

# THE ANTI-MESMERIST.

"THE EARTH HATH BUBBLES, AS THE WATER HAS,  
AND THESE ARE OF THEM."

SHAKSPEARE.

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## SOMNAMBULISM.

WITH respect to this evidence of the truth of Mesmerism, we have little to add to the exposures already described, as exhibited by the patient at Wade bridge, and especially by Mr. Vernon's patients. It was left for him to divest this supposed phenomenon of all appearance of truth; to exhibit his girls in the full plenitude of mendacity. In no one particular did they appear or attempt to appear, other than wide awake; and when he called this lucid somnambulism, we know not which to admire most, his ignorance or his cunning. Somnambulism means "sleep-walking;" and when girls sit in their chairs, as his did, laughing and chatting with those around them, and contradicting those who observed upon them, they were no more asleep than he was, and he could not but know it—false and foul imposture from beginning to end, belongs to those who rise from their chairs, and advance or recede, as these Mesmerizers beckon or repel them; there is no delusion, no mistake in either party. fraud, and nothing but fraud belongs to both, whatever their rank in life or previous reputation for modesty and truth; the same may be said of Clairvoyance, and the same also, of all Phreno-mesmeric manifestations exhibited upon the platform. In short, at all public mesmeric lectures, trained patients of the lowest and most worthless class, or at all events, only less worthless than those who live by their cheater, are exhibited; impudent assertions, and barefaced falsehood, constitute the very essence, beginning and ending of every case which has been put before the wise, the philosophical public, in proof of this charlatanism.

But granted that there has been much imposture—granted that the more striking phenomena have been feigned: is there no such thing as Mesmerism? we are asked. Go into what company we will, we find some one whose honesty and intellects are above suspicion, who, from open sceptics have become enthusiastic believers from the supposed mesmeric effects exhibited in their own families, and by friends as free from guile

and as little disposed to act or to speak falsely as themselves. How can I doubt it? is the remark of one, "I have put my own sister to sleep;" "I have been put to sleep myself," says a second; "I sat down determined to oppose, determined to disbelieve, and yet I fell asleep, sound asleep: you cannot disprove the evidence of my own consciousness, however you may tell me to doubt the evidence of my senses. A man who wakes out of a sleep, must know whether he has been asleep or no." True, most true; we do not deny that men go to sleep in bed, in church, in the arm chair, nay, on the giddy mast, or on the field of battle; still less do we deny, that looking long at one object, setting very quiet, or having the limbs gently rubbed, or having the hair of the head played with, are frequent causes of sleep. All we contend for is, that by whatever means a healthy man is sent to sleep, there is no such thing as mesmeric sleep, and this we shall prove in the following article:

## SOMNOLENCY.

Beautiful sleep creeps o'er the tired mind with renovating strength, and with a Phoenix power, makes rest the parent of activity. This blessed intermission to sorrow and fatigue, which comes to all in regular succession, when darkness veils all nature in repose, may also intervene at any hour or time when tired limbs or brains require rest and respite. The child sleeps often, that the alchymy of life may be at work in adding to his stature, undiverted by less necessary objects. "It is more important that he should grow up strong and healthy, than that he should obtain knowledge or use it, by so much as capacity is far more valuable than learning. Men too, who work much in stomach, head, or limb, drop off on sofas or in hayfields, to a slumber good or evil, as the cause may be which has worn the living energies. The sleep of death comes on the huge feeder, the sleep of comfort on the starving beggar; like the future thus the night speaks out truths which are hidden from the sun, and levels the peasant and the peer.—To the wicked it brings no repose, conjuring up dreams more fearful than e'en the truth; to suffering innocence it offers an oblivion of wrong, and is a foreshadowing of that quiet haven where the weary shall rest for ever. So that independently of its regular return, sleep may be brought about by any thing which shall produce nervous fatigue.

From the cradle which rocks the child, to the waving mast that lulls the boy, every stage in man's ladder of life, has some quiet nook where he can lie down to rest, and awake again to renewed exertions in his destined race.

There are conditions of brain which refuse to be thus

quieted. In fever, in sorrow, and above all, in coming insanity, the glazed and restless eye declare that the rubicon of safety has been passed, and that functional disorder will soon become organic disease: no one was more fully impressed with this truth, than the mighty monarch who thus apostrophised it:—

“ ————— O sleep, O gentle sleep,  
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee  
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down  
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?  
Why rather sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,  
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,  
And hushed with buzzing night flies to thy slumber;  
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great  
Under the canopies of costly state  
And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody?  
O, thou dull God, why liest thou with the vile  
In loathsome beds, and leavest the Kingly couch  
A watch case, or a common 'larum bell?  
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast  
Seal up the ship boy's eyes and rock his brains  
In cradle of the rude imperious surge,  
And in the visitation of the winds  
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,  
Curling their monstrous heads and leaving them  
With deafening clamours in the slippery clouds  
That with the hurly, death itself do wake.  
Canst thou, O partial sleep! give thy repose  
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,  
And in the calmest and most stillest night,  
With all appliances and means to boot,  
Deny it to a king? Then happy, low lie down!  
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

SHAKESPEARE—*Henry IV.*

But in every case of sleep, consciousness and volition are only suspended, not annihilated. When the gorged brain is choked with perilous stuff, and the senses refuse to be aroused, men are said to be comatose or apoplectic. Epilepsy and fainting are other conditions from which no stimulus will waken until the fit hath past.— But in ordinary sleep, the conditions are well-known, and it is necessary that believers in Mesmerism should bear this well in mind. The automatic functions of the body continue to do their work; breathing goes on, the pulse beats, and the liver secretes its bile—except disjointedly, and foreign to the purpose, the sleeper speaks not, neither does he hear, or see, or feel; to the first touch of the tickling feather, and to the blow which should sever life and limb together, the body is equally insensible; and they do greatly err, who attribute either consciousness or will to a sleeping man: but although not present then, they may be soon revived; if the first brush of the feather be unfelt, the second rouses, and the third awakens; if the sabre edge be unheeded, the pain which follows, by quick degrees brings back that consciousness which was given for our protection. You may call the snoring man a dozen times, shake him, and bawl in his ear: he will each time just wake enough to growl an answer out, and be sufficiently himself to speak, but not remember.

This then, is the state (if any) into which honest people fall, who stare at corks or fingers till their eyes ache and their brains weary; this half-conscious, half dozing state which simulates sleep, if it be not it; others fall fairly off just as many do when the hair is cut, or as some do when they listen to the “twice told tale vexing the

dull ear of a drowsy man.” It is evident then, that from complete wakefulness, to complete coma, there is a connected series of links in the dormant chain, and men may repose for a time in any one of them; but between sleep and coma there is this marked difference—*you cannot rouse a man from coma, you can from sleep.* It matters not how deep that sleep may be, act upon his senses, throw light into his eye, pinch him, call him, and gradually the mist dissolves, and all his waking powers are renewed. Do all this to the apoplectic man, and he is deaf to your voice, blind to your light, senseless to your touch. His pupil contracts not, his skin shrinks not, and only by renewing the cause, can you destroy the effects. If a piece of his skull be pressed upon his brain, elevate that skull, and the coma disappears—leave it, and the patient dies. Consequently, when Mesmerizers tell us to pinch their patients, to run pins down their nails, and to try the eye with light, they wish to force upon us the conviction that a state of coma has been produced which has destroyed consciousness and will. Medical physiologists ought to be able to disprove this at once, they know that the pulse is always changed in this state of brain, and when they find that in Mesmerized patients it remains the same, or becomes quickened, they should be sure, that no coma, or anything like it, is there. When moreover, they draw a feather unexpectedly across a patient's eye, and it quivers, no coma is there; when a patient moves arm or leg, or answers questions, or sits upright, no coma is there. *For in every instance of loss of consciousness and will from whatever cause, the person affected falls to the centre of gravity, and cannot remain in any position adverse to it.* The Mesmeric patients do affect this, they throw their heads backwards or forwards, but when they retain their position, and after awhile, lift up their heads and remain firm on their seats, and are as wide awake as any one in the room, neither coma nor sleep are there. The simple test of the feather shews what is there. On its first application the eye will wink, the head be quickly moved; as this is destructive of coma, so is it also of sleep; in every case of sleep where consciousness should be so near, each succeeding touch of the feather would produce more winking, more motion, until the person would awake; this is an inevitable condition of sleep, however induced. But the mesmerised patient who winks at the first touch, bears the second better, and by a strong determination, endures almost without motion the tenth or twelfth, which should awaken him; this proves consciousness, and will, and fraud, and roguery, and folly, and humbug, and ignorance, and impudence, but it does not prove sleep; and we do wish this to be borne well in mind—that in coma, people are unconscious, and incapable of being restored to consciousness, except by removing the cause; so far from winking at a feather, they feel not the cupping glass. But that in sleep, consciousness is easily aroused, and volition follows;—that in sleep as in coma, there is no power whatever over the senses, no controul over the muscles, and that every person who sits up, or holds up an arm, or speaks from the organs, or answers questions, or blows his nose, or laughs when any thing is said, or winks when his eye is touched with a feather, and won't waken when the irritation is continued

to which he has owned himself sensible, is an impostor, and deserves whipping.

LUCID SOMNAMBULISM, is the wretched phrase which has been invented to blind us to the truth in this matter. In early exhibitions, patients sat perfectly still, and only moved or spoke at the will of the operator. So tutored were they, that they were as statues, whatever noises were made or mischief done. This constituted the very essence of the Mesmeric condition; and tests (*of the Mesmerizer's own dictation*) were employed to prove its truth: but as some patients found it difficult to deceive for any length of time, and as the position and the tests were sometimes painful, an easy way of escaping both suggested itself; after a minute or two the patient comes out of the comatose state into lucidity,—that is, instead of being called a cheat because he can't help moving his limbs a little, he now calls you something worse, if you do not believe that he is fast asleep when he thinks, acts, and speaks, as all men do in their waking,—as no men do, did, or will, in their sleeping condition.

We hear little, in consequence, of CROSS MAGNETISM, which was a cunning contrivance to avoid detection before suggestive influence was invented. Lundie, at Bridgewater, declared that no one should come near his patient. Brown and Vernon, and others, content themselves with interdicting the approach of any man capable, or whom they suppose to be capable, of detecting collusion. No one heard of cross-magnetism four years ago; and if Mesmerism be true, *it must have accompanied it from the first*. Sceptics have been present at experiments from the beginning; and as their influence must have been as potent then as now, were it true that patients did suffer any thing from the approach of an enemy, it would not have been left for the charlatans of the present day to have discovered it. The *cause* might have been unknown, but the effects would have been evident. But any one who watches for an evening, will see the patient whom it is forbidden to approach, pawed about on all hands when discussion or noise distracts the operator, and neither then nor ever has the smallest evidence of cross-magnetism been manifest.

SUGGESTIVE INFLUENCE is another screen interposed between the sceptic and the truth. If, when one organ is named, and another pointed at, the organ which is called upon answers, and that which is supposed to be Mesmerised says nothing, Dr. Elliotson and his tail gravely tell us, that the organ is excited by suggestion—that our voice has more effect than Mesmerism. Granted, Doctor, granted; but why don't they both speak?—why is the one pointed at dumb—always dumb? We will tell you: Because the patient is deceived, and the patient is awake, and the patient is a cheat; and from what we have lately read in the *Zoist*, we much fear that there is not a single public operator much better, *no, not one*. Suggestive influence means, then, that the patient hears others than the Mesmeriser, without being put “en rapport” with them—answers to what they dictate, and refuses all communication with the foiled magician: in other words, it is an acknowledgment, on the part of the Mesmerists themselves, that they have no influence, and that their occupation's gone.

### CATALEPSY, OR RIGIDITY, &c.

INSENSIBILITY of the pupil of the eye is a general consequence of a comatose state of the brain, and it has ever been claimed by Mesmerizers as an evidence of their influence. In apoplexy, if the eyelids be opened, the pupil will be found dilated, nor will it contract if a strong light be thrown suddenly upon it. Medical men of talent, have again and again declared that the pupil of Mesmeric patients does not contract under similar circumstances. But we have no hesitation in declaring that there is scarcely one medical man in twenty, who knows how to apply the test: they hold the candle straight before the closed eye, and then open the lid, the consequence is, that the light acts upon the pupil, *before they obtain sight of it*, and the pupil *has* contracted without their knowledge. The proper method to test it is, to hold one hand before the patient's eye, then elevate the other; fix your gaze steadily upon the shadowed pupil, and then, and not till then throw the light suddenly upon it. In every case that we have ever seen, in every case we have read of, the pupil when so examined, has invariably contracted.

But although the patients are said to be insensible to personal pain, they are declared to be sensible to any injury inflicted on the operator. The usual mode of exhibiting this is to pull a hair from the patient's head who winces not. A hair is then pulled from the operator's head, and the patient shrinks, as if hurt. Mr. Spain's case at Sheerness (already related) is a type of the whole; the operator universally stands in such a position, that the patient can see with the half-closed eye; or hear, or otherwise become acquainted through confederacy, with the exact moment when the hair is pulled out. If care be taken to prevent this; or better still, if the motion indicative of extracting the hair, be made so that the patient cannot see it, or hear it, he will start, although *no hair be touched*.—Moreover, no such pain is felt by the operator, he jumps not, and surely the patient should not feel, when he does not feel, when he is not hurt. It is all of a piece—trick, trick, from beginning to end.

CATALEPSY or RIGIDITY of the limbs as it is now called, is, perhaps, the most common experiment adduced in support of Mesmerism. And strange to say, although at first glance, the imposture is palpable to all who can reason, it is generally considered the most successful proof. The proper mode of exhibiting it consists in putting the patients into what they call the comatose state, in which all sense, all volition is suspended, and then by making passes along any of the limbs, they gradually rise and become rigid. This was called catalepsy, until we ourselves pointed out the mistake. Catalepsy consists in a loss of power over the voluntary nerves, but the muscles do not become rigid. Place a cataleptic patient's head awry, and it will remain so until you remove it from its position; but it will yield to whatever force you use. The muscles of the neck will offer no resistance, and so there is complete freedom and mobility both in muscle and joint. But true catalepsy is very rare; a cataleptic condition is the more proper



term for most of the recorded cases; for some volition usually remains, which is employed by the patient in aid of the disease to which he seems determined to submit, and more or less of stiffness follows; but the amount of rigidity is exactly proportionate to the amount of volition; consequently no case of even simulated catalepsy has ever been exhibited by the Mesmerizers, and we wish our non-professional readers to remember this, because they will now know that those medical men who adduce catalepsy as a proof of Mesmerism know not what they are talking about. Since our exposure of this ignorance, the term rigidity has been used; (a proper term if true.) That the muscles of the human body are capable of becoming rigid, in various forms of disease we know: so rigid, that we may break, but not bend them. Teeth are obliged to be punched out in locked jaw, that food may be inserted into the mouth, which no human force can open, without destruction to some of its parts. In a similar affection of the muscles of the abdomen or back, you may rupture, but cannot loosen the bonds of adamant, which in their spasm, are capable of throwing the body from the bed up to the ceiling. But in all these cases, you may break but cannot bend. Now then, compare this with the mummery we are in the daily habit of seeing practised. Turn back to the account of Mr. Vernon's patients, and we find that in them there was no pretence even to rigidity; they always had free use of their limbs, and did not in any one single particular pretend to differ from the congregated asses assembled to applaud them. We beg their pardon, there was a difference: all the difference observable between rogues and fools. And even when the arms were held out; again and again did they move up or down in direct opposition to the motion of the operator: going down as he pulled up, ascending as he depressed, and proving to demonstration that they acted as they thought he intended, but mistook his meaning. Moreover, did it never strike an observer of even the best cases, that the operator makes precisely the same kind of passes to mesmerize the limbs, which he uses, to render them flaccid: just as they direct the same finger to an organ they wish to excite, which they had previously directed to the eye to produce insensibility. Even this is enough, more than enough to detect the whole imposture. You see a man pass his hand from the face down the stomach and limbs of delicate females, who, (*proh pudor*) are not ashamed thereat, and incontinently the limbs relax, and the mind becomes an abject slave to its seducer. You there see this man, this ignorant shoe-maker, taylor, or worse—this man, whose opinions and conduct, moral and religious, would scout him from society, if published; this thimble-rigger, who, if he can read and write, is by so much above his fellow professors; you see him who travels with any girl who will submit to his influence, with any vagabond, who, like his master, is too lazy to work.—You see him, who sets up for a physiologist, a lecturer forsooth, without understanding one single law of life, and who is, in a majority of instances ignorant of one single rule of grammar:—you see him, we say, make precisely the same passes to *excite*, which he made but a minute before to *compose*, and you shout as if he were a demigod

and his maker an idiot. Asses, trebly proved asses that you are! Well, the arm is up—Is it cataleptic?—Certainly not, for when you pull it down, which you may easily do, it recoils! Is it rigid?—Certainly not. The boy's leg at Northampton, sank at least a foot (we know that it sank more, but we say a foot for peace sake), in fifteen minutes; and if you make them avoid the chair-back, which they often attempt to hitch, it will droop, droop, droop, and ever and anon be raised again, just as a natural arm should do, as it did in an amateur patient at Leicester, seven inches by measurement, as it does in every case, when proper means are taken to detect it. And so tender are these empirics of their patients even then, that they object to any continuation of an experiment, lest it hurt them!

RIGIDITY.—There are many experiments which prove beyond all cavil, that *no* rigidity whatever occurs, but that all is purely voluntary. Tie a weight of four or five pounds to a string, hang it to the wrist of the party, place an upright stick by the arm's side, and you will observe it oscillate to the same extent as your own held in the same position. Then suddenly, (without letting the patient see when,) cut the string with a pair of scissors, and the arm will instantly spring up several inches, and as instantly be brought back to its position. Mesmerizers generally, are not anatomists, and this is why they have entrapped themselves. If the muscles of the arm are rigid, those below, are equally so with those above: the same force prevents the arm from going up as down, otherwise it would not retain its position. Now, when a weight is suspended, it is evident that the muscles are rigid enough to support that weight; if, on the other hand, the arm be attached to a pair of steelyards, it would resist the same weight; consequently, when the string is cut, it is equivalent at most, to reversing the weight, and the same rigidity which prevented the arm from yielding in one direction, should also, prevent it from yielding in any other—up as well as down.

To make this more clear, rest the end of a piece of stick upon the table, tie the other end by two strings, the one attached to a hook in the ceiling, and the other to the floor; then hang a weight upon the stick, it will now be precisely in the condition of a mesmerised arm: the strings above and below, are analagous to the rigid muscles—the weights are similarly suspended; now cut the string which suspends the weight, and the arm remains just as it was, for the lower string, which was an antagonist to the upper string, is still an antagonist, just as the lower muscles which antagonized the upper muscles, still antagonize them. Cutting the weight did not remove the rigidity. If you were to cut the weight suspended from a rigid hand-post, it would not spring, neither should the arm, which is precisely in the same condition. Therefore, the arms are neither rigid nor cataleptic.—Q. E. D.

What are they then? The arms of impostors, held up to deceive, but so badly held, that they ought not to impose upon a child.

It has been agreed that there is an elasticity in the muscle, as evidenced in the dead body which causes the resiliency of the arm; but this is not the fact, for the dead muscle is perfectly placid and inelastic *after the*



effects of congelation are overcome; in apoplexy, in fainting, in perfect sleep, there is no elasticity—this property cannot be shewn to exist independent of volition, but if it could, it affects not the question before us; the above experiment altogether disproves rigidity of muscle.

Those who wish for further evidence may adopt Dr. Elliot's plan, and press the thumb strongly on the popliteal nerve, if it be in the leg, or on the head of the radius in the arm; or they may induce a belief in the patient that passes are being made, and hold the operators hands in their own, as Dr. Blair of Colchester did those of Holmes; or they may take the fingers and easily bend them one by one; and then, if they can do the same thing with an ankylosed joint, or tetanic limb, then and not till then may they cite rigidity of the muscles as evidence of Mesmeric influence.

Oh, but cry the believers, Can you hold out your arm with a chair upon it, as long as this girl can? Yes, anybody can, of the same amount of strength and practice. We would not undertake, strong as we are, to nurse a child so long as we have seen many an idle mother compel many a delicate child, aye, until our limbs and heart have ached at the sight. But in every instance where it has been tried, the patients have invariably been beaten. Generally speaking, they attempt nothing.—Vernon hangs a chain upon the arm of a stout girl for half, or at most a minute: we have seen him do it several times, and in our presence, it never exceeded a minute. Well, any body can do that.

At Hammersmith, a surgeon there, challenged the patient and beat him. Standing with his arms out and steady, long after the patient's had fallen to the body, accompanied by the derisive laughter of the audience.

Mr. Johnson, a surgeon, at Derby, sat upon the platform half an hour and five minutes, with a heavy stool upon his legs, part of the time, and this also, was more than the patient could do. At Northampton, a lad came from the gallery, and beat the patient both in duration and the steadiness with which he held his legs up, the one sinking more than a foot, the other scarcely an inch.

The inference from all is inevitable: the arm is held up by mere volition, and that only. In every public case the patient is aware of this, and the operator knows it as well as the patient. They are all dishonest to a man; they practice and contrive, and fail, but they go on, simply because the public loves darkness better than light, falsehood better than truth.

How far the effects of imagination on private patients may soften down these terms, will be better understood when we come to treat of that most interesting subject.

*Report of a Series of Experiments, conducted by M. Marcelllet on the youth Alexis, in presence of Dr. Sutro, Messrs. Day, Pearson, Prater and Giesler, at No. 5, Maddox Street, Regent Street, July 5th, 1844.*

About thirty persons were present, and the room being but small and the evening sultry, some inconvenience was felt by several of the party present. Dr. Sutro, for instance, having been obliged to leave the room twice.

At half-past seven Alexis was placed in an arm-chair facing the windows, with his back close to the wall. He immediately assumed

a reclining posture; and M. Marcelllet standing obliquely before the patient, at a distance of about three feet, and so much to his right as not to intercept the light from the windows, fixed an unremitting gaze upon him, but during the first five minutes made no passes.

The patient did not appear to make any endeavour to fix his attention on his magnetiser, his eyes wandering as if he were in a state of unconsciousness almost immediately after the respective positions above described had been taken up; and very shortly afterwards a series of apparently spasmodic contractions occurred in the features, and gradually extended to the limbs; the patient, as if uneasy, frequently changing his posture, and two or three times crossing and re-crossing his legs. In about three minutes his eyes closed, and his head fell back over his left shoulder, as if he had suddenly fallen asleep; but the twitchings in the face continued at short intervals. M. Marcelllet then seated himself at the right hand of Alexis, and made a few passes with contact downward over his arms and chest, which seemed to allay the spasmodic symptoms. As soon as the patient appeared composed, M. Marcelllet addressed a few words to him in an undertone, and on his reply, which was equally unheard, declared him to be in the condition of lucid somnambulism. M. M. then produced two roundish pieces of chamois leather, which had been prepared some time before by saturating them with gum water, and placed them over the closed eyes of the patient who assisted in adjusting them. Alexis called for two more, which were immediately damped with gum water and placed on the others, but rather higher, leaving the lower edge of the former in the same state as at first. A quantity of raw cotton was then laid upon the eyes, and a silk handkerchief bound tightly over the whole, so as to cover the nose. Alexis immediately pushed the handkerchief up a considerable distance, so as to leave about half the nose exposed: he then, at M. M.'s desire, sat down to play écarté.

The first hand was played by Mr. Giesler, and Alexis played his cards without the slightest hesitation, and exactly as one would do whose sight was not intercepted at all, holding his cards very low before him, and playing as if he were looking at them. After playing with several others, altogether eight or ten hands, in most of which Alexis had the advantage, Mr. Giesler again sat down with him, the patient now varying the experiment by sitting with his back to the table, and professing to play to Mr. Giesler's cards without requiring them to be named to him, which he performed by handing over (to a friend of the parties who dealt for him) the cards in answer to Mr. Giesler's play.

The nature of the hands dealt to the parties in this case is so remarkable as to merit detail. Mr. Giesler had three trumps (diamonds) a strong heart and a strong club. Alexis had no trump, and no card in his hand that could by possibility win a trick, consequently there was only one chance, and that but a remote one, of his making any mistake in his play, namely, that he should have retained, as his last two cards, a heart and a club, and that on Mr. Giesler's fourth card being played, Alexis should have drawn the wrong one to answer it, instead of following suit. In fact, all he had to do was to throw down one card after another and it mattered not in what order, as he had not a card in his hand which could take one of Mr. Giesler's.

The experiments in card playing were not continued further, and Alexis complaining of the heat, took off the bandage from his eyes. It will be perhaps proper here to remark, that the plasters first applied appeared to be perfectly dry, the second still quite damp, the former having been prepared some time prior to their application, the latter only when required by Alexis.

Alexis then sat down upon a sofa, and M. Marcelllet invited the company to witness another set of experiments. Mr. Giesler was requested to select a card, and to take Alexis' hand in his with the card between the two, and the face downwards resting upon the palm of the patient. Alexis grasped first the hand containing the card, then the other, then both together, shifting his hands from time to time, but without crossing them, and after some time said, "It is a red card." Mr. G. said, "No." He then said "No, it is a figure card: there is some red in it, it is a spade." He then repeated several numbers, as if he were counting or communing with himself, and after in this way naming several without obtaining any reply, he declared it to be the king of spades. This was correct.

Mr. Day then took a card from a pack which he had himself

provided, and kept in his pocket till required. Having placed it on the patient's hand, in the manner before described, Alexis immediately declared it to be "a red card," then "a spade"—"the ten," then "a club"—"the five, the king or knave;" all which declarations being negatived, he exclaimed, "Ah, then it is some other card. Mr. Day then exhibited the card, which was a plain card with the printed letters B A L in a large bold type pasted thereon.

Mr. Prater also held a card which Alexis declared to be "red," and after some time named the ace of hearts, the card was then shown to be the nine of diamonds.

On the conclusion of these experiments, a gentleman placed an ordinary letter envelope in the hands of Alexis. He examined it attentively for some minutes, turning it and looking at it in every possible way, and at length said there was an A and B, and calling for a pencil and paper wrote A B, stating further that there were two words. He then asked for a pin, saying he would pass it through the letter A; the paper was opened, and the word Dingwall was found written on a piece of paper, and doubled up so that the fold passed through the word; the paper was perforated in four places, neither of the perforations passing through the *a*, the nearest being close to the downstroke of the *l*, where it joined the *a* thus, *al*. Alexis then declaring himself tired, and that he would go on no longer, was withdrawn from the room.

Alexis appears to be about twenty-one or twenty-two years of age; his general health he says is good. He was Mesmerized for the first time about three years ago, and was previously a natural somnamulist.

The above report, one would think, amply sufficient to settle Alexis. The whole of his pretended clairvoyance is evidently a combination of guess and question. The following extracts, from a report made by one of the scrutineers, are ample evidence of this.

"Mr. Day presented an envelope containing two cards, on one of which was pasted the word CONCERT in clear printed letters. Alexis declared that there were several words. Mr. Day told him that there was but one. He said it ended in "ion," but was told that it did not. He then named "cre" as its termination. Mr. Day told him that these letters were in the word, but did not conclude it. [Here it is evident that he had got hold of three letters, and we shall see how cunningly he went to work to find out the remainder.—ED.] He now declared that it ended in *r*, this being equally wrong he guessed *e*, then *d*, but was of course still incorrect. Alexis being evidently foiled, tried another tack. "It is a word of six letters?" he asked. "More," replied Mr. Day. He then declared the initial letter to be *b*. "No," said Mr. D. "*e*," said Alexis, then *d*—then wrote down "*on*," and asked if the letters were rightly placed. Being told that they were not, he declared the word to be composed of seven letters, and wrote the figure 7, then made several attempts to name the word, and wrote down *honestu* and *conarto*. This experiment lasted about twenty minutes, when it was concluded by Alexis declining any further attempt."

Now this boy has the faculty of clairvoyance or he has not; or it comes and goes: but if either, were he honest, he would say "Now I can read," "Now I cannot." The making the attempt and failing convicts him of imposition, and the mode at once confirms it. In the above instance, by mere guessing, he came to the knowledge of three words out of six; but although he almost named the alphabet, he failed altogether in declaring the word.

An experiment made by Mr. Gaye, surgeon, was equally demonstrative that he is not made rigid, or, indeed, Mesmerized at all.

Present—Dr. Sutro, Messrs. Prater, Pearson, Day, and Giesler, Dr. Storer, and Mr. Gaye.

The latter gentleman came in late; Alexis was sitting with his arm extended, and it was declared by Mr. Marcellet to be rigid.

Mr. Gaye asked to be allowed to test it, but Mr. Marcellet did not like his customer, and hesitated, but when he stated that he merely wished to rotate the arm, Marcellet consented: "He immediately bent the arm at the elbow by a sudden though gentle blow from his right hand, at the same time assisting the flexion by raising the arm by the sudden application of his hand to the wrist."

The arm was bent: Marcellet and Alexis both declared it rigid; Marcellet and Alexis must have known whether it were so or not; therefore Marcellet and Alexis are impostors.—Q. E. D.

### CHALLENGE TO DAVID WALKER.

In Lloyd's weekly newspaper is an account of some clairvoyant experiments made by a boy of the name of David Walker. Our readers will know what value to put upon them, when we state that this boy has been exhibited again and again at the Adelaide Gallery, and when properly tested has been proved to be totally destitute of any such power. We have given him the following challenge:—

If David Walker will come to my house this evening, and shew me a TRUE instance of clairvoyance, I will give him £5, own Mesmerism to be true, and exhibit him as a proof; but if he fail, I shall publish the failure as evidence of the correctness of my views upon the subject.—J. Q. RUMBALL.

### "THE ZOIST."

It may be expected that we should review this publication at some length. We were prepared to do this, but on a careful perusal of No. VI., vol. 2, we find that a much shorter paragraph than we had anticipated will serve to expose its fallacies and its grossly evil tendencies.

Dr. Elliotson, if not editor, is at all events the ostensible support of the work, and its chief contributor; great portions of his contributions consist in reports of his own doings; and in order that we may know what credence we can give to his assertions, what value to his judgment, we turn to page 4, No. 1, of "The Anti-Mesmerist," and we there re-read the tests employed by Mr. Wakley in detecting the impositions practised by the O'Keys. We find him so successful, that they are proved to fail in every single instance; we find Dr. Elliotson confounded, beaten from the field; his patients detected and declared impostors; himself a credulous enthusiast.

"A report of these results," (those with the nickel) "was conveyed to Dr. Elliotson and the gentleman who remained with him; when Dr. Elliotson said that "*the occurrence was most extraordinary; that he could not at that moment account for it; but he should, he dare say, be able to account for it,*" &c. And so he has, by denying now what he admitted then; by declaring false what was then proved to be true, even in Dr. Elliotson's own presence, and admitted so by his more than silence. These things were not done in a corner: he himself was present at most of the experiments, and some of his friends at all of them. The report was drawn up by two medical men, against whose impartiality not a whisper was breathed; and Mr. Wakley, who has been abused by the Doctor and his clique, as having been the author of a tissue of falsehood from beginning to end, *had no more to do with that report than we had; he did not write a line of it; he suggested and performed the tests, and Mr. George Mills, Dr. Green, and Mr. Farr, took notes of them at the time of their performance, and from whose notes the report was prepared by two of them.*

If ever there was a report above suspicion it was this. There is no vagueness about it; no mere assertion, or unauthenticated evidence. The accuracy of the experi-

ments therein recorded were "*affirmed by all the gentlemen present*;" so that the report is not that of two merely, but of the whole body of respectable men who witnessed the proceedings; and yet Dr. Elliotson has now, in the face of this, the audacity to parade the O'Keys before the world as true instances of Mesmeric influence, Mr. Wakley as an utterer of falsehood, and himself as an injured man: trusting to time and ignorance, he denies the truth, and still the *respectable* character of Dr. Elliotson is to outweigh evidence, falsify fact, and be a sufficient voucher for all the succeeding absurdities which he may choose to utter or perform. Had he left the O'Keys alone, or declared that they had deceived him, we must have taken his new experiments as he gives them: however we might have doubted his judgment, we must have believed his word; but he has chosen his path, and must abide by it: either he is a man perfectly incapable of drawing a necessary inference from a proved fact, or his word is utterly valueless.

He now holds the O'Keys up as evidences of Mesmeric truth: he compares their manifestations with those of his present patients: he desires that the truth of one should be a guarantee for the truth of the other. He is willing that they should all stand or fall together, and we take him at his word. *The O'Keys were detected impostors!* His present patients are classed by himself with the O'Keys. Dr. Elliotson may not deduce the consequence, but the world will for him; and they have only himself to thank for it. Turn we now to the passages on which we found so grave a charge: page 214, speaking of a case of epilepsy, which he takes credit to himself for curing, and noticing the effect of traction, he writes, "It was just the same with the O'Keys." Page 210—"Elizabeth O'Key, when insensible to cutting or burning, could *walk and hold things*." And after this, men call Dr. Elliotson a physiologist! Page 221, he again cites the O'Keys, and declares that "no man of any intellect and feeling, who saw such experiments with the O'Keys, and recollects their dying notes as the sleep increased, will ever forget them, or can ever doubt the reality of what he saw."

Again and again he refers to the O'Keys as testimony on which he fully relies; and again and again, we tell him that this fully proves him to be entirely devoid of the commonest judgment: again and again we tell him, that whatever he may say in future with respect to Mesmerism will be held by all just-minded men to be entirely unworthy of credit!

And what is the case of "epilepsy cured by Mesmerism," upon which he so prides himself, and which it is to be presumed he fondly dreams will restore to him his reputation and his practice? Why, a girl, aged sixteen, had been subject to fits for nine long years; in their commencement they lasted for four months, "leeches, blisters, and medicines being employed," when she "expelled a long round worm, and in ten days absolutely a mass of worms, enough to fill a small basin, hundreds of them thread worms, the rest larger and of various sizes, as if round worms of different ages, looking altogether like a bunch of young onions, and all alive."

What followed? Why, of course, "she was better." The worms caused her fits: these worms being expelled, her fits ceased, and no fit took place "until two-and-twenty months had elapsed. A violent fit now seized her again, *from no evident cause*; she was again treated with oil of turpentine and expelled a tape worm three yards long." Her fits lasted this time for five months, when "*she remained perfectly well for five months*." Again, "she had two fits; and without medical advice, her mother applied leeches and gave calomel, and a tape-worm came away in many pieces: she had no other fit for six months." In 1839 they came on again, and in 1841, having continued with more or less violence, she was brought to Dr. Elliotson. It is evident that this is one of those very common cases, where a sluggishness of the bowels and accumulation of mucus affords a breeding place and a home to the different kinds of worms, which, in the water that we drink, or the food that we eat, find their way into the stomachs of us all. Her fits were the consequence of the irritation they produced, and instantly ceased upon their expulsion. We have every right to believe that after the last recorded tape-worm which "came away in many pieces," other worms were generated: the reappearance of the fits is conclusive evidence of this; and that they were still within her is evident, for the fits continued, and some had passed. Now, if in the course of whatever treatment adopted, the fits should again have disappeared, there is not a medical man in the kingdom who would not say that the fits were wholly and entirely dependent upon the presence of worms in the intestinal canal; and the subsequent history of the case proves most indisputably that the effect upon the brain was purely secondary; that no organic lesion had occurred, and that so often as the worms should be expelled, so often would the fits cease, until new accumulations should again disturb cerebral functions, and renew the fits; that the expected consequence would be a general improvement in health as the girl grew older, or was placed in new circumstances of diet or air, or hope, and that she would lose her enemies and her ailment together. This is the history of nine out of ten of all the worm cases upon record; and if *she is well*, (which remains to be proved, however,) this is the history of Dr. Elliotson's patient; but she is well, and no worms have passed, cries the Doctor, therefore Mesmerism has cured her. How do you know that none have passed? It is evident enough that she is playing with you. She need not tell you what happens if she do not choose. *How does she herself know that none have passed?* The subject is one on which we cannot dilate; but it must strike every one that if daily examination has not taken place, hundreds of worms may have been expelled, and the patient as ignorant as the Doctor of the fact. That it was not by Mesmerism that she has been even relieved is evident from this—that for very many days indeed, she was thrown *into fits* by the very means the Doctor employed to cure them. On Thursday, the 12th, she came to him, complaining of her usual pain at the heart, and headache: *there had been no fit*, but the Doctor took good care that she should have one. "After a time she trembled, and at the end of five-and-twenty minutes was insen-



sible; her eyes turned deeply down, the right towards the nose, the left outwards; her legs grew stiff, her hands became clenched, and her body was bent firmly back; and I could not control the fit by making passes, indeed they seemed to excite the tremor, and after continuing it for half an hour, she was perfectly herself again." On the next day, Friday, he again produced another epileptic fit of half an hour's duration; Saturday, Sunday, Monday, he, or Mr. Symes for him, again threw her into a fit, and yet her parents had still the infatuation to bring her to him, and he demands that we concede to Mesmerism the power of curing epilepsy—a disease known to be easily reproduced by any thing which shall excite the nervous system, and which this (what shall we call him?) this Prince of Mesmerists did produce, at the same time that he was deluding the parents by expectations of a cure. He says he has cured her: he says that the O'Keys were true cases. Who can believe what he says? "*Credat Judæus Apelles non ego.*"—Tell it to the marines, the sailors won't believe him. But if he did not cure her of one disease, he seems to have inoculated her with another. At first she regarded the affair "*as a piece of folly, not believing that he ever sent her to sleep;*" but he contrived to overcome her scepticism, and put her in a condition at all events to exhibit feelings as in a dream, which she would have scarcely dared to express if believed awake: just as the Roman wit was pungent as harlequin, but dumb when his mask was off. Men don't pass their hands about the heads and limbs of \* "sweet-looking" girls of sixteen, "with blooming faces and dark blue eyes," for nothing; and so, in process of time, she yields herself up to the growing influence, and this President of the London Phrenological Society, which, during the twenty years that it has dragged its slow length along, has become the laughing stock of every practical phrenologist, simply because he is its president.—This innocent and unsophisticated Mesmerizer tries her phrenological organs by accident—quite by accident, and finds that he can excite four, only four; Benevolence and Violence, Pride and Attachment; and right well does he direct their manifestations—Pride and Violence for others, and Attachment for himself.\* But before he does this, unmistakable evidence appears of the mischief he is working, as the following extracts from his own writings prove:—She begins singing "the Rover" to me, and then she becomes "attracted to me," fancies "herself at home with her sister, and taking tea and reading, whilst squeezing one of my hands in hers,"—"when she was again squeezing my hands with the same fancy,"—"while she fancied me her sister, and squeezed my hand affectionately,"—"squeezing my hands tightly." All this occurs before the 10th of July, 1841,† eleven months after he had been pawing her about four times a-week, and before the first time he Mesmerized her phrenological organs, and which was the first organ of the four that he attempted?—why, of course, "attachment." And then we have repetitions of the same scenes, till it produces what we suppose will not be thought an improbable result,‡—"causing a high degree of affection to myself, and indifference and intense dislike to others; until at last her hand not only squeezes mine, but presses it against her bosom."§

(To be continued.)

\* His own words. † Quere 42.—Ed. ‡ 223. § Page 225.

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