

THE ANTI-MESMERIST.

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

SHAKSPEARE.

No. IX.]

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ALEXIS.

We have delayed the publication of the concluding number of the *Anti-Mesmerist*, in order to lay before our non-medical readers satisfactory evidence, from other sources than our own, that this renowned Mesmerist is just as great an impostor as all, without a single exception, have been proved to be, whose exhibitions have been properly tested.

It seems that Dr. Forbes, (Editor of *The British and Foreign Quarterly*), "hearing from all quarters of the wonderful feats of the young Alexis in Mesmeric divination, and especially of his facile and unlimited power of clairvoyance," and "regarding clairvoyance as the major marvel including all the minor marvels," determined to judge for himself, and if he found this to be true, he could have no difficulty in admitting any other supposed evidence almost unexamined. If Mesmerism does really enable a man to read without eyes, there remains nothing that he may not do, and the more impossible the more credible must henceforth be the philosopher's creed.

The Doctor accordingly attended an exhibition "on Thursday, July 11, 1844, from half-past twelve to two, P. M. There were thirty or forty persons present, and the performer (Alexis) was thrown into a state of so-called somnambulism, by his friend M. Marcelet merely looking stedfastly at him whilst sitting in a chair. With the exception of the first experiment, during which Alexis appeared to be asleep, all the others were performed while he seemed to a common observer to be awake, with his eyes (when not bandaged) partially open. He appeared to hear, and see, and know what was going on just as well as any of the spectators;"—tolerably good evidence, one would think, of the nature of the whole proceedings.

However, after a weak attempt at rigidity, in which less strength was exhibited than is usual with trained patients, and on which the Doctor observes, "any one could do this," he proceeded to exhibit clairvoyance; and those who have read our remarks upon an assertion made by a

reporter in *The Times*, that the eyes of Alexis were "perfectly bandaged," will now acquit us of presumption in denying the fact. The mode in which the bandage was put on Alexis is thus described by the Doctor:—

"From carefully and most closely watching him, I am of opinion that he saw, or might see, under the bandage. I particularly remarked that while the bandages were being placed, he repeatedly touched and shifted them, and before they were removed, I observed most distinctly that he pressed a knuckle forcibly over the bandage into the hollow of each eye, *as if to close the leather that might have been removed*. I also observed that when examining some body presented to him, before the bandages were removed, he placed the body *to one side of him*, exactly as a person would do who was trying to see through a difficult passage." But even with all his cunning, although he "played readily and well, winning the game, and telling the cards in his partner's hand, still he also repeatedly failed and made glaring mistakes in his guesses." And the Doctor justly remarks, that "the evident possibility of sight being exercised in the ordinary way vitiates the card playing as an experiment."

In a succeeding exhibition at the Doctor's own house, the game of *écarté* was again played; and here ample evidence was afforded that when he *did* see the cards, it was by the eye in the ordinary way, and that when he *did not* see them, he guessed, and guessed badly.

In the first game, "Alexis took the pack, threw out the superfluous cards, and the game proceeded; *the cards being dealt in the usual manner* (sometimes by Alexis), *and played with their faces upwards*. Now here is about as impudent a performance as can well be recorded: a fellow pretends to a supernatural power, and in order to prove it, has the audacity to sit down at a table with his eyes open, and names some cards that lie on that table with their faces upwards! But we shall be told that he names them when not exposed, and with his eyes bandaged! But how does he name them?—Why he first of all selects his *own partner*, "a gentleman of the company who is known to him, and considered by him and M. Marcelet as favourable at least to Mesmerism, if not a full believer in it." Surrounded as he and all of them are by confederates, how easy it is to concoct signs which shall inform Alexis and deceive the company. Let it never be forgotten, that the question is one *between collusion and a miracle*; and that the miracle would not be proved, even if collusion were merely possible; how much credit does it deserve then, when we detect fraud and failure at every step. "After a hand or two thus played, Alexis proposed to continue

the game with a partition or screen placed between him and his partner. The screen used was a music-book (eleven inches high by fourteen wide), supported at the back by a small round sofa-cushion. Several hands were thus played, Alexis playing his cards down on his own side of the partition, or handing them over it, or round the end of it, and his partner laying his cards down on his side of the partition."—And how did he succeed with his eyes open—a *friend* for a partner, and a music-book *eleven* inches high between them?—Why, in the first game he desired his opponent to play a *spade*, and stated that his opponent had *four trumps* in his hand, when he had neither *spade* nor *trump*: in the second, he stated that his opponent had the ten, which he had not; in the third, he said the trump card was a *diamond*, but it was a *spade*: in the fourth he said it was a *heart*, when it was a *spade*. "He asked for five cards, when he only required three." And although he sometimes played tolerably well, sometimes named the number of card he wanted accurately, and was sometimes right as to the trumps," yet when the cards were played with their faces downwards, "in all these respects he was much oftener wrong than right. In giving the names of the cards behind the screen, he over and over again not only mistook clubs for spades and hearts for diamonds, but he mistook the cards of different colours, and even the court and plain cards of different colours for one another. He sometimes fancied his opponent had a very good hand when he had a bad one, and *vice versa*. He sometimes followed suit, and sometimes he did not."

In a word, his performance seemed decidedly better than might have been expected of a blindman,* yet far short of what we had a right to expect from one who professes to see through opaque bodies." Indeed, his guesses as to the cards turned up behind the screen were mere random guesses, and his failures (as we have elsewhere shewn) completely prove them to be nothing but guesses.

If he failed in card-playing, no less evident was his incapability of seeing words in books or boxes. Three sheets of white paper being placed upon a book, Alexis professed to read through them the words "*de France*." He indicated the exact spot, and declared them to be on the page immediately under the paper. Upon examination, no such words were to be found; nay, the page itself "was two-thirds blank, there being only seven lines of print upon the top of it." In another experiment, he said he could not read the word, "because it was folded upon itself." "When opened, it was not in the least folded." Again, he pricked through one envelope with a pin, saying that he "*pricked the dot of the i*," and then "*the i itself*;" when opened, the word did not contain an *i*!

A lady, a friend of Alexis, gave him a large paper card-case, with a watch inside of it. Alexis pressed it so hard as to break the glass, and listened quite attentively enough to hear it tick, and then said it "was a watch, and that the glass was broken." The lady said it was not broken when she gave it to him!! But

* And yet Sanderson, the blind mathematician, played whist beautifully.

throughout there was no attempt made to exhibit clairvoyance other than with the eyes. If a gentleman asked what he had in his hand, Alexis tried to "separate" his hand that he might see it. If a word was to be read, he and his friends made unconcealed attempts to wheedle the party who gave the word into conceding something, so as to help him in solving the problem. "It is a word of five letters—*ch*?" "It is a word of six, seven, eight, five," and so on. Frequently, too, he said the word ended in "*ion*." So many English words do end in *ion*, that he would often be right, and thus get a clue which he might dexterously unravel; and the conclusions to which Dr. Forbes arrives are evidently the true ones.

"1. The whole affair bore the complexion of trickery, or at all events it wanted entirely the precision necessary in scientific inquiries.

"2. The total amount of positive failures and positive blunders, greatly exceeded that of performances having even a colour or slight degree of success.

"3. The failures occurred in cases where the circumstances were such as to exclude collusion and the exercise of ordinary vision.

"4. All the instances of success occurred when circumstances allowed of collusion or ordinary vision.

"5. In all the cases of success, such collusion or vision was either proved or rendered extremely probable.

"6. There was not one single unequivocal example of what is called clairvoyance; and consequently

"7. This exhibition is not only destitute of one tittle of evidence in favour of the existence of this faculty in the man Alexis, but presents extremely strong grounds for believing that the pretended power in him is feigned, and that he is consequently an impostor."

Let our readers now refer to our own account of the doings of Alexis, and they will have correct data whereon to form their opinions of this charlatan. Nor will they fail to perceive that whilst roguery and impudence form the stock in trade of *all Mesmeric professors*—whilst delusion and imbecility characterize all private exhibitions—the public at large is guilty of a fatuity that almost exceeds belief. In place of that stern sifting of evidence, that exclusion of hearsay and demand for truth which can alone be admitted in all scientific inquiries, there seems a determination to believe whether or not—to convert failures into proofs—take for granted all that patients say, and their masters profess—and, upon the testimony of the vile and the worthless, to admit as science what is clearly fraud. Never was the "*omne ignotum pro magnifico*" more thoroughly exemplified.

"THE ZOIST."

(Continued from page 64.)

Oh jam satis!—Thine is a pleasant mode of cure, truly, and a safe one: we shall not be surprised to find arise a new school of doctors, who will not have passed their meridian, who will not be so honourable as Dr. Elliotson, nor so candid, nor so public; but

who, having learned from him how to excite female passions, will turn to Deslou for the means of profiting by the knowledge. "Would it not be very easy to seduce young women in this condition?" was a question put to him by the Committee of the French Institute, and "most easy" was the reply. We do not accuse Dr. Elliotson of any evil meaning or intention: we do not say that he has any thought of the kind: we do not even suspect him;|| but we know that there are hundreds ready to avail themselves of this ready means of blinding the eyes of the young and the thoughtless to their own shame: and again we declare that it is a question for the civil magistrate rather than the philosopher. That after this young girls will go in safety to the Doctor to be Mesmerized may be true, but that open and undisguised infamy belongs to the system is also a sad but a striking truth.

We pass from him to Dr. Engledue; and here we find a strong mind equally infatuated. He who denies a soul to man—who calls mind "cerebration"—who materializes our consciousness, and would fain measure out our feelings by inches, relates as follows:¶—"This patient had been confined to bed for eighteen months, when the following experiment was performed. The house of a relation who lived fourteen miles off was broken into and several articles stolen. This was not communicated to her, but I received a note mentioning the circumstance, not however detailing any particulars. When I entranced her, I directed her to go to the house and to ascertain what the family were about; after a few minutes her countenance changed its colour, and she exclaimed, 'Why——has been robbed. The door of the house has been cut; the desk has been moved and all the papers thrown about (they were carried into the meadow); he has lost six pounds (this was quite true; at first it was supposed that only four or five pounds had been taken, but a subsequent investigation proved that there must have been six pounds in the desk.) I know who did it: it was——and——; they used a carpenter's tool. It was done on Monday night, when the wind was so high that they could not be heard. (The robbers broke into an outhouse, and obtained a centre-bit, and cut through the panel door with it.) Why they gave old Peter something in some food that he should not bark. P--- gave it to him,' (the terrier dog Peter was dull and stupid for two or three days from the effects of the drug which had been given him), &c. &c. On another occasion he was told that something important had occurred at the same house; and he entranced her, and sent her to look; and she said, 'Why one of ----- sheep has been killed. It was killed in the front of the house by two men; there were four, only two went into the house, and two stood by the lawn-gate. They would have killed some pigs, but they heard the great gates. ----- is so distressed because he has lost his best sheep.' After a considerable interval, she goes on thus, 'Well, I declare, if he has not sent down for me to find out if I can; I hope I shall; and they have sent for you and -----' And! why the

heart sickens with disgust, to find such folly as would shame an old wife on hallo'een, twaddled forth by a physician and a philosopher, and a deep thinker, and a bold speaker. Dr. Engledue, Dr. Engledue! however wise, and haply grey before your time, yet thou art, like Solomon, but little skilled in maidencraft. Look behind their pillows, or in their writing desks, the next time they come over you with their flummery, and you will find just enough information for them to hang all the marvels upon, which have muddled thy brain, and made thee an immaterialist in practice, whatever may be the nature of their avowals. Wilt thou tell us the form, size, and colour of that portion of her---wilt thou name it?---which quits her mortal, her corporeal frame, and at many leagues away holds silent discourse with her cerebral atoms, whilst she, as she lies there senseless and deaf, sees sights which never existed, hears words which were never spoken, tells men's thoughts which were never uttered, and knows the best sheep in the flock, though it lies mangled at the time and gory, or rather, although it is probably dismembered and in the pot or on the spit,---she only uttered one word of truth during the whole discourse which was that they "had sent down for her to find it out."

So, so! *you* could have letters, but of course *she* had none, although it was *her* relation, and not *yours*, who was concerned: she not only knew what was doing and had been done, but carried herself back many days, and saw those who were no longer to be seen, entered into their souls, and not only told what they did, but *what they wished to do*. Shame, shame, Dr. Engledue, why even Dr. Elliotson will blush for you.

And this is the Zoist, the oracle of Delphos,* which speaks no riddles, but boldly vows as true what even the writers know to be impossible. Alas, poor Zoist.

More there is of teeth being drawn without the knowledge of the patient, and leaving *no soreness afterwards*; of the dumb being given their speech: not a word of the blind being made to see; this is, at all events, a cut above these conjurors. But we have no more space for a notice of the pigmy trash; we have grappled with the giants of the work, and can waste no time on dwarfs.

COMMUNITY OF TASTE.

By this is meant a singular condition of the body, from which sensibility has been generally removed, but which can be partially restored by contact with the operator; and then, whatever the operator is eating and drinking is tasted by the patient, and he can and does name what it is. *Are these men willing to be judged by their own assertions?* If so, turn to the Phreno-Magnet—listen to any of their lectures---and you will find that when any mental faculty is to be excited they touch it, or direct their influence to it, and that, unless they do this, it never is excited. In our article on Phreno-Mesmerism we have given abundant evidence of this. Well, then, what do they do to excite taste? It is a mental element, this same appreciation of flavour; it is separate from hunger, as we have proved for years; and, in contradistinction to alimentativeness or the desire for food, we name it gustativeness—a term originally given

|| Although we must, in all fairness, ask what business the O'Keys had with their hands "upon his shoulder," or "sitting on the ground with their heads against his leg whilst he was writing," p. 236.

¶ Ut passim 272.

by Dr. Crook to the double organ. To taste, implies consciousness, sensibility; as to speak, implies the excitement of that portion of the brain capable of manifesting the power, so to taste, implies the excitement of that portion of the brain manifesting gustativeness; and how is it excited? Why, the operator takes hold of the patient's hand, puts something into his mouth, asks her what he is eating, and she guesses; and, with all the subjoined trick and collusion, she guesses more often wrong than right. *They never attempt to excite either Language or Taste.* ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN SHEWING, THEN, PHRENO-MESMERISM IS FALSE; and it is now for us to prove that this is equally so. We have already suggested, at page 14, a code of signals which might be agreed on between the operator and his patient. By means of it we were enabled to describe all the colours on the dresses of various parties in a room; and by means of it Mr. Blackwell's boy told with ease whatever the audience thought fit to hand to Mr. Blackwell, to test him. By means of these signals clairvoyance is produced when patients are *really* blinded. We were in company with a gentleman yesterday here, at Wolverhampton, who played at All-fours *without even knowing the game*; and he beat his antagonist, although his eyes were completely bandaged. Those who have witnessed Lundie's experiments, will have noticed that when cards are to be placed, he places his finger on the "*organ of card-playing*." Others do the same. We have heard that Mr. Spencer Hall does it, we hope he does; we would not hurt an honest man's feelings, if we could help it, and it would relieve us much to find such striking evidence that he was as dishonest as all are with whom we have come in contact.

When the boy begins to play, the operator, standing behind him with his finger on his head, indicates by one, two, three, or four gentle pressures, which card he is to play; but this system is complex, it requires that the boy should see his own cards at least, so as to play as directed. A better plan is to let the boy be completely blinded, and when it is his turn to play, let him run over his cards, passing them singly from one hand to the other, as people usually do when examining them; and if he do this slowly, the moment he is passing the card that is to be played, a gentle pressure on the head informs him of the fact—the game is won, and clairvoyance established. To distinguish colours, we have already stated that it is only necessary to connect some unimportant word with any particular colour, and then the question indicates the colour.

Community of taste may be juggled in a variety of ways; and the usual method is to take hold of the patient's hand, and with your finger in his palm, hidden by his hand from the audience, you can write the *name* of the thing you are tasting, and if you do it well the effect is magical. A simple mode, but more limited in its application, is to attach a meaning to each of the patient's fingers, but then you must have the things to be tasted known beforehand: this you can do by introducing them yourself, or having confederates in the audience. By means of one or other of these, or similar plans, the results already described as having been produced in Mr. Blackwell's lectures may be brought about; but, we repeat, that he accomplished what we have never

seen a Mesmerizer attempt even. It mattered not what was handed to him, the boy named it at once, and so completely were some of the Mesmerizers taken aback, that they declared that he was mesmerized, and nothing that he could or can say to the contrary will un deceive them.

But the Mesmerizers bungle this as they do everything else; we have never seen a single trick even cleverly performed. At the Western Institution, Leicester Square, May 25, 1843, a Mr. Hart pretended to exhibit community of taste. He held the boy's hand in his (as described,) and asked him questions. Not content with this, when somebody handed him some snuff, he drew it up with as much noise as he could make close to the boy's face, and then said "What am I tasting, Charles?" and the boy actually replied "Snuff;" and the audience believed him! Such *wonders* as these will never cease.

One gentleman, however, not so easily gulled, twisted a bit of paper, and then handed it to Mr. Hart, telling him that its flavour was pungent, and well-known. It is clear that if Mr. Hart had learnt his trade, he could easily have surmounted this difficulty; but he took a shorter course, he put his head down to the boy, and whispered "Paper;" and when accused of this, he owned that he did it, but then "What right had you to deceive the boy?" was his excuse. Oh most immaculate professors! What right, indeed, have any of the uninitiated to take your trade out of your hands? You deserve a monopoly of infamy, and you shall have it. But we shall be told that Mr. Vernon and others make a chain of hands, and removing at a distance, communicate through half-a-dozen intermediate persons. This is exactly what we say: they DO COMMUNICATE, however impervious may seem the impediment; and when communication is impossible the patient fails. The very mode of asking the question communicates; the tone of voice; coming forwards or backwards; these and a hundred other means of communication, difficult of detection at the time, will readily suggest themselves to any one possessing the smallest pretensions to reason; but *Mesmerists cannot reason*. Some are honest: Mr. Spain, of Gravesend, was, when he took his sister to Sheerness, to exhibit her after our lecture, as a proof of mesmerism, at his own cost; simply as an enthusiast he took her there; and before he proceeded to his experiments, a gentleman present rose and testified to the moral probity of both brother and sister, who were both of them well-known to all then present; and the following extract from the Editor's note-book shows how honest people may be deceived.

After the preliminary passes, the usual nods, and dying looks, the sister was apparently asleep, when her brother declared her insensible to pain. He held out her hand; a Mr. Sparshott nipped it hard with his thumb-nail; she manifested no consciousness of pain, *but then I stood between them!* Another experiment was even more successful; Mr. Spain passed with a pin in his hand, I took the pin into mine, and asked him to place his in a hat. He replied, "I won't allow you to thrust the pin into my hand," and I whispered just loud enough for her to hear, but low enough to

deceive her into the belief that I did not wish it, "I will not hurt you much." I then held the pin near his hand in the hat, but touched it not; presently she jumped up as if suddenly pained. "Did I prick you, Sir?" I immediately asked. "No," he said, "I am bound to say that you did not;" and I replied "Then why did she jump?" Again, he said "Try the water," that is, either he or I might drink without her knowledge, but when we drank she would imitate the action. I wished him to go into another room, but he would not leave his patient. A glass was handed to me: I went behind the audience and drank it. She made no sign. A glass was then handed to him; I placed him behind the audience, and then requested him to put the glass to his lips, but not to take any—to this he consented: I stood beside him, and imitated with my throat the gurgle of swallowing: *she immediately did the same.* I again asked him "Had he drank?" and he replied "Certainly not," when I retorted, "Then why did she gurgle?" He acknowledged the failure, and asked me to point out the organs in his head which had laid him open to so much deception. The organ of secretiveness was certainly not amongst them, for he performed his experiments in all fairness.

ATTRACTION OF METALS.

We have already noticed this supposed evidence of Mesmeric influence in the O'Key cases, and their complete exposure by Mr. Wakley. The *Phreno-Magnet* contains some striking instances of the kind. Thus, in No. IV. page 121, we are gravely told that there lives at Chatham a Mrs. Holding, so sensitively to metallic attraction, that one day she bought a pair of pattens, and had no sooner put them on than "*back she ran to the wall, and could not stop herself,*" by which she was very much hurt. Reader, we are not joking, turn to the page, and you will find the very words, aye, and what's more, such as "swinging her arms like the swift of a mill," &c.; but this is nothing to what follows. Talk of astronomy! talk of the compass! why, you have only to "cause her to stand on a piece of iron with all her weight on one foot, the toes pointing southward, and, almost instantaneously, *round she goes to the North, and there remains!*" Confucius! thy votaries are fools; sailors! no longer shall your way over the deep be trackless or aimless. Loadstone, remain for ever buried! Woman, lovely woman, shall not only attract on land, but direct at sea: her heart, the loadstone here, shall be the compass there. No longer condemned to wash her "figure-head" in the briny wave, her "better-half" below; abaft the binnacle, at stem or stern, in Captain's cabin, or in seaman's berth, her soft power shall safely bring, and, true, as needle to the pole, her love shall know no change. Fit out at Chatham, sailors: there you may have magnets that know "no variation," needles that never dip, compasses that require no "boxing." And never fear supply: the breed will go on: once discover an available article like this, the Ladies will keep up the influence dependant: if not, boys will. Mrs. Holding's son has already caught the soft contagion; he too whirls to the North the instant you put him on *any metal*; it matters not whether brass or tin, 'tis all the same to him, round he goes!† Talk of teetotallers! why, we shall all be teetotums if this go on; and then we have but to convert Dr. Elliotson into a telegraph, for if he could mesmerise a young lady by bathing at Boulogne, when she was playing with water-nymphs at Dover, he or his admirers will find little difficulty in conveying intelligence as well as feeling, and time and space are henceforth bugbears for school boys. Then let the American discovery be fully practised; let it be thoroughly understood that Mesmerism not only produces community of taste but community of fat. So that if twenty-seven join hands, and only one eat, all the rest not only enjoy the meal, but thrive upon it also. And Paradise is come again; Love without contact; Travelling without trouble; Hunger satisfied without the nuisance of

† Phreno Mag. No. 3. p. 69.

chewing, or still greater nuisance of paying for food, and the most delicious wine enjoyed by the veriest beggar who shall only lean against the rich man's door post. Aerial machines!—Who talks of aerial machines?—pattens against the world!

Metal attraction only seems to act in close proximity to the patient; but the attraction of the human frame is illimitable. At York, we find Mr. Hall exhibiting its power to such an extent that when "the boy was placed a few yards from a large board, behind which Mr. Hall took his station, after making a few passes the boy was gradually drawn to the board, the magnetic influence appearing to have passed through it."

"On Friday, May 20, 1842, a party of gentlemen went from Sheffield to Brightside, as a place convenient for their purpose, to ascertain whether it was possible to magnetise an individual at the distance of several miles. Joseph Flower was selected as the most likely subject for the trial, and he was placed in a room near the Brightside Railway station; the operator going forward in the train to Rotherham, a distance of about three miles. It was agreed that at a given time the manipulations should commence. Flower knew that an attempt would be made to magnetise him, but he did not know when (*credit Judæus Apella! non ego,*) within a minute of the agreed time the subject was asleep, and was at once attracted by a tremendous force towards Rotherham. The gentlemen present (six or seven in number) were anxious to take him out into the open air, but for some minutes their united strength was unable to accomplish that object. They at length succeeded in carrying him out, and restoring him to partial consciousness. In the mean time, the train from Rotherham was bringing the operator back; as it neared, the subject became more calm, and on being touched by him was instantly restored.‡

So innocent is Mr. John Fowler (who describes this feat), that he expresses his firm conviction that there is great danger when the patient and the operator cannot be brought into immediate contact; "*and that the danger is increased by the distance they are from each other.*" And this rubbish is put forward in evidence that the laws which have regulated the universe for six thousand years are abrogated. This trick is so palpable, that there is not one of our readers, not even a Mesmerizer, who will not allow collusion, gross collusion, in both instances.

INSENSIBILITY TO PAIN.

The Leicester papers are teeming with wonder at a recent operation performed in that town upon a young girl of the name of Lakin, whose thigh was amputated during what was supposed to be Mesmeric sleep. It is reported, too, that she suffered nothing, but was both insensible and unconscious. No contortion of countenance, no screams, betrayed the slightest evidence of pain, and she herself declares that she felt none until she was demesmerized, when she found, to her astonishment, that her leg was off. The Mesmerizer was Mr. Hollings, second master at the grammar-school there; and three or four of the first medical men in the town assisted at the operation. She had been previously Mesmerized to the manifest improvement of her health, and her broken rest had become soothing sleep for many days. This we do not dispute; strong faith is a fine opiate, as morbid minds and wicked ones will surely find: but that she suffered pain, and evidenced that suffering, is manifest enough: for in the Leicester Chronicle it is stated that she moaned, took frequent and deep inspirations, and forcibly grasped Mr. Hollings by the hand during the whole operation. This is as much, aye and more, than many women do under operations of the most painful nature; it tells us that she *did* feel, though not so much as she expected, perhaps; and she declares that she was both sensible and conscious too, for "she felt as if a string was being tied tightly round the other leg." She herself then contradicts herself, and her assertions are not true.

The following correspondence has been mislaid, up to the very time almost of our going to press with the concluding number.

It is an important document, for it demonstrates our doctrine to be true, and is a complete answer to those who still think apparent indifference to pain an evidence of more than mortal endurance.

Bank Street, Maidstone; June 8th, 1843.

Sir,—Will you kindly reply to the following questions:—

Were not needles thrust through a man's cheek at Mr. Hall's

‡ Phreno Mag. p. 89.

lectures—pins driven into his legs, and a pewter quart pot flattened by striking on his head, without his evidencing the slightest symptom of pain?

Your obedient Servant, J. Q. RUMBALL.

London Mechanics' Institution; June 9th, 1843.

Sir,—In answer to your questions on the other side, I have to state that at Mr. C. Hall's lectures, given in the Theatre of this Institution in April last, I was present when needles were thrust into a man's cheek, and pins into his legs. I saw the man before and after the operation, and neither during it nor afterwards did he evince any symptom of suffering. I also saw him beat in, or flatten, a pewter quart by striking it against his forehead.

I am, Sir, yours obediently, A. M'FARLANE, Sec.
— Rumball, Esq.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—I have observed in the public prints several reports of operations, such as amputation of legs, fingers, drawing teeth, &c. said to be performed without pain, or rather, I should say, without the parties exhibiting external manifestations of pain, whilst under the hands of the operator. These cases are published by the advocates of Animal Magnetism, for the purpose of proving, that in the mesmeric state, man is insensible to pain; but do they prove it? I say, no; for I have seen numerous cases, in which patients have suffered the removal of important members, without the slightest expression of pain either during the operation or afterwards. The first case which occurs to my recollection, was that of a boy, who suffered amputation of the arm, for a scrophulous affection of the elbow joint; he whistled an air, popular at the time, from the commencement of the first incision, to the termination of the operation. Another case was that of an old soldier, who was wounded in the leg by a musket ball, more than fifty years before the limb was removed, and suffered much torture from disease of the bone, from the time he received the injury to the period of the operation, which he bore without a murmur; and upon my asking him, when it was over, how he felt, he replied, "I hope I have done my duty, Sir, I have not been so comfortable these forty years." One more out of many, and I have done: A man came to the surgeon with his hand much injured by a chaff cutting machine, and I found it requisite to remove one finger, and as he made no complaint, I enquired whether I hurt him, when he replied, little or none, Sir! I think the disciples of Mesmer had better look out for some better prop to their failing credit, than a few isolated cases of absence of sensibility to pain, feeling aware that any surgeon having much experience in operating, can adduce instances as remarkable *without*, as they can with, all their pawing and poking.

Why should they take so much pains, to find out an unusual and unnatural cause, for an effect, when we see the same effect produced by natural causes continually? I give you my name and address, in order that any one really seeking after truth, may have an opportunity of satisfying himself the cases are not fictitious; and I sign as under, in order to escape the impertinences of those who for interested purposes, persist in maintaining error.

I am, your obedient Servant, AN IMPARTIAL OBSERVER.

CONCLUSION.

From all that we have said, it may possibly be inferred that because we deny any such thing as Mesmeric influence of any kind, we attribute *all* its asserted effects to falsehood. If our readers will accept our definition already given, we do fearlessly assert this to the fullest extent, and think that a candid perusal of the preceding pages amply bear out the assertion that *no public exhibition has ever yet been tested by a competent person, without being proved a fraud*. From the O'Keys to the Alexia, this is a universal, an admitted fact. How long did not Vernon's hirelings deceive the public? How completely they were exposed at last! Lundie, who was voted a philosopher at Bridgewater, was hooted out of the towns of Wolverhampton and Walsal. Lafontaine was followed by crowds, and then fled from Scotland, a detected impostor. Ask Mr. Brookes what they think of him and Sarah at Exeter? Where is Dan's boy at Maldstone? Hughes, Hicks, Brown? They have all been detected again and again; and as it is upon their exhibitions that much of the public belief reposes, we have a right to

expect that reaction of mind which has already begun and almost concluded in London, and is spreading far and wide throughout England. Mr. Spencer Hall most cunningly contrives as yet to keep his bark afloat, but we shall meet with him some day. As for Dr. Elliotson, he is a lost man, and the less we say of him the better. Is all fraud then? Do our sisters, brothers, parents, all deceive us?—Those whom we have ever found honest, does this accursed science convert them into liars, for the mere sake of lying?—God forbid. Most of the private manifestations are honest ones, but not a bit the more Mesmeric than if they were false. A few, a very few fall into a state of unconsciousness—some into mere sleep—out of which any one can awaken them as well as the operator. Others become insensible, and for a time comatose, and then neither the operator nor any one else can awaken them until the violence of the fit be passed. Others become epileptic, and the very passes made to relieve it do but increase the fit. Some again become hysterical and convulsed, and apoplexy is hard upon others. All the above may be produced by what Mr. Braid calls neuro hypnotism. His experiments completely shew simple derangement of the nervous system, and entirely disprove personal or Mesmeric influence. He finds a cork placed on the forehead, a nail on the wall, or any object so situate as to make long continued vision painful, sufficient to produce some, if not most of the above results; but he does not hesitate to declare that the phenomena which he produces * "Do not depend upon any peculiar influence of the operator upon the patient, in the way the animal magnetisers presume that their patients are affected. His phenomena, he considers, arise entirely from the patient keeping the eyes fixed in one position (and the greater the strain on them the better) and the mind rivetted on one idea." The fact is they turn giddy, sick, faint, hysterical, and perhaps insensible; but many of them deceive even Mr. Braid, for he admits phrenological manifestations during insensibility, and we have already proved, we think, that these do not nor cannot exist.

That some effect is produced upon the nervous system by any thing that disturbs it, most of us painfully know. And as ninety-nine out of every hundred who submit to be experimented on have no definite notion of what Mesmerism is or is not: the moment they feel queer, they fancy themselves Mesmerized. They shut their eyes, or their Mesmerizer shuts them for them; a certain amount of confusion comes on, and then they believe that they are to do whatever may be wished, and so, when passes are made along the arm, they lift it up—when a finger is put upon the head, if they know any thing of phrenology, they say or do something which they think is a proper manifestation; and if made to walk, why they walk; and as their feelings, whilst being operated on, are different from their normal or healthy condition, they assert ever after that they were unconscious, and deceive themselves as well as others into a belief that they were Mesmerized.

We may be asked how is this possible? A person must surely know whether he lifts his arm up of his own volition, or whether another lifts it up for him! Certainly not, if he has been brought to believe that he is the subject of that other's will: and herein lies the solution of the whole difficulty. All voluntary motions depend of course upon the will; we cannot move until we will to move; we cannot will until we begin to will; and there is nothing in our limbs—no sense—no indication which can possibly inform us that the power to move is there. By experience only do we know that we can rise from our beds and walk—just as by experience alone we know that the sun will rise to-morrow. There is no difference in our feelings now and yesterday when we did move; consequently, we conclude that if we will we can. We try, we move, and the thousands of times we are able to do this, compared with the occasional privation of the power from broken limbs or illness, fixes in our minds that negative condition which implies a state of muscle capable of being moved by the will. But the Mesmerized patient believes that his will has been removed—he fancies his limbs subservient to the will of another—he feels his arm rise, but is unconscious that he raises it: when in an horizontal position the continued action of his will is not made evident to him, and its relaxation, when the arm is blown upon, is still in his mind the effect of his operator's will and not his own. Thus he deludes himself, and mistakes want of will for want of power, just as a boy

who falls from a bird's-nest, fancying that he has broken a limb, is afraid to try to move, lest his worst fears be realized; whilst he lies still, he is in hope, nothing then tells him if he can move it or not, and he hesitates conviction. This was the state in which Miss Fancourt, of Hackney remained so long; she had been afflicted with a spinal complaint, which really prevented her from walking. As the complaint was gradually removed, all that she would feel would be a cessation of pain. *No positive monitor* would tell her she could walk, and under the strong delusion that she could not, she was carried from her inclined board to her bed and back as an helpless infant; when, however, the Rev. Mr. Greaves, impelled by a superstitious enthusiasm, asked her "Had she faith?" and on being answered that she had, commanded her "to rise and walk," she arose, took his arm, and walked for ever after. The Misses Cardale might have believed themselves compelled to make those horrible noises at Irving's chapel, which passed for the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit; only it so happens that we had one of their servants live with us, and she declared that they practised every Thursday in the drawing room, just as they did singing; only, too, that the inspiration always came at the proper time, like the hymn, to fill up a pause; only, too, that they ceased when Irving no longer needed them, just as they commenced when his waning popularity required the prop of some novelty. That he was a good man, and a talented one, is universally allowed; and if he and those who so committed themselves were really deluded, if they did in their hearts believe that their monstrous exhibitions were entirely involuntary and beyond their control, it confirms, in the strongest possible manner, the whole scope of our argument; for it proves how difficult it is nicely to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary actions, and how easy it may be for a believer in Mesmerism to exhibit all the supposed phenomena, and fancy that none of them were of his doing.

The action of a man's mind upon his own body, however excited, whether to kill or to cure, is known to every one; and nervous complaints especially may be produced or relieved by it. The father of the writer, believing that the degenerated habit of body invariably attendant upon cancer was mainly attributable to nervous agitation, made it one of his most imperative injunctions that the disease should be kept constantly covered, never looked at, never, if possible, thought about; and perhaps few men ever had such success in the treatment of that complaint as himself. It is recorded of Sydenham, that a patient labouring under some nervous disease was found "immedicabilis herbis." No prescription had any effect upon him; when the Doctor hit upon the following remedy. He told him that there was a Dr. Robinson at Glasgow, skilled in such ailments, and advised him to consult him with all speed. He started immediately, and travelled as fast as post horses could take him. Upon his arrival at Glasgow, he could find no such a physician, when he came back to London as rapidly as he went, to reproach Sydenham for his duplicity. On entering the room the Doctor congratulated him on his apparent restoration to health. "Yes," cried the angry man, "I am well, but no thanks to you nor Dr. Robinson either." "How so?" said Sydenham. "How so, sir?—Why there is no such a man as Dr. Robinson, and I am come, sir, to tell you a bit of my mind for sending me such a fool's errand." "One moment, if you please, before you begin," rejoined Sydenham, "and I hope to convince you that it was not such a fool's errand as you imagine. I found you labouring under a nervous affection which baffled me—I felt convinced that there was no organic disease, and I thought that if I could change the current of your thoughts, and fix some one intense idea long enough, I should break the morbid links of your complaint, and cure you. I sent you therefore as long a journey as I could, to an imaginary physician, knowing well that hope would be active all the way there, and rage against me all the way back, and I expected to see you return as rosy and as strong as I see you. Now what do you think of my prescription?" "Think!" cried the man, "that it would be well for the world were there more physicians as sensible and as honest as Dr. Sydenham." To the faith reposed in a medical man is often attributable the cure of patients, far more than to the medicines he orders, and thus it is, that like money, a growing reputation increases ability. Faith has worked miracles from the time when we were told that it should remove mountains, down to the girl at Ilfracombe, who being lately Mesmerized by Mr. Davy, recovered the use of her voice, which she had lost for many months. The dumbness under which she laboured was evidently a rarer affection of the nerves supplying the

larynx, and there is no earthly reason why a strong mental stimulus should not be as restorative as was the inhalation of the steam of some pot-herbs to a fellow-traveller in Switzerland, who instantly and entirely recovered the voice which she had lost for three days. Strong conviction and strong passions may not only cure, but kill, (and all the supposed miraculous agencies of Catholicism are nothing but so many successful appeals to one or other of these). Just as the sight of the surgeon's brass-plate often relieves the tooth-ache, so does any strong influence of the mind affect the body; and if it cure it may also slay. Instances of sudden death occurring from fright or grief are too familiar to need relating here; nor is it unknown how thousands have pined away and died, the victim of some silent sorrow,

"Which sighs no sigh, which sheds no tear."

People have been cured of the worst symptoms of hydrophobia under which they were struggling and dying, by having the dog produced which had bitten them, and finding him not mad after all. Others, to whom no such remedy could be brought, have sunk, the victims of their own despair. Perhaps the most striking instance of the power of mind over matter is the case which happened at Paris.

A condemned criminal was handed over to some French surgeons to experiment upon. They told him that they had interceded in his favor, and obtained permission to bleed him to death, thus saving him public exposure, and substituting an easy for a painful termination to his life. He gladly permitted his eyes to be blinded, and his arm to be bandaged, when the operator made a slight scratch on the arm, but did *not* puncture the vein. To deceive him still more, some warm water was trickled from a small tube upon his arm, which he was led to believe was the flowing blood. After a time his breathing became difficult, his pulse weak and trembling, a cold sweat broke out upon his limbs, his heart fluttered, his head drooped, AND HE DIED.

It is the long-continued influence of such feelings that fulfils some prophecies, and brings about the dreaded event in the very time and manner predicted. It was probably to this that the celebrated Lord Lyttleton owed his death, just as many, many women were lost at Abingdon, some fifty years ago, under the mistaken dicta of a gipsy. It appears that some young person had her fortune told, and among other things she was cautioned that she would have a child in her thirty-sixth year, and would die in childbed. The Editor's father attended her in her confinement, which passed in perfect safety; but the saying had sunk deep into her mind: after a few days of well doing, she sickened and died. The cause was bruited forth, the fatal prediction was adverted to and magnified; it was said to apply to all who should be confined in their thirty-sixth year, and then to all who should bear children in the fatal year which had come, whatever their age might be; and the parish was filled with mourning; mothers falling into their graves, who but for a knavish fortune-teller would have gone through their travail in safety; and he who till then had never lost a patient in childbed, saw his best and healthiest drop off one after the other till he was almost a ruined man. We could multiply instances of the effect of a man's own mind upon a man's own body sufficient to fill a volume, but enough has been written to shew that persons under supposed Mesmeric influence may suffer more and do more than any have yet suffered or done; but that this is only the working out a natural law known to every physiologist, known to every Catholic priest, and made use of by those who would strongly act upon us, whether for good or for evil; but it no more proves Mesmerism than it does astrology. Neither in the sleep, nor in the various phenomena which we have carvassed, is there the slightest evidence of the substitution of one man's will of another man. Not the slightest evidence of magnetic or any other influence passing from one man's body to another man's. No evidence of clairvoyance, catalepsy, phreno-Mesmerism, or rigidity, or indeed of any of the other supposed facts upon which Mesmerists build their theory; and although it is difficult to separate at all times delusion from fraud, and painful to suspect, yet we think that we have clearly demonstrated the proposition with which we started, viz., "THAT THERE IS NOT, NOR EVER HAS BEEN, SUCH A THING AS MESMERIC INFLUENCE, UNDER WHATEVER NAME OR IN WHATEVER SHAPE IT HAS BEEN SUPPOSED TO EXIST, AND THAT EVERY PUBLIC EXHIBITION YET ATTEMPTED HAS BEEN ONE OF DOWNRIGHT DECEPTION,—EVERY PRIVATE MANIFESTATION ONE OF THE GROSSEST DELUSION."

A striking confirmation of the correctness of our opinions with respect to the self-delusion existing in most private cases of supposed Mesmerism, occurred at Uttoxeter on the evening of Monday, August 5th. at the conclusion of one of our lectures.

A Mr. Benwell rose in reply; and, after much personal insult and abuse, declared that his servant had that morning had a tooth extracted during Mesmeric sleep, without consciousness and without pain: this was corroborated by the surgeon who drew it, and by a witness who was present at the operation.

After some discussion, the girl was produced upon the platform, and Mr. Benwell proceeded to experiment upon her. He said that she was ill, and so he would not send her to sleep, but only cataleptic her arm. After a few asses she held it up (more mesmeric), and we then requested to be allowed to bend the arm; but no, Mr. Benwell, though an amateur, has learnt his lesson too well to admit a fair or proper examination; so he talked the usual nonsense about cross-magnetism, and refused our test. He then took the girl's fingers in his, declared that they could not be separated, and apparently pulled her about as he liked. He then joined them in the same manner to the hand of another gentleman, who, after humouring the thing a little, suddenly slipped his hand away, when she quietly put down her rigid cataleptic arm, and began using it as the other. Now as no attempt had been made to mesmerize her, she was at once taxed with duplicity, and a remark made which bears out all that we have ever said upon the subject—**"SHE THOUGHT SHE WAS TO DO SO."**

Have we not declared this over and over again—that honest patients, not knowing what Mesmerism is, fancy any thing Mesmerism? and so without feeling the least affected, if the hand is pointed to any part of the head, and they know the supposed function of the part, they give what they suppose to be a correct phrenological manifestation—**"THEY THINK THEY ARE TO DO SO."**

Turn back to Brown's declaration at Bridgewater.—Ponder this case—weigh our arguments, and reflect upon all that you have seen, and you will accord to us the true solution of the only difficulty we had, which was to shew that there may be and are honest patients, who appear to be under the influence of Mesmerism when they are solely acted upon by their own imaginations, and that we need not impute falsehood to those who are only foolish.

MR. RUMBALL takes into his family, and treats as members of it, NERVOUS INVALIDS whose cases require medical care, but not personal restraint. A retired and beautiful spot in the country, his own medical and son's personal care, air, exercise, and amusement, are the means of cure offered. The distance from London is 20 miles; and for the future Mr. R. intends remaining constantly at home, with the exception of a few hours each day in the season, when he will be in London for consultation either medically or phrenologically. His claims upon public confidence rest upon his having been a pupil to Dr. Monro and Sir George Tuthill, at Bethlem, 20 years ago; the latter of whom frequently deputed him to attend patients of the very highest rank; since when he has constantly had in his house and at his table, Nervous Invalids, and many of them have been restored to their friends by his treatment. He need scarcely specify his position as a Phrenologist: but as he has studiously avoided writing insulated essays upon the subject, hoping ere long to publish a complete system, and as he has ventured to oppose some of the authorities of the day, he may be excused if he insert the following reply to any attacks past, present, or to come, which may be made by infuriated Mesmerists or would be critics.

At a Public Meeting held at the Natural History Lecture Room, Worcester, January 3rd, 1840; 282 persons being present; That this Meeting wish to testify, in the strongest manner, their approbation of the conduct of

MR. J. Q. RUMBALL,

Both as a Philosopher and a Gentleman, during the several periods of his stay in Worcester, whether as a Lecturer on Phrenology, or as defending that science from the attacks lately made upon it. They consider his defence to have been most able and manly, and that by his lectures, and especially by the accuracy of his Craniological Examinations, he has not only confirmed the opinions of believers in Phrenology, but converted many sceptics into his and its warmest friends. In proof of which his portrait is this evening presented as a memento of the estimation in which his talents are held in this city.

Here follow the names of Fifty-nine Subscribers.

From the PLYMOUTH HERALD, Feb. 1841.—**"TAVISTOCK MECHANICS' INSTITUTION.**—We have just been favoured with a series of

Lectures on the science of Phrenology, by J. Q. Rumball, Esq. His engagement took place in consequence of the great popularity he acquired while delivering a similar course at the Tavistock Literary Institution."

"The accuracy which he manifested, during his residence here, in delineating natural dispositions after a Craniological examination, has both astonished the believers in the science, and dispelled the doubts of many who had denied its truth; and his remarks on the tendencies of Phrenological doctrines have removed strong prejudices which have been entertained against them, and clearly pointed out the vast amount of good derivable from their application."

"It is difficult in a few words to convey a better idea of his style of lecturing, than by saying—what Buckingham was on Palestine, Rumball is on Phrenology. Nothing more need be added, than the circumstance of an accession of nearly fifty new members to the Institution on the occasion."

Chelmsford Chronicle, Apr. 28th, 1843.—If any other evidence of his success here were required, it would be found in the fact of a vote having been passed by the Committee of the Mechanics' Institute, presenting Mr. Rumball with a sum in addition to that agreed upon for the admission of the Members.

PRESENTATION OF PLATE.—We understand that a deputation of the members of the Colchester Phrenological Society waited last week on J. Q. Rumball, Esq., and presented him with a very handsome and massive silver inkstand, as an expression of the high esteem in which Mr. Rumball is held by the society, for his inimitable powers as a popular and philosophical lecturer—his invaluable services to phrenology—his talent as a scholar, and worth as a gentleman.—Essex Standard, March 3, 1843.

Gloucester, May 20th, 1829.—At the Annual Meeting of the Society a Silver Snuff-Box was presented to Mr. Rumball by Dr. Evans, from "his Friends, Members of the Gloucester Literary and Scientific Association, as a mark of their esteem."

In addition to the above, another silver snuff-box was presented to the Editor at Plymouth, and the following testimonial voted him at Reading:—

At a Meeting of the Directors of the Reading Literary, Scientific and Mechanics' Institution, held on Thursday Evening, April 25th, 1844, Major Grafton, Vice-President in the Chair, it was moved by Mr. W. Brown, seconded by Mr. C. Clark, and unanimously resolved,

"That the Directors of this Institution have much pleasure in testifying to Mr. JAMES QUILTER RUMBALL, their cordial approbation of the Course of Lectures delivered by him upon EDUCATION, PHRENOLOGICALLY CONSIDERED; and feel it due to that gentleman to state, that no Lectures have ever been given to the Institution which have imparted more valuable information to its members, or afforded greater satisfaction; while the eloquent and highly emphatic manner in which they were delivered, rendered them in every respect interesting and attractive.

By Order of the Board,

"G. GROSSMITH, Hon Sec."

"Mr. Rumball's eminent success in describing the characters and dispositions of individuals, after a craniological examination, is, we think, of itself, one of the best proofs that can be adduced of the truth of Phrenology."—Gloucester Chronicle, Dec. 8, 1838.

"The correctness of his conclusions is startling, and his skill in reading characters by the aid of his science, is little less than marvellous."—Plymouth Gazette, Oct. 5, 1841.

Mr. RUMBALL is open to engagements for the ensuing season to lecture to Literary and Scientific Societies upon Phrenology or Education Phrenologically considered. His terms may be known by addressing Mr. Rumball, Surgeon, Oster Hills, St. Alban's, Herts.

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