

LECTURES

ON

MESMERISM,

DELIVERED AT

THE ROTUNDA, DUBLIN,

IN 1851.

BY

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DEDICATION.

TO

MY FRIEND AND COADJUTOR,

WILLIAM DAVEY,

IN conjunction with whose experimental demonstrations these Lectures were delivered, they are now dedicated, in the assurance that one whose devoted labours, during many years, have gained thousands of converts to the truth, and whose Mesmeric manipulations furnished Surgery with a painless amputation, prior to the discovery of Ether, in the case of Mrs. Northway, and whose tuitions supplied the London Mesmeric Infirmary with its principal operator in the person of his pupil,

THOMAS CAPERN,

is well worthy of this public testimonial of respect and esteem from

His faithful Friend,

And sincere Well-wisher,

THE AUTHOR.

LECTURE I.

A DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF MESMERIC PHENOMENA.

Treatment of Mesmerism—Its Literature—Experiments on Subjects in a State of Vigilance, in a State of Trance—Facts the only Basis on which to rest the Evidence of the Truth of Mesmerism—Mesmeric Phenomenon not new—Power of the Gaze, of the Passes—Nature of Mesmeric Aura—Phreno-mesmeric Manifestations—Clairvoyance, the Result of exalted Perception—A cheering Revelation of Man's higher Nature.

THE subject which we have the honour of introducing to your notice is, under its scientific aspect, comparatively new, and not only are its theoretical explanations controverted, but its very facts, though easily reproducible, are doubted and denied. So peculiar, indeed, is the opposition which mesmerism has to encounter, that even when the phenomena which it enables us to elicit have been exhibited to the satisfaction of thinking minds in one city, they have again to be demonstrated in another, the process of conversion being attended with as much difficulty in the second instance as in the first. Mesmerism has shown that there is a point of investigation where scientific men fail to place confidence in each other; that there is a rate of progress in discovery so

utterly beyond the receptive power of a certain class of minds, that they prefer the practical abrogation of every admitted principle of philosophic investigation, rather than receive as true a range of facts so utterly antagonistic to their preconceived ideas ; thus affording, in the nineteenth century, the lamentable spectacle of a return to the practices of the mediæval schoolmen, with their foolish preference of Aristotelian logic and antiquated theory, to the sublime truths of Nature's teaching.

Probably but few of my hearers are aware that this dawning science, which is so superciliously condemned by those who, from entire ignorance of its nature, must necessarily be incompetent judges of its claims to their attention—but few, I say, are aware that it has a literature extending over many hundred volumes, composed by philosophers, physicians, and men of literary eminence, in all the cultivated languages of western and southern Europe; that it has hospitals devoted to its practice, and respectable journals in which its progressive development is regularly chronicled. It may indeed, without misrepresentation, be asserted, that the opposition to it hitherto has been simply that of ignorance. Read the attacks upon it which have, from time to time, appeared in our leading medical journals, and you will be astonished at the lack of argument and the absence of counter-experiment, and, perhaps, disgusted by the ridiculous admixture of personal abuse, wherewith the obvious want of logical power is, shall we say, not covered but exposed. Mesmerism professes to be based on fact, and evidences its existence by experiment ; it is, in every respect, a department of the inductive philosophy, and can neither be assailed nor defended with effect upon mere hypothe-

tical grounds. Let me, then, sum up the facts which constitute the results of mesmeric power, the evidence of whose existence must be derived from their reproduction in your presence, and that, too, from subjects whose character and position forbid the idea of collusion.

It has been supposed that, for the due evolution of mesmeric phenomena, the trance is a necessary accompaniment or preliminary; this, however, is a mistake, for the following are among the results which you will witness on the present occasion:—a strong man, in a state of perfect vigilance, and who has never been entranced, may be fixed immoveably on the surface of a smooth floor, incapable of going backwards, forwards, or lifting his feet from the ground; he may have his arm rendered so rigid as to be incapable, when it is extended, of either bending it so as to reach his mouth, or putting it down so as to touch his side; nay, in the very act of grasping at an object on the table, his hand may be suddenly arrested in mid-air, or fixed rigidly over the orange which he tries to obtain. When standing erect he may be attracted to the operator or repelled from him, and this, too, so powerfully, that, if he will not move his feet, his fall can only be prevented by his being caught in the arms of a bystander.

The trance itself, however, develops features still more extraordinary, for, under it, the subject passes into a state of sleep so peculiar as to deprive him of speech or hearing, and render him unconscious of the surgeon's knife, and yet leaves him a susceptibility so unusual, that a mere touch of the mesmerist's finger suffices to restore the use of his suspended senses, and reproduces its activity in any portion of the brain under

phreno-mesmeric manifestation. Indeed, a good subject is like a delicate instrument in the hands of a musician, the fair melody of mind being educible at pleasure in all its varied notes of vigorous thought or vivid imagination, of strong emotion or warm affection, at the pleasure of the magician who owns the simple but commanding spell of requisite knowledge. The wonders of mesmerism, however, are not yet quite enumerated, for, in a few extraordinary cases, another condition of mental being seems to be evolved, and we obtain lucidity, or that transcendant exaltation of the faculties known as clairvoyance, wherein the ordinary limits of sensuous perception, and the usual range of thought and conception, are alike surpassed. I have given this cursory enumeration of facts not as an exhaustive catalogue of mesmeric phenomena, but simply as an outline of the more striking results which every competent operator may succeed in producing with a duly susceptible subject.

Now the evidence of all this must, as we have observed, be based on experiment, for in the investigation of Nature facts are more cogent than argument, and results, when undeniable, must be received, whether hypothetically explicable or inconveniently unaccountable. The fundamental principle of the inductive philosophy is the subordination of theory to fact, and any departure from this, even in the case of so unpalatable a subject as mesmerism, can in no wise be permitted. Even the authority of great names, that hero-worship to which scientific men are as prone as their less enlightened brethren, must succumb to the still weightier authority of experiment, and the revelations of Nature herself be

the primal evangile of all who would devoutly worship in her universal temple. Upon our manifestations, then, do we base the demonstrative evidence of the existence of mesmerism as a fact in nature, and to this alone would I rigidly adhere if dealing with an opponent in the way of controversy; but as it is our desire to remove every obstacle to the progress of a truth which we believe to be fraught with practical advantage of the utmost importance to mankind, I will endeavour to obviate even those theoretical objections which, while they exist in any mind, must tend to produce a disinclination to, and even an inaptitude for, the unbiassed investigation of this nascent knowledge.

Mesmerism, then, in virtue of the power by which its results are evolved, is a department of the imponderables; and as its facts are elicited from a human subject, and consist in the reproduction of vital phenomena, it is a branch of physiology. Its experiments, in their entire range, constitute the sum of the results obtainable by the action of one organization on another. The manifestations which it enables us to elicit, although extraordinary, are not absolutely new; for the various conditions of the nervous system, superinduced under mesmeric manipulation, are found, on investigation, to bear a very close resemblance to those abnormal states of being, wherewith the curiosities of medical, and we may add ecclesiastical and judicial experience, have rendered us comparatively familiar. Our cases of fixity, rigidity, &c., are obviously allied to catalepsy. Phreno-mesmerism is simply somnambulism, artificially induced, and scientifically regulated; while the much-doubted and sadly-decried clairvoyance, is but the old

and once well-known ecstasy and possession of which our mediæval chronicles, as well as the records of antiquity and the East, treat *usque ad nauseam*. The mesmeric coma generally seems to partake of the character of trance, or that profound sleep of the nervous system in which the susceptibility that attends ordinary slumber is lost; and light, sound, odours, or even coarser impingements on the system, fail to arouse us to the consciousness of external impressions. The objection which might here be taken to the mesmeric processes, in consequence of their producing effects so nearly resembling in their essential character the usual forms assumed by disease, will be met and examined, in the lecture which I proposee specially devoting to the subject, in its medical aspect.

Our business now is, to account, if possible, for phenomena, of whose reality we are assured, while the mode of their evolution is still involved in mystery. Probably, much of the distaste usually manifested by men of science to the investigation of mesmerism, arises from the absurd pretensions to mysticism, in which some of its advocates still indulge. Nothing is more common than to hear of its phenomena as mysterious and unaccountable; and thus the reader or hearer, as the case may be, is generally left with the impression that the seeming facts are the results of charlatanic imposture, or that the motive force in the whole affair is supernatural and spiritual. Mesmer found this new old knowledge clad in the garb of astrology and magic; his especial merit consists in his having liberated it from these wrappings of time-worn superstition, wherewith, however, some of his later disciples would again willingly

envelope it. Let us, however, following in the footsteps of those great men who developed astronomy out of astrology, and chemistry out of alchemy, endeavour, with such success as we may, to afford a rational explanation of facts, by referring them to forces in Nature which we think competent for their production, and thus remove the scandal of utter incomprehensibility, which has so long attached, whether deservedly or not, to mesmerism and its processes.

Let us commence, then, with the seance, and glance at the usual means employed to effect it. The subject sits in a chair, the operator sits or stands opposite, gazing fixedly into the eyes of the former, and at the same time making passes slowly from the head down over the face and body, holding the hands at intervals, so as to produce an especial action on the thumbs. As a result of these apparently simple processes, the subject closes his eyes, and eventually passes into the profound slumber which characterizes the mesmeric coma. Now the primal objection to all this is, the apparent inadequacy of the means for the production of the effect. But what says Nature? Has she not used the gaze of the serpent and the carnivora, from the tiger to the fox, for paralyzing their destined prey? Has not superstition spoken of the "Evil Eye"?—and has not poetry, that idealistic revelation of the "open secret," told us of the magic which resides in a glance? Now the mesmerist simply uses this old power under new conditions, and we must not, therefore, wonder at its being found productive of new phenomena. The eye of the operator is the most direct and ready channel through which the imponderable force of his brain can be radiated; it is

also the most direct and convenient channel through which it can be received by the subject ; hence the use of the gaze, really neither a new nor unaccountable proceeding.

The passes, too, have met with no little opposition, both "grave and gay," for the antagonists of a rising truth can be "lively or severe," as occasion may seem to require, or circumstances demand. Let us, however, again consult dame Nature. She informs that if we take a piece of steel, made in the form of a horse-shoe magnet, but not yet endowed with the peculiar properties of this agent, and make a few of our "ridiculous passes," from the curve downwards, over it, with another piece of steel, similar in form, and already endowed with magnetic properties, that the common steel horse-shoe will, in virtue of its being subjected to the passes, become a magnet also, the reverse, or upward passes, sufficing again to remove the effect so produced. Now, if you read Von Reichenbach's profound work on the dynamics of vital magnetism, you will find that not only is man a magnet, but that his major axis is from the sinister to the dexter side ; he is, in short, a sort of vital horse-shoe. The passes of the operator, then, have their precise analogue, both in process and result, in the respectable, established, and orthodox science of mineral magnetism. Do not plants tend to fold up their young leaves, and close their lately expanded flowers on the approach of night or rain ? and are not the passes of the operator from the brain to the extremities calculated to, in a like manner, fold up the more sensitive portions of the nervous system ? for if the analogy is to be preserved, the brain must be considered as the root of this

delicate plant. And do not animals seem to experience a soothing sensation when passes are made over them in contact from the head to the tail? Strange that downward passes should produce the mesmeric coma in man and magnetization in steel; while the upward passes produce vigilance in the former, and demagnetization in the latter! What a pity that the statement of a few simple facts should suffice to destroy the force of all the smart things that have been said about the much-abused passes! These, it appears, judging from analogy, *ought* to produce a certain effect on the system, and that effect, too, of a soothing and somnolent order. So much for a *priori* argument about the possibility of mesmeric results being produceable by the means employed for effecting them.

Let us now make a few observations on the real nature of the "mesmeric aura," or "universal fluid," about which the first French Commission was so concerned, to the utter neglect of all the tangible facts brought under its notice. This force is obviously imponderable, and from the various means by which it can be brought into action, would seem to have a relationship to galvanism, electricity, magnetism, light, heat, and the od force. It has been doubted by many, whether, arguing from probabilities, man might be supposed to be endowed with the faculty of acting at a distance, and by an imponderable agent; analogy, however, declares in favour of the existence of such a power. All the great bodies of the universe manifest action and reaction, and appear to be surrounded with an atmosphere of power. Man, it would seem, is no exception, nor are we able to definitely settle the limits where this influence becomes inoperative.

The "aura" is probably an emanation of the vital force, and hence, doubtless, one source of its healing virtue in cases of disease. It would seem that fixity, rigidity, &c., arise from the application of this power, to which we find something analogous in certain galvanic and electro-magnetic experiments. Rigidity ensues in the arm or leg of a susceptible subject, when the operator makes passes from the origin to the extremity of the limb, flexibility being restored by passes in the opposite direction. If we conceive that the nervous circulation is influenced by the movement of the operator's fingers, as the magnetic currents obviously are by the poles of the acting magnet, when passing over the steel horse-shoe, the effects may be accounted for. The outward passes attract a flow of nervous power on the extensors; the opposite movement causes a reflux of neural energy, and consequently a restoration of the normal condition.

If such tangible phenomena as fixity, rigidity, &c., which are so easy of examination, have been considered as fit subjects for controversy, it is no wonder that the higher and more complicated manifestations of a mental character, which are evoked under phreno-mesmerism, should have proved the subject of endless disputation; their explanation is, however, comparatively simple. The operator and subject are related to each other as actor and actee; they are the positive and negative poles, respectively, of the compound human battery. Now if two bodies thus related are brought in contact, a powerful action is at once established at the point of junction. In the case under consideration, this is supposed to be a portion of the head of the subject, to which the finger of the operator, that natural pointer of the

human machine, is directed, generally in close contact, sometimes, however, only in proximity. In so far then as there is any relationship between mesmerism and electricity, a current must be established at this point, the seat, upon the phrenological theory, of an organ, whose appropriate manifestation follows if the experiment prove successful. It would seem that, if desirable, a portion only of the cerebral mass may be thus fractionally aroused into action, by passing a sustained current of vital force through it, without arousing the remainder of the brain into vigilance. The withdrawal of the finger permits the stimulated organ to again subside into its former quiescence. Judging from the effects produced on the limbs of a subject, we might anticipate some result from exciting the brain, but, perhaps, scarcely so fine a series of phreno-mesmeric manifestations as are commonly obtained. It would seem that there is more of isolated and independent action in the various portions of the cerebral structure than physiologists had conceived of. The facts, however, are decisive; the objection that the osseous substance of the skull, with its various attachments, &c., presents an impassable barrier to the free transmission of the mesmeric aura, is obviated by the imponderable character of that influence, which permits of its pervading matter as freely as magnetism, to which, as we have before observed, it has probably some relationship.

Let me now conclude this merely introductory sketch by a reference to clairvoyance. If the wonders of phreno-mesmerism have raised some doubters, the *incredibilities* of clairvoyance have produced more. That a sleeping man can be made to stand up, or sit down, sing, talk, or

eat, at the pleasure of another, and upon returning to consciousness know nothing of this, his trance life is of itself a quite sufficient stumbling-block to minds not yet familiarized with the phenomena that attend the abnormal conditions of the nervous system. But to hear of a man reading with his eyes closed, perceiving what is going on through a wall, or becoming cognizant of events transacted in another portion of time or space, is too much for poor human credulity, and faith succumbs under the tremendous demands made upon its vast receptivity! A credence in clairvoyance is generally the final stage of initiation, and stamps the finished disciple of Nature's last grand revelation.

To comprehend distinctly the essential character of clairvoyance, with all its attendant phenomena, we must remember that it is a condition of the system, under which, by whatever means produced, there is an exalted action in the nervous system. The subject has passed from a state of normal to abnormal vigilance. Perhaps, strictly speaking, a perfect lucide is the only subject who can be said to have passed through the entire cycle of mesmeric experiences; he fulfils our anticipations, and manifests the results which we might have expected from the infusion of additional nervo-vital force into the system; his perceptions are keener, his conceptions more sublime, his reflections more profound, his moral sentiments more exalted, and even his affections more generally sympathetic, than in his ordinary state. The true clairvoyant is, in short, the idealized psychic portrait of himself, and affords us a revelation of humanity under its holier and brighter, because deeper manifestations, than in ordinary life. Rigidly defined, the unconscious

insensibility, which fits a subject for the operator's knife, or makes him an apt instrument in the hands of the phreno-mesmerist, is but a transitional stage from our ordinary condition of thought and action to the ecstatic development of our usually latent powers, which are evoked only under such rare and peculiar modifications of the nervous system, that all in whom it occurred were, in the remoter ages of the world, supposed to be either inspired or possessed, and were considered seers or demoniacs, as their revelations contradicted or accorded with the prevalent belief of their age and country.

Let us, however, examine the matter somewhat more closely, and we shall find that many of the wonders of lucidity, whether that condition has been spontaneous or induced, will seem a little less miraculous than they are usually deemed. That the nervous system in this condition is exalted in its functions we know, for the individual hears sounds and smells odours at a distance too great for their perception under the ordinary range of sensation. Even in the stages approaching to this condition we find something like a transposition of the senses commencing. Thus many of our phreno-mesmeric subjects can distinguish colours by the touch. Mesmeric experiment, indeed, seems to indicate that the senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing, and sight, are but the successive developments of one essentially identical power of perception, modified and adapted to the various modes in which matter is calculated to impinge upon us; vision being the ultimate stage of refinement to which touch or feeling has yet attained in our normal condition. And this you will perceive has a relationship to the finest form of matter which we can use while in this condition,

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namely, light; but as this is obviously not the most penetrating of the imponderables—for almost every grosser form of matter will suffice to exclude it, while at the same time completely pervious to the magnetic currents—we might from this alone arrive at the conclusion, that vision is not the ultimate even of physical perception, because it cannot use the finer forms of imponderable force as its medium. Now, grant that the exalted ecstatic may use the magnetic currents as a medium of perception, and the difficulties of ordinary lucidity immediately vanish; for the envelope of a letter, or the wall of a room, must demonstratively prove transparent to him who commands a medium, that pervades them as readily as light pervades glass. For the same reason, a lucide needs not to use his eyes, for the skull with all its integuments is as pervious to magnetism as any other portion of matter. Let us remember that glass is transparent, not from its relationship to us or to the objects which we perceive through it, but from its aptitude for the transmission of the rays of light. Now, to a true lucide, using even the magnetic currents, or the od force—and, for aught we know, there may be finer forms of the imponderable than these—the entire universe must be as transparent as a shadeless crystal. Philosophy, indeed, enables us to demonstrate experimentally, the possible existence of that exalted condition of being wherein there shall be no night, and to whose everlasting illumination no sun need to lend the beams of his inferior radiance.

We have now but to account for that victory over time and space which has been apparently manifested by some superior ecstasies, to whom some distant things

have appeared near, and past events have seemed present. Opticians will no doubt gravely inform us, that if the globe were as transparent as its circumambient atmosphere, it would still be impossible to perceive a human being at Calcutta from a drawing-room observatory in London. The angle presented by so minute an object at so great a distance would be too small. If vision were the mode of perception this must be granted; but let us remember that it is but a very imperfect exemplification of the inductive philosophy to thus transfer, without due authority from experiment, the laws which govern one mode of perception to another. As well might we declare that the limits of touch are also those of smell, and that it is impossible to hear the thunders of a cataract at a greater distance than we can detect the odour of a rose. If the sphere of sensuous perception be extended in proportion to its refinement, that of the new or universal perception must as far transcend the range of vision as the latter does that of hearing.

Time is a somewhat more difficult element to master, without at least ascending to the empyrean heights of the transcendental philosophy; much, however, that here seems pre-vision or post-vision, is so only in appearance. The astronomer pre-calculates an eclipse; the physician foretels a crisis; the statesman anticipates a revolution; and even the seaman foresees a storm; when, to ungifted minds and unpractised eyes, the coming events have not yet cast their shadows before. The intuitions of the clairvoyant may be based upon data of which we are ignorant, and his pre-calculations thus assume to us the guise of prophecies.

Thought-reading, in its highest form, solves the problem of a present presentment of past incidents. Your lucide may be ignorant of every detail of antiquarian knowledge, and yet describe to you the personages and places of a remote antiquity, with a precision as to manners, costume, and architecture, perfectly astounding. But your own mind, or that of a by-standing observer, with its conscious or unconscious reminiscences, has furnished the "magic mirror" whence these descriptions were so accurately read off. Thought-reading is but the highest form of sympathy, which, beginning from community of sensation, ascends to community of ideas, and may be explained upon the supposition that the operator and subject are united together as a central and peripheral battery, when, as in Mr. Alfred Smee's theory of ordinary sensation, impressions are propagated from one to the other, like the messages which man's lightning servant bears from station to station on the wires of an electric telegraph.

Supposing, however, that we should be compelled by the resistless force of experiment, that most cogent of all reasons in this nineteenth century, to admit the existence of a power in man, whereby he may transcend the limits of time and space, need we be alarmed. Is there aught that is degrading to our race, or disheartening to us as individuals, in the evidence thus afforded to us, that man is, after all, but the seeming prisoner of his material bonds. Shall we despair because we have heard the angel wings appropriate to his celestial home rustle in the chrysalis tenement of our entranced, and, therefore, partially liberated brother? Does it grieve us to know that the simplest of the sons or daughters of

Adam have within them such high prerogatives as must some day laugh the glories of the physical universe to scorn, and smile in fadeless youth when suns and systems yet unbirthed shall have faded into irremediable decay? Is the limitless perception of things, or the boundless acquisition of ideas to which the clairvoyant so obviously approximates, a fitting subject for lamentation? Rather let us rejoice that amidst the wreck and ruin of so much that was once noble and God-like in humanity, there is yet left to us this sublime and consoling evidence of the existence of that superior nature whereby man demonstrates his still unbroken relationship to that divine Father, in whose likeness the primal parent of our race was originally fashioned. In clairvoyance we do not communicate a new faculty; we only evoke a latent power. We do not endow our subjects with ability from without, but elicit their essential attributes from within, and thus exhibit man not merely as a being of sense and reason, but as an exalted participant in that sublime power of spiritual intuition, under which he appears in his true relationship as a brother of the angels, a son of the Universal Father, and a destined dweller in the Eternity.

LECTURE II.

MESMERISM AS A REMEDIAL AGENT, PROFESSIONAL
AND DOMESTIC.

Medical Science in a State of internal Conflict—Mesmerism may add to this, but did not originate it—Effects of Mesmerization—The Principle of Health transferable—Contagion ; Morbific Influences follow the Passes of the Operator ; hence Disease is removed out of the System—Mesmeric Insensibility less dangerous than that produced by Chloroform—Nervous Diseases especially fit for Mesmeric Treatment—Insanity curable by the Quiescence of Coma, and by Phreno-mesmeric Excitation judiciously regulated—Address to the Profession.

THE subject proposed for this evening's lecture will enable me to present mesmerism to your notice, under an aspect which, although, perhaps, not the highest, is, nevertheless, one which the genius of the present age delights in contemplating. We shall see the *utility* of the science, and witness the results produced by its application as a remedial agent in the many forms of disease to which humanity is liable. In the former address, it was presented for investigation to the philosopher ; in the present, it is recommended to the consideration of the philanthropist.

Civilization advances, and, doubtless, with an illimitable train of blessings in its rear ; but its progress is

accompanied with sacrifices, alas ! but too proportionate to the advantages which it confers. Walk through the wards of a modern hospital, and listen to the shrieks of its operating theatre, and you will at once perceive that the fell demon of disease still bids defiance to the weak exorcisms of medical art. Emerge from these loathsome temples of Æsculapius, where a complicated pharmacy and self-contradictory physiology so often do disadvantageous battle with the acute agony and rapid death of laborious poverty, and ascend into the luxurious and tasteful chambers of rank and wealth, where chronic forms reign predominant, and life with manifold appliances can be modified into one long disease—and say is the spectacle at all improved; is the real amount of suffering less, because scattered over many villas, and frowning amidst multiplied mansions, instead of being concentrated into the dreadful focus of one charitable lazar-house; has modern medicine done that for health which mechanism has effected for labour, optics for vision, or printing for knowledge; does it stand in any respect on a level with the giant forces now at our command in almost every other department of human activity. And is this sluggishly progressive and internally conflicting department of knowledge precisely the one to most sternly bid defiance to the “voices of the day” which so clamorously and urgently call for improvement. Are its professors of all others in the best position to sit as Canutes and set bounds to the surging tide of new ideas now swelling and rising so tempestuously around them. Are they the men—undecided even among themselves as to the fundamental principles of their art—are they to authoritatively decide on the authenticity of facts, not

by the test of experiment, but by the congruity or otherwise of these new revelations with their antiquated ideas. Will an enlightened age submit much longer to the leadership of men, who thus seem, of all others, the least capable of appreciating and acting on "the meditations of Francis of Verulam," that sublime architect, on whose majestic plan the glorious temple of the inductive philosophy has been thus far magnificently reared.

Medicine doubtless professes to be a science, and its leaders once taught with unquestioned authority. Grave suspicions have, however, most inconveniently arisen, as to the soundness of some of its fundamental dogmata. Homœopathy declares them to be utterly false, or rather denies their claim to be considered as principles at all, and promulgates the horribly heterodox opinion that the established system of medicine is but the aggregated empiricism of ages, "*rudis indigestaque moles*," unpermeated by one single intelligible law, where the right is attained by accident, and the wrong avoided by chance, and much of irremediable evil, even to the strongest constitutions, is perpetrated upon system! The scandals propounded in the name of hydropathy are, we fear, scarcely inferior in their damaging character to those so openly announced by its sister heresy. Amidst all these outward and visible signs of an approaching crisis, however, the old school of medicine behaves itself with an indomitable courage well worthy of its illustrious descent, and such as rightly befits the disciples of Hippocrates and the pupils of Galen. Innovators are not to be reasoned with; they are accordingly denounced. Their facts are ignored, and their principles denied; the

younger pupils being sedulously kept in the old ways, and the leading medical periodicals being still "sound in the faith," with their columns hermetically sealed against all detestable novelties, there is no doubt but that the good old cause will ride out the gale for another decade at least, perhaps for another generation, and then "let the future take care of itself!"

Mesmerism was scarcely needed as an additional element of innovation amidst this Babel confusion of systems and practices. But it came, and added one more voice to the manifold demands of our age for a reconstitution of affairs medical. Why it should be treated with such especial severity by the established school, except upon the principle of resisting all innovation till it becomes irresistible, it seems, however, rather difficult to say, for it is by no means an exclusive partisan of any schism or sect in medicine, and its practice may be most comfortably combined with all the various systems now prevalent. Thus some physicians mingle passes with pill and potion in a manner that might edify the most scrupulous adherent of established usages, while infinitesimal doses chemical are found to harmonize delightfully with infinite infusions imponderable. Nor have I ever heard of anything essentially antagonistic between immersion in water and suffusion with aura. Mesmerism, in short, is of no party, and simply offers itself as the humble handmaid of all who would work with Nature for the expulsion of disease from a suffering system.

To be serious, mesmerism is presented to the notice of medical men as a science based on facts too obvious to be denied by any unprejudiced observer; and as such, its general reception is merely a question of time; its

ulterior application to the cure of disease is quite another question. The profession are in a false position when they deny the facts, and simply expose themselves to the ridicule of all sensible men who can see for themselves ; they might as well refuse to admit the facts of electricity. But whether the new power can be safely or advantageously used as a therapeutic agent, is a more legitimately disputable question, and one whereon society will not only be more ready to receive their opinion *ex cathedra*, but in which a prudential reserve and cautious delay on their parts will be rightly esteemed as the praiseworthy discharge of a duty which we have a right to expect from them as the professional conservators of the public health.

In the following statement of effects producible by mesmerism, I am borne out by the testimony of physicians, British and foreign, and by papers in the *Zoist*, and other reputable sources of information on the subject, as well as by my own experience. It can produce sleep without the usual concomitant evils which attend on the administration of ordinary narcotics ; and this sleep, which gives a true nervous respite, can be prolonged, if necessary, over two or three days. It can accelerate or retard the pulsation without the ulterior disadvantages which usually follow the use of stimulants on the one hand, or the diminution of vital force, which results from energetic depletion, on the other. The distinguishing feature of a cure by mesmerism is, that it is effected without expense to the constitution, the very process of relief being, in its means and appliances, essentially renovating. In how many cases are the wasted frame and pallid countenance of a convalescent, treated under

the old system, due rather to the method of cure, than to the ravages of disease.

We have heard much of *contagion*, and the word is one of terror ; but it would seem that Nature has been more just than we deemed, for the principle of health is as transferable as that of sickness, and a vigorous operator is a fountain of sanative influence, whence the decrepid and ailing may derive a fresh supply of vital force. Perhaps, we do not exaggerate when we say that the mesmeric aura is the true nectar of classic antiquity, which the *youthful* Hebe presented to the father of the gods ; the mythic ambrosia, on which divine natures were fed of old ; the elixir vitæ, whose traditionary powers led on the dim faith of mediæval alchymists to the pursuit of earthly immortality.

A universal medicine composed by art seems an absurdity ; but the transfusion of the *vis medicatrix naturæ* from one system to another, granting it to be possible, would, of necessity, accomplish the results so foolishly anticipated from merely chemical compounds. If, in mesmeric experiments, we have to do with the vital force itself, then have we mastered the grand desideratum of ages, and stand on the vestibule of that temple whose adyta will yet unveil to us the majestic realities of primeval knowledge. Mesmerism, as a medical appliance, transcends the limits of authentic history, and looms out from amidst the shadows of remote antiquity, as the mighty heritage of sacerdotal castes, and the priceless attainment of long-sought and successful initiation into the secrets of a wisdom that was already old, when Greece was in the first dawn of her advancing knowledge, and the "seven hills" were a hunting-ground for Italy's untutored aborigines.

But to return. Organic lesions heal more readily when the injured parts have been mesmerised, probably from the infusion of additional vital force, by which the work of reparation is enabled to proceed more vigorously. Inflammation and gatherings are dispersed, and local diseases disappear, partly, perhaps, from the same cause. There seems, also, to be a law, in virtue of which morbid influence tends to follow the passes, and may thus not only be removed from one part of the body to another, but finally drawn out of it altogether. Gout, rheumatism, &c., will thus sometimes vanish as if beneath the wand of an enchanter. As a general result of the long passes from the head towards the feet, a more vigorous supply of nervo-vital power is thrown upon the viscera, and, consequently, their many important functions are more effectually discharged than before. Frequently a subject will thus be restored to general health from a state of debility, so easily and naturally, that he is almost tempted to think it the result of his own unaided constitutional vigour.

Mesmerism, as you are doubtless aware, led the way to painless operations. The insensibility which it produces is preferable to that which results from ether and chloroform, if only from its being more safe. It has never yet proved fatal. How sad is the contrast presented by the records of chemical anæsthetics. It is mortifying that Esdaile, a name already assured of immortality, should have needed to remove to the extremity of our empire for the purpose of effecting that glorious series of experiments which have rendered Calcutta permanently illustrious in the annals of medical science; and even at home, the provinces have preceded the capital in mesmeric operations, as if the latter were

the seat of too much knowledge or too much prejudice to prove a convenient site for heterodox experiments in the art of healing.

There is, however, one class of diseases which have been in all ages the opprobrium of medicine, and in which mesmerism has achieved its greatest triumphs—I allude to nervous affections—which, but imperfectly developed in the savage, assume their direst type amidst races cultivated by the arts, ennobled by the ideas of a high-wrought civilization. From the needless tremour of the delicate girl, up to the frantic yell of the raving maniac, we have, at this moment, amidst our refined cities and rural homesteads, the manifold presentments of this terrific scourge. Our schools are increased, while our asylums are multiplied; and London, while she pities the barbarism of Moscow, or the stolidity of Constantinople, may yet envy the comparative sanity of their unexcited inhabitants. The medical art, in this department at least, has not advanced *pari passu* with the demands made upon it. Nor is this failure a matter of wonder; working wholly by material agencies, its appliances have been too coarse “to minister to a mind diseased.” I suspect that the gold-headed cane and professional wig of our great grandfathers were quite as potent in this way as the inscrutable mystery of an utterly unintelligible prescription, that evanescent remnant of the once potent charms and amulets of an antecedent era.

It has been long admitted that mind can cause disease—why, then, should it not cure it? Is it not, indeed, to be gravely suspected that, with our drugs and plasters, we have been all along working at the periphery,

instead of the centre of power. Are not the imponderables the motive forces of the universe?—and is not the nervous system in man the governing power, whether for health or disease, of its coarser envelope? The marvels which have been transacted at the tombs of saints, and under the hands of fanatics, have a voice which even the physician should not neglect. Man, as we are informed by a great cotemporary, is something more than a patent digester. Why, then, apply to his *stomach* for relief from every ailment that flesh is heir to? Is there not a quite fearful relationship between drugs and drams? are they not the Janus-face of the same grand delusion, that health, strength, and inspiration must arise from *beneath*, instead of descending from *above*. In nervous cases, at all events, is not the brain worthy of some consideration as a prime mover? and if mesmerism enable us to act on it directly, have we not, in virtue of this agency, a command over the more refined portions of the system, scarcely to be expected even from the ample resources of the modern pharmacopœia?

In ordinary cases of nervous debility, the simple induction of the mesmeric sleep is all that is needed; deficiencies are thus supplied, and the lost equilibrium restored. Supposing, however, that the matter has proceeded beyond this, and some fixed ideas have been formed, we have in phreno-mesmerism an invaluable auxiliary, whereby we can command any condition of mind at pleasure. Under this potent influence the desponding become cheerful and the gloomy are rendered happy, and even where decided insanity has set in, the raving maniac may be soothed into the dreamless slumber of the insensible coma. And shall we despise or neglect

a power by which the forebodings of melancholy monomania can be converted into brilliant anticipation, and the agony of despair be supplanted by the hilarity of joy. Phreno-mesmerism enables us to *command* the mental condition of a patient; let those who have studied insanity realise this idea in all its train of far-extending consequences, and the subject will, for them at least, need no further argument or illustration.

Let me close this discourse, which has necessarily been popular rather than scientific, because addressed to a general rather than scientific audience, by recommending mesmerism to the grave consideration of the heads of families, as a preventive of further disease in cases of slight indisposition. Man's prerogatives are nobler than he deems them. The parent holds a relationship to his children fraught with beneficent influences, not the less potent because they have slumbered during the night of many centuries. The affectionate mother intuitively mesmerises her restless or ailing infant, but her movements at present are little more than the instinctive promptings of that fathomless love which only maternity knows, for advancing civilization has liberated her from the traditionary forms in which an antiquated superstition once embodied and transmitted the experimental knowledge of the past, and we are now only beginning to recover, under the progress of inductive science, the practical power enjoyed in, perhaps, a still higher degree by those simpler generations, whose sublime faith sufficed for more than a merely chemical or mechanical philosophy will ever attain to. The sweet slumbers of childhood can be commanded at pleasure, and the wail of its young nature, under the sufferings to

which it is so frequently exposed, may be exchanged for the profound placidity of a dreamless sleep, without the administration of one nauseous or noxious ingredient. Whenever it is thought that a simple recipe might be safely administered without the formality of medical advice, there, at least, mesmerism may be tried, even by the simplest individual, with safety and advantage. Let us not, then, neglect the due culture of a dawning power which promises to endow the parent, the friend, the clergyman, and the philanthropist with an exhaustless treasury, whose priceless gift of health is one which the wealth of princes has but too often failed to purchase.

And now let me conclude with a few words to the profession. As a body they hold a distinguished and enviable position in society, and one, too, of which their solid attainments and the high spirit of gentlemanly honour by which they have been long characterised, render them eminently deserving. From the palace to the cottage they are the trusted advisers in man's last extremity; necessarily confided in on subjects and under circumstances that admit them to the penetralia of the domestic hearth, they have nobly risen to the demands made on their high-souled integrity, and proved themselves worthy of a confidence never before placed in any but a sacerdotal body. Why, then, should they risk these advantages, the ripened results of ages of arduous toil and manful discharge of duty, by committing themselves to an insane warfare with palpable facts. For themselves, as a respectable profession, it is unwise, it is inexpedient, it is suicidal. Neither is the permanent diminution of their influence which must result from such a course desirable for society. In the present de-

liration and dilapidation of so many things venerable, we cannot afford to lose the harmonising influence of a body of gentlemen who, in city and village, among rich and poor, are the welcome visitors and the confidential counsellors of all classes : they are a priesthood. Mesmerism, as a great doctrine, can, if they reject it, develop another. Already some of the choicest of this new wine has been poured into vessels never used in the ancient sanctuary. A little longer and the rejection or assumption of this great power will no longer be optional, perhaps it has ceased to be so already.

LECTURE III.

ANCIENT MESMERISM DISGUISED AS A SUPERSTITIOUS CEREMONIAL.

Charming, a Mesmeric Process—Belief in Dreams based on the occasional Occurrence of lucid Vision under ordinary Sleep—Presentiments—Second Sight; the Seer—The divining Crystal—Magic Mirror—Idolatrous Ceremonies—Demonology and Witchcraft—Blessing and Cursing.

WE have hitherto contemplated mesmerism as a subject for philosophic experiment, or as an instrument to be subordinated to man's necessities in the pursuit of health. Let us now behold it under the no less interesting aspect of arcane knowledge, whose shadow was superstition. Whether from a dim consciousness that all thought is revelation, or from a remote tradition that divine intercourse first planted the germs of reflection in the human mind, certain it is, that among the earlier generations of our race, and more especially amidst the remoter nations of the East, knowledge was ever esteemed sacred, and its possessors revered as a holy brotherhood. Then the sage was a priest of Nature and her God, and the poet consecrated the productions of his genius in sacred anthems to the service of the temple, a time which, in the vast revolution of humanity's far-extending destiny, is again beginning to cast the glory of its morning ra-

diance upon a world too long buried in the shadows of a faithless materialism and grovelling expediency. Among the cheering rays which constitute the still faint Aurora of this second morning, the harbinger, may we trust, of a day that shall constitute the grand epicycle of man's spiritual development, mesmerism is distinctly perceptible as a re-birth of fine influences, as the beginning of the reclamation of man's mental power over his corporeal structure.

We laugh at the charms of the ignorant, and deride the tales of the superstitious. We deny the marvels of modern fanaticism, and treat with contempt the narratives of ancient prodigies, because we do not understand them. Facts that cannot be explained must be denied! If things tangible be the ultimate of Nature's forces, then, perhaps, philosophy is not far wrong in the matter; but of this grave doubts may, of course, be reasonably entertained in these days, when "our portraits are painted by the sun and our messages carried by the lightning." The truth is, superstition was ever the gaunt shadow of a glorious reality, the sublime misconception of ages, whose faith dominated over reason.

Let us endeavour, then, to penetrate the cloudy grandeur of this mysterious region, and disenchant its semblances of those now needless accessories wherewith the misinterpretation of a too easily receptive past clothed the stern reality which still remains to us as the immutable revelation of Nature, wherewith she speaks from her throne of indestructible fact to the men of every age, and in a voice, therefore, to which the latest as well as the earliest generations of our race must become familiar. How poor and insignificant a thing is the charm of a

village dame. Trace up its descent, however, in time or place, to a remote antiquity or the farther East, and it becomes respectable. There the despised power is divine, and the individuals who wield it are a holy priesthood, led by hierophants whom the most potent princes respect, and the astutest statesmen reverence. The mesmeric fact is, that the mental and physical energy of an operator, concentrated upon a diseased subject, whether the ailment be local or general, is eminently calculated to effect a cure. The mutterings and manipulations of these mystic healers indicate to the experienced modern mesmerist the combination of digital and cerebral influences, simultaneously at work, and lead him rather to anticipate than deny the beneficial results said to be derived from these once inexplicable processes.

Dreams have had a varied fortune. Once princes took counsel with their pillow ; now the rustic maid is almost ashamed to tell the visions which have enlivened her virgin slumbers, and some half-witted crone of the hamlet mumbles an interpretation, once deemed worthy of the soothsayers of Chaldea. Now and then we are startled by some well-authenticated narratives of a fulfilled dream ; but it is soon conveniently forgotten, or, at the most, accounted for as a coincidence. Physiologically speaking, ordinary dreams are the result of partial cerebral excitation, interesting, doubtless, to the physician as indications of health or disease, but nothing more ; so at least say the disciples of matter of fact. We fear, however, that this will scarcely account either for prophetic dreams, or for the existence of that widely-spread belief in them which once undoubtedly prevailed. Let us, then, examine the matter a little further. There is

such a thing as lucidity, or the spontaneous development of ecstatic thought and perception. Mesmeric clairvoyance is but the scientific reproduction of a similar condition, arrived at generally by passing through the state of coma. If, then, the nervous sleep, artificially induced, will permit of the development of lucidity, why may not the natural sleep be sometimes productive of the same condition? Who shall say that in peculiar constitutions and in certain states of mind such an exaltation of the mental powers is impossible? The prophetic dream is, then, but a lucid vision obtained in slumber, and distinctly remembered in the waking state. Here we have the *fact* on which rested the ancient faith in dreams, and the distinction so finely drawn between the ivory and the horny gate, once deemed so purely fanciful, may now be understood; the former was the portal of the lucid, the latter of the "common vision of the night."

We have reason to believe that, in addition to the spontaneous occurrence of ecstatic revelations in this way, the Egyptian and Chaldean priesthood were in the practice of artificially inducing trance, under which the seer was supposed to be gifted with equal or even superior illumination. When the interpretation of dreams had become a profession, the thing was already in the yellow leaf; it had descended from a sublime phenomenon to a grovelling superstition. The ecstatic revelations of gifted slumber were already clad in the gorgeous but degrading robes of hierarchical charlatanry, when the unequalled grandeur of his imperial city proved too much for the aspiring soul of the regal Chaldean.

This leads us to another form of superstition, perhaps

somewhat more respectable than the one of which we have been just treating; I allude to a belief in presentiments. The former is vulgar; it is the weakness of the ignorant; the latter is respectable, it is the foible of the educated. When we find the Cromwells and Napoleons confessing to impressions of this kind, it is almost perilous to stigmatize it as an indication of mental infirmity; so it has been allowed to pass, even in "good society," under protest. The substantial fact of a presentiment can, nevertheless, be unveiled. Of clairvoyant dreams we have already spoken, the distinct reminiscence of them is in all probability an exception to the general rule, for, judging by the phenomena attendant on mesmeric lucidity, we have reason to believe that in a large majority of cases the subject is oblivious in his normal consciousness of the experiences obtained in the abnormal state. Very few clairvoyants, or even phreno-mesmeric subjects, know anything of their somnolent manifestations, after they have been restored to vigilance. But while all distinct ideas have thus vanished, impressions may remain and be acted on; promises made in the one state are fulfilled in the other, under an influence which the subject feels to be potent, but knows not why; yet, at the place and time specified, an irresistible desire for the execution of the mysterious engagement arises, and is, if possible, carried out. May we not, then, readily conceive that warnings thus received in the hours of slumber, and forgotten on awaking, may be, in their results at least, recollected by the well-known law of the association of ideas, as the time, place, or person connected with their fulfilment becomes revealed to the interested party in the sphere of the present and the actual. One class of presentiment may thus be explained as the

associated reminiscence of a prevision obtained under the lucidity supervening on clairvoyant slumber, a condition of being the most likely to be developed in men who lead excitable lives, or who, from prolonged solitude or the pressure of weighty affairs, have been enabled or compelled to indulge in intense or concentrated thought. There is, probably, another source whence the true presentiment may be derived, namely, waking lucidity, of which it may be considered as an imperfect development. To this, then, let us now direct some attention, as it explains the existence and attributes of the seer, that mysterious being, peculiar to no age or country, no race or faith, but emerging with dazzling radiance, ever and anon, on the actual stage of events, to leave behind in the memories of men a trace as of the lightning's flash, vestiges as of some celestial visitant, for a moment mingling with the crowd of mortals.

We laugh at second sight as the vanishing superstition of a few ignorant mountaineers, and treat the tales of the sybils as we would the feats of a hand-shifting fortune-teller. Perhaps, however, it is doubtful whether the faith which implicitly receives or the incredulity which superciliously denies the revelations of these natural ecstasies, be the most significant of an imperfect and barbarous mental development. We have said that the *seer* is a natural phenomenon, of whom the mesmeric lucide is but a scientific reproduction. An overwrought intellect, as in the case of Swedenborg, or overstrained emotions, as in the instance of religious devotees, or the stilled and concentrated attention of the whole being, as among the Brahmins of India, have often sufficed, even in comparatively modern times, to reproduce a special exalta-

tion of the mental powers, under which lucidity has at times supervened, when prevision, distant perception, and apparent intercommunion with spirits have been at times manifested, and a favourable tendency in the age or people was alone needed to develop this seer-germ into the full magnificence under which it has been presented, when birthed at a more appropriate time for its manifestation.

We have hitherto contemplated seerdom as a spontaneous development of mental activity, the result of ecstatic exaltation; but the records of ancient thaumaturgy, confirmed by the experiments of modern philosophy, demonstrate that this peculiar gift may be specially sought, and sometimes with success. The divining crystals and magic mirrors of our romantic ancestors have long since found their way into the museums of virtuosi, there to be exhibited as the interesting relics of a barbarous superstition or a shameless charlatanry; and Elias Ashmole, the antiquary, and Horace Walpole, the man of letters, successively prided themselves on possessing and exhibiting the magic mirror of the quack and astrologer, Dr. Dee. It is said that the sextants and chronometers of skilled navigators have, by the casualties of shipwreck and other disasters, fallen into the hands of rude barbarians, who, ignorant of their uses, have also preserved and exhibited these refined instrumentalities as objects of idle though amusing curiosity. The parallel between savage ignorance and barbarous scepticism is sometimes much closer than would prove agreeable to the self-sufficient superficiality of a sardonic Voltaire or a supercilious Gibbon. In our own day, learned lords and gentlemen have gone to Egypt to re-

cover, from amidst the debris of the Pyramids, some fragmentary remnants of ancient magic, and wonderful were the tales narrated of the mysteries still practised in the secret chambers of Grand Cairo. That boys should, by looking at a drop of inky fluid, be able to describe the persons and habits of European gentlemen to their inquiring friends in the land of the Pharaohs, was an announcement almost too extraordinary either for the gravity of London or the mercuriality of Paris ; so, after a little ridicule, the uncomfortable revelation was quietly abandoned to the digestive capabilities of the German illuminati. There was, however, no need of going to Egypt at all for information, as divination by the crystal, of which the inky inspection is only another form, has never been thoroughly extinguished among our own population, while vaticination by the mirror, if it ever slumbered, has again appeared in renovated vigour. The venerable magi of old, once the councillors of princes, now the butt of graceless witlings, to think of their despised pretensions thus undergoing a resurrection amidst all the chemistry and mechanics of the nineteenth century ! Cycle upon epicycle of faith and infidelity. What Thaumaturgist ever equalled Time in the invocation of spirits from the vasty deep of long buried centuries.

Not without a due basis of fact could the gaunt spectre of superstition have stood upon the face of the earth and received the undoubting homage of her successive generations. The crystal and the mirror are instrumentalities for the evolution of waking lucidity in duly susceptible subjects. The crystal may be a precious stone or an oblong spheroid of polished glass ; the mirror may be

a dark fluid or a prepared surface of shining solid ; you look into the former and at the latter. The operator wills at the same time intensely for the production of the desired result (he should concentrate his gaze on the back of the head) ; if successful, you see things, places, and persons emerge into more or less distinctness, so that you can recognise the aspect of familiar scenes and the faces of old friends. There is every stage of clearness and order in the vision, from cloudy indistinctness to brilliant and forcible portraiture, the degree of seer-vision attained to depending partly on the operator, partly on the subject ; when the latter is susceptible of lucidity, all the effects of prevision, &c., may be attained to, as in the mesmeric sleep. By his own prolonged and concentrated gaze the subject is hypnotized, by the will of the operator he is mesmerised, and the result is, that manifestations of ecstatic exaltation in a state of vigilance, of which we have already spoken when treating of the natural seer. Sound as well as sight may, in the case of highly susceptible persons, be thus obtained—in other words, the ghostly visions of the crystal or the mirror may speak as well as move.

The philosophy that cannot explain such facts has, of course, but one resource—it must deny them, and make confident assertion, thus for a time at least, supply the place of an imperfect analysis. Physiologically and psychologically speaking, however, the phenomena are explicable enough. In consequence of the abnormal exaltation of the nervous system, there is a transference of ideas from the subjective to the objective sphere, and that which is in reality a conception becomes a perception, while from invigorated memory the unconscious

past of the subject is reproduced like a new revelation to himself, and from intense sympathy he also reads off the thoughts of his operator, or even of a by-stander. The crystal and the mirror suffice for the reception of the projected vision whereby it may gain in distinctness, but nothing more.

Such a rational and common-sense explanation is, however, by no means sufficient to satisfy that aptitude for the marvellous, which has no doubt been wisely made inherent in human nature; and, accordingly, we have the spiritual school of mesmerists, who believe in the objective existence of the visions of their subjects, and this was even carried so far in Paris, that Cahagnet actually opened a celestial telegraph, where people might hold intercourse with their deceased friends, through the intermediate agency of mesmerised lucides. The operator was, no doubt, a scientific enthusiast, and in pure honesty published a book containing the wonderful narratives of his clairvoyants' interviews, both with angelic natures and the spirits of deceased mortals. The work, I need scarcely say, affords ample evidence of the real nature of the intercourse held by Cahagnet's subjects with beings of the spirit-sphere. This operator's power of commanding ecstasy transcended that of all his predecessors, and approached nearer to the tremendous influence wielded by the old exorcists, than mesmerism under its scientific aspect had before attained to. Hence the thoughts and reminiscences of all inquirers were read off to the profoundest depths, and the circumstances of their own past life, or the features and habits of their distant or deceased friends, described with startling precision. The curious admixture of a Swe-

denborgian heaven and hell, derived from sympathy with the operator's especial form of faith, gives the book a serio-comic air, not the most agreeable to those unprovided with a key for its interpretation.

The peculiar condition of high-wrought ecstasy, termed the death-trance, is eminently deserving the attention, both of the physiologist and the psychologist; but from its terrible nature it is altogether unfit for public experiment, and perhaps from the profoundly abnormal character of its manifestations, not at all times a safe procedure even for the most skilful experimentalist. It is a scientific reproduction of the highest state of natural trance, and of that condition of perfect absorption to which some mystics, ancient and modern, have aspired as the acme of attainable bliss.

Let me again remind my hearers, that mesmerism is ancient magic and thaumaturgy rebirthed under the more appropriate aspect of modern science. It is the spirit of arcane lore stripped of its time-worn wrappings of superstition, and commencing a new cycle of progress in all the vigour and energy of renovated youth. Shall we call it the majestic reality of which the gorgeous ceremonial of ancient idolatry was but the esoteric symbol and popular emblem; the sacred and primeval truth of which barbarian and classic mythology was but the idealistic vehicle and childish embodiment. Did not the cloudy incense, that rolled in its fragrant volumes before the vulgar gaze, typify to the initiated those medicated and odorous vapours which steep the senses in a slumber, whose dreams are the visions of Elysium. And we may conjecture that even its bloody sacrifices were but the terrible means by which, through a fearful

sympathy, darkly taught men sought to re-awaken the latent intuition of their higher being, by absorbing the effluence, and, with it, the unvitiated instincts and terrene inspiration of the expiring brute. Even human sacrifices once had a fathomless significance, of which neither those who practised, nor those who abrogated them in latter ages, could have had the faintest conception. Dactyli, Centaurs, Arrow of Abaris, and demon of Socrates; O! ye erudite compilers of classical dictionaries, what a mighty work of revision lies as yet all unattempted before you!

The vulgar demonology and witchcraft of the middle ages appears to have been a traditionary remnant of antecedent heathenism, fallen into contemptible decadence from having passed through so many generations of ignorant devotees. Still, enough remains amidst the exaggerated and prejudiced narratives of this monstrous abortion, to indicate the lingering remains of ancient initiation, with its ecstatic possession and supersensuous exaltation, of which bacchanal revelries and walpurgis nights were the olden and modern revelation to the uninitiated.

The transmutations of form to which the weird sisters, and their victims, were supposed to be subjected, was a subjective phenomenon to which we have an approximative result in the feats of modern biology. The evil eye is the mesmeric glance used as a vehicle for the cursing influence, or in other words for an emanation from destructiveness, combativeness, and the animal nature generally. An amulet is a mesmerised substance, which may be solid or fluid, and really effective for health in certain highly susceptible cases, although the virtue of

this talisman, as an agent for conveying an operator's influence to his subject, seems with us to want more frequent renewal than was customary of old. The basis of the faith in these locomotive charms seems, however, to have been based on a tangible "fact in nature."

The popular and playful charms and incantations, of which we have an evanescent remnant in the midsummer night and new year's eve mysteries, still celebrated, although with decadent glory, in some rural districts, are all based on the power of mental mesmerism. That young ladies, after a long evening's excitement of mingled fear and anticipation, should on running into the garden behold the shadow of a favoured beau, will not astonish any one acquainted with the fanciful vagaries of a disturbed nervous system, and the power of the mind to transfer its subjective conceptions to the objective sphere. Nay, we are ready to believe that the concentrated attention of a young and affectionate being, devoted for hours to the task of thinking on another, may produce very peculiar results on him, quite in accordance with the well-known laws of sympathy. Hence we are prepared to receive the most wonderful narratives, in connexion with these pleasant witcheries, as subjective phenomena, to be accounted for, of course, on the severest principles of the inductive philosophy!

Let me now conclude this rather lengthened address, by directing your attention to the real power exerted by blessing and cursing. It is to be feared that these two manifestations have, in the estimate of many even well-informed persons, sunk into a mere form, utterly devoid of all inherent and essential efficiency. There cannot be a greater mistake. Each implies a powerful and con-

centrated action of the brain, in the one case its moral, and in the other its passionate nature, being predominant. In the act of blessing, every great and good quality of our nature is in high positive action in the mind of him who communicates. Now all the facts evolved under mesmeric sympathy, and in well-conducted experiments under biology, indicate that such a radiation of beneficent influence cannot be inoperative. It is calming, purifying, ennobling in its action on the recipient, and as far as it is effective, will tend to make him wiser, better, happier than before. Conversely the radiation of every evil influence, as in the curse, must in an equal degree tend, by sympathy, to arouse "anger, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," in the mind of him on whom it falls, unless protected from its devastating influence by the panoply of a vigorous and well-disciplined moral nature. It is philosophically as well as religiously demonstrable, that the "effective fervent prayer of a righteous man" will avail much. Blessing and prayer are something more than "mental exertations." Nature herself teaches us, that their efficiency may be limited only by the extent of the universe. By them man strikes a chord, whose vibrations extend from the throne of Omnipotence to the perishing worm on the uttermost limits of creation.

I had much more to say to you, on the symbolical truthfulness of many sacred and venerable things which have descended to us from a remote antiquity. The simplest of our religious forms has in it, when viewed by the grander light, which is now happily redawning on the world, a depth of significance, which may suffice to show us how much wiser were the primeval forefathers

of our race, with their profoundly thoughtful reverence, than the sceptical descendants, with their superficial infidelity; but, I pause here, lest, by any chance, the true scope and intention of these expositions should be misunderstood. Let it suffice for the present, that I assure you, we now find the intuitions of faith anteceded by all these many centuries, the discoveries of science and the conclusions of reason, and we may now hope that the day is happily approaching, nay, has to some minds already arrived, when a charitable faith, and an enlightened philosophy, will again meet in friendly greeting, and bridge, by their communion, the fathomless gulf that once seemed yawning between thought and inspiration, knowledge and faith, whose pathway of approach may be diverse, but whose goal is the same—even the footstool of the Eternal.

LECTURE IV.

MESMERISM AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF MENTAL PHENOMENA BY EXPERIMENT.



Modern Metaphysical Inquiries hitherto based on Hypothesis, not Experiment ; not always so among the Ancients—Mesmerism enables us to experimentalize on Mental Phenomena—Under Phreno-mesmerism we can reproduce any Train of Thought or Feeling at Pleasure—Our Belief in the objective Reality of dreaming Conceptions illustrated—Exalted Perception—Seer-vision—Thought-reading—The Mental Phenomena induced by Mesmerism subjective, not objective—Mesmerism calculated to increase our Self-knowledge, and restore to us the profound Self-intuition of Antiquity—The Dawn of a new Era.

THERE was a time—fortunately we have passed it—when hypothesis was triumphant over fact, and theory superseded experiment, even in the sphere of physics. The despotism of preconceived ideas is evidenced in a thousand years of mediæval stagnation. The terrible reign of the Stagyrite and the celestial doctors will, we may trust, prove a sufficient warning to the students of Nature for ever. The errors that must be matured by perpetually arguing from a foregone conclusion in this department of investigation, are too obvious to afford a probability of recurrence to the follies of the schoolmen. Physics are safe ; but how fares it with metaphysics.

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We boast of having escaped from the dialectics of a darker age in relation to the former—but are we not involved in the clouds of endless theory and baseless supposition in the latter? What is the history of metaphysical inquiry from the beginning, but a narrative of whatever aerial castle-building in the sphere of “pure intellect” the master-minds of successive eras have been pleased to indulge in. Each penetrating by such helps as he might into “the stilly depths” of his own being, brought up thence, like a successful diver, the pearls of soul-light. Alas! with what labour of logic, what hard-wrought “definition of terms,” and the like, was the glimmering of psychic revelation, so obtained, afterwards communicated. Never surely was Pythian priestess more convulsively contorted in the utterance of her oracular responses, than were these philosophic illuminati in their desperate attempts to make patent to a benighted world the dark chambers of a human mind. Language undoubtedly failed these “veiled prophets” in expressing, as it undoubtedly did their readers in apprehending, the fathomless depths of meaning that might possibly be concealed behind the overwhelming mantle of verbiage, in which their shadowy enigmas of thought and consciousness seemed more than ever begloomed.

Alas! we say, for this task of expounding the revelations of man’s inner and higher self, if it was ever so much as even approximated to, we may be quite sure that some gifted seer of Nature’s own making, like a William Shakspeare, would do more to give fitting utterance to his burning thoughts in one lightning line, than the life labour of many moral philosophers and learned

professors would have accomplished, in tomes that it were worth a university degree even to peruse. Whatsoever of available psychic light was cast upon the world since the days of those primeval seermen, the Pythagorean and other initiated sages of antiquity, whose esoteric communications, by the way, seem to have been purposely mystified, is due to the poets, the only soul-revealers, whose lucidity seems to have outlasted that "night of the dark ages" whose chronology is, we apprehend, something more extensive than is usually supposed. Seriously, there is increasing evidence that much of ancient philosophy and theosophy, both Greek and Hindoo, was the product of supersensuous exaltation, and of that ecstatic illumination, under which the human mind transcends its ordinary range of thought and conception, more especially in reference to its own essential nature and its relation to that exhaustless fountain of being, whence the dwellers of the eternity hold a derivative existence.

To descend, however, from these vague generalities to some special instances in point, where mesmerism may be effectually and advantageously used for experimentalising on the phenomena of mind; when I inform you that we can in phreno-mesmerism not only evoke the several faculties, principles, and passions, into their respective and appropriate manifestations, either separately or in combination, and thus illustrate the arrangement and working of the mental machinery in the ordinary state of conscious vigilance, but that we can also reproduce all the phenomena of ordinary dreaming and somnambulism, and vary them at our pleasure, it will be at once perceived, that the means thus placed at our

command for ensuring a precise and accurate investigation of man's mental constitution, transcend anything of which the olden school of metaphysicians could have conceived. But the resources of the science are not even thus exhausted ; for so far we have supposed it only to reproduce ordinary normal or common abnormal conditions of the nervous system. It can do far more, even to the extent of evolving the supersensuous vision of ecstatic trance. Remember we can not only evoke those peculiar states of mental being, which, when manifested spontaneously, have ever proved a source of wonder, and often of terror, to the widely separated ages privileged to behold these extraordinary manifestations of man's usually latent powers, but we can do more : we can to a great extent command not only the dreamer, but his dreams—not only the visionary, but his visions. The mesmeric lucide is a seer, more or less obedient—a spirit, that being evoked, proves the servant of a duly qualified enchanter.

It was said by some over-scrupulous observers of old, that in physics we should wait and catch Nature in the fact, not coerce and torture her by an experiment. With what success this patient waiting was attended, I need scarcely tell you ; ages rolled away with less of progress in scientific discovery than has rewarded any, even the most listless, generation of those who have applied themselves to the same department of knowledge on the true Baconian system of experiment by coercion. And shall we refuse to avail ourselves of similar powers, in reference to the nobler province of inquiry, which have already proved so effective in enlarging the inferior one. Shall we foolishly decline to master the long-concealed

secrets of our higher nature, by that powerful process of investigation, which enables us to produce at our pleasure those otherwise rare psychic manifestations, for whose spontaneous occurrence we might have to wait for the lapse of centuries, and even then be found comparatively incompetent to the important task of observation. We trust that in the realm of psychology, mesmerism may yet solve the sphynx riddle of *humanity*, and provide the thread that will lead our wearied and wandering souls from the labyrinth of an inexplicable and self-contradictory metaphysics, into the pure light of that unclouded spiritual vision which blessed the primeval, and will again comfort the final generations of earth's much-enduring heaven sons.

But to return. By phreno-mesmeric experiments we demonstrate the truth of phrenology, with all its vast train of consequences to the science of mind, a department of the subject for which, in its details, I must refer you to the lectures more especially devoted to its illustration. When, however, it is stated that by this power we are enabled to produce any condition of thought or feeling, and almost any degree of emotion or passion in a subject at pleasure, it must be at once obvious that we are placed in a very favourable position for investigating mental action under all its manifold phases. We can reproduce the manifestation of fear, hope, pride, benevolence, affection, or hatred, singly or in combination with other influences, and vary the number and proportionate force of the elementary powers that conduce to these evolutions at pleasure. We can put the intellect through its facings, and evolve reflection, imagination, and memory, in all that *intensity* of

concentrated demonstration which usually results only from the immediate pressure of some great and urgent demand. We wield, in short, an influence over a mesmerised individual for the time, which equals, if it does not surpass, the coaction supplied by the most tremendous emergencies. If desirable, we can convert anxiety into fear, and exalt the latter into terror, and yet in an instant change visions of unutterable horror into scenes of bliss, or spectacles of surpassing beauty. Under the play of a skilful operator's finger the subjective demon of the mesmerisee is converted into an angel of light, and the ravenous beast metamorphosed into a smiling maiden; while the yawning gulf into which he was being precipitated is exchanged for the spring-time beauty of the flower-garden, or the wavy slopes of the cultured landscape. The orator is made to speak, the actor to recite; and when the God-like gift is inherent the poet may be induced to compose. The musician, now himself an instrument, executes the lively polka under one combination, and the solemn anthem under another. The speaker indulges in the loftiest flights of imagination, or pours forth unrestrained the boundless wealth of metaphor and comparison, and then convinces his auditors by the severest and most coercive logic, as the various groups of the ideal and reflective powers are alternately excited, or rendered quiescent. Under other influences he indulges in withering invective and cutting sarcasm or playful irony, and then, with gentle reproof and mild persuasion, gradually leads his imaginary hearers to some hopeful conclusion of the varied theme, whose modifications have been throughout regulated by the master-hand of an accomplished operator,

acting on the organs of a highly susceptible subject, who, on returning to vigilance, is generally quite unconscious of all that has transpired—the only individual in the company who has not been delighted with his own wit, or improved by his own manifestations. And these things are neglected, as of small account, which the true masters of mind, the real giants of philosophy, would have accounted a life well spent in observing.

There is also another very important series of mental phenomena which can be illustrated by cerebro-mesmeric manifestations. I allude to that mysterious portion of our being of which we are more or less conscious in dreams. How strangely potent is the influence which then holds dominion over us, in commanding an ever-recurrent belief in the outward existence of the scenery and *dramatis personæ* of our nocturnal experiences ; and yet we can reproduce this, and show the working of that important law, in virtue of which the subjective conceptions of a somnolent vision are projected into apparent objectivity, and assume all the semblance of stern realities. If we excite benevolence, the vision of some person in distress, and needing the action of beneficence, is at once raised before the mind's eye of the subject ; while, on the other hand, if we stimulate combativeness, an opponent is generally presented. Prospects and incidents of travel occur under locality, and the scenery is sublime, beautiful, or commonplace, according to the organs introduced into the combination. It would seem that when the brain is in a somnolent condition, if one or more of its organs be aroused into activity, spontaneously, or rather by any influence other than the usual stimulation of sensuous excitement, ideas are framed in

accordance with the dominant character of the mental condition so superinduced. The usual order of sequence, in short, is reversed, and instead of a foe calling up the passion of anger, it is mental irritation that evokes the vision of a seemingly sufficient cause in the person of an antagonist. A similar tendency is observable in the ordinary workings of imagination, the principal difference being, that in the latter case, from entire cerebral vigilance, the various mental movements are kept in due relative subordination, and conception, consequently, does not intrude on the domain of perception, and there is no belief in aught beyond the subjective existence of the passing phenomena. Insanity, delirium, and other forms of morbid mental excitement, have been found sufficient to so far disturb the healthy proportion of the various faculties, as to produce a similar belief in the objective reality of visionary ideas, even during the vigilant but unequal action of the entire brain. The ordinary dream, then, is susceptible of effective and satisfactory illustration in its more mysterious aspects, from the facts evolved in the usual process of phrenomesmeric manifestation.

The preceding observations on the phenomena of dreams may suffice also to explain many things connected with waking visions. The major portion of these are no doubt due to disturbed cerebral function, which, when it has attained to such a degree as will permit of the tyrannical dominancy of some organs over the others, may very possibly produce, by the inequality of action, even in the waking state, a condition similar to that which seems to supervene as the immediate cause of somnolent dreaming, namely, a loss of equipoise between

the several portions of the cerebral structure. In this condition, subjective perceptions are, as in ordinary dreaming, projected into objectivity, and seemingly become things for the cognizance of sensuous perception, the defective functional state of the brain, notwithstanding its vigilance, being insufficient for the sustained action of that corrective process, by which ideas, originated within, are intuitively distinguished from impressions obtained from without. The greater part of our village ghosts are, doubtless, simply these phantoms of a waking dream, which people generally see with moderate comfort, in consequence of the prepared condition of the mind for the perception of its own conceptions, whereas let a real ghost of the substantial sort be well enacted, and fits, long continued sickness, and even permanent mental imbecility, attest the fearful shock which the nervous system receives, when suddenly presented with an object, which all its previous education has surrounded with associations of unutterable horror.

We must now, however, advance to a higher range of investigation, where we are presented with phenomena, that seem to indicate not disturbed but exalted perception, and on which well-conducted mesmeric experiments cast a light not otherwise obtainable. We have already spoken of the seer, in a previous lecture, let us now contemplate him as a subject for grave consideration by the moral philosopher. Obeying the practical genius of their age, modern metaphysicians have contemptuously dismissed, with a few cursory remarks, those strange revelations of humanity's interior nature, that now and then loom out upon us, in fitful gleams from the records of mystic spiritualism. The results of these strange ex-

periments, although extending geographically from the Ganges to the Rhine, and chronologically from the remotest traditionary records, whose oft-reverberated echoes are caught in the earliest pages of the Vedas, and whisper their mystic mutterings in such stray fragments of Hellenic lore as have survived to us from Pythagorean tuition and Eleusinian initiation ; these results, we say, although developed again and again in Fakeer, Dervish, and European saint, although narrated now of a Socrates, and then of a Swedenborg, have been allowed to quiescently slumber in the dusty tomes where their records are preserved for a profounder age, the more superficial mental phenomena of every day-life being apparently considered as alone worthy the attention of the wise, and illustration from the ingenious "men of the west."

Man has been considered as a being whose range of perception must be bounded, while he remains an inhabitant under his present form of the terrestrial globe, by the limits assigned to his known and acknowledged senses. Material aids, as in the case of optical instruments, have extended the sphere, but not changed the essential character of ordinary sensuous perception. This limitation is, however, founded upon a grievous error, and the data obtainable from unprejudiced observation in any age might have demonstrated its fallacy. The boundary of man's perception varies according to the functional delicacy of the organic instrumentality employed. Opacity disappears, and distance is annihilated, to a human being duly exalted, nor is the curtain of yesterday or to-morrow that mystic veil which separates the outer temple of Time from the adytum of Eternity,

much less pervious to a qualified eye than the coarse vestiture of granitic mountains and widely-spreading provinces, which interpose their puny barriers in vain between the true lucide and his object of psychic research. Man, restored to the command of his Diviner attributes, shines forth as the conqueror of his temporal environment, and stands a victor on the remnants of an evanescent materiality, that would vainly essay to girdle his liberated spirit within its narrowing limitations. We are greater than we know, sons of the Infinite, we inherit a germ, whose roots may yet be nourished in the soil of Time and Space, but whose blossoms already prepare to extend their fragrance through the shadeless vistas of an ever-present Here, and an everlasting Now.

It is not to be supposed, when lucidity has been induced in a subject, that we have conferred a new power ; we have only evoked a latent one. The spontaneity of its manifestation, in successive ages and in various individuals, would lead to a similar conclusion. Clairvoyance, then, may legitimately be considered as an inherent, although usually dormant, faculty in man. It is a higher sense, the development of a nobler condition of being than that under which he ordinarily exists, wherein exalted intuition supplies the place of reflection, and conclusions are often attained to without the intermediate process of conscious excogitation. As to the range of sensuous perception, it is obviously rendered more nearly coextensive with the properties of matter than before. Let us not boast of sight as the highest of all possible modes of physical perception ; the mantle of darkness can shroud the glories of the universe from the keenest eye. And in all but a few instances of transpa-

rency how fearfully opaque is our material environment ; and yet that darkness is transfused with imponderable force, which becomes a shadeless light to the exalted sensibility of a perfectly lucid somnambule ; and that gloomy solidity which, in our ordinary condition, we may look *at* but not *into*, whose surface only is exposed to the sharpest eye, but whose interpenetration defies the most searching glance, is, nevertheless, pervaded by magnetic currents, which, to beings duly qualified, must render it pellucid as the cloudless atmosphere of a summer's day. Darkness and opacity exist only for those whose range of perception is limited to ordinary vision ; they are relationships which disappear in proportion as the faculty of ecstatic perception becomes developed. Man has the regal prerogative, doubtless hereafter to be more generally developed, of transcending these narrowing circumscriptions.

In addition to this extension in the sphere of perception, lucidity is often accompanied by another form of exalted mental action, known as thought-reading. This seems to be a superior manifestation of sympathy to that usually termed community of sensation ; the latter is physical, the former is mental. Each may arise from complete interpenetration between the od force or mesmeric aura of the subject and the individual with whom he is thus *en rapport*. It is a case of interspheration, and is complete, when the lucide reflects, not only the present ideas, but the past impressions of another soul-mirror. The polished language of the most gifted orator, even the inspired utterance of the heaven-sent poet, become unspeakably insignificant as a medium for the transference of ideas from mind to mind, when compared with the

stupendous instrumentality commanded by a perfectly lucid seer. But, alas, this glorious endowment of an all-embracing receptivity departs with its magnificent potentiality on a return to consciousness, and the commonplace being who seemed for a moment endowed with the concentrated eloquence, knowledge, and wisdom of ages, descends again from the realms of enchantment in the simple guise of an ordinary mortal. But it is enough; we have heard the rustle of those pinions whose more than eagle flight shall hereafter bear the soul for ever upwards and onwards through the boundless realms of inexhaustible knowledge. Here it drank, though thirstily, yet from a shaded humanity like itself; there, let us hope, its vast capacities will have the wisdom and experience of the first-born of the morning stars of creation as the fountains of its derivative inspiration.

As might be supposed, in a science so abounding with extraordinary phenomena there are not wanting several schools of interpretation. The sober seriousness that would explain as much as possible by exalted function, and admit only as a last resource the objective character of spiritual visitations and angelic interviews, meets with but little sympathy from the more imaginative. Much, no doubt, of seemingly ingenious demonstration may sometimes be offered as to the reality of certain "lucid visions;" but whether of the night or the day, whether mesmeric or spontaneous, in the mirror or the crystal, I must confess my scepticism as to their being anything more than subjective phenomena, interesting to the philosopher but not heterodox to the divine. Dogmatism, however, on a subject so far transcending all recent experience would be absurd; let each be fully satisfied in

his own mind, and charitably permit his neighbour to think for himself. It is a field of investigation that cannot be too assiduously cultured, and the one only condition on which progress can here be satisfactorily achieved is "liberty."

Of the extent to which mesmerism is destined to aid the cause of mental science, I believe not even the most sanguine of its advocates can yet form a conception. That it will, however, afford man a glorious revelation of his higher being, a self-intuition, of which his physical introversion is but the type and symbol, the faint shadow of a mighty substance, we can scarcely doubt. And if so, then will it be the harbinger of a revolution in philosophy, such as the world has never before seen. Man will return on a higher plane of thought and action, over the "old ways" of profound meditation, trodden by the sublimer spirits of that antiquity, whose veriest fragments of esoteric knowledge sufficed for the mental sustenance of so many subsequent generations. We shall be privileged to drink of the same deep fountains whence welled forth those ideas that made their possessors giants, and shall then find the utterly inexpressible depth of meaning couched beneath that one short sentence, "know thyself," whose esoteric development embraced the mysteries of that grandly awful volume, a human soul purified of its terrestrial dross, and used as a cloudless mirror of the universe.

That it is an intellectual as well as physical change, a moral as well as material "idea," that now struggles for birth, is obvious, not only from its essential character, as thus far revealed, but also from the recklessly

desperate nature of the antagonism to which it has been subjected, and also from the martyr-like character of the apostleship by which it has been advocated. No flowery path is that of the mesmerist ; his life is a " warfare upon earth," and men think they do God good service by persecuting those whom they doubtless conceive to be adherents and propagators of mischievous error. I speak not of myself ; I have made my home in the tempest, and ever feel it my supremest pleasure " to mount the storm and ride the whirlwind" of popular opinion on this agitated question ; but I speak of those great and good men, who, endowed with ability, and placed in a position that must have ensured them an easy success in the beaten path of their profession, to which, indeed, some of them had already attained, nevertheless, have nobly dared, not merely to sacrifice the coarse guerdon of pecuniary reward, but what must be far dearer to their minds, a world-wide reputation, and the well-earned respect of their brethren, on the altar of truth, in whose holy cause they have endured long-continued contempt and ridicule, " the world's cold sneer ;" and have submitted, for now these many years, to the scoffs and jeers of those who would have been but too proud to add the mite of their applause, to swell that triumph which would otherwise have surely awaited them. Need I mention the names of Elliotson and Ashburner, of Esdaile and Engledue, as those of the men to whom I have been more especially alluding, and whose exalted spirit of self-sacrifice is of itself sufficient to redeem our age from the charge of incapacity for moral heroism. Such witnesses are prophetic of a glorious futurity for the cause in whose behalf they have

borne such long and severely-tried testimony. Other honourable men, not a few, in every department of society, might also be named, the divine, the soldier, and the private gentleman, who have also borne the heat and burden of this fearful day. But it is enough; may many of my present auditors be also added to this "holy army of martyrs" for the truth!

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