

VITAL MAGNETISM;

A Remedy:

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*"Magnetismus, quia passim viget, præter nomen, nil novi continet;
nec paradoxus nisi iis qui cuncta derident, et in Satanæ dominium
ablegant quæcunque non intelligant."*—VAN HELMONT.

LONDON:

SAMUEL HIGHLEY, 32, FLEET STREET.

1844.

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P R E F A C E.

IN issuing the following little Treatise, it seems reasonable to offer a few remarks as to the causes of my engaging in an inquiry into the subject of Vital Magnetism. First, then, I trust I have been led by a love, for its own sake, of truth, my pole-star from earliest years. Secondly, I have found the subject connected with some scientific associations to which Alma Mater directed my mind as a student. Thirdly, I have learned that here is seated a power, which, the gift of a merciful God, is fraught with remarkable blessings to man. And, fourthly, I have considered, that, if Missionaries were to learn the method, and suitably exercise it, in subserviency to their exalted calling, they would gain thereby a great accession of influence, not for temporal good only, but for moral and spiritual purposes.

Under these circumstances, though I may wish that I had more of intellectual stores, and of medical knowledge in particular, by which to illustrate the subject, and to add authority to my words; and, though I regret that some minds, who might adorn the science, are, through various causes, little acquainted with it, or may even be ranked among its opponents, yet I willingly bear any railery, or, though not insensibly, even graver censures, to which my attention to Magnetism may have exposed me, being fully satisfied that I have entered upon the investigation with a faithful mind; and in that spirit I commend it to the calm and candid judgment of my readers.

VITAL MAGNETISM.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

It is announced in prophecy not only that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah; but also **וְתִרְבֶּה יְדָעַת** that knowledge—science in general—shall be increased or multiplied. With such a prediction before him, the believer in the Scriptures cannot but expect a great augmentation in mental activity, and in discoveries, being sure that a matter which has been deemed worthy of prophetic care must be in itself remarkable.

Without, then, wishing to concentrate too much the rays of prophetic light on our day, a danger against which we should carefully watch, it is yet reasonable for us to observe the openings of Providence, as connected with the Divine word. By this means our faith will be confirmed; and, instead of opposing science, or endeavouring to mould it to our pre-conceptions, we shall receive its revelations with the meekness of wisdom, with gratitude,

admiration, and a desire to use each fresh degree of information for the Divine glory and the good of men. Thus, in the best enjoyment of the present, we shall learn to revere the past, but to live for the future.

Yet, by the nature of the case, if knowledge is to be increased, the discoveries must come upon us as novelties; for what is already ascertained cannot be the subject of invention. This simple thought should prepare us for unexpected stores; while some points may be only the expansion of our present ideas, others will, of necessity, be of a character wholly unlooked for.

We all can bring to mind instances of this kind of inexperienced truth. In one sense, indeed, they are necessitated by the state of infancy from which we grow: but here prescription and example teach us, and lead us on so gradually, that we do not perceive how much we are called to learn. But, in another, the world at large is to be a learner, and in this character it is inapt in understanding and slow of heart. It forgets that it, too, has its childhood, where, there being no visible parental guidance, and no teaching but from itself, it demurs at most things, is indisposed for progress, and doubts, if it oppose not, every truth, not because it is unreasonable, but because it is new.

It may be, too, that interests generally attach

themselves to things as they are. Let but a fragment of cliff fall into the channel and soon it will be incrustated with sea-weed, and the limpet will find on it a home; even thus, whatever portion of knowledge, or of error, has descended to our times, quickly becomes the basis for spontaneous growths of advantages and plans.

Besides this, there is in novelty something startling to the human mind. It offends the pride by which we deemed ourselves already wise; it must break up some previous theory, and put us in the place of learners. Then man seeks about for reasons against intrusion. Ignorance wields such weapons as it can. Ridicule may serve where argument could not. And persecution is a readier instrument than reason. Man has forgotten his sphere of honour as the minister and interpreter of Nature, and fails, through the excess of vanity, by making himself her arbiter. Great names are appealed to rather than just sentiments, and words are often used to mystify things.

It is, however, by no means intended by these observations to make light of the cautiousness due in the investigation of every novel truth. There is a spirit of scrutiny which is highly needful in all our reasonings, but which is especially proper in unexpected paths; and this in the degree in which they are unusual. To weigh, to pause, to

collect facts, to go only so far as, and no further than, the premises admit, this is essential to all the higher exercises of reason. We should scrutinize phenomena, as we would strangers coming to our door; but, then, we would not rudely refuse hospitality, knowing, that some have thereby entertained angels unawares. To theorize is a secondary consideration; too promptly, indeed, undertaken in the curious working of our minds, yet, after all, neither essential, nor ultimately definite, and offering only the formulæ of phenomena, not the primary causes of things. But this kind of patient inquiry must be carefully distinguished from the prejudices of ignorance. It is not the side on which error is usually found. It is, rather, an instructive speculation to observe how generally mankind have sought to smother and destroy the infancy of truth. Perhaps this hatred has been designed by a kind Providence to keep humble the men of radiant mind who have discovered it, and who are naturally enamoured of that which their genius has brought before them, and, at all events, we may learn the caution due from ourselves in reference to every unexamined statement, and to pray—Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins. Nor is it only respecting truths actually new that we do well to exercise a cautious judgment. Things may be new to us which are well known to the world;

and, at least, truth may have revealed itself in beauty from an early age to the few holy and humble men of heart who have adorned our nature in succession, which to the mass may remain entirely obscure.

Happy, then, is he who is contented to be a learner,—a learner evermore at the feet of the great monitress Nature,—who will receive every ray which history or science gives him with meek thankfulness, yet feels the scantiness of his knowledge and waits and seeks for more; who bows to the great truth, that for every fact, as for every faculty, there must always be a reason and an end proportionate; and who uses, therefore, his mental opportunities, in obedience to the will of God, for the chastening and improvement of his moral faculties, for the glory of the Divine Being, and the happiness of man. Such cannot fail of a reward, because their state of heart ensures one; they are recovering the image of the Most High within, and they enjoy His favour: here they experience the greater blessedness of giving than of receiving; hereafter, where ignorance and error are not, they shall receive abundantly, and grace for grace.

The above remarks apply with peculiar force to the subject of animal magnetism, on which we are about to enter. It is a question involving the great principles of life and the laws of nature, and,

therefore, should be approached only in a religious and a philosophic spirit. In this temper, even should any reject the propositions, the inquiry will not have been in vain: the mind will have been brought into more near communings with God and with itself, and at least the disposition will prepare it for the investigation of other truths.



CHAPTER II.

THE AUTHOR'S MIND OPENS TO THE SUBJECT OF VITAL MAGNETISM.

I USE the name Vital Magnetism, not as committing me to a theory, but because it is the title in more frequent use on the Continent, and because, personally, I prefer it to that derived from a modern practiser of the art, Mesmer, who made an attempt to methodise the subject, but left it surrounded with some pretensions of a doubtful character.

The manner in which my own mind was first decisively directed to the inquiry was by reading the following passage. I adduce it, not as being myself of any consideration, nor as disposed unduly to be influenced by authority, but because I thought

the practical application of the subject in the hands of such a man as Lavater was sufficient to make me sure that it deserved attention:—

In the Memoir of that distinguished scholar by Heisch, (p. 112), it is stated, that, while at Geneva, he had frequent opportunities of seeing the operation of animal magnetism performed; and having from these observations become convinced of its salutary influence in many illnesses, particularly nervous ones, he determined on his return to Zurich to try this new method of cure on his wife, who had often been affected with nervous complaints, and was at that time labouring under a severe and obstinate illness. He found all the phenomena which he had witnessed on his journey, or of which accounts had been communicated to him by others, confirmed. In this case, too, there was no fear of deception. Having been thrown by the operation into magnetic sleep, Mrs. Lavater conversed on things of which, while awake, she knew nothing. Lavater, who was so well acquainted with the extent of her knowledge, could judge with accuracy of the new ideas she expressed during this exalted state of her mind. This operation, which he continued for some time, having greatly alleviated her illness, Lavater and his brother, a highly respectable physician, tried it also upon others; and the following is the result of his

observations, so far as they relate to health, in his own words:—

“ I am not satisfied with the whole of Mesmer’s system, but I believed what I heard from respectable witnesses, and now believe, what I have often seen with my own eyes, and what my brother has seen more than a hundred times, and what any one may see every day, that there is a power in man, which, by a certain manipulation, can pass into another, and produce the most striking effects. I believe, that some intelligent persons suffering under disease, particularly such as labour under nervous complaints, can, through this operation, be thrown into a kind of trance, in which they have finer perceptions than in their waking state, and often foretel, with the greatest precision, things relating to their health. I am convinced, that, through this operation, I have given considerable relief to my wife, and can almost immediately relieve her when fresh symptoms appear.”

Lavater then gives a very proper caution as to the judicious use of such a power; and his biographer observes, that “ he acted in reference to the subject as he always used to do when his mind was occupied with new and important ideas. He corresponded with intelligent men, particularly such as entertained different opinions, in order to rectify his own. This practice, and the continual reading

and holding fast the doctrines of the Scriptures, guarded him," continues Heisch, "from attributing to the exalted state produced by magnetism any similarity or affinity to that of the inspired writers."

Now, Lavater, though chiefly known in England as a physiognomist, was, according to Dr. Hunter, the publisher of his chief work, "a man of the greatest talent. Every period of his life has been marked with luminous zeal in his clerical capacity, with intrepidity in his public, and with primitive innocence in his private, conduct. His works on a great variety of topics, though all directed to one end, that of promoting order, instructing ignorance, exciting virtue, diffusing humanity, and regulating taste, are sufficiently numerous to fill a library. He was born a poet, an orator, a philosopher, a critic." With such a testimony, it seemed to me no longer possible to doubt the desert of the subject to consideration; and this sentiment was strengthened when I became acquainted with the fact, that Cuvier, the best modern physiologist, was also a believer in it; and that La Place, the most accurate mathematician, had declared, that the testimony in favour of its truth, coming with such uniformity from enlightened men of many nations, who had no interest to deceive, and possessed no possible means of collusion, was such, that applying to it his own princi-

ples and formulas respecting human evidence, he could not withhold his assent to what was so strongly supported*.

This, according to Dr. Elliotson, was in a conversation with Chenevix about the year 1816; according to whom, (on the same authority), "In the whole range of human argument, no art or science rests upon experiments more numerous, more positive, or more easily ascertained."

While, then, we would not defer to names, however great, who merely pronounce a judgment without examination, we may properly accept the concurrent testimony of accurate thinkers and men of probity, such as have been adduced. This will free the subject from the imputation of anything vulgar, frivolous, or improper, as necessarily connected with it, and has been, to a certain extent, my surety in commencing inquiries respecting it. At this time I heard frequent conversation respecting it, with much ridicule and opposition cast upon its advocates: I proceeded to experiment, and found confirmed the statements of its friends.

* London Medical and Physical Journal, p. 500.

CHAPTER III.

THE HISTORY OF ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

It is curious, and may offer a lesson of modesty to the moderns, to observe how many principles and truths may be traced, at least in their rudiments, in times far remote from our present inquisitive and stirring age. Thus, for instance, toleration, which was only legalized in our country in A. D. 1688, received its birth in the declarations of Scripture; and the respective discoveries of Watt, Guttemburg, and Gioia, may be found, in their elements, the first among the attempts of Archimedes; and printing and the compass among the Chinese. The great distinction between the present and earlier æras is not so much in the advancement as in the diffusion of knowledge, though, again, diffusion certainly tends to advancement, from the fresh lights reflected from many minds. The wondrous temples of Baalbec and Palmyra were surrounded, probably, by shepherds' tents, as our cathedrals, when rising in beauty, overlooked almost the rudest forms of habitations. Men kept their information in guilds or crafts, or more commonly reserved it as the subject of

family secrets. It was a part of their capital, and the source of their honour; and a natural selfishness led them to prefer their private distinctions to a public good.

And thus truths affect us with all the air of discoveries, which have only been extended, and perhaps methodized, among us. Among these Animal Magnetism may certainly be placed. Traces of it are to be met with among the few from a very early date. Carefully guarding, as in candour we are bound, against the supposition of the miracles of scripture having been performed by this art, for among them are many circumstances recorded to which magnetism could never aspire; we yet cannot fail to observe details which render it probable that the subject was not unknown to the Hebrews and the neighbouring nations. Thus, Naaman said, when seeking for the prophet's aid, "I thought he would surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, (move his hand up and down—Hebrew), and recover the leper*." Pyrrhus is recorded by Plutarch to have cured persons by the touch of his toe—the same thing is said to have been done by a family in Dauphiné from father to son in our day. The

* 2 Kings, v. 11.

prophetic oracular voices were probably rendered efficacious from the same cause as prevoyance; and the Druids, who are designated by Pliny as prophets and physicians, are said, by Pomponius Mela, to have wonderfully cured diseases, and to have predicted events soon to occur.

“ In the following verses of Solon,” says Mr. Colquhoun, “ we have the earliest, and, perhaps, the directest testimonies to the practice of manipulation, as a sanative process, to be found in antiquity. It is surprising that they should have hitherto escaped the notice of all the writers upon Animal Magnetism, many of whom have exercised great diligence in collecting the allusions to this process which occur among the ancients—

Πολλάκι δ' ἐξ ὀλίγης ὀδύνης μέγα γίγνεται ἄλγος,
 Κ' οὐκ ἂν τίς λύσαιτ' ἥπια φάρμακα δούς·
 Τὸν δὲ κακαῖς νούσαισι κυκώμενον ἀργαλέαις τε
 Ἀψάμενος χειροῖν αἰψα τίθησ' ὑγιή.

Solon apud Stobæum*.

The following remarkable expressions occur in the *Amphitruo* of Plautus:—“*Quid, si ego illum*

* Thus translated by Stanley—*History of Philosophy*, 1666:—

“ The smallest hurts sometimes increase and rage
 More than all art of physic can assuage;
 Sometimes the fury of the worst disease,
 The hand, by gentle passes, will appease.”

tractim tangam, ut dormiat." These expressions are evidently used euphemistically in a humorous sense for "What if I knock him down!" but we can hardly fail to perceive that there is here an obvious allusion to some method of setting persons asleep by manipulations. In the following verses of Martial, the process in question is not merely alluded to, but pretty fully described. They occur in B. 3, Ep. 82, and appear to refer to some refinement of luxury:—

*Percurrit agili corpus arte tractatrix,
Manumque doctam spargit omnibus membris.*

We have distinguished between the miracles of Scripture and Magnetism; for the latter makes no pretensions to such a power as that of rendering perfectly sound a withered arm, or of instantaneously giving sight, with all the effects of experience, (the greater wonder of the two), to one born blind. Locke proposes the question, supposing one born blind to be made acquainted by the touch with the surfaces of a cube and a sphere, so that he should be able to distinguish them, and that his eyes were suddenly opened, and the bodies placed before him on a table, and he were asked to tell by the sight which was the cube, which the sphere? would he be able to do so?

He decides this question in the negative. Diderot, speaking of a young man who had been couched by Cheselden, says, "The young man whose cataracts were couched by this skillful surgeon, did not, for a long time, distinguish either magnitudes, distances, or even figures from each other. An object of an inch in size, which, when placed before his eyes, concealed a house from his view, appeared to him as large as the house. All objects were present to his eye, and appeared to him to be applied to that organ as objects of touch are applied to the skin. He could not distinguish by his sight what, by the aid of his hands, he had judged to be round from what he had judged to be angular. He attained, though not without difficulty, to a perception that his house was larger than his chamber, but he could never conceive how the eye could give him this information. Many repeated facts of experience were required in order to satisfy him that paintings represented solid bodies; and when, by dint of looking at pictures, he was convinced that what he saw before him were not merely surfaces, he felt them with his hands, and was much surprised to find only a plain surface without any projection. He would then ask which of his senses deceived him, his touch or his sight." Similar to this is the beautiful narrative of Caspar Hauser. On being di-

rected to look out of window at a lovely prospect, (shortly after his release, and before his eye had become accustomed to objects), he drew back with visible horror, exclaiming, "Ugly! ugly!" Some time afterwards, when asked what had caused this impression, he explained, that, when he looked out, it always appeared to him as if a shutter had been placed close before his eyes upon which a painter had spattered the contents of his different brushes. He could not distinguish single things one from another.

In the Lord's miracles, then, an effect was produced of a kind different entirely from that of magnetic agency; for, as the benefits of visual experience were given, so a higher intellectual range was imparted. The blind or the withered restored received, not only a new power, but a fresh mental development for its adequate and instantaneous use. So, too, in the storm, not only did the awakened Saviour make at once a great calm, hushing, in an instant, winds and angry waves, but immediately the ship was at the place whither they went. Thus, as he said on another occasion, "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." But there is another power to which, perhaps, it may be analogous. St. Paul, in his enumeration of spiritual gifts, twice mentions those of healing *χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων*, placing them after miracles,

from which they may be clearly discerned, as being, however wonderful, only a natural power. It is to something of this kind, probably, that Eusebius refers, when, having quoted from Irenæus a modification of the stupendous works of Christ and the Apostles, he observes, "these gifts of different kinds also continued with those that were worthy;" and it is, possibly, something of the same kind that the ancient Chaldeans, and the modern Chinese, (according to the Jesuit missionaries), are known to practise.

The trust of the North American Indians in their prophets, who, like those of the Druids, are also their physicians, may have a similar foundation; as well as the power exercised by the Roman Church, which has always maintained that miracles were wrought among them; and which, on a recent occasion, adduced the case of Estatica, who, clearly in the magnetic trance, allowed a fly to cross her open eye, walking over the ball, without flinching, and was only moved from her fixed gaze at the image of the Virgin, by the priest (her magnetizer, we presume) coming near, and exhibiting the consecrated host.

We find traces of an original revelation of moral truth through all the tribes of men; and it may be that fragments of Divine discoveries of this nature may also have been dispersed, though, partly

through wickedness, and by the influence of ignorance, mixed with many superstitions, and confounded with the supposition of magical arts. In the earliest periods of man's history, it pleased God to allow angels to descend and converse with his children. Perhaps it was thus that the principles of language, so highly philosophical and above other inventions of a rude people, were given; and perhaps, too, such a matter as the obtaining of fire, as the Greek legend intimates; and, at all events, we may ask, next to the duties of man to his Maker and his fellow, what subject could be more suited to form the basis of angelic converse than one calculated to raise almost above earthly ties the human spirit, and to scatter the blessings of health and the freedom from pain throughout the world?

There is another curious point connected with the question, which also merits attention, viz., the power attributed to royal persons to cure diseases. Allusion has been made to the power of Pyrrhus in this respect; but the accurate Tacitus (*Hist.* iv. 81) (supported by Suetonius) is yet more definite. I offer a translation:—

“During the months in which Vespasian was waiting at Alexandria, many miracles occurred, by which the favour of Heaven, and the propitious disposition of the deities towards him were shewn.

A certain Alexandrian from among the common people, who was known for a disease of the eyes, fell at his knees, entreating with groans a remedy for his blindness, which he thus sought by the monition of their tutelary god Serapis, praying the prince to condescend to bedew his cheeks and eye-balls with his spittle. Another, having a diseased hand, prayed, by the advice of the same god, to be passed over by the foot of Cæsar. Vespasian at first ridiculed the matter; yet, as they continued their importunities, at one time fearing the imputation of vanity, at another led to hope, by their entreaty and the voice of his courtiers, he at length requested the physicians to give their opinion as to whether such a blindness and debility could be cured by human aid. The medical men offered various judgments. 'With respect to the former, they thought that the power of vision was not actually lost, and might be recovered, if the obstacles to sight could be removed; and as to the other, that the limbs, though in a very bad state, might be restored, if the principle of health could be exhibited: that, perhaps, the gods, in their divine benignity to the prince, had chosen him to this work; and, at all events, that the honour of success would be Cæsar's, while the patients only would have the disgrace of failure.' Vespasian, therefore, deeming

all things open to his fortune, and that nothing was impossible, himself, with a glad countenance, the multitude being all intentness on the transaction, performed the requisitions. Immediately the hand was restored to its energy, and the day shone again to the blind. Moreover, some who were present, now, when no longer any advantage could be derived from a falsehood, still aver the facts."

In this narrative the saliva is mentioned, the power of which, as well as that of the breath, is not unknown to magnetists; and it is to be observed, that the patients stated that it was by the advice of the numen or oracle that they applied; which seems to confirm our previous remark as to the sybils, the Pythian priestesses, &c., being in possession of the secret. But the point to which we would direct chief attention is, the idea that the Cæsar or King possessed this virtue of cure. The same sentiment was held in the middle ages. Milton, in his "History of Britain," in summing up the character of Edward the Confessor, says, "He was full of alms-deeds, and exhorted the monks to a like charity. He is said to be the first English king that cured the disease thence called the king's evil: yet Malmsbury blames them who attribute that cure to his royalty, not to his sanctity; said also to have cured certain blind men with the water wherein he had washed

his hands.” The kings of Scandinavia, especially St. Olaf, and, after them, the French kings, were reported to have a like power, so that in the latter case the words “ Le Roi te touche, Dieu te guerisse,” passed into a usual form for the occasion. Our faithful chronicler Evelyn, mentioning the entrance of Charles the Second into the City (1660), of which he (Evelyn) was an eye-witness, says, “ His Majestie began *first to touch* for the evil, according to costome, thus: his Majestie, sitting under his state in the banquetting house, the chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought or led up to the throne, where, they kneeling, the king strokes their faces or cheekes with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplaine in his formalities says, ‘ He put his hands upon them and he healed them.’ This is sayd to every one in particular. When they have been all touch’d, they come up again in the same order, and the other chaplaine kneeling, and having angel gold strung on white ribbon on his arme, delivers them one by one to his Majestie, who puts them about the necks of the touch’d as they passe, while the first chaplaine repeats, ‘ That is the true light who came into the world.’ Then follows an Epistle (as at first a Gospell), with the Liturgy prayers for the sick, with some alteration; lastly, the blessing: and then the Lo. Chamberlaine

and Comptroller of the Household bring a basin, ewer, and towel, for his Majestie to wash."

In 1684, Evelyn again relates, "There was so great a concourse of people with their children to be touch'd for the evil, that 6 or 7 were crush'd to death by pressing at the chirurgion's doore for tickets." Dr. Samuel Johnson is the last person known to have been thus touched for the evil : he was brought to Queen Anne by his mother for the purpose, but without success.



CHAPTER IV.

PRACTICE OF MAGNETISM IN RECENT TIMES.

THE seventeenth century, which was remarkable for the spread of knowledge in other respects, has the honour of reviving or introducing this subject. A Mr. Valentine Greatrakes had become acquainted with the power, from what source does not appear, and exercised it upon the learned author of the "Intellectual System*." The Hon. R. Boyle testifies to the excellency of this gentleman, and to the cures performed by him. A shoemaker, named Dal, of Auxerre, was also in the habit of

* Cudworth.

employing it; and a yet more remarkable person, named Gassner, who became Catholic minister of Clösterle, where he performed, under the protection and observation of the government, a number of wonderful cures*. His plan was to use manipulations; but he began by thinking exorcism permissible and useful. This was in keeping with the superstitions at that time passing away; but had nothing whatever to do with the power.

After these arose F. Antoine Mesmer, a native of Weiler on the Rhine, born in 1734. This person commenced practice as a physician in Vienna; but, having applied himself to magnetism, he received so little encouragement, that he was obliged to leave the city. He had written a dissertation on the influence of the planets upon the human body, which had caused him to be regarded by the medical world as a speculatist and enthusiast; and a subsequent difference with Father Hell, a Jesuit, to whom he was indebted for some hints on mineral magnetism, seems to have affected his fortunes. But, as Bacon says, "a good notion never dies," and, though persecuted in Vienna, Mesmer carried with him his secret and his power. At Berne, therefore, and Zurich he was still successful in cures; and at

* Calhoun, p. 45.

length appeared in Paris with his favourite hypothesis. At first he used metallic rods as the medium of conveying the energy ; but subsequent experiments led him to abandon these, and to conclude that the human frame, well-poised and healthful, is the best or sole depository.

He put forth his views in twenty-seven propositions*, but as they were partly borrowed, especially from Van Helmont and Maxwell, and were not without admixture of error, it is scarcely needful to do more than to refer to them. He was, however, a strong and independent thinker. At Paris his opinions received considerable attention, and drew upon him, as at Vienna, much opposition. But as he now gradually assumed an air of mystery, used darkened rooms, music, and the baquet or tub, the persecution might not be wholly without cause. He made considerable sums by the sale of his secret, which led him to be ill thought of; yet, on the other hand, the fame of his cures was such as to lead the French government, in 1784, to appoint a commission to inquire into his pretensions. This committee was composed partly of physicians, and partly of members of the Academy of Sciences, and among them were Franklin and the learned Jussieu. Franklin, who was unwell at the time, appears to

* See "Teste's Manual of Animal Magnetism," p. 2.

have paid little attention to the proceedings; and Jussieu thought it good to publish a report of his own, in which he vindicates the subject from the prejudice and ignorance with which the rest treated it. But even these, although their report has been received as giving a final blow to the cause, appear rather to have established the main fact which would be contended for by magnetisers. They seem to have made the ascertainment of a magnetic fluid the object of their observation, and, having asserted its non-existence, because of its imperceptibility by the senses, they conclude that "Imagination, imitation, attouchement, telle sont les vrais causes des effets attribué au Magnetisme Animal." To their report, made, it would seem, on a very partial examination of cases, they added, as a caution, "Les procédés du Magnetisme etant dangereux, il suit que tout traitement public, où les moyens du Magnetisme seront employés, ne peut avoir à la longue que les effets funestes."

Yet, notwithstanding this appeal to the timidity of men, and the general ridicule and invective with which the subject was met, it continued to advance. One party, observing the errors of Mesmer in appealing over-much to external things, placed the principle of cure solely in the will; but another combined the truth of the two; viz., the commanding power of volition as connected with that of which

Jussieu had spoken: "The action which certainly appertains to animal heat existing in bodies, which constantly emanates from them, is carried to a considerable distance, is capable of passing from one body to another, and is developed by moral as well as physical causes."

Of this school the leader was the Marquis de Puységur. By gentle and moderate treatment, being himself probably of a mild but decided character, he produced the most agreeable as well as sanatory effects on his patients. The violent crises and convulsions of Mesmer were avoided; and he describes himself as transported "at the effects which a man, with a kind heart and a desire to do good, may produce by means of animal magnetism."

The subject was thus gradually advancing when the French Revolution occurred, and amidst those insane proceedings, and the sanguinary struggles which followed, this, as well as other objects of science and benevolence, languished, or was almost unknown. Yet, still in the more tranquil parts of Germany and France, it was quietly practised, and again after the return of peace, and, therefore, of the freedom of human inquiry, attained such consideration, that once more, in 1825, the French Government issued a mandate to the Academy of Sciences for their investigation of its truth or false-

hood. This commission was composed of nine persons, of established reputation for accuracy and candour, and was charged, by the Academy at large, to observe, "that the decision in 1784 should by no means sanction them in dispensing with examining the subject from the beginning, because no decision in science can be pronounced absolute and irrevocable."

The commission commenced their sittings in 1826, and gave a report in 1831. All their inquiries were conducted in the most philosophical spirit; they appealed to those who were acquainted with them to attest their fidelity and honesty, and took the utmost precaution against deception.

In their proceedings* they rejected those things which appeared as mere accessories or accidents in Mesmer's experiments: they neither admitted nor rejected the existence of a fluid, because they did not verify the fact; but they established their observations under the four following divisions, viz.:—

I. That magnetism has no effect upon persons in a state of sound health, nor upon some diseased persons.

II. That in others it is slight.

III. That these effects are sometimes produced by *ennui*, by monotony, and by the imagination.

* Report, &c. by Colquhoun.

IV. But that they had seen them developed independently of these last causes, most probably as the effect of magnetism alone.

Under this head they not only verified the more common facts, such as a momentary acceleration of the respiration and circulation, fugitive, fibrillary, convulsive motions resembling electric shocks, a numbness in a greater or less degree, heaviness, somnolency and somnambulism; but, also, several most curious phenomena of clairvoyance, and of the prevision of acts or injuries of the organism; and were decided, in their opinion, that, "considered as a cause of certain physiological phenomena, or as a therapeutic remedy, magnetism ought to be allowed a place within the circle of the medical sciences."

Some of their magnetized patients, they observe, felt no benefit from the treatment. Others experienced more or less decided relief, viz. one, the suspension of habitual pains; another, the return of his strength; a third, the retardation for several months of his epileptic fits; and a fourth, the complete cure of a paralysis of long standing.

Besides this remedial power of magnetism, they perceived its efficacy in another highly important class, viz., that of enabling patients to endure without sensibility, and, therefore, without suffering, operations from which human nature ordinarily

shrinks. "The greater part of somnambulists, they assert, whom we have seen, were completely insensible. We might tickle their feet, their nostrils, and the angle of the eyes, with a feather; we might pinch their skin so as to leave a mark, prick them with pins under the nails, &c., without producing any pain, without even their perceiving it. Finally, we saw one who was insensible to one of the most painful operations of surgery, and who did not manifest the slightest emotion in her countenance, her pulse, or her respiration."

In this declaration reference was made to the case of Madame Platin, who, in this state, had her right breast cut out on account of an ulcerated cancer of several years' standing, combined with a considerable swelling (engorgement) of the corresponding axillary ganglions.

Nor is this the only case on record of such insensibility. Mr. Colquhoun, the able translator of the report, publishes, in a foot-note, the following instance:—"John ——, farmer, had an abscess in the internal and upper part of the thigh; the operation required prudence, as the crural artery crossed the tumour. Count B—— placed the patient in a state of magnetic somnambulism and produced complete insensibility; the operation was performed in the house of the Juge de Paix, of the Canton of Condom, Department of Gers, in the pre-

sence of several distinguished persons, and is reported in the *Journal of Toulouse*."

In England, also, numerous instances of surgical operations, without pain, are now recorded. Dr. Elliotson has published an account of some of these, to which it may be sufficient to refer the reflecting reader*.

Surely, then, a power so simple, yet so efficacious, well deserves the consideration of physiologists; and especially when we can add, that, as a therapeutic agent also, it is placed beyond doubt; but this last consideration I leave to a detail of my personal experience in a future chapter.

* See "Surgical Operations without Pain in the Mesmeric State. By T. Elliotson, M. D. Cantab., F.R.S."

CHAPTER V.

THEORY OF MAGNETISM.

OUR duty, in reference to knowledge in general, is to observe facts, rather than to form hypotheses. To go on, as Bacon teaches, in the modest accumulation of positive data; aware that these are eternal truths, whatever may come of our opinions. Yet, to the diligent inquirer into nature, some law or ultimate rule will usually make itself apparent, and then mystery, which was truth seen in fragments, is perceived to cohere, and to be as beautiful as it is simple. The comet, at first, not only astonished, but affrighted mankind; and still remained inexplicable till the law of a body moving in an hyperbola was ascertained. How wise and needful also the long induction, until, at length, the truth, on which the universe depends, of the attraction of bodies varying inversely as the squares of their distances, poured like a flood of light on the reflecting mind of Newton. Mariners have used the compass for ages, and yet the proper theory of mineral magnetism remains to be solved, and even the place of the central abode of the force is but just ascertained. And

thus, in the subject before us, facts are to be considered, compared, received. We must not expect an over near approach to the causes of things connected with our primary being. Yet something may be said, and, if in modesty and caution, the thoughts may offer, at least, a step in the right direction; and, at all events, may suffice to prevent *a priori* objections to the whole subject.

First, then, it may be remarked, that the question of an animal power, acting at a distance from the creature employing it, is put beyond doubt by the now familiar phenomenon of the electric eel. This animal, though far less energetic than when found in its native rivers, may still be seen any day at the Adelaide Gallery to kill fish, put into its tub as a prey, at a distance from them. The fish are, at first, full of life, till the creature wills the shock, and then, at once, though no apparent cause intervenes, at the volition of the eel, they rise to the surface dead.

When, then, we compare the lower development of the *gymnotus electricus* with the complete arrangements of nature in the most perfect of her works—man, is it unreasonable to conclude that something may be found in him similar to this power, but proportioned to the excellency of the creature, and to those moral attributes of compassion and sympathy which it is the will of God

that he should exercise? For defence and sustenance the eel has received the gift, for compassion and for happiness the nobler being—man. Secondly, the conditions predicated of magnetism, although peculiar, are not wholly foreign to us in our normal state. It is in many aspects, at least, one whose symptoms are already found; the difference being, that, in magnetism, they are produced artificially or at will. The remedial power of sleep, for instance, is a matter of such universal experience as to render it needless to insist upon the fact. Nor is it apparently only by the repose it affords to the muscular system that it acts; for while, on the one hand, we perceive that a very long rest, as a night passed in a reclining posture, but without sleep, is not sufficient to restore nature, a few minutes even, the mere forgetfulness of a moment, will often totally reanimate the frame. It would seem, then, that there is some peculiar agency acting by the mind upon the nerves in slumber which renews the principle of life within, and this will suffice, full often, for the assuagement of pain, and the restoration of health. The anxious question of the physician, “Has the patient slept? or, How has he slept?” will shew the opinion entertained of the importance of this gracious arrangement of nature, which, in some cases, as in delirium tremens for example, is the sole

known remedy; while the approximation to insensibility observable in the state may prepare our thoughts for receiving the notion of a yet greater withdrawal of the mind from its outposts. But what is said of natural sleep is, in some respects, true of that caused by narcotics. These are the best means hitherto known of producing artificial slumber; their effects are in a high degree deadening as to pain, and, were it not for the derangement of the organs produced by some other of their qualities, the result would, probably, be far more remedial than it is.

But, whatever these may be, our object is made out; viz., in the establishment of the two points—first, of the remedial effects of slumber; secondly, of the possibility artificially to produce it. This is not precisely magnetism; still less is it the whole thereof; but it affords a clue to some of its phenomena. The question which remains, as far as these analogies obtain, is, the possibility of producing coma by the means which we assert.

The same kind of argument may be derived from catalepsy. Here is an insensibility, more or less complete, with rigidity of the muscles; and so far magnetism produces, by voluntary effort, similar results.

We may, advancing another step, observe also the parallel in normal somnambulism. This state

differs from that of dreaming chiefly in the control which the will has in it over the bodily functions. The mind does not receive ordinary impressions from the nerves, yet it conveys them exteriorly, and derives, to some extent, a consciousness from its own acts. In this state, conversation, wayward, generally, and fanciful, yet correct in result according to the principles assumed, will be held; the mental faculties are often refined, something very like prevision at times occurs, and the thoughts in one fit of somnambulism, though forgotten during the waking intervals, will be resumed at the next. Persons have been known to compose music and poetry in their sleep. Dr. Franklin observed, that political affairs, both in their circumstances and results, were rendered greatly more clear to him in dreams than when awake. Dr. Abercrombie mentions the case of Dr. Blacklock, who, having lost his sight at the age of a few months, had, in his dreams, a distinct impression of a sense which he did not possess when awake. In waking hours he discerned persons by hearing them speak, and breathe, and by feeling the head and shoulders; but, when asleep, he imagined himself united to them by a kind of distant contact, which seemed to him as though it were effected by strings or threads passing from their bodies to his own. Another case is also

mentioned of a servant girl who had fits of somnolency, in which she would both speak and perform many things correctly, yet who, though, during the paroxysm, she had a distinct recollection of what took place in former paroxysms, had no remembrance of it at other times. On one occasion she was taken to church while under the attack, and there behaved with propriety, evidently attending to the preacher; and she was at one time moved to tears by the discourse. In the interval she had no recollection of having been at church; but, in the next paroxysm, she gave a most distinct account of the sermon, and mentioned particularly the part by which she had been so much affected*.

In these cases—cases of a class so familiar as to have been instanced in one of the most popular of our dramas, by a man who knew well the human heart—"I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed: yet, all this while in a most fast sleep." In all such instances we have more or less a groundwork for belief in the curious phenomena of magnetism. We see something different from the waking consciousness, at times superior to it. The wonders

* "Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers," p. 302.

of old received may reasonably prepare our minds for others more newly established.

And this leads us to some cognate considerations. The case of infection with disease is generally considered as established. However hidden the causes, a long experience has proved the fact of the peril to health in being near certain classes of fever. In whatever way we account for it, whether by the impurity in the atmosphere derived from the secretions in a state of disease, from sympathy, or a nervous medium, the truth is granted. If, then, it be possible to infect with maladies, why not with health? When infectious disorders enter a crowded ship, their encroachments on the healthy proceed with fearful rapidity; while, on the other hand, no place is, I will not say more healthy merely, but more restorative to the sick introduced under other circumstances among them. The refreshing or sanative power of young persons upon the aged is well known; so much so, that the longevity of school-masters, according to Hufeland, as quoted by Townsend, has been ascribed to this cause; while, on the other hand, the young associating chiefly or wholly with the aged, and especially sleeping with them, are found to droop, and to contract various ills. The anatomy schools and the premises of the nacker, where the atmosphere is impregnated with the

effluvia of old and diseased subjects, are pronounced insalubrious ; while the trade of the butcher, exercised among the carcases of young and healthful creatures, is known to be favourable to life.

Again, I have seen a person deprived of three senses, i. e., having but taste and touch, who yet was by no means incapable of holding communication with those to whom she was accustomed. The remaining faculties are proportionally quickened, as others are lost ; as, for instance, the touch and ear to the blind, and the sight to the deaf. And what is the cause? Is it not that the mind becomes concentrated on these senses? I asked a partially clairvoyant patient how she could discern certain objects which I held in my hand when her eyes were closed. She answered, "I see through my eye-lids." Another, whom in like manner I interrogated, when she described objects, one after another, which I held at the back of her head, and which, even had not her eyes been shut, she could by no possibility have seen, replied, "I feel them." The senses are evidently in great degree relative. M. Blaze, in his history of the dog, mentions the case of a servant who had designed to murder his master. A dog belonging to the gentleman was found most troublesomely determined to remain in the master's sleeping-

room. At length, the master permitted the intrusion, when, in the middle of the night, he was awakened by the dog having seized the murderer's throat. Blaze accounts for this susceptibility of the dog by the supposition of effluvia passing from a man when he intends a crime which might forewarn the animal. Further, the perceptions of some creatures, as the grylli, are said to commence where ours end: yet when we remember that colour is found to proceed from vibration; that every vibration in the aura or substance must have a corresponding vibration in our nervous texture; and that we can accurately perceive the difference between colours, as scarlet and violet, though the vibrations of one are 458 millions of millions of times, and of the other 727 millions of millions of times in a second, we learn to estimate the inconceivable rapidity of such motions, and, therefore, the subtlety of the impulses which give rise to ideas in the mind.

For it should be observed that the senses, as they are called, that is, the organs of sense, are only instruments for the collection of impulses, and by no means the ultimate power. They do but receive and modify exterior impressions, and so convey them to other nerves, along the solid, pellucid lines of which they are to pass to the sensorium. The eye, for instance, by means of

the dilating and contractile power of the iris, always introduces sufficient, and only sufficient, rays to be refracted upon the retina. There the beauteous picture, at times a landscape of some forty miles, at others the filaments of the feather of a humming-bird, is formed, in reverse; then will the inner nerves commence their activity, and, by answering impulses, carry on the object to the seat of perception. So again the ear, with its self-adjusting sentries, the bones and muscles, and its long, voluting chamber of sound, will convey to the soul just so much of the first impact, and no more, as is requisite for audition. In all these cases, and, in short, in the whole fabric of the epidermis, which may be considered a universal instrument for the sense of touch, the object seems to be to deaden exterior impulsions, and to leave it to the nerves to respond to such degrees, and only to such, as may be most suitable to the mind.

I once asked a man who had recently lost his arm if he felt any pain. His reply was, "No; my only inconvenience is, that I have got my little finger over the next, and I cannot remove it." Here, and in numberless such instances, was the case of sensation retreating to the central nerves. I well know a person who was subjected occasionally to the distressing consciousness of seeing things double. It came on in reading Greek;

and he beheld sometimes the words, sometimes the page, sometimes his acquaintance's face, twice over at the same moment. The symptom, which proceeded from derangement of the gastric functions, always yielded to remedies; but it left the curious sense of the mind's power of multiplying its images. It is well-known that the blind can distinguish colours by the touch. In the same way, a man entirely deaf may ascertain the relations of sound. "Mr. Sanderson, the blind mathematician," says Dr. Abercrombie, "could distinguish by his hands in a series of Roman medals the true from the counterfeit with a more unerring discrimination than the eye of a professed virtuoso; and when he was present at the astronomical observations in the garden of his college, he was accustomed to perceive every cloud which passed over the sun." In the case of *muscæ volitantes*, the appearance is of spots or bodies floating before the eyes; yet the whole cause is referable to a fulness of the vessels of that organ. Sir I. Newton remarked, that, when he produced a spectrum of the sun by looking at it with the right eye, the left being covered, upon uncovering the left, and looking upon a white ground, a spectrum of the sun was seen with it also. He could also recover the object by thinking intently upon it; "and at length, for some months after, the spec-

trum of the sun began to return as often as I began to meditate upon the phenomena, even in bed at midnight."

From the above considerations, not only will the curious energy of the nervous system be observed, but the power of the mind by attention to employ particular portions of it for its distinct purposes. We are, in a sense, all nerve, as we are all life; while the soul, the queen, receives all notices, and governs and directs her forces to her especial objects; and yet on the other hand, in the circulation, the peristaltic motion and the ganglionic system at large, even as the herbage grows spontaneously, and rivers sparkle to the sun, and from brake and field a thousand sources of national prosperity, unknown and unbidden, flow; so here, matters are going on in secret harmony for the good of the universal frame. We should have enough to do to take care of our instincts. A gracious heavenly Parent inworks for us in all.

Thus much for the question of the nerves. Another point remains in reference to the power exercised by parties foreign to ourselves upon them. Wherever there is influence, there must always be a medium through which that influence is conveyed. Hence, Sir I. Newton, observing the attractions of the heavenly bodies, justly asked, if there were not some substance necessarily per-

vading space which caused these*; an opinion which the retardation of comets has since proved correct. And again he observes, "If in two large, tall cylindrical vessels of glass, inverted, two little thermometers be suspended so as not to touch the vessels, and the air be drawn out of these vessels, and these vessels, thus prepared, be carried out of a cold place into a warm one, the thermometer in vacuo will grow warm as much, and almost as soon, as the thermometer which is not in vacuo. And when the vessels are carried back into the cold place, the thermometer in vacuo will grow cold almost as soon as the other thermometer. Is not the heat of the warm room conveyed through the vacuum by the vibrations of a much subtler medium than air, which, after the air was drawn out, remained in the vacuum? And is not this medium the same as that by which light is refracted and reflected?" When a needle is magnetised, it receives a power wholly unperceived, yet of a most remarkable character; and a wheel, moving with a velocity which in daylight shall render its spokes invisible, or as one, seen at the same velocity by the electric light, will appear to be at rest.

In these cases, then, an aura, or medium, is

* See "Townsend's Facts in Mesmerism," p. 418.

found to exist, which is not the ordinary atmosphere, but which, it may be, fills its interstices, indefinitely subtile, and penetrating alike the deepest caverns of the earth and the loftiest regions. We would not call it necessarily caloric, or electricity; it may be either; it may be something yet more rare,—a supposition rendered probable by the fact that magnetised iron is capable also of being mesmerised; yet it is sufficient for our purpose that such an aura is found. In certain circumstances, no heat will suffice for the health and content of an infant, except that which it obtains in its nurse's arms; while the method of placing a body in asphyxia between two living persons is well known to be highly remedial. If we take some wool and heat it moderately, so that a thermometer, placed in it or in the human hand, will ascend to the same point, a difference may still be discovered between the kinds of heat, though none is indicated by the mercury. The existence, then, of such a medium being undoubted, its immediate connexion with life follows. For not only does every universal agent connect itself with our vital functions, but this, in proportion to its fineness, evidently pervades our frames. The nerves, however wondrous in structure or impressibility, are still but matter; the mind is the only source of power; it remains to apprehend how the two become connected: and as in every

other force, through nature we see nothing disrupted or out of joint, as in the polypi, the fungi, the amphibia, or the ornithorhyncus; so in things connected with so ethereal a gift as mind, it seems probable that there should be an intermediary between the spirit and its bodily organs: and this, the secondary spring of life, under the control of its primary, and carried out for efficiency through the bodily organs, is made available for the control, to a certain extent, of another being put into relation to it; and hence, by its inpouring upon that structure for the assuagement of pain and the restoration of health. Nature loves equilibrium, and God, its author, rejoices in compassion. Hence, as the rod of iron, becoming negatively electrified, i. e., losing its electricity, is found to be a conductor, while the iron steam-boat (where the metal, being in masses, retains its charge) refuses fresh supplies, (a gracious arrangement by which, on the one hand, our houses may often be preserved, and, on the other, we can pass through a charged atmosphere, our seeming danger our security): as it is thus in ordinary electricity, so in the anima-magnetic process: where need is, the deficiency is supplied; where there is abundance, the life-giving power cannot be received.

And it is from these principles apparently that

the higher magnetic states known as clairvoyance and prevoyance are derived. When a stone is thrown into a calm ocean, the undulations spread circularly, and would, were there no disturbing forces, extend from pole to pole. Again, when a musical chord is struck, the aerial vibrations, the atmosphere being a perfectly elastic, yet ponderable, fluid, extend spherically, except so far as gravitation, the earth's surface, and other resisting substance intervene; but the perturbations of an imponderable perfectly elastic medium will extend on every side, their only restraint, the *vis inertię*, inhering in every form of matter. Supposing, then, the mind to gain the knowledge of signs or impressions in this medium, even as it must acquire all ordinary knowledge through impressions or vibrations of the atmosphere, its perceptions will extend as far as these vibrations; and as we have seen this agent not resisted by substances, which ordinarily offer resistances to the grosser air, the ideas excited in the mind through its instrumentality will also pass through such seeming obstructions. This view will account for some of the phenomena which seem very like the gift of a sixth sense, while the same basis of knowledge will render the mind of the magnetised person, in certain very elevated conditions, receptive of the more forcible impressions of the magnetiser ;

and this relation being established, the one will, in a certain degree, seem gifted with the intelligence and the judgment of the other. To what extent the magnetised person may become in that state percipient of knowledge before wholly alien to his mind is, perhaps, scarcely ascertained; but the sources of information just named may be the latent causes not only of some of the extraordinary phenomena of far-sightedness, but also (though I do not assert there is nothing further) of what is called phreno-magnetism. There is a story of some Missionaries in Labrador who saw the ship on which they depended for their year's provisions, and which contained some of their friends, fast on a rock, at several days' sail from the place where they stood. This supposed miracle, as also the *fata morgana*, and the clear-sight of the native of the Mauritius, who could discover ships at three or four days' sail from the land, may easily be accounted for on the principles of refraction. But they furnish a kind of parallel to clairvoyance, so far as the grosser atmosphere may be comparable to the finer magnetic medium; while the wondrous impressionability of mind on mind, the instinctive apprehension of thought, may give some clue to the experience of the finer harmonies of the magnetic interchange. Let but the agents be compared, and the results will not seem so incredible.

The whole of nature bears an impress in its delicate changes to human thought and action, making, as it were, an open book for the great judgment; and were our spirits but more observant on such a subject, we might learn that, even beyond all that we perceive of consequences, there is a higher range, not now appreciable, but full of power, which must meet us in the moulding of mental character in eternity. The spring of life is ever-welling, and it forms to itself its bed in its path to the great ocean. The magnetic effluvia course over the earth, not alone to turn the needle of the ship-man, nor alone for the support of vegetable and animal life, but for purposes of our highest being, and to lead us, it may be, to thoughts of God, the primal mind in its majesty; and of our own mind its image, and bright, though imperfect, reflection.

Connected, then, with such a basis, may all our future life be found. Not only may it form to us the luminous vehicle of the intermediate state, as possibly it did when the Judges and Samuel were seen coming up out of the earth, but the glorious and spiritual body with which we are to be clothed upon in heaven, and which, in its aptitude for movements, in its undecaying elements, and beautiful arrangement, will be the fit partner for the redeemed spirit. The word "seraph" seems to

imply such a substance, while the fact that Gabriel was *חַיָּה בְּיָעוֹף* “weary in flying,” shews that even that strong archangel has a corporeity dependent on some form of matter. Just as in the curious laws of crystallization, after the severest chemical changes, the body returns not only to defined particles, but to these in normal forms, and even in some cases to the very form of its antecedent state, as in the residuum of pyroligneous acid; so the arrangements of this subtle æther may be found superior to dissolution, and remain the vesture of the soul in that happy eternity, in which

Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,
And kindred spirits meet to part no more.



CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS TO MAGNETISM—METHOD OF MAGNETISING.

AN objection is sometimes made to magnetism, which, were it not for the excellent qualities of the heart of some who propose it, would scarcely deserve attention. Yet it is, perhaps, widely-spread, and that in proportion to the ignorance which prevails on the subject. I allude to the notion that the effects are produced by satanic agency. With

these parties it is not merely "omne ignotum pro magnifico," but "pro diabolico." Yet surely such merciful objects as the assuagement of pain and the cure of disease would not be within the wish of the spirit of evil; nor can even the curious exaltation of the faculties, and the various philosophical inquiries to which magnetism leads, be in any way shewn to be among his works. It is a curious speculation to observe how much disposed the ignorant and marvel-loving have always been to trace the work of the devil in things they know not. Is a scene rather more striking than usual, it is the "Devil's Dyke," "the Devil's Punch-bowl," "La Caverna del Diavolo," &c. The name for a steam-boat on the Niger is "devil-ship." "Our Arab hostess," says Mr. Drummond Hay*, "in Morocco, now handed us a bowl of milk, and I gained the good graces of the coterie by addressing an Arabic couplet of compliments to them. On this there was a general burst of acclamation, 'He is Arby! he is Arby!' (an Arab). Then followed a thousand questions; but having accidentally pulled off my glove, the clatter of tongues ceased at once, and all shrank back in horror at what they considered an act of sorcery, looking aghast and seeming to mutter in alarm, 'What next?' 'O most merciful God!' exclaimed the

* Western Barbary, 1844.

old woman, 'keep us from Jins and from men that work by the evil spirit.'” When printing was introduced into Paris, and Faustus was found multiplying copies of the Bible with wondrous rapidity, and selling them at thirty crowns, while the scribes asked 300, it was roundly asserted that the printer had sold his soul to the devil; and the red ink with which the volume was illuminated was adduced in proof, and asserted to be his blood. In this way a new truth has often been met. But I have usually found of such objections, that, though like the atmosphere, they may press upon me from every side, like it they yield when once we boldly advance. God has been pleased to place nature, *i. e.*, his order, in various ways under our power; and it would be an evil day for human happiness should we ever be induced to yield to such idle fears. Knowledge should be esteemed the handmaid of religion; but if religion, forgetful of her proper and gentle dignity, begins to surmise that she is attended by a gnome, it may be that a separation will take place, which will lead to a false independence in the one, and to the darkness of superstition in the other.

Another objection of a graver character against magnetism is, the sentiment of its being unfriendly to morality. Now, here, as to general tendencies, it may safely be asserted that nothing can be more

erroneous; for, if a magnetised person is in the earlier states of coma, the mind is as sufficiently active to repress evil as it is in ordinary circumstances: if in the higher condition of sleep-waking, its impressions are withdrawn from the senses, the judgment is refined, and, in short, the soul is in a condition of the highest mentality. Townsend says, I think, of one in such a state, "that it seemed as if the soul had received for the time the wings of angels." "Separated," he observes, "from the usual action of the senses, the mind appears to gain juster notions and quite a new sense of spiritual things, and to be lifted nearer to the fountain of all good and of all truth."

"A state so simple, so religious, so tender, yet so pure, is in itself a refutation of the charge of immorality. If to this be added the absolute deadness of corporeal sensation which accompanies it, there will be a manifest absurdity in the supposition that it is an affair of the senses."

The soul is impassive, the physical instincts are suspended, and conscience, which, as Bishop Warburton* beautifully calls it, is moral instinct, can fully work. Besides this, no good person would be magnetised any more than he or she would converse with those in whom confidence could not be

* "Divine Legation of Moses."

placed: while, as a means of avoiding even the appearance of evil, it may be always possible, and is very advisable, to have present some other responsible party.

But to go on to another subject, this little treatise would scarcely be complete without a brief indication of the best method of magnetising. This appears to be, first, to place the patient opposite to the magnetiser in an easy position, and such as each can retain; then to put the points of the fingers upon, and of the thumbs under, the shoulders, but at a short distance from them; from thence to draw the palms thus held gently down the arms to the hands, which should be taken in such a manner that the points of the thumbs of the magnetiser may touch the points of the magnetised person's thumbs, and the tips of the fingers, the palms of the hands. The eyes should be directed to the eyes of the patient, who should look without staring at the magnetiser. Meanwhile, the magnetiser should will the convalescence of the patient, and feel as though an emanation passed from the one frame to the other. The knees and feet may be in proximity or contact; and the position should be kept till an equality of temperature is established between the parties. The first signs of the power will be shewn in acts of gentle deglutition by the patient, then by tranquil sighs; the

eyelids will *fall*, and, perhaps, the eyeball will be, with a slight convulsion, raised. The magnetiser now withdraws his hands, and with the points of the fingers makes passes at a distance down the frame, following the great circle of the nerves; and pointing at times to the feet. No upward passes must be made, for this, in some cases undoes what is done, and, in others, has been known to injure*. The mind of the operator must be kept steady throughout, and fixed on the patient, and no emotion in the latter must rob him of his calm desire to do good. Should any hysterical symptoms come on, it will be well to demagnetise, which is done by counter-passes, viz., by bringing the back of the hands together, and then suddenly separating them transversely; this should be repeated from the head to the trunk; and to any limb affected with rigidity. Should this not be sufficient, blowing in the eyes, introducing a current of air, or waving a handkerchief across the face, will succeed. In no case should a magnetised person be violently disturbed, and in general it will be found well to leave nature spontaneously to resume her activity. Water breathed upon, or with passes made over it, may at times be sent to a distance, and will usually increase the activity of the force; and various sub-

* Teste mentions a person being made to retch for months by these retractions from the stomach to the mouth.

stances may in a similar way be impregnated with the magnetic energy. In particular complaints the remedy should be applied locally; and it is not always needful to be near the parties to effect them, six feet and six inches being of little perceptible account in the intensity of the operation. It is thought that silk is a non-conductor; and some magnetisers have stood upon a stool of glass.

The operation is universally described to be as pleasant as it is beneficial; and I never knew any one properly affected by it, who did not desire it to be tried again.

Finally, no experiments as such should be attempted; and magnetism should never be practised by any except by persons of a mature judgment, and (as disease may be otherwise thus communicated) by such as are blessed with health and freedom from hereditary tendencies.

CHAPTER VII.

CASES.

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been said, this little treatise will yet, I imagine, receive its chief value from experience. I, therefore, proceed to give a brief account of a few cases, out of many, which have come beneath my notice, and in which it will be seen that the words of the parties in describing their sensations and their cures have generally been followed. If the medical world should be scandalized at the seeming intrusion into their office, others will, at least, unite with me, I trust, in gratitude to the Author of good, who has bestowed such mercies on his creatures.

First, then, I may premise, that I have met with a few instances in which little or no perceptible change has taken place. One friend, on this point, told me, that he had submitted more than once to the operation, and endeavoured to communicate the force, and that he had been capable neither of receiving nor of imparting it. For my own part, if I do not succeed in a short time, ten minutes or so, in producing some effects, I usually leave off; for the exertion after that is great, and

I doubt whether the continuation is salutary to the patient.

But, again, I have met with cases in which the benefit has been only partial or transient; for example, I find this entry in my book:—

—— —, age 74, rheumatism and numbness in the right leg and foot, pain now in the abdomen and thigh; has had it four months. After a quarter of an hour he signed his name to this declaration:—
“I feel myself a great deal better; I can walk much better without a stick than with one before.”
However, on inquiry a month afterwards, the man told me his pains had returned. Whether, if I had continued to magnetise him, I could permanently have removed the disorder I do not know. The man’s age was against him, and in many cases I have not been able to repeat often the attempt. Another man, suffering from pleurisy, was quite relieved for a few hours, but the pains returned; he was not a susceptible patient, and I did not succeed in removing them. He called in a medical man by my advice, (for I never unduly incur responsibility), and that gentleman’s treatment cured him.

A young gentleman was received by me at first every day for a week or so, then twice a week for about a month. He had suffered from a forming cataract. His father thus wrote to me:—“My

boy's eye-sight is evidently much improved, and the medical men who have seen him, and were acquainted with his previous state, are much struck with the alteration. One of them (the surgeon and apothecary who attends my family) had a few months ago thought an operation inevitable, as the only chance of restoring the sight. He said to-day, on seeing the boy for the first time since he has been in your hands, that the eyes will get well. I have not yet said to them a word of the cause of this extraordinary amendment."

About two months after the date of the above letter his sight had not gone back, and he was still able to read, but with effort, a fine print, which he could not read till after I had magnetised him four or five times. Yet it was but a partial benefit. He was very insusceptible, and I never succeeded in comatizing him.

The above may suffice as instances of insufficient or not completed cures. I would wish not to flatter myself with hopes beyond the facts. But, perhaps, even in these, some defect in me, or the want of the opportunity of perseverance, might diminish or prevent the effect.

I come now to more complete cases. And, first, of children. These I adduce because they offer a strong argument against the remedial power being merely the influence of imagination.

An infant was brought to me aged seven weeks. Her symptoms:—"She does not grow, screams much, always craving, never sleeps by day, little by night." I magnetised her for three minutes. After eight days the nurse again called, and signed this declaration:—"The infant is much improved since Mr. Pyne saw her; she slept three hours-and-a-half immediately, and has slept well since; her appetite is returned, and she grows. The parents are very thankful, and I."

A child, aged about five years, was brought to me afflicted with deafness. I saw her three times. The mother wrote me this certificate:—"Mrs. ——— feels greatly obliged to Mr. Pyne for the benefit her daughter has received. She has been quite cured by him of her deafness. Thanks be to the Almighty for it."

I was requested to call on a family to see their daughter, a child of about four years old. I did so, and found her very ill with an abscess on the saurus muscle. I only magnetised her for a few minutes, but saw some change; the next day I did it more perfectly; it was evidently better. By the fourth day it had dispersed. I give the parents' certificate:—"My child, ———, has been afflicted with an abscess in the loin for two months. A medical gentleman attended her throughout the time

but without relief. It was very bad, and it was feared she would not get over it, when the Rev. Mr. Pyne called, and in treating her in four days she became quite well; for which we feel very grateful. Her appetite is returned, she runs about, sleeps well, and her spirits are excellent. The medical man said if ever she did get over it, most likely she would be a cripple. Her limbs are quite free. (Signed by the Father and Mother)."

In passing through my parish, I observed the horse of a medical officer at the door of a cottage. I, therefore, went in, supposing that sickness must be there. I saw a poor woman lying on her bed, and the worthy practitioner standing by her. The woman, who had had an internal abscess, connected with child-bearing, of some continuance, was suffering much from a pain in her side. The medical man in my presence ordered her a blister and some further remedies. I said to him, "I think, Sir, if you would pardon the liberty I take, I could remove that pain." "Oh! certainly, if you can," he replied. I magnetised her for a few minutes locally, and seeing her countenance brighten, I said, "How do you feel?" "I have no pain in my side now," she answered; "it is gone to my leg and foot." I made some passes there, and again asked her how she was. She said, "I am

easy now." I said, "What do you mean? that you are free from pain?" "Yes," she replied, "quite free, and quite comfortable." I turned to the medical man, and said, "I trust you will excuse my doing this in your presence." "Most surely," he candidly answered; "I only wish I could remove pain so easily." He left the house, and the woman fell into a gentle slumber. No blister was needed, nor other remedy. She was well; better, as she informed me two months afterwards, than she had been for fifteen years, and she continued cured. The following is her simple certificate:—"Dear Sir,—I return you great thanks that I found so much ease from that blessing that I received. I thank God for it, as I was in great pain. Seven years afflicted; found ease in five minutes."

I need scarcely add, that the medical man's conduct was here as philosophical as it was Christian.

The following may shew the charm which magnetism has had for me. I mean, that the happiness imparted by its curative property has rendered me unmindful of ridicule or censure:—A woman, aged sixty-seven, having dislocated her right hip four years since, and the dislocation having never been reduced, the weight of her body in walking fell upon her left leg, which in conse-

quence had become weak, and dreadfully painful. "It is now," she said, as with evident anguish she sat down, "like knives sticking into it through agony. I cannot get any help from the doctors. I cannot sleep. I have come to you through the wonderful cures I hear you have performed. The thigh is worst, and the chief seat of the pain; the whole leg stiff. I have had the pain all the blessed winter; worse for the last three months, now TERRIBLE!" In ten minutes, she said, "I feel in Heaven now, thank the dear Lord, and thank the gentleman; God bless you, Sir! Oh, how comfortable! I have not had such ease for many months. I can put my leg up now, and the stiffness is gone. I shall go home quite different. I can walk well, and had a hard matter indeed to get here."

The following account I received from the lady of an officer, at whose request I magnetised both her daughter and herself. I confine myself to the remedial effects in the description:—

"My dear Sir,—It will give me much pleasure to give you in writing a statement, as far as I can remember, of the effects of mesmerism on my daughter; for let me assure you both she and I feel most grateful for your kind attention, and feel convinced that you were, under Providence, the means of restoring her to health, when, although there

was no serious formed disorder, her medical attendant expressed considerable anxiety about her state of health. She was suffering from influenza, which had left great debility, pain in the back and side, which had caused her for several days previously to walk quite lame; there was swelling about the under part of the face and total disinclination to all exertion either of mind or body. You were kind enough to mesmerise her. Neither myself nor my daughter had ever seen it tried on any one, or had it tried on ourselves. In a very short space of time she fell into a quiet slumber, sighing very frequently, and appearing perfectly happy. She had her eyes quite closed; when spoken to, she answered readily. You asked her if she was comfortable, she replied, 'O, yes!' At one time she frowned and seemed in pain. You asked if she was so, she said, 'Yes, in my side,' and pointed to the spot; you asked if you should remove it, she answered, 'O, yes;' and after a few passes made by you, she seemed quite comfortable and happy. After an hour you asked if she wished to be awakened, she replied, 'No, no!' You awoke her, however. She sat up and said, 'She had enjoyed a delightful sleep.' No one made any remark to her on the subject for some hours; but we were astonished to observe her set about various domestic arrangements, wish for tea, and play with the children,

having evidently shaken off all those listless feelings she had previously felt. She had *no pain*, and the *lameness* when she awoke was quite gone, and has *never returned*. She slept soundly and comfortably all night, and, although not strong, continued free from pain, and recovered every day after.

“ I can also testify to the power of mesmerism in my own person when suffering from violent cold, which had caused pain in every bone, so that I had been two nights and days without sleep; but in a few minutes you removed all pain, and I enjoyed a night of refreshing slumber, certainly, I can safely say, the most delightful sleep I ever enjoyed. Trusting that this very truly valuable gift may, through Divine aid, be the means of soothing the afflictions of many, and hoping you may long enjoy health to render you a blessing to those around you, I wish you every happiness.”

In one of the first cases of magnetism I had, the following were the circumstances:—I called on a person, whom I found very ill, unrelieved by medical remedies, and apparently sinking. The chief seat of her malady appeared to be the liver. When I visited her she said, “ O that I could sleep! I have not slept day or night for three weeks.” I said, “ I think I could procure sleep for you.” “ Could you ?” she said, “ how grateful I should be; but I

cannot take opiates; they have been tried, but only produce greater uneasiness." I said, "Give me your hands, and look at me." In three minutes her eyes gently turned upwards with a slight convulsionary movement, and her hand quivered. I spoke to her, and she said, she felt a rapid pulsation at the heart. It was an anxious moment to my inexperienced mind, but the fluttering ceased on my passing my hand near the region. She slept a few minutes, and I awoke her, she smiled delighted, and said, "O, I feel heavenly! as much refreshed as by a night's slumber." Her pain in her side was gone; but a stiffness in the knee, which for about six weeks had been contracted, remained. I made a few passes, and the leg relaxed. The medical attendant expressed his surprise at her unexpected improvement; and though she was not cured, convalescence, according to her view, then began. On one occasion, afterwards, when reclining on a couch, I asked her why she did not sit up. She said, she had a drawing of the knees to the body, and of the head towards the chest. She thus then sat with her chin and knees very nearly together; on making a few passes locally, she put her knees down, and then her head back, and thus I left her. Good medical advice was pursued in this case. I, therefore, take no exclusive credit to

magnetism; but it interested me much, and being among my first essays excited me, with thankfulness, to attempt others.

A woman who had been confined was suffering much pain, and, after six weeks' illness, was getting no better, but rather worse. I magnetised her twice—she was well.

Again, A——, aged about 50, was suffering from excruciating face-ache, apparently *tic dolo-reux*. She was very averse to magnetism being attempted, and was altogether thankless. The pain left before I quitted the house, the next day she was very easy, and she has had no return of attacks, though before she was constantly subject to them.

Another writes, "I cannot omit to thank you for your kindness in meeting me, and, as I truly believe, in having made a cure of the pain in my chest, which I have been suffering with for some years past. May God bless you for your kindness to me a perfect stranger." I saw this person three times. Her constitution seemed generally renovated.

Another, aged about twenty-two: "Sir,—I was seized with insensibility and loss of sight three years since. In about half an hour by the use of stimulants my senses returned, but I had paralysis

in my right arm and side, which, and my tongue also, would become quite dead, my arms would be quite rigid, and this was followed by great pain. I had good medical advice, and by the use of very powerful medicines had some intermission; but for the last six months it had returned, and for three weeks before I saw you the attacks came on several times every day. You have been so good as to magnetise me four times, which has effected in all respects a perfect cure."

Another says, "I have been suffering for thirteen years with a violent pain in the chest, stomach, and left side, for which I have been leeched and blistered, and taken much medicine. I have been magnetised once. I feel a different person altogether. I have had no pain since, can place my hands firmly on my chest, and no one could believe the relief I have found. I am well; and Mr. Pyne's care has cured me at once. (Signed) ——."

Another: "I much regret not being able to see you again before I left to thank you for your kindness, and the trouble you took about me. I must ever consider that I am greatly indebted to you, as it is the opinion of myself and friends that through you God's mercy was manifested and my life saved. I know that this testimony

can be of little consequence to you, but it may be pleasing to find I have a grateful knowledge of it."

Another: "My eyes have been failing for the last six years; I have not been able to read a chapter in the Bible for three years, or to work by candle-light, nor, indeed, to see well when the sun shone. You have been good enough to magnetise me three times, and have quite restored my sight. I can see with perfect comfort by candle-light as well as by day to read, work, &c.; and I am very much obliged to you."

Another: "Rev. Sir,—I am happy to inform you that I am quite well after thirteen years' labouring under a disease of a pain in the breast and side and shortness of breath. I, therefore, Rev. Sir, send you my most sincere thanks for the kind office you have done me."

I might multiply these instances; but hasten to another class. I have not myself magnetised any one for operations; but in the coma I have, in some instances, pinched the hand severely, but not so as to bruise the flesh, without the patient betraying any consciousness; and a young medical friend assured me that he had had a tooth extracted without feeling. There is no reason to doubt this power.

I have now to speak of exterior ailments or wounds. The following needs no comment :—
“—— duty to the Rev. Mr. Pyne, and begs him to accept her sincere thanks for the excellent cure he has performed for her in curing her broken breast. (Signed) ——.” I saw this party three times.

A boy, aged about nine, was brought to me, having a protruding spine, weak and suffering, and with a scrofulous sore on the hand. I saw him once. The father wrote me this letter:—“ Sir, it gives me much satisfaction by informing you my little boy is very much improved in health and strength. His hand is quite well, and he is altogether better. Remaining much obliged by your kindness. (Signed) ——.”

The following testimony has also been given me :—“ I have been afflicted for five years, with a surfeit covering the chief part of my face, and especially my nose and ears, with malignant sores. No medical remedies could remove it. It was growing worse. Mr. Pyne called upon me a few times and treated me. He has cured me. I thank him greatly.” The father adds, “ The above is correct, and my son has now got employment.”

I called on a poor parishioner, aged twenty-six, confined for a month with a sore foot. The chief seat being the back of the heel. He had not slept

the previous night for agony; the medical man had lanced it in the morning; but still it was very tender and full of pain. On magnetising him, in two minutes he declared the pain gone, and putting his bad heel (so bad that he could not bear me to touch it) firmly on the ground, he stood on *it alone*, exclaiming to his wife, "See, I am well!" He was well from that time. I put him into coma for twenty minutes, (in the meantime calling at another cottage, and being permitted to relieve a poor woman of serious pain in the face), then awoke him. Once more he slept for three hours after I left the house; then arose and played with his child; and the medical man, I understood, pronounced it a cure.

The following entry also occurs in my book. I transcribe it, and the certificate of a most respectable gentleman. I have heard nothing to cause me to doubt of the man's sincerity in the description of his feelings. He was, however, a stranger:—

—— ran a rusty edging iron through his shoe, and into his foot. A surgeon told him it had gone to the bone, and he feared he would be obliged to lay up a week or a fortnight. The accident caused sweating and faintness, but little

hæmorrhage. It had occurred three days before I saw him, and he came to me in evidently great pain, leaning on a crutch and a stick, and unable to put his foot to the ground with his shoe on. In a few minutes he was well, and signed his name to these words:—"I feel cured, I thank God. I shall carry my crutch and stick, for I shall run home or a part of the way."

Then follows the gentleman's testimony:—"I came into Mr. Pyne's house on a visit, and found ——— seated on a chair, Mr. Pyne having attended to him. The man was rather somniferous, but shortly recovered himself. He gave Mr. Pyne the above description, which was read over to him in my presence, and I saw him affix his name to it, jump about the room on the wounded place of the injured foot, and take a *running departure* from the house across the gravelled road, carrying his crutch and stick. (Signed ———)".

The man after this at once returned to his accustomed habits, the cure having been complete.

The last instance I shall state is this:—

The wife of a party, who had had a remarkable cure, in gratitude for it, took me to a man, ———, aged sixty, lying ill with a most seriously

bad leg. He had pains in the knee, where a thorn had run in; and two wounds on the external side of the tibia, one two inches long by one-and-a-half inches wide, the other an inch each way; great discharges, and black round the leg for a hand's length. The woman, who begged me to go, said, that the medical man feared it would mortify, and would require amputation, and that there was great danger of its occasioning the patient's death. The disease seemed scrofulous. His mother had been in like manner afflicted. On magnetising him, I saw it improve. The next day I again called, and put him into coma. He had scarcely slept before. He now slept generally well. The hue of health returned. It was Sunday evening when I first saw him. On Friday he was down stairs, and said he did not think such a change could have passed on any one. He was free from pain, and his wounds closing in health. He gave me the following declaration:—"The Rev. Mr. Pyne has read the above account to me. It is very correct, and my leg, through his care, is quite well. (Signed ———)."

The cure was about three weeks in completing. I saw him six or seven times.

Such has been some of my experience. I trust I have wished to exercise a candid and cautious

judgment in the cases, and in most instances the declarations of the parties verify the facts.

In conclusion; one chief thought strikes me, viz., the adaptiveness of God's works to his merciful designs. In nature, we find the two rows of petals to the daisy, and the two rings of Saturn answering exactly similar comparative ends, viz., that of concentrating the sun's rays each on their disk. In like manner, the range of mountains round the equator of Mercury, given apparently to cool the air, and add fertility to the ground; and the planet (by which our system seemed deficient), expected by one philosopher, and discovered in fragments by another, shew the unity of design throughout the Divine kingdom, and its exactitude of operation alike in the greatest and the least things. The more we study and inquire, the more do we perceive reason to anticipate yet other discoveries; and some suited to the peculiarities of the human constitution, as these are to the fabric of the universe. The Tabernacle of old was covered with badgers' skins, dark and unseemly; but within was the fine twined linen, the ark of the covenant, the shekinah, and all things appropriate for the service of the sanctuary; and when once we enter the glorious temple of nature, however different may have been our expectations, all shall

seem wondrous in beauty, and perfect in contrivance; and it is then only that we are in a suitable frame of mind when we receive with reverential love the Divine developments, and pursue our philosophical inquiries for the noblest ends of God's glory and human welfare, in the remembrance of the axiom of Bacon, "*Non fingendum, non excogitandum, sed inveniendum et observandum quid natura faciat aut ferat.*"

THE END.

LONDON :

W. M'DOWALL, PRINTER, PEMBERTON-ROW,
GOUGH-SQUARE.