given to natural Somnambulism, the same must be granted to Magnetical Somnambulism; for, it being proved that those phenomena really exist with regard to one of these two species of Somnambulism, it would be to contend for contradiction's sake only, to deny the possibility of their existence in the other.

We must then necessarily know that there exists a state of natural Somnambulism, acknowledged and awarded by the faculty, during which, sleepers execute things impossible for any man awake to perform.

Without

Without entering into a detail of the singularities already observed on that account, I shall only mention the phenomena perfectly analogous to those observed among Magnetical Somnambules.

Nothing is more common than to see Magnetical Somnambules walk, go towards other people, speak to them, come back to their places, take a book, paper, ink, in a word, perform a prodigious number of things which supports the idea of perfect reason and sense.

Thus is the public justly incensed when any one presumes to insinuate, that such persons are not in a state of sleep, and that they neither see nor hear through their usual organs.

Some of those Somnambules having their eyes open, the spectators naturally thought they must make use of them, and the faculty themselves have ridiculed this pretension, "That people could see without the use of their eyes, and having their eyes open, could not make use of them."

But, unhappily for them, such a pusillanimous observation loses much of its strength, when we consider that even our learned have consecrated that very truth in one of their books, calculated to teach posterity the actual state of our knowledge. Open the Encyclopedia, and at the word Somnambule, you may read literally thus:

"People struck with Somnambulism, given up to a sound sleep, walk, talk, write and perform many other actions as if they were awake; nay, even sometimes with more discernment and exactitude;" and afterwards, "Some Somnambules have their eyes open, but do not seem to make use of them."

The learned consequently (for Encyclopedia is their work) are convinced plainly to believe, with Magnetisers, that it is possible to see without the eyes assistance, and that though the Somnambule has his eyes open *he does not make use of them.*

Magnetisers have often observed, that Magnetical Somnambulism displayed in many patients a wonderful subtlety of sight, so far that they discern very delicate objects through a bandage, or any other intermediate body.

That proposition, has not been more favourably received.

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They have laughed at the story of a Magnetical Somnambule, who had written when his eyes were covered with a head-band, and corrected words, erased letters to substitute others, upon or near them.

They said such a thing should be seen before it was believed; and even after having really seen it, they suspected the good faith of the Somnambule, so extraordinary the event appeared.

But how could they forget that our learned had beforehand prepared us to believe those phenomena, by presenting them to us, as a necessary consequence from Somnambulism? "If you follow a Somnambule," says the already quoted article, "it is easy to perceive, that his sleep, so much alike when he is awake, offers a prodigious number of wonderful things. Truth itself becomes incredible."

The author despising the exaggerations often attending on such stories, has only referred "to notorious facts, of which the truth cannot even be suspected."

It is after such a preamble, that he relates the story of a young Somnambule, a clergyman and fellow-student of the Archbishop of Bourdeaux. That Prelate used to go every night in that Somnambule's room, as soon as he thought him asleep. He remarked in particular, that the person got up, took paper, composed and wrote sermons. When he had finished a page, he read it over, and repeated it very loud; if, adds the author, that action was done without the eyes assistance, can it be called reading?

The same clergyman with his eyes shut composed music; a cane served him as a compass; with it he traced, at an equal distance, the five necessary lines, put in their stead the *Key, Flat, Sharp*, then marked the notes which he had first done all white; and when he had finished, in taking up again every one of them, he made them *black*, such as should have been so, and wrote the words under.

It once happened that he wrote them with too large characters, so that they were not placed directly under their corresponding notes; he soon perceived his mistake (without the assistance of his eyes) and in order to mend it, he erased what he had just done, by passing his hand over, and made again lower that musical line with all possible precision.

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The Prelate to whom we are indebted for these particulars, having placed himself before the Somnambule to be enabled to follow him with more application, observed a very wonderful circumstance: The young clergyman having put in some place of his sermon the words, *this divine infant*, perceived in reading it over again, that these two words made a disagreeable dissonance, and substituted the epithet *adorable* instead of the word *divine*; but that alteration left an imperfection in the phrase, because there was *ce adorable enfant*; the Somnambule perceiving the error, very dexterously added a *t* after *ce*, so that it was written *cet adorable enfant*.

Whenever the Somnambule read or corrected what he had written, he took care to put his fingers on the characters that were not yet dry; he made a digression to avoid rubbing them: a caution he never took when the letters were not wet.

It is to be observed that the Prelate, in order positively to know whether he made *any use of his eyes*, had imagined to put a *paste-board under his nose*; and it was in that position he continued the operations above-mentioned.

There are facts certified in the Encyclopedia itself, equally notorious, and above all contradiction; which is no doubt sufficient evidently to prove one of these two points, viz. That the Somnambule can see without the *assistance of his eyes*, or that his sight, exalted to an inconceivable degree, pierces through his eyelids and the opaque bodies.

The memorials of the Academy of Sciences, and the physicians works, contain a prodigious number of observations which plainly confirm the facts hinted, and others of the same nature. When an explanation of such a singularity is demanded, they all unite to acknowledge the weakness of our comprehension, and exhort us to admire what we cannot understand. What Encyclopedia says on that account well deserves to be related.

"How is it possible," says he, "that a man buried in a *sound sleep* should hear, walk, write, or see; in a word, enjoy the exercise of all his senses, and perform divers motions with exactness and precision?"

"We must freely own there exist many things, the reason of which we are quite ignorant of, and
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“ which we cannot penetrate into, nature has its mysteries.”

The author of the same article, after having mentioned many surprising facts, which he asserts as incontestable, makes a judicious sarcasm against those pretenders in point of learning, who believe nothing but what they can account for, and will not for a moment suppose, that there are in nature mysteries impenetrable to their sagacity. Let us now observe the dangerous effect of prejudice.

Whenever the same phenomena are repeated by a Magnetical Somnambule, it is insinuated those concerned in them use deceit and fraud, because such phenomena are contrary to all received notions, and have no instance in nature to authorise a belief. But how is it possible to reconcile such a reclamation with the various examples which have just now been quoted ?

One of the chief objections against Magnetical Somnambulism is, because it offers both *contradictions and inconsequences* with that pretended subtlety of both sense and feeling.

It has been observed that those Somnambules, so discerning with regard to certain objects, were altogether insensible of others.

For example, such a man who dexterously crosses a row of chairs without touching them, and writes or reads through a paste-board, shall not see whether there are people round him ; he will take one thing for another, and shall not perceive the fraud imposed on him.

But natural Somnambulism's example fully answers that objection, and the supposed contradiction, far from being an argument against the reality of Magnetical Somnambulism, better establishes its veracity, since it presents a degree of resemblance more consistent with natural Somnambulism.

The natural Somnambule of Encyclopedia well saw his paper and letter through a paste-board, and yet could not see the very person who was placed before him, busily employed in examining his motions.

The same Somnambule imagining he was walking on the border of a river, thought he saw a child falling into the water ; immediately he precipitates himself on his bed, making

making the same gestures as a man swimming, and after having much moved and fatigued himself, finding the bed clothes in a heap, he supposes it the child, takes it up with one hand and employs the other to return, by swimming on shore ; when he thinks himself there, he lays himself on the bed, and rattles his teeth, conveying the appearance of a man quite wet and cold ; he then asks the bystanders for a glass of brandy to warm him, and as they were giving him a glass of water he perceived the trick, and insisted on having brandy, which, as soon as he has got, he eagerly drinks it, declaring, at the same time that it does him good.

By that example it is evident that the Somnambule, though deceived by the sight and feeling, had his taste found and perfect, since he well knew how to discern brandy from water.

Such contradictions being hereditary to natural Somnambules, they should not be looked upon as extraordinary in Magnetical Somnambules, since both Somnambulisms are derived from a secret disposition which, likely, are very near the same.

I had many times an opportunity of seeing myself such contradictions, which at first produced in me a great diffidence, because I was not then well acquainted with the singularities inherent to Somnambulism.

Two years ago being at the Marquis of *Puysegur's* I ordered a Magnetical Somnambule, whom he shewed me, to take a hat which was lying on a table in the closet, and to go and put it on the head of some of the company.

I did not express my command in speaking, but only by sign in tracing the line which I gave him to run over, and at the end of which was the hat. The Somnambule, (whose eyes were covered with a paste-board) got up from his chair, follows the direction shewn with my finger, advances towards the table, and takes the hat amidst many other objects that were on the same table ; but before he presented it to the person, thinks it civil to brush it ; and though there was no brush on the table, he makes the gesture of a man who took one ; and holding the hat with his left hand, he brushes it on the three sides with his right hand, puts the imaginary brush on the table, and carries the

the hat, placing it on the head of the indicated person. Though that Somnambule had perfectly fulfilled my intention, I conceived some diffidence on account of the circumstance of the brush.

How could that man whose sight and feeling were seeming perfectly sound, not perceive there was no brush on the table ! How could he mistake himself so far as to think he had one in his hand ?

From thence I inferred, that having committed so gross and palpable a mistake, he was far from having the feeling and sight as subtle as they would give to understand, and that there was in the rest of his operations more address than fair practice.

The Magnetical Somnambules, whom I have since seen, have all given me reason for the same diffidence, by displaying contradictions of the same nature.

But how great was my surprise, when, after having consulted the works, memorials, and relations made on Somnambulism, I observed the same contradictions in natural Somnambules, and that they were also an object of great astonishment to spectators ; so what at first seemed to me a motive of suspicion, became at last a new reason to ground my persuasion. " What is inconceivable," says *Pigatti*, an Italian doctor, (speaking of Somnambules) " is, that, " on certain occasions their sensations are very subtle, " whilst, on others they are very impenetrable."

I saw in the same work an infinite number of other Somnambules, which, after having at first shewn a wonderful subtlety of sensation, seemed the next moment to be entirely deprived of them, by taking one thing for another, and confounding the objects which could claim no analogy to one another.

The most astonishing Somnambule that ever existed, is, without a doubt, *John Baptist Negretti*, who was both followed and closely examined during five successive nights, by a vast number of people. Mr. *Pigatti*, who was present at those experiments, has given an exact and precise account of them, which is found in the *Journal Etranger*, March 1756.

That Somnambule, having his eyes closely shut, took snuff out of a box presented to him, came down many large stairs

stairs without groping, hesitation, or even touching, turning and stopping precisely where he should; placed bottles, and glasses on a small pillar which was in his way; went and came into the different apartments without running against any thing; stopped at doors which were shut, and opened them; went to draw water from the well, took out of the buffet napkins, towels, knives, and generally all that was necessary for a table; and performed many other things no less surprising, too tedious to relate, but which all suppose an exquisite subtlety in the sight and feeling.

Next to this, are to be seen mistakes, which quite contradict that perfection in the senses. After having looked for a light, the Somnambule imagines he has a candle in his hand; without perceiving his error, he thinks he holds a candlestick whilst it is only a bottle; he helps himself with that pretended light by carrying it along with him; he draws near the chimney to dry a wet towel, though there is no fire; he salutes the ladies and gentlemen in whose company he imagines himself, whilst there is not any such person as he supposes among those that surround him. He goes to the public-house, thinking to be accompanied by a comrade, though there is not such a thing; he pours him some drink, addresses him, and drinks his health, without perceiving he is alone. When busy in eating a salad, they take his plate away to substitute a dish of cabbages imbibed with vinegar and cinnamon, unknown to him: they take the last dish to serve him with a plate of raw fritters, and he continues to eat; they give him water instead of wine; at last somebody jestingly rubbing his legs with a cane, he takes it for the beating of a dog which he supposes near him; he falls in a passion against the dog, looks for him, endeavours to beat him, goes and fetches a whip to chastise him: after having returned with the whip, some of the spectators throw a muff at him; then imagining to lay hold of the dog, he beats him with violence.

There are contradictions to explain that which struck me so forcibly in the Somnambule of the Marquis of *Puysegur*, on account of the imaginary brush he thought he held.

There are an infinite number of other examples which might be quoted, and which all tend fully to manifest that
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inequality of sensations and sensibility observed in the several Somnambules.

The Library of Medicine, vol. x. p. 477. mentions a Somnambule, who getting out of his bed at mid-night, went to a neighbouring decayed house, and of which but little remained, saving the bare walls and some pieces of timber.

The Somnambule mounted to the very top of that house, and jumped from one beam to another, though there was under a profound abyss.

In the same work is related a story of another Somnambule, who, in the night time dressed himself, put on his boots and spurs, and then leapt on the border of a window five stories high, which he mistook for his horse, and in that posture agitated himself with all the gestures of a cavalier who rides post.

In the two last instances, there is an inexplicable association of the most perfect penetration, with the greatest stupidity. How a man, who had address enough to climb up the top of a decayed house, and run on a few weak beams, could not perceive the profound abyss which lay under? and how he, who dressed himself as a cavalier, put on his boots and spurs, could take the border of a window for a horse? To explain those singularities, the principle of Somnambulism, and that want of organization which at that moment took place in the individual, should be better known.

That induces Mr. *Rebelini*, a celebrated Italian doctor, author of many observations on Somnambulism, to say, that we ought to content ourselves with admiring the wonderful effects of that condition which Providence seems to present to the learned, in order to confound them, and shew the narrow compass of human understanding.

The apparent immobility and insensibility of Magnetical Somnambules, for whatever is said or transacted round them, is also experienced in natural Somnambules. He whom I just now spoken of, was quite insensible to the approach of a candle, which almost burnt his eyebrows.

There is likewise in the memorials of the Academy of Sciences for the year 1742, p. 409, a dissertation of Mr. *de Sauvage de la Croix* on the Somnambulism of a girl from Mont-

Montpellier, exhibiting a striking instance of the like insensibility :

“ On the 5th of April, 1757,” says the author, “ when I visited the hospital at ten o’clock in the morning I found the patient in bed.

“ She began to speak with a degree of vivacity and wit, which she never shewed when out of that situation ; she changed now and then her discourse, and seemed to address many of her friends who were assembling round her bed ; what she uttered seemed to bear some analogy with what she said in her attack of the preceding day, wherein having verbatim related an instruction, in the way of a catechism, which she heard the day before, she made some moral and malicious applications to the people of the house, whom she took care to mention under fictitious names, accompanying the whole with gestures and motions of her eyes, which she had opened : in a word, with all the circumstances attending on the action done the day before ; and yet she was in a sound sleep. It was a very awarded circumstance which no one doubted ; but foreseeing I could never presume to ascertain it, unless I had previously rendered some formal experiments, I made them on her senses and organs whilst she was in the act of speaking.

“ At first, as the girl had her eyes open, I thought that dissimulation, if there was any in the case, could not withstand a slap on the hand, or one given suddenly on the face ; but this repeated experiment did not either occasion the least grimace or interrupt her discourse : I had recourse to another experiment, which was to put briskly my finger to her eye, and to approach a lighted wax candle near enough to burn her eye-brows ; but she did not even twinkle on the occasion.

“ Secondly, a hidden person made suddenly a great noise in the girl’s ear, and repeated it with a stone against the bolster of her bed : at any other time she would have been trembling with fear, but then she appeared perfectly indifferent and insensible to what passed.

“ Thirdly, I poured in her eyes and mouth some brandy, and spirit of ammoniac salt ; I even applied on the horny tunicle of the eye, a feather’s beard, then the end

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“ of my finger, but in vain : Snuff blown up her nose, “ pricking with pins, and fingers extorted, had on her the “ same effect as on a mere machine ; she never gave the “ least sign of sentiment.”

The 10th vol. of the Medicine’s library contains a memorial on a female Somnambule, who was insensible to the blows she received with a whip on her naked shoulders ; one day they rubbed her back with honey, and in that condition exposed her in the sun’s meridian to the stinging of bees, which occasioned a great number of blisters on her body, without shewing the least motion in the world : but when she awoke, she seemed to suffer acute pain in the affected places, and bitterly complained of the hard usage and treatment she had met with.

Concerning that woman, I observed an interesting circumstance, which is perfectly conformable to what is now past ; it is because the learned and other professors of medicine declined to go and verify the case of that sleeper, under the pretence that such a state contradicted the notions already received in physiology.

The author of the relation thus expresses himself :

“ The long stay that woman made at Louvain, gave “ every body an opportunity of seeing her, and scrupulously examining so extraordinary a phenomenon. The “ ancient professors in that town looking on the event as a “ fable and mere chimera, could not take on themselves to “ increase the number of spectators. It is thus,” continues the author, “ that prejudice shuts the eyes of men of the “ first merit, and hinders them from studying and applying “ themselves to the discovery of several things which might “ prove very beneficial to mankind—Lastly,” says the same author, “ the young professors and other physicians in the “ town, looking on this phenomenon with an indifferent “ eye, seriously enquired into the case of that sleeper, and “ after a thorough investigation, had every reason to be “ fully satisfied.”

It will not be amiss to observe, that the author of this page is “ a physician of the faculty at Paris.”

Such an insensibility is true, for the noise which surrounds Magnetical Somnambules does not extend to every kind of noise, since the Somnambule preserves the faculty

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ty of hearing those persons with whom he is in analogy and harmony.

This distinction has been deemed, by many, a mere extravagance, as it is not conceivable how, in the same individual, a faculty could exist which lies open only to such a person, and open for all others.

But that wonder, repugnant to reason, finds its analogy in natural Somnambulism, wherein Somnambules are seen, who, though deaf to thundering noises and the voice of several people, yet hear very well, and without the least difficulty, another person with whom they keep an exclusive relation, such as *patients, nurses*, or others they have more specially approached, as a *husband, wife, or children*.

These last have not only the faculty of making themselves heard to a natural Somnambule, but even that of making him *speak*.

This singularity is so very remarkable, that many authors complain that certain persons avail themselves of such a circumstance to catch the secret of the Somnambule. It is thus that begins the article Somnambule in Encyclopedia :

"Somnambules are frequently seen," says that article, "who, in their sleep relate whatever happened to them in the course of the day; some answer the questions made them, and hold very consistent discourses. There are persons so uncandid as to avail themselves of the condition they are in, "to catch in spite of them," certain secrets which it is much their interest to conceal."

Observe well these expressions "to catch in spite of them." This plainly shews the acknowledgment of the formal influence which certain persons awake can exercise over the Somnambule.

But by similar means and proceedings can such a relation take place betwixt the person awake and the Somnambule? Magnetisers pretend, and insinuate, that the relation is established by mere contact, by touching the Somnambule in the extremities of his fingers or pulse; or by touching, in a like manner, any body else in relation with him; which presents a kind of resemblance with the loadstone.

They have not failed in exclaiming against this assertion; and when experience has seemingly convinced them of the truth, a deceit has been suspected on the part of the pretended Somnambule.

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But to what purpose then have they recourse to that pretended reluctance, to admit of so ancient an effect, and long since well known in the world? A proverbial expression traces us this opinion of old; for, it is well known that most proverbs are but scattered remains of forgotten truths.

But as many persons might refuse such authority, we must furnish them with a testimony given out by the learned themselves, and which fully evinces the efficacy of the proceeding taught Magnetisers.

Henry de Steers, a Flemish physician, certifies, that he knew from his infancy a Somnambule, who, during his sleep, performed wonderful things; among others, he relates that in the middle of night, and during a most profound sleep, he went and took his child out of the cradle where he lay, and then walked over all the house, holding the infant in his arms: his wife, who had accidentally perceived this, afraid of the child, followed her husband step by step, with an intent of assisting them if occasion required: or, as she had observed that, in that situation her husband answered all questions she put to him, and took the freedom of interrogating him on the most secret things she wanted to know.

The author observes that the husband was in day-time very circumspect with his wife on his personal affairs, which he affected to conceal from her: but being interrogated by his wife, when in a state of Somnambulism, and "holding his child in his arms," then, said the author, he plainly answered all the questions put to him by his wife, who followed him, and "then had nothing concealed from her," and was often surprised to hear her speaking of things which he thought were only known to himself. Vide *Library of Medicine*, vol. x. p. 463.

The testimony of a respectable author serves first to confirm that influence spoken of in the *Encyclopedia*, which lies in certain persons "to oblige the Somnambule to speak and declare those very thing which it was his intent to conceal." It also confirms the possibility of finding out a means to establish a *relation* between the person who is awake and the Somnambule.

The Somnambule we were speaking of, was in no *relation* with his wife, from the moment he entered into the state of Somnambulism;

Somnambulism ; to establish a communication, it was necessary he should have had *his child in his arms*. Lastly, observe, that the circumstance of having his child in his arms, perfectly answers the proceedings pointed out by the Magnetisers. The child, placed in his father's arms, and on the other hand supported by the hands of a trembling mother, established a relation between the husband and wife, through the communication and analogy he bore to each of them.

Thus, that astonishing marvel, against which physicians have so much inveighed as a mere chimera, a fable, a fraud, has, long ago, been attested by one of their authors, who confirms in the most precise manner what Magnetisers had advanced.—It is easy to perceive that Magnetisers, by putting themselves in harmony with Magnetical Somnambules, do nothing else but procure themselves that intimate analogy, of which instances are to be found in natural Somnambulism, and into the principle of which they have neglected to enquire.

As to the faculty the Magnetisers pretend to be endowed with, to direct the Somnambule's motions, by making him go from the right to the left, forwards and backwards; in a direct and circular line, after the manner of a loadstone, in the presence of the Carupees, that faculty is a necessary consequence of what has been said before ; and after having admitted and acknowledged the power " of making a Somnambule speak against his will, and declare those very things he has a material interest to conceal," ought not have any great objection to admit the faculty of directing his motions.

An instance quoted by Kaau Boerhaave, will afford an idea of the astonishing subjection which a man is liable to with regard to another person with whom he is in affinity.

That author speaks of a man who had the whim quickly to enter in affinity with all those whom he approached.

After a few moments, his body acquired a sympathetical flexibility which forced him to imitate, with precision and rapidity, all the motions he perceived in the person he had fixed upon, as, " to move his eyes, lips, hands, arms, feet, to cover or uncover his head, walk, &c." and all this in spite of himself, and through the influence of a superior force, which prompted his sympathetical organs to act with those of others.

It was an amusement to hold his hands in the presence of any one who happened to make gestures, and then he was extremely agitated, continually struggling and endeavouring to set himself at liberty.

If any kind of sensation was required of him, he was in those moments constrained, and answered he had the head or heart ach.

Boerhaave adds, that in consequence of that odd kind of organization, he was obliged to go in the street with his eyes closely shut, and that he was a very troublesome member of society.

The example of such a sympathetic sensibility may serve to diminish the improbability, of the affinity and relation which Animal Magnetism seems to establish between the patient and the Magnetiser; and it is on that account that Kaau Boerhaave certifies, that a man can, by the means of such an affinity well established, become "a god for another man," by making him subservient to his will and pleasure. *Sic homo homini Deus est.*

We read in the work of the Marquis de Puységur, entitled, "Memorials to serve for establishing Animal Magnetism," many observations of that nature, concerning the patients he had put in a state of Somnambulism.

The very first person, whom, to his great astonishment he put in that state, was in such perfect affinity with him, that he exactly followed all his motions, and loudly repeated every air which the Marquis internally sang.

That singularity which at first appeared incredible, acquires (notwithstanding the high character of the author) a new degree of authority from the above related examples, and the testimony of the authors, who have spoken of that kind of sympathetic influence.

The proceedings made use of by Magnetisers find likewise their analogy and authority in natural Somnambulism.

Mr. Figault was used to put an end to the state of Somnambulism, by lightly passing the extremity of his fingers over the Somnambule's eye-lids. It is exactly the method used by Magnetisers. We read in the work of the Marquis de Puységur, that he made, at his pleasure, a patient change his conversation, by deterring him from sad objects,
and

and presenting him with some of a more consoling nature,

“ When I thought,” says the author, that his thoughts ought to affect him in a disagreeable manner, I stopped him, and tried to inspire him with agreeable ones, which I easily did, and then saw him perfectly pleased, and imagining that he either aimed at some prize, or danced at an entertainment. I united those thoughts in him, and by that means forced him to move himself in his chair, as in imitation of dancing, &c.”

Those phenomena have been suspected, though they are fully confirmed by the Encyclopedia in the article of Somnambule.

The author of that article, relating a number of wonderful facts in the Somnambule mentioned, continues thus :

“ The same Somnambule has furnished us with a great number of extraordinary facts : but those which I have related are sufficient to my purpose. I shall therefore only add, that whenever I had a mind to make him change his discourse, leave off sad and disagreeable subjects, it was sufficient to pass a pen over his lip, and immediately he discussed quite different question.”

That conformity betwixt both recitals, serves to confirm the one by the other ; and if, after that double testimony, any one is authorized to persevere in his surprize, he is still more so to persevere in his suspicions.

To conclude, the last proof of resemblance between the two kinds of Somnambules is, that of waking : they both entirely forget whatever they have either done or said during their sleep.

I could, by extending such discussion, account for the communication of thoughts, without the assistance of either voice or signs, it being easy to shew that this singularity is not more difficult to be understood than the other ; that it has been suspected by ancient physiologists ; and even mentioned in modern works of celebrated physicians ; but I think it useless to expatiate any further on a phenomenon with which the different minds are not as yet grown familiar enough.

My object is, by no means, to write a complete work wherein the subject of Magnetical Somnambulism should
be

be fully discussed. I only meant to elucidate some ideas, and to encourage judicious persons to investigate the matter, excite their reflections, and provoke in them a philosophical doubt, and lastly, to encourage them to contribute, by investigation and observations, to resolve a problem no less interesting to mankind than conducive to the improvement of Sciences.

In my next I shall give an Essay on the Theory of Semnambulism.

F I N I S.

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