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ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

REPORT OF DR. FRANKLIN

AND OTHER COMMISSIONERS,

CHARGED BY THE KING OF FRANCE WITH THE EXAMINATION OF THE ANIMAL MAGNETISM AS PRACTISED AT PARIS.

Translated from the French.

WITH

AN HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE "SCIENCE,"

AN ABSTRACT OF THE

REPORT ON MAGNETIC EXPERIMENTS,

Made by a Committee of the Royal Academy of Medicine, in 1831;

AND

Remarks on Col. Stone's Pamphlet.

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A. WALDIE, PR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In addition to the contents of the present pamphlet as set forth in the title, the reader will find the first eight pages occupied by the first report of the committee of the Royal Society of Medicine in 1784.

Next follows the Report of the Royal Commissioners, Dr. Franklin at their head, and the pamphlet is concluded by a succinct history of the so called "science," and an abstract of the report made in 1831, when lucidity or *clairvoyance* had been added to the list of the wonders of Animal Magnetism. The whole is designed as a MANUAL on the subject, which should be carefully perused by those in danger of being led away by the doctrines now broached.

Philadelphia, Oct. 20, 1837.

REPORT

OF A

COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE,

Appointed to examine a work, entitled "Enquiries and Doubts respecting the Animal Magnetism," by M. Thouret, Regent Physician of the Faculty of Paris, and Member of the Society. *To which are subjoined, by the translator, notes, chiefly extracted from M. Thouret's performance.*

The underwritten were charged by the Royal Society of Medicine, with the examination of a work of M. Thouret, member of the society, entitled, "Enquiries and Doubts respecting the Animal Magnetism."

In the attentive perusal of this work, it is obvious to remark, that it has two very distinct objects; one of them, which is in a manner historical, is to explain the coincidences of the animal magnetism, as it was known to the ancients, with that which is admitted by the moderns: the other contains critical reflections and doubts in regard to the evidences upon which the doctrine is founded, the uncertainty of which M. Thouret undertakes to display. We will endeavour to lay before the society an idea of his performance.

The animal magnetism held a principal rank among the systems which were embraced in that period of literary history, when suppositions were admitted to hold the place of facts; and this hypothesis vanished, together with many others, when experimental philosophy began to dissipate the impostures of the imagination, and to afford an accurate measure of the value of arts and sciences.

The object of this system was a fluid extremely subtle, upon which were bestowed the magnificent titles of soul of the world, spirit of the universe, and universal magnetic fluid; and which was pretended to be diffused through the whole space occupied by the material creation, to animate the system of nature, to penetrate all substances, and to be the vehicle to animated bodies in general, and their several regions in particular, of certain forces of attraction and repulsion, by means of which they explained the phenomena of nature.

Nor were they contented to admit, or rather to imagine, the fluid

we have described; they flattered themselves that they were able, in certain methods, to render themselves masters of this fluid, and to direct its operations. Even this did not terminate their chimerical pretensions: they affirmed that this fluid, in which they admitted a species of flux and reflux, exerted an important degree of action upon the nerves, and had a grand analogy with the vital principle; that its effects, under the guidance of skill and illumination, extended to very great distances, without the intervention of any foreign substances; that it was possible to impregnate with it, either certain powders, in the manner of Sir Kenelm Digby, who asserted that he had done this, or fluids, or different parts of the bodies of animals; that this agent was like light reflected by mirrors, and that sound and music augmented its intensity.

The partisans of the animal magnetism, who wrote in the seventeenth century, did not yet confine their hopes within these limits: the art of directing the fluid, which they had brought down from heaven, and which, according to them, acted in so distinguished a manner upon the human body, might be expected to have a considerable share in the medical science, or rather to supersede that science, as it had hitherto existed; they did not fail to assert, that in causing it to circulate in a proper manner, the restoration of diseased organs was infallible, as well as the preservation of the health of those who were yet unattacked with any disease.[1]

Such was the origin of an external and universal medicine, of a species entirely new, and which boasted of having the advantage of curing diseases, without obliging any drugs to be swallowed by the diseased. Soon after poles were discovered in the human body, that is, points towards which it appeared that the action of this imaginary fluid ought to be directed, cures and evacuations were operated without the assistance of pharmacy, sensations of various kinds were excited in the patients; and, notwithstanding the distinguished effects ascribed to this agent, it was asserted, that persons the most feeble and delicate might submit to its process without danger. The process had yet another use, that of discovering the

[1] "It must be confessed, however, that the manner of directing the pretended magnetism, is different in these systems. The ancients, as well as M. Mesmer, regarded this fluid as universally diffused, as pervading the bodies of animals, and as capable of being rendered the vehicle of the most salutary influences. But, in order to call it into action, they did not, like M. Mesmer, desire to touch, or so much as to approach the patient. Their method consisted in a different order of proceeding. To give a suitable direction to the universal spirit, they were obliged to employ real parts, either extracted or evacuated, of the individual upon whom they proposed to direct the magnetism. The different humours of the human body, whether natural, as the blood, the urine, the excrements, or contrary to nature, as the pus bred in wounds; in fine, the solid parts of the frame, as the flesh, the nails, the hair, in a state of separation from the body, afforded, according to the ancient doctrine, the suitable and necessary means of employing the magnetism. These different parts, so long as they remained in a state of integrity, were supposed to be united in the link of a common vital principle with the individual who had furnished them. The union was operated by the intervention of the universal spirit, and in acting upon them, the physician was said to act also upon the person to whom they had belonged; an action, which, as it was independent of contact, and was not superseded by distance, was regarded as magnetic."—*Thouret.*

seat of the distemper; a thing frequently so difficult to be ascertained, but which was pointed out by the fluid by a sort of instinctive intelligence, and with absolute demonstration. It perfected the concoction of the humours; nervous distempers, in particular, rarely resisted its influence; it was favourable to transpiration. In fine, and this last remark is of particular importance, it had a powerful action upon the moral principles of our frame. A propensity, that could scarcely be resisted, was the basis of the attachment and gratitude, which were vowed by the patients to those who had employed upon them this method of cure. Several, and in this number was Maxwel, even gave us to understand, that it was possible, in certain circumstances of human life, to make an improper use of this vehicle of influence.[1]

This picture of the animal magnetism, as it was invented and applauded by the ancients, is faithfully extracted from the performance of M. Thouret. The principal authors, to which he has recourse in the progress of his enquiry, are Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Goclenius, Burgravius, Libavius, Wirdig, Maxwel, Santanelli, Tentzel, Kircher, and Borel.[2] The entire passages are

[1] "Far be it from me," says Maxwel, "to lead you to improper actions. If, from the perusal of my works, you become acquainted with the means of such actions, you will do me the justice not to divulge them. I have seen" adds he, "the most incredible effects, and the greatest advantages from a right use of this method. I have also seen infinite evils occasioned by the abuse of it. Indeed, it is scarcely prudent to treat of these subjects, on account of the dangers that may result from it. If we were to express ourselves in a manner universally intelligible, fathers could never be sure of their daughters, nor husbands of their wives; women would be deprived of their self-government in spite of the most judicious and obstinate resistance."—*Maxwel, de Medicina Magnetica, apud Thouret.*

[2] Paracelsus Arecolus Philippus Theophrastus Bombastus de Hohenheim is to be regarded as the inventor of the magnetical system. He was born at a village near Zurich, in Switzerland, in 1493, and died in 1541. His profession was that of a physisician, and he obtained great reputation by the use of mercury and opium, medicines that were unknown, or not employed, by the physicians of those times. But beside this, he was a proficient in alchymy, astrology, and magic. He was acquainted with the philosopher's stone, and the universal medicine. And he invented an elixir, in the use of which a man could not fail to live to the age of a thousand years.

Van Helmont was the immediate successor of Paracelsus in the pursuit of the magnetical science, and wrote an express treatise De Magnetica Vulnerum Curatione.

All the other persons enumerated lived in the seventeenth century.

"To Maxwel, we are particularly indebted for the most complete and copious treatise upon the subject, in which he has endeavoured to support its declining credit by calling in the assistance of that theory of the universal spirit, which he derived from the earliest philosophers of antiquity, and in which we are presented with the exact counterpart of the system of M. Mesmer.

"Another inhabitant of this island, the learned and illustrious Sir Kenelm Digby, is well known for his invention of the sympathetic powder; which it was only necessary to apply to the linen which had imbibed the blood or pus of a wound, or to the arm or sword of him who inflicted it, provided they were still stained with the blood of the wounded person. It was necessary, however, that the wound should be kept perfectly clean, and protected from the air.

"There was a sympathetic sweating powder, invented so lately as the year 1745. The means of applying it was, by mixing it with the urine of the person diseased, and keeping it boiling over a fire as long as you wished the perspiration to continue. During the operation, the patient was to keep his bed, to be covered up warm, and to drink several large basins of tea. This medicine was never known to fail of its effect."—*Thouret.*

extracted, and M. Thouret has displayed in this performance, as he had already done in so many others, an erudition the most various, the most precise, and the most extensive.

It is easy to see how analogous is the system we have described to that of M. Mesmer. To demonstrate this analogy, M. Thouret has considered separately each of the propositions published and avowed by the latter. They amount to twenty-seven, and the result of this examination is, that they are all positively announced in some of the authors whose names have been recited.

Every part of Mesmer's system, even down to the experiments of the ring and the sword, have been found by M. Thouret in the works of these writers.[1] It is therefore certain, that the assertions of M. Mesmer, which are represented by him as principles of his own, do not belong to him; and that this theory, in the room of being an attractive novelty, is an ancient system, abandoned by the learned near a century ago.

In ascending indeed to the original systems which were formed upon the subject, we are unable to discover any thing but suppositions destitute of proof, and for that reason devoted to oblivion. The parts of this hypothesis were not connected together by any other tie than that of the imagination. The steps that were proposed in order to its establishment, were the very same that had been employed in favour of the art of cure, now by enchantments and now by exorcisms. It has been always by sensations that they have pretended to prove the existence of these different agents; and if this kind of proof were sufficient, there is not one of them which would not have been demonstrated. Sound philosophy has therefore refused credit, as well to this species of proof as to the magnetism, such as it was proposed by Maxwel, Goclenius, and Santanelli, and such as we have described it in the opening of this report.

Has the animal magnetism of M. Mesmer any better claim to our confidence? M. Thouret, without replying to this question in a positive manner, has permitted to himself, in the second part of his work, certain reflections respecting it, which he has proposed simply as doubts, and which relate entirely to what M. Mesmer has published, or authentically advanced. It may be objected to him, says M. Thouret,

1. That the touch frequently employed in his method for a considerable time, and on regions extremely sensible, such as those of the stomach, is of itself capable of producing effects, by communicating a vivid impulse to the nerves of the plexuses which are there

[1] The experiments of the ring and sword, are to be found in Kircher's Magnes, sive de arte magnetica. They are both well known. "That of the sword consists in the balancing it upon the point of one of the fingers, the consequence of which will be a very rapid rotary motion, *provided the person be properly magnetised.* That of the ring is performed by a person initiated in the animal magnetism, holding it suspended by a thread in the inside of a wine glass, when it will invariably strike the hour of the day."—*Thouret.*

situated, and which have an intimate connection with the whole nervous system; that authentic records present us with a great number of facts of this kind, and that, in consequence, the sensations, which originate in the application of the touch, do not prove the existence of a separate fluid or agent.

2. That the heat produced by the hand, and the motion communicated to the air, may occasion very strong impressions upon a person extremely sensible, and whose fibres are in a state of convulsion, without these impressions being calculated to prove a new agent.

3. That in subduing the imagination by solemn preparations, by extraordinary proceedings, by the confidence and enthusiasm inspired by magnificent promises, it is possible to exalt the tone of sensible and nervous fibres, and afterwards to direct, by the application of the hands, their impulse towards certain organs, and to excite in them evacuations or excretions, without there resulting any addition to the sciences, either of philosophy or medicine.

4. That the partisans of the animal magnetism do not produce what they call crises, that is, a state of convulsions, but in subjects extremely irritable, extremely nervous, and above all, in women, whose sensibility has been already excited by the means we have described.

5. That among these disposing causes, particular stress is to be laid upon the presence of a person already in a state of convulsion, or ready to fall into that state; that just as an organ attacked with spasmodic affections easily propagates these affections to the other organs, in like manner are they transmitted from one man to another; that we have therefore no reason to be surprised, if in the halls, where the pretended magnetical operations are performed, spasms, and even convulsions, are diffused with extreme alacrity; and that history furnishes a great number of facts, of convulsions propagated through whole villages or towns, in a manner still more astonishing than that of which the animal magnetism presents us with an example.

6. That history has also transmitted to us a great number of cures operated by fear, by joy, or the commotion of any violent passion; which proves, beyond controversy, the power of nervous influences over diseases.

7. That in different ages, two famous empirics, Valentine Greatrakes of the kingdom of Ireland, and Gassner of Ratisbon, produced upon different persons effects which appeared surprising, and have had their admirers; that they employed only the instrumentality of the touch, either upon the nape of the neck, or the limb affected; and that it has been universally acknowledged that they acted only upon the imagination.[1]

[1] "Valentine Greatrakes, Esq., was a native of Afane in the kingdom of Ireland. We are told, that one day he was conscious to a wonderful internal revolution, and at the same time heard a voice like that of a genius, which cried incessantly for a long time: 'I endow you with the faculty of curing diseases.' Importuned by this salutation, from

8. That in many instances the partisans of the magnetism seem to bestow a greater attention to excite surprise in the spectators

which he could in no way distract his attention, he determined to make an experiment of the truth of the intelligence. The voice had first announced to him the gift of curing the king's evil. He made an experiment upon this distemper, and succeeded. He afterwards touched persons attacked with an epidemical fever that raged in his neighbourhood; the voice had announced to him the gift of curing this disease. In fine, he was enabled to cure every species of disease; and he succeeded in all cases, except where, as he observed, the malady was too deeply rooted, or the patient laboured under a particular indisposition to this method of cure. The exterior of this man was extremely simple. His cures were accompanied with no degree of pomp and ceremony, unless we should call such, his ascribing his success to God, publicly expressing his gratitude, and inviting the patient to join with him in the act of thanksgiving. But he made a very extensive use of the operation of touch. The distemper fled before him, and he was able, we are told, to dislodge it from its seat, and remove it to parts the least useful. If its progress appeared to be suspended in any part, he redoubled his frictions upon that part to remove the obstacle. In this operation, nature, excited by the stroking, seemed frequently to operate crises, and it produced stools, vomitings, and perspirations."—*Thouret.*

"Greatrakes cured not only internal diseases, but also external ones, such as wounds and ulcers. The second Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was one of his patients. His attestations were signed by Boyle, Wilkins, Whichcot, Cudworth, and Patrick. He was born in 1628, received the gift of healing, 1662, and removed to London, 1666.—*Des Maizeaux, Vie de St. Evremond.*

"The cures of Gassner are of a much later date, and are not above ten or twelve years old. This German, having in his youth been afflicted with an ill state of health, which resisted the efforts of all the physicians, suspected that his distemper might have a supernatural cause, and derive from the influence of the devil. His conjecture was verified by his success in expelling the devil, having abjured him in the name of Jesus Christ. From that moment he enjoyed the most perfect health for sixteen years. Encouraged by this event, he laid aside the study of medicine, to which his distemper had prompted him, and procured all the authors who had treated of exorcism. He began with healing his parishioners in an obscure town upon the borders of Switzerland and the Tyrol, and his reputation increased so much, that, in the last two years of his residence there, he had between four and five hundred patients who applied to him. He then made a progress through several of the Swiss cantons, and settled at Ratisbon in 1774. He distinguished diseases into two classes, the natural and the demoniac, the last of which were much the most numerous. Over the former he pretended to no power. His cures were performed with much pomp and solemnity; and it was observed, that he constantly rubbed his hands upon his girdle and his handkerchief previously to his touching the patient. He performed his cures in the name of Christ, and by the faith of the diseased in his holy name; if their faith failed, the cure did not take place. He gave the sick, when he dismissed them, balm and oil, which he considered as spiritual medicaments, together with certain waters and powders, and a little ring, inscribed with the name of Jesus, to prevent a relapse."—*Thouret.*

Thouret considers the system of Gassner as having had an influence on that of M. Mesmer. Astrology and possessions were extremely current in Germany; and as Gassner had taken possession of, and ruined the latter pretension, Mesmer had recourse to the former. It should however be remembered, that Mesmer had written and published his thesis upon astrology before the pretensions of Gassner were heard of.

These instances are produced by Thouret, as distinguished proofs of the efficacy both of the touch and the imagination. In proof of the contagion of convulsive affections, he cites the convulsions of St. Medard, and the possessions of Loudun. "The former of these took place in 1732, and made their appearance as soon as any of the religious were approached to the tomb of their patron saint. They were exposed in the most triumphant manner, and covered with ridicule by Hecquet, in his Natural History of Convulsions. The pretended possessions of Loudun (1740) originated in an infamous scheme of avarice and revenge against the unfortunate Urbain Grandier, Rector of Loudun, who became the victim of the machinations of his enemies. The physicians of Montpellier, charged with the examination of the affair, discovered the whole secret of the possessions to consist in factitious and pretended convulsions."—*Thouret.*

than salutary effects in their patients; the spasms and convulsions which they produce being the source of undoubted evil, were it only by the habitude of that state which they are calculated to induce, while the advantages of this method are not equally demonstrated.

9. That certain local diseases not being of the number of those upon which the animal magnetism acts, and certain persons, by the confession of M. Mesmer, not being susceptible of its action, it may be suspected that the partisans of this system have contrived for themselves this resource, in order to account for their failure of success in certain cases.

10. That to pretend to the discovery of a means which shall extend to every kind of disease, that is, to an universal medicine, is an illusion which cannot be excused in an enlightened age.

11. That the known effects of sensibility are sufficient to explain, without any new agent, the phenomena which M. Mesmer produces by a method which he has not yet imparted to the public.

12. That M. Mesmer, in supposing a particular agent, has adopted a route contrary to the interests of his discovery, in following the example of those who have exerted their efforts to give credit to a system, worthy upon every account of the oblivion into which it has fallen.

The society may judge of the performance from this extract: it is proper here to call to mind, that the Royal Society, acquainted with the zeal of M. Thouret, and his indefatigable enquiries into every thing that concerned the magnetism, charged him in their session of the twelfth of March, 1784, with the collection from the authors, as well ancient as modern, of all that had been written respecting the animal magnetism. This collection, which is sufficiently complete to satisfy every reasonable desire, and of which M. Thouret communicated the plan to the society, composes the first part of his work, and is to be considered as his report to the society upon that subject. We are of opinion, that the society is extremely indebted to him in that respect. The second part contains judicious reflections and sagacious doubts. We think both of them worthy of being printed with the approbation and privilege of the society.

The society, charged by the king with the examination of all new inventions, and secret methods of healing diseases, has not beheld without inquietude the species of vogue acquired by the animal magnetism; whose procedures, whatever be their merit, have been and are administered to the diseased, and paid for by the public, without having previously, in obedience to the express provisions of the laws of the kingdom, undergone the examination of the physical profession; an abuse, against which the society, as in duty bound, has exclaimed ever since its introduction. They have a right to take much pride to themselves that one of their members is publishing so learned enquiries upon a subject which has not been hitherto treated but in anonymous compositions, which are,

for the greater part, destined more for the amusement than the instruction of their readers. The work of M. Thouret, full of depth and sagacity, will enlighten those who are impartial in their enquiries, and will greatly tend to the solution of a question upon which the public interest requires that sentence should be pronounced as soon as possible.

Louvre, July the 9th, 1784.

(Signed) GEOFFROY,
DESPERRIERES,
JEANROI,
DEFOURCROY,
CHAMBON,
VICQ D'AZYR.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS,

&c. &c.

The king named, on the twelfth of March, 1784, four physicians of the faculty of Paris, Messieurs Borie, Sallin, d'Arcet, Guillotin, to enter into the examination, and to lay before him an account of the animal magnetism practised by M. Deslon: and upon the petition of these physicians his majesty joined with them, for the purpose of this inquisition, five members of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Messieurs Franklin, le Roy, Bailly, de Borie, Lavoisier. M. Borie having died in the commencement of the business, his majesty appointed M. Majault, doctor of the faculty, to replace him.

M. Mesmer has described the agent he professes to have discovered, and to which he has given the appellation of animal magnetism, in the following manner. "It is a fluid universally diffused; the vehicle of a mutual influence between the celestial bodies, the earth, and the bodies of animated beings; it is so continued as to admit of no vacuum; its subtlety does not admit of illustration; it is capable of receiving, propagating, and communicating all the impressions that are incident to motion; it is susceptible of flux and reflux. The animal body is subject to the effects of this agent; and these effects are immediately produced by the agent insinuating itself into the substance of the nerves. We particularly discover in the human body qualities analogous to those of the loadstone; we distinguish it in poles different and opposite. The action and the virtue of the animal magnetism are capable of being communicated from one body to another, animated or inanimate; they exert themselves to considerable distances, and without the least assistance from any intermediate bodies: this action is increased and reflected by mirrors; it is communicated, propagated, and augmented by sound; and the virtue itself is capable of being accumulated, concentrated, and transferred. Though the fluid be universal, all animal bodies are not equally susceptible of it; there even are some, though very few, of so opposite a nature, as by their

mere presence to supersede its effects upon any other contiguous bodies.

"The animal magnetism is capable of curing immediately diseases of the nerves, and mediately other distempers; it improves the action of medicines; it forwards and directs the salutary crises so as to subject them totally to the government of the judgment; by means of it the physician becomes acquainted with the state of health of each individual, and decides with certainty upon the causes, the nature and the progress of the most complicated distempers; it prevents their increase, and effects their extirpation, without at any time exposing the patient, whatever be his age, sex, or constitution, to alarming incidents, or unpleasing consequences."[1] "In the influence of the magnetism, nature holds out to us a sovereign instrument for securing the health and lengthening the existence of mankind."[2]

Such is the agent, with the examination of which the commissioners have been charged, and whose properties are avowed by M. Deslon, who admits all the principles of M. Mesmer. This theory forms the basis of a memoir, which was read at the house of M. Deslon, on the ninth day of May, in the presence of M. the lieutenant general of the police, and the commissioners. It is asserted in this memoir, that there is but one nature, one distemper, and one remedy; and this remedy is the animal magnetism. This physician, at the same time that he acquainted the commissioners with the doctrine and process of the magnetism, instructed them in its practice by discovering to them the poles, and showing them the manner of touching the diseased, and directing in regard to them the magnetic fluid.

M. Deslon undertook to the commissioners, in the first place, to evince the existence of the animal magnetism; secondly, to communicate to them his knowledge respecting this discovery; and thirdly, to prove the utility of this discovery and of the animal magnetism in the cure of diseases.

After having thus made themselves acquainted with the theory and practice of the animal magnetism, it was necessary to observe its effects. For this purpose the commissioners adjourned themselves, and each of them repeatedly witnessed the public method of M. Deslon. They saw in the centre of a large apartment a circular box, made of oak, and about a foot or a foot and a half deep, which is called the bucket; the lid of this box is pierced with a number of holes, in which are inserted branches of iron, elbowed and movable. The patients are arranged in ranks about this bucket, and each has his branch of iron, which by means of the elbow may be applied immediately to the part affected; a cord passed round their bodies connects them one with the other: sometimes a second means of communication is introduced, by the in-

[1] Memoir by M. Mesmer, upon the Discovery of the Animal Magnetism, 1779, pages 74 and following.

[2] Ibid. Advertisement, page vi.

sertion of the thumb of each patient between the forefinger and thumb of the patient next him; the thumb thus inserted is pressed by the person holding it; the impression received by the left hand of the patient communicates through his right, and thus passes through the whole circle.

A piano forte is placed in one corner of the apartment, and different airs are played with various degrees of rapidity; vocal music is sometimes added to the instrumental.

The persons who superintend the process have each of them an iron rod in his hand, from ten to twelve inches in length.

M. Deslon made to the commissioners the following declarations. 1st. That this rod is a conductor of the magnetism, has the power of concentring it at its point, and of rendering its emanations more considerable. 2dly. That sound, conformably to the theory of M. Mesmer, is also a couductor of the magnetism, and that to communicate the fluid to the piano forte nothing more is necessary than to approach to it the iron rod; that the person who plays upon the instrument furnishes also a portion of the fluid, and that the magnetism is transmitted by the sounds of the surrounding patients. 3dly. That the cord which is passed round the bodies of the patients is destined, as well as the union of their fingers, to augment the effects by communication. 4thly. That the interior part of the bucket is so constructed as to concentrate the magnetism, and is a grand reservoir, from which the fluid is diffused through the branches of iron that are inserted in its lid.

The commissioners in the progress of their examination discovered, by means of an electrometer and a needle of iron not touched with the loadstone, that the bucket contained no substance either electric or magnetical; and from the detail that M. Deslon has made to them respecting the interior construction of the bucket, they cannot infer any physical agent, capable of contributing to the imputed effects of the magnetism.

The patients then, arranged in considerable number and in successive ranks round the bucket, derive the magnetic virtue at once from all these conveyances: from the branches of iron, which transmit to them that of the bucket; from the cord which is passed round their bodies, and the union of their fingers, which communicate to them that of their neighbours; and from the sound of the piano forte, or of a musical voice, which diffuses it through the air. The patients are beside magnetised directly, by means of a finger or a bar of iron, guided before the face, above or behind the head, and over the surface of the parts affected, the distinction of the poles still observed; they are also acted upon by a look, and by having their attention excited. But especially they are magnetised by the application of the hands, and by the pressure of the fingers upon the hypochonders and the regions of the lower belly; an application frequently continued for a long time, sometimes for several hours.

In this situation the patients offer a spectacle extremely varied

in proportion to their different habits of body. Some of them are calm, tranquil, and unconscious of any sensation; others cough, spit, are affected with a slight degree of pain, a partial or an universal burning, and perspirations; a third class are agitated and tormented with convulsions. These convulsions are rendered extraordinary by their frequency, their violence and their duration. As soon as one person is convulsed, others presently are affected by that symptom. The commissioners saw accesses of this kind, which lasted upwards of three hours; they were accompanied with expectorations of a thick and viscous water, brought away by the violence of the efforts. Sometimes these expectorations were accompanied with small quantities of blood; and there is among others a lad, a patient, who has frequently brought up blood in considerable abundance. These convulsions are characterised by precipitate and involuntary motions of all the limbs or of the whole body, by a contraction of the throat, by sudden affections of the hypochonders and the epigastrium, by a distraction and wildness in the eyes, by shrieks, tears, hiccupings, and immoderate laughter. They are either preceded or followed by a state of languor and reverie, by a species of dejection, and even drowsiness. The least unforeseen noise occasions starting; and it has been observed, that the changing of the key and the time, in the airs played upon the piano forte, had an effect upon the patients; so that a quicker motion agitates them more, and renews the vivacity of their convulsions.

There is an apartment lined with quilting, which was originally destined for the patients in whom the magnetism produced convulsions, and is denominated the apartment of crises; but M. Deslon has not judged proper to make any use of it; and all the patients, whatever be the accidents of their situation, are placed together in the apartment of public proceeding.

Nothing can be more astonishing than the sight of these convulsions; he that has not had it can have no idea of it: and in beholding it, a man is not less struck with the profound repose of one class of patients than with the violence which agitates another; he observes with admiration the various accidents that are repeated, and the sympathies that are developed. He sees some patients seek each other with eagerness; and in approaching smile, converse with all the demonstrations of attachment, and soothe their mutual crises. They are entirely under the government of the person who distributes the magnetic virtue: in vain they may appear to be in a state of the extremest drowsiness, his voice, a look, a sign from him, rouses them. It is impossible not to recognise in these regular effects an extraordinary influence, acting upon the patients, making itself master of them, and of which he who superintends the process, appears to be the depository.

These convulsive affections are improperly styled crises in the theory of the animal magnetism: according to this doctrine indeed they are regarded as a salutary crisis, of the same kind as those which nature produces, or which a skilful physician has the art to

excite to facilitate the cure of diseases. The commissioners will adopt this expression in the following report; and, wherever they employ the word crisis, they will always understand the convulsive, drowsy, or lethargic affections, produced by the means of the animal magnetism.

The commissioners observed, that in the number of patients in the state of crisis, there were always many women and few men: that it was one or two hours before these crises took place; and that, when one had taken place, all the others commenced successively, and without any considerable interval. But after having made these general remarks, the commissioners were speedily of opinion, that the public process could not be made the scene of their experiments. The multiplicity of the effects is one obstacle; too many things are seen at once for any one of them to be seen well. Beside, the patients of rank, who repair hither upon account of their health, might be displeased with the enquiries of the commissioners; the very act of watching them might appear a nuisance; and the recollection of this might be burdensome, and impede the commissioners in their turn. They therefore resolved, that as their frequent attendance at the public process was unnecessary, it would be sufficient for a few of them to go from time to time, to confirm the former general observations, to make new ones in case an opportunity should occur for that purpose, and to report them to the commission assembled.

After having observed these effects at the public process, it behoved them, in the next place, to endeavour to discover their causes, and enquire into the proofs of the existence and utility of the magnetism. The question of its existence is first in order; that of its utility it were idle to examine, till the other shall have been fully resolved. The animal magnetism may indeed exist without being useful, but it cannot be useful if it do not exist.

Of consequence the first object of attention with the commissioners, and the direct tendency of their first experiments, ought to be the ascertaining this existence. Again, this was itself an object of considerable comprehension, and had need of being simplified. The animal magnetism embraces the whole compass of nature; it is the vehicle, we are told, of the influence exerted upon us by the celestial bodies; the commissioners were of opinion, that they ought, in the first place, to leave this more extensive influence out of the question, and to consider only that part of the fluid which is diffused over the earth, without troubling themselves with whence it comes; in a word, to evince the action it exercises upon us, around us, and within the sphere of our inspection, before they undertook to examine its relation to the universe.

The most certain method of determining the existence of the animal magnetic fluid, would have been, to have rendered its presence capable of being perceived by the senses; but much time was not necessary to convince the commissioners that this fluid is too subtle to be subjected to their observation. It is not, like the

electrical fluid, luminous and visible; its action is not, like the attraction of the loadstone, the object of our sight; it has neither taste nor smell; its process is silent, and it surrounds you or penetrates your frame, without your being informed of its presence by the sense of touch. If therefore it exist in us and around us, it is after a manner perfectly insensible. There are persons among those who profess the magnetism, who pretend that it may sometimes be seen passing from the extremity of the fingers, which serve it for conductors, or who believe that they feel its passage when you guide your finger before their face, or along their hand. In the first of these cases, the emanation perceived is merely that of transpiration, which becomes completely visible when viewed through a solar microscope; in the second, the impression of cold or freshness which is felt, an impression by so much the more perceptible the warmer one is, results from the motion of the air which follows the finger, and the degree of whose temperature is always below that of animal heat. When, on the other hand, the finger is approached to the surface of the face, which is colder than the finger, and it is held at rest, the consequence is a sensation of heat, which is no other than the communication of the animal heat.

It is also pretended that this fluid has a smell, and that it is perceived when either the finger or an iron conductor is brought into contiguity with the nostrils; it is even said, that the sensation is different, according as the finger or the rod of iron is directed parallel with or opposite to the poles. M. Deslon essayed the experiment upon several of the commissioners; the commissioners themselves have repeated it upon different subjects; not one has experienced this difference of sensation: and if, by giving a close attention, any scent has been perceived, it has been that of the iron, when the rod has been presented rubbed and heated; or that of the emanation of the transpiration, when the finger has been presented, a scent frequently combined with that of the iron with which the finger itself has been impressed. These effects have been erroneously attributed to the magnetism, but they may be traced in reality to natural and definite causes.

Indeed M. Deslon has never insisted upon these transient impressions; he did not think they were to be offered in evidence; on the contrary he expressly assured the commissioners, that he could not demonstrate to them the existence of the magnetism, otherwise than by the action of this fluid, producing certain changes in animated bodies. This existence is so much the more difficult to be demonstrated by effects, which shall be incontrovertible, and whose causes shall be unequivocal; by authentic facts, in cases where moral circumstances cannot exert their influence: in a word, by proofs calculated to convince and compel the understanding, the only ones which can yield any solid satisfaction to persons really proficient in the study of nature.

The action of the magnetism upon animated bodies may be observed in two different ways; either as it consists in that action

continued for a long time, and in its salutary effects in the treatment of diseases, or in its momentary effects upon the animal economy and the perceptible changes there produced. M. Deslon insisted that the former of these methods should be employed principally, and nearly exclusively; the commissioners have been of a different opinion, and their reasons are as follow.

The majority of diseases have their seat in the interior part of our frame. The collective experience of a great number of centuries has made us acquainted with the symptoms which indicate and discriminate them; the same experience has taught the method in which they are to be treated. What is the object of the efforts of the physician in this method? It is not to oppose and to subdue nature, it is to assist her in her operations. Nature, says the father of the medical science, cures the diseased; but sometimes she encounters obstacles, which constrain her in her course, and uselessly consume her strength. The physician is the minister of nature; an attentive observer, he studies the method in which she proceeds. If that method be firm, strong, regular, and well directed, the physician looks on in silence, and bewares of disturbing it by remedies which would at least be useless; if the method be embarrassed, he facilitates it; if it be too slow or too rapid, he accelerates or retards it. Sometimes, to accomplish his object, he confines himself to the regulation of the diet: sometimes he employs medicines. The action of a medicine, introduced into the human body, is a new force, combined with the principal force by which our life is maintained: if the remedy follow the same route, which this force has already opened for the expulsion of diseases, it is useful, it is salutary; if it tend to open different routes, and to turn aside this interior action, it is pernicious. In the mean time it must be confessed that this salutary or pernicious influence, real as it is, may frequently escape common observation. The natural history of man presents us in this respect with very singular phenomena. It may be there seen that regimens the most opposite have not prevented the attainment of an advanced old age. We may there see men, attacked according to all appearance with the same disease, recovering in the pursuit of opposite regimens, and in the use of remedies totally different from each other; nature is in these instances sufficiently powerful to maintain the vital principle in spite of the improper regimen, and to triumph at once over the distemper and the remedy. If it have this power of resisting the action of medicine, by a still stronger reason it must have the power of operating without medicine. The experience of the efficacy of remedies is always therefore attended with some uncertainty; in the case of the magnetism the uncertainty has this addition, the uncertainty of its existence. How then can we decide upon the action of an agent, whose existence is contested, from the treatment of diseases, when the effect of medicines is doubtful, whose existence is not at all problematical?

The cure which is principally cited in favour of the magnetism

is that of M. le Baron de ——; all classes are acquainted with its history. We shall not here enter into a discussion of the facts; we shall not enquire whether the remedies precedingly employed might have contributed to this cure. On the one hand the very critical situation of the patient is admitted, and on the other the inefficacy of all the ordinary means of medical science; the magnetism has been employed and M. le Baron —— has completely recovered. But might not a natural crisis have singly operated this recovery? A woman of low rank and extremely poor, who lived at the Gros-Caillou, was attacked in 1779 with a malignant fever in all its symptoms; she resolutely refused every assistance, she only desired that a vessel which she had near her should be kept constantly replenished with water; she remained quiet upon the straw which served her for a bed, drinking water continually and doing nothing more. The disease developed itself, passed successively through its different stages, and terminated in a complete cure.[1] Mademoiselle G ——, who lived at the lesser royal mews, had two indurations formed in her right breast, which gave her great pain; a surgeon recommended to her the use of the eau du peintre as an excellent dissolvent; at the same time informing her, that if this remedy did not succeed in a month, it would be necessary to extirpate them by incision. The young lady, terrified at this sentence, consulted M. Sallin, who gave it as his opinion that the indurations were susceptible of resolution; M. Bouvart, who was also consulted, confirmed the opinion of M. Sallin. Before entering upon any course of remedy, they prescribed dissipation; fifteen days after she was seized at the opera with a violent cough, and so profuse an expectoration, that she was obliged to be carried home; she spit, in the space of four hours, about three pints of a viscid lymph; one hour after this, M. Sallin examined the breast; he discovered no trace of induration. M. Bouvart, called in the next day, proved on his part the happy effect of this natural crisis. If Mademoiselle G—— had taken eau du peintre, the honour of her cure would have been attributed to this medicine.

The uninterrupted observation of ages proves, and the professors of physic acknowledge, that nature alone, and without our interference, cures a great number of persons. If the magnetism were absolutely inactive, the patients, who undergo this method of cure, might be considered as abandoned to nature. It would be absurd to choose a method of deciding upon the existence of this agent, which, by attributing to it all the cures performed by nature, would tend to prove that it had an action useful and curative, when in reality it might have no action at all.

Upon this head the commissioners are of the opinion of M. Mesmer. He rejected the cure of diseases when this method of proving

[1] The observation of this fact was laid in detail before the faculty of medicine at Paris, in an assembly de prima mensis, by M. Bourdois de la Mothe, Physician of the Charity of Saint-Sulpice, who visited the sick person regularly every day.

the magnetism was proposed to him by a member of the Academy of Sciences: "It is a mistake," replied he, "to imagine that this kind of proof is unanswerable; it cannot be demonstrated that either the physician or the medicine causes the recovery of the patient."

The treatment of diseases can therefore furnish nothing but a result, always uncertain, often deceitful; nor can this uncertainty be dissipated, and all the causes of illusion compensated, but by an infinity of cures, perhaps by the experience of successive centuries. The object and importance of the commission demand means of a speedier description. It was the duty of the commissioners to confine themselves to arguments purely physical, that is, to the momentaneous effects of the fluid upon the animal frame, excluding from these effects all the illusions which might mix with them, and assuring themselves that they could proceed from no other cause than the animal magnetism.

They proposed to make experiments upon single subjects, who might be willing to submit to the various experiments which they should invent; and who, some of them by their simplicity, and others by their intelligence, should be capable of giving an exact and faithful account of their sensations. These experiments we shall not confine ourselves to relate in the order of time, but shall follow the order of the facts they were intended to elucidate.

The commissioners in the first place resolved to make their first experiments upon themselves, and personally to experience the action of the magnetism. They were extremely curious to become acquainted by their own sensations with the effects ascribed to this agent. They therefore submitted themselves to these effects, and in such a disposition, that they would not have been sorry to have undergone some accidents and a partial derangement of health, which being evidently produced by the operation of the magnetism, should have enabled them to decide this important question upon the spot, and with their own testimony. But in submitting themselves to the magnetism in this manner, the commissioners have employed one necessary precaution. There is not an individual, in a state of the fullest health, who, if he paid a close attention to the point, would not be sensible to an infinity of interior motions and variations, either of a pain infinitely slight, or of heat, in different parts of his body; these variations which exist at all times are independent of the magnetism. To turn and fix in this manner one's attention upon oneself, is not perhaps itself entirely without its effects. There is so intimate a connection, whatever be the vehicle of that connection, between the volitions of the soul and the motions of the body, that it is not easy to prescribe limits to the influence of attention, which appears to be nothing more than a train of volitions, directed, constantly and without interruption, to the same object. When we recollect that the arm is moved by the will as it pleases, how can we be certain that the attention being fixed upon some interior part of our frame may not excite some slight emotion in it, direct the heat towards it, and so modify its actual situation as to produce in it new sensations? The first

thing, therefore, to which the commissioners were bound to attend, was not to observe too minutely what passed within them. If the magnetism were a real and operative cause, there was no need that it should be made an object of thought, in order to its action and manifesting itself: it ought, so to express ourselves, to compel and arrest the attention, and to render itself perceptible to a mind that should even be distracted from it by design.

But in determining to make experiments upon themselves, the commissioners unanimously resolved to make those experiments private, without admitting any stranger, except M. Deslon, by whom the operation was to be performed, or such persons as they should choose; in like manner they engaged not to submit to the magnetism at the public process, in order that they might discuss freely their observations, and be in all events the sole, or at least the first, judges of the symptoms observed.

In pursuance of these determinations, a particular apartment and a separate bucket were destined for their use in the house of M. Deslon, and the commissioners repaired thither once in the course of every week. The operation was continued in each experiment for two hours and a half, the branch of iron being in contact with the left hypochonder, surrounded with a cord of communication, and forming from time to time the chain of fingers and thumbs. They were magnetised either by M. Deslon, or in his absence, by one of his pupils, some of them for a longer time and more frequently than others, and those with whom this was the case were the commissioners who appeared from constitution and habit the most susceptible. The operation was performed sometimes with the finger and the rod of iron, presented and guided along the different parts of the body, sometimes by the application of the hands and the pressure of the fingers, either upon the hypochonders or upon the pit of the stomach.

Not one of the commissioners felt any sensation, or at least none which ought to be ascribed to the action of the magnetism. Some of the commissioners are of a robust constitution; others have more delicate habits, and are subject to interruptions of their health; one of these last was sensible of a slight pain at the pit of the stomach, in consequence of a considerable pressure that was employed upon that part. This pain continued all that and the next day, and was accompanied with a sensation of fatigue and dejection. Another felt, in the afternoon of one of the days in which the experiments were performed, a slight irritation of the nerves, to which he is very subject. A third, endowed with a still greater sensibility, and especially with an extreme restlessness of the nerves, was subject to a higher degree of pain and a more perceptible irritation; but these lesser accidents are the result of perpetual and ordinary variations in the state of their health, and are of consequence foreign to the operation they had undergone, or proceed only from the pressure employed upon the region of the stomach. The commissioners do not speak of these slight details, but from a scrupulous fidelity; they relate them, because they have imposed it as a law upon themselves constantly and in every particular to say the truth.

The commissioners could not avoid being struck with the difference of the private experiment made upon themselves from the public process. All was calm and silence in the one, all restlessness and agitation in the other; there, multiplied symptoms, violent crises, the ordinary state both of body and mind interrupted and overthrown, and nature wrought up to the highest pitch; here, the body free from pain, and the mind from anxiety, nature preserving her ordinary course and her equilibrium, in a word the absolute privation of every kind of effect: the stupendous influence, which creates such an astonishment in the public process, appears no longer; the magnetism stripped of its energy seems perfectly supine and inactive.

The commissioners, having at first submitted to the experiment only once a week, were desirous to ascertain whether a continuity of experiment would produce any effect; they submitted to it three days successively, but their insensibility was the same, and the magnetism appeared with respect to them perfectly impotent. This experiment, made at once upon eight different subjects, several of whom were subject to habitual derangements of health, authorises the conclusion that the magnetism has little or no action in a state of health, or even in a state of lesser infirmity. We then resolved to make experiments upon persons really diseased, and we chose them out of the lower class.

Seven of these were assembled at Passy, at the house of Dr. Franklin; the operation was performed upon them by M. Deslon in the presence of all the commissioners.

The widow Saint-Amand, asthmatic, having the belly, legs, and thighs swelled; and dame Anseaume, who had a swelling upon her thigh, felt no sensation; the little Claude Renard, a child of six years of age, scrofulous, almost consumptive, having the knees swelled, the legs bent inward, and the articulation nearly deprived of motion, a very interesting child, and possessing a greater degree of understanding than is usual at his age, was likewise conscious to no sensation; any more than Geneviève Leroux, nine years of age, subject to convulsions, and to a disorder greatly resembling that which is called St. Vitus's Dance. François Grenet experienced some effects; he had a distemper in his eyes, particularly in the right, in which he had scarcely any sight, and in which there was a considerable tumour. When the operation was directed towards the left eye, by approaching and moving backward and forward the thumb very near and for a considerable time, he was sensible of a pain in the ball of the eye, and the eye watered. When the operation was directed to the right eye, which was the most disordered, he felt no sensation in it; he felt the same pain in the left eye, and nothing in any other part of the body.

Dame Charpentier, who had been thrown down against a log of wood by a cow two years before, had experienced the most unfortunate consequences from this accident; she lost her sight, recovered it afterwards in part, but remained in a state of habitual infirmities; she declared that she had two ruptures, and the belly of so great sensibility, that she could not bear the pressure of the

strings of her petticoats; this sensibility belongs to the case of nervous irritation; the slightest pressure upon the region of the belly is capable of determining this irritation, and producing, through the correspondence of the nerves, effects in every part of the body.

The operation was performed upon this woman as upon the rest, by the application and the pressure of the fingers; the pressure was extremely painful to her: afterwards, in directing the finger towards the rupture, she complained of a pain in her head; the finger being placed before her face, she said she could not draw her breath. Upon the repeated motion of the finger upwards and downwards, she had sudden starts of the head and shoulders, like those which are commonly occasioned by surprise mixed with terror, for instance, that of a person who has some drops of cold water suddenly thrown in his face. She appeared to have the same startings when her eyes were closed. The fingers being held under her nose, while her eyes were shut, she complained of a sensation of faintness so long as they were continued there. The seventh subject, Joseph Ennuyé, experienced sensations of a similar nature, but much less considerable.

Of these seven patients, four felt no sensation at all; three experienced some effects from the operation. These effects deserved to engage the attention of the commissioners, and demanded an accurate examination.

The commissioners, to obtain further light, and to define their ideas upon this part of the subject, resolved to make the experiment upon patients, placed in other circumstances, and selected from the polite world; such as could not be suspected of sinister views, and whose understanding made them capable of enquiring into and giving a faithful account of their sensations. Mesdames de B—— and de V——, Messieurs M—— and R—— were admitted to the private bucket together with the commissioners; they were entreated to remark their sensations, without fixing upon them too regular an attention. M. M—— and Madame de V—— were the only persons who experienced any sensation. M. M—— had an indolent tumour over the whole articulation of the knee, and a constant pain in the patella. He declared, during the operation, that he felt nothing in any part of his body, except in the moment that the finger was guided before the diseased knee; he then thought that he felt a slight degree of heat in the place in which he has habitually the sensation of pain. Madame de V——, attacked with a nervous disorder, was several times upon the point of falling asleep during the operation. The experiment having continued for an hour and nineteen minutes without interruption, and for the greater part by the application of the hands, she was sensible to nothing but a sensation of irritation and dejection. These two subjects underwent the experiment only once. M. R——, whose distemper was the remainder of an obstruction in the liver, the consequence of a very violent disorder of that kind ill cured, underwent the operation three times and felt nothing. Madame de B——, severely attacked with obstructions, underwent the experiment constantly at the same time with the commissioners, and felt nothing;

it is necessary to observe, that she submitted to the magnetism with an extreme tranquility, which originated in the highest degree of incredulity.

Dr. Franklin, though the weakness of his health hindered him from coming to Paris, and assisting at the experiments which were there made, was magnetised by M. Deslon at his own house at Passy. The assembly was numerous; every person who was present underwent the operation. Some sick persons, who had come with M. Deslon, were subject to the effects of the magnetism in the same manner as at the public process; but Madame de B——, Dr. Franklin, his two relations, his secretary, and an American officer, felt no sensation, though one of Dr. Franklin's relations was convalescent, and the American officer had at that time a regular fever.

The experiments we have related, furnish a number of facts, calculated to illustrate, and fit to be compared with each other, and from which the commissioners were at liberty to deduce certain inferences. Of fourteen sick persons, five only appeared to feel any effect from the operation, nine felt no effect at all. The commissioner, who had the head-ach, and coldness in the feet, derived no benefit from the magnetism, nor did his feet recover their natural heat. This agent has not therefore the property which has been attributed to it of communicating heat to the feet. The magnetism has also been said to have the property of discovering the species, and particularly the seat of diseases, by the pain, which the action of this fluid infallibly occasions in that part. Such an advantage would be of great consequence; the fluid which was the instrument of it would be a valuable means in the hands of the physician, often deceived by equivocal symptoms: but François Grenet felt no sensation, no pain, but in the eye least affected. If the redness and tumour of the other eye had not furnished external symptoms, in judging from the effect of the magnetism, we should have been led to conclude that it was undistempered. M. R—— and Madame de B——, both attacked with obstructions, and Madame de B—— with great severity, as they were conscious to no sensation, would have received no intelligence, either respecting the species, or the seat of their disease. And yet obstructions are among the disorders which are said to be particularly subject to the action of the magnetism; since, according to the new theory, the free and rapid circulation of this fluid through the nerves, is a means of opening the channels and destroying the obstacles, that is, the obstructions, which it encounters in its passage. It is at the same time said that the magnetism is the touchstone of health: if therefore M. R—— and Madame de B—— had not experienced the derangements and the sufferings inseparable from obstructions, they would have had a right to believe that they enjoyed the best health in the world. The same thing may be said of the American officer: the magnetism therefore, announced as the discoverer of diseases, completely failed of its effect.

The heat that M. M—— felt in the patella, is an effect too slight and fugitive to authorise any conclusions. It may be suspected that it proceeded from the cause already descanted on, a too great

attention to observe what passes within us: the same attention would discover similar sensations at any other time, when the magnetism was not employed. The drowsiness experienced by Madame de V—— must undoubtedly be ascribed to the regularity and fatigue of preserving the same situation; if she was sensible to any vaporous emotion, it must be remembered that it is a known property of nervous affections to have much dependency upon the attention that is paid them; to renew them it is only necessary to hear them spoken of, or to think of them. It is easy to judge what ought to be expected from a woman, whose nerves are extremely irritable, and who, being magnetised for an hour and nineteen minutes, had during that time no other subject of reflection than that of the disorders which are habitual to her. She might have had a nervous crisis more considerable than that we have described, without our having a right to be surprised at it.

There remains then only the effects produced upon dame Charpentier, François Grenet and Joseph Ennuye, which can be supposed to derive from the operation of the magnetism. In comparing these three particular facts to the rest, the commissioners were astonished that three subjects of the lower class should be the only ones who felt any thing from the operation, while those of a more elevated rank, of more enlightened understandings, and better qualified to describe their sensations, have felt nothing. Without doubt François Grenet experienced a pain and a watering in the eye when the thumb was approached very near to it; dame Charpentier complained, that in touching her stomach the pressure corresponded to her rupture; and the pressure might have been in part the cause of what she felt; but the commissioners suspected that these sensations were augmented by moral causes.

Let us represent to ourselves the situation of a person of the lower class, and of consequence ignorant, attacked with a distemper and desirous of a cure, introduced with some degree of ceremony to a large company, partly composed of physicians, where an operation is performed upon him totally new, and from which he persuades himself beforehand that he is about to experience prodigious effects. Let us add to this that he is paid for his compliance, that he thinks he shall contribute more to our satisfaction by professing to experience sensations of some kind; and we shall have definite causes to which to attribute these effects; we shall at least have just reason to doubt whether their true cause be the magnetism.

Beside this it may be enquired, why the magnetism produced these effects upon persons who knew what was done to them, and might imagine they had an interest in saying what they said, while it took no sort of hold upon the little Claude Renard, upon an organisation endowed with all the delicacy of infancy, so irritable, so susceptible? The sound understanding and ingenuous temper of this child evince the veracity of his relation. Why too has this agent produced no effect upon Genevieve Leroux, who was in a perpetual state of convulsion? Her nerves were certainly sufficiently irritable, how comes it that the magnetism did not display its

power, either in augmenting or diminishing her convulsions? Her indifference and impassibility induced the belief, that the reason of her having felt nothing, was the idiotism which did not permit her to judge that she ought to have felt any thing.

From these facts the commissioners are at liberty to observe, that the magnetism has seemed to have no existence for those subjects, who have submitted to it with any degree of incredulity; that the commissioners, even those who have their nerves most irritable, having expressly turned their attention to other objects, and having armed themselves with that philosophic doubt which ought always to accompany enquiry, have felt none of those sensations which were experienced by the three patients of the lower class; and they have a right to suspect that these sensations, supposing their reality, were the fruits of anticipated persuasion, and might be operated by the mere force of imagination. Of this suspicion another class of experiments has been the result. Their subsequent researches were directed towards a new object; it was necessary to destroy or confirm the suspicion they had formed, to determine to what degree the power of the imagination can influence our sensations, and to demonstrate whether it can be the cause, in whole or in part, of the effects attributed to the magnetism.

At this time the commissioners heard of the experiments which were made at the house of M. the dean of the faculty by M. Jumelin, doctor of physic; they were desirous of seeing these experiments, and they met M. Jumelin in a body at the house of M. Majault, one of the commissioners. M. Jumelin declared to them that he was a disciple neither of M. Mesmer, nor of M. Deslon; he had learned nothing respecting the animal magnetism from them, but had formed his principles and digested his process from what he had heard upon the subject in conversation. His principles consist in regarding the animal magnetic fluid, as a fluid which circulates in the human body, and which flows from it, but which is essentially the same with the principle of animal heat; like all other fluids he conceived that it tended to an equilibrium, and that it therefore passes from the body in which the greatest quantity of it resides, into that which has the least. His method does not differ from that of Messieurs Mesmer and Deslon less than his principles; like them he performs the operation with the finger and the rod of iron as conductors, and by the application of the hands, but without any distinction of poles.

Eight men and two women submitted to the operation in the first experiment, and felt nothing; at length a woman, who waits in the hall of M. Alphonse le Roy, doctor of physic, having been magnetised in the forehead, but without touching her, said that she felt the sensation of heat. M. Jumelin guiding his hand, and presenting the five extremities of his fingers over the whole of her face, she said that she felt as it were a flame, that passed from place to place; magnetised in the stomach she said that she felt heat; magnetised upon the back she made the same declaration: she also said that she felt hot in every part of her body, and that her head ached.

The commissioners, observing that, of eleven persons that under-

went the experiment, one only had been sensible to the magnetism of M. Jumelin, were of opinion that this person had experienced certain sensations, only because she had probably an imagination more easily excited than the rest: the opportunity was favourable for clearing up the point. The sensibility of this woman being perfectly established, the business was only to protect her from the illusions of the imagination, or at least to leave her imagination without any thing to direct its operations. The commissioners proposed to blindfold her, in order to observe what her sensations would be, when she could no longer know any thing respecting the conduct of the experiment. She was accordingly blindfolded and magnetised; the phenomena no longer answered to the places towards which the magnetism was directed. Magnetised successively upon the stomach and in the back, she felt only a heat in her head, a pain in both eyes and in the left ear.

The bandage was removed from her eyes, and M. Jumelin having applied his hands upon the hypochonders, she said that she felt heat; after a few minutes she said that she was ready to faint, and she fainted in effect. When she was tolerably recovered, the experiment was resumed, she was blindfolded, M. Jumelin was removed, silence recommended, and the woman was induced to believe that the operation was performing. The effects were the same, though no operation, either near or distant, was performed; she felt the same heat, the same pain in her eyes and in her ears; besides which she felt a heat in her back and loins.

After a quarter of an hour, a sign was made to M. Jumelin to magnetise her in the stomach, she felt no sensation; in the back, it was the same thing. The sensations diminished instead of augmenting. The pains in her head continued, the heat in her back and loins ceased.

We see in this instance certain effects produced, and these similar to those which were experienced by the three subjects, respecting whom the experiment has already been detailed. But the former and the latter were obtained in different methods; it follows that this difference is of no consequence. The process of Messieurs Mesmer and Deslon, and an opposite process, have produced the same phenomena. The distinction of poles is therefore chimerical.

It may be observed that while the woman was permitted to see the operation, she placed her sensations precisely in the part towards which it was directed; that on the other hand, when she did not see the operation, she placed them at hazard, and in parts very distant from those which were the object of the magnetism. It was natural to conclude that these sensations, real or pretended, were determined by the imagination. Of this we were convinced when we saw that, being entirely at rest, the preceding sensations having ceased, and the bandage being fixed over her eyes, this woman experienced all the same effects, though no operation was performed; but the demonstration was complete, when after a remission of a quarter of an hour, her imagination being undoubtedly cooled and worn down, the effects, in the room of augmenting, diminished at the moment in which the operation was actually renewed.

If she was seized with a faintness, women are liable to this accident from their garments being tight or otherwise burdensome. The application of the hands upon the hypochonders was capable of producing the same effect upon a woman extremely susceptible; but there is no need of having recourse to this cause to explain the appearance. The weather was extremely hot, the woman had unquestionably felt some emotion in the beginning of the experiment, she had made an effort upon herself to submit to a new and unknown operation, and it is by no means extraordinary that an effort, continued for a longer time than the constitution will bear, should occasion a propensity to faint.

This swoon had therefore a natural known cause, but the sensations, which she experienced when no operation was performed upon her, could be only the result of imagination. In similar experiments, which M. Jumelin made in the same place the next day, the commissioners being present, upon a man who was blindfolded, and upon a woman who was not blindfolded, the result was precisely the same; it was evident their answers were determined by the questions that were put to them, that is, the question pointed out where the sensation was expected to be; in the room of directing the magnetism upon them, all that was done was the exalting and directing their imagination. A child of five years of age being afterwards magnetised, felt nothing but the heat which he had just before contracted at play.

These experiments appeared sufficiently important to the commissioners, for them to desire a repetition of them, in order to obtain further light into the subject, and M. Jumelin had the complaisance to comply with their request. It would be to no purpose to object, that the method of M. Jumelin was a bad one; for at the present moment it was not proposed to bring the magnetism, but the imagination to the proof.

The commissioners agreed to blindfold subjects who had already undergone the magnetical operation, for the most part not to magnetise them at all, but to put to them interrogations, so framed as to point out to them their answers. This mode of proceeding was not calculated to deceive them, it only misled their imagination. In reality, when no operation was performed upon them, their sole answer ought to have been, that they felt no sensation; and when the operation was performed, the impression they felt, not the manner in which they were interrogated, ought to have dictated their replies.

The commissioners adjourned themselves to the house of M. Jumelin; they began with an experiment upon his servant. They fixed a bandage over his eyes, prepared for the purpose, and which they employed in all the succeeding experiments. The bandage was made of two calottes of elastic gum, whose concavity was filled with edredon; the whole inclosed and sewn up in two pieces of stuff of a circular form. These pieces of stuff were then fastened to each other, and to two strings which were tied in a knot at the

back part of the head. Placed over the eyes, they left in their interval room for the nose, and the entire liberty of respiration, without the person blindfolded being permitted to receive even the smallest particle of light, either through, or above, or below the bandage. These precautions having been contrived, with an equal view to the convenience of the subject, and the certainty of the result, the servant of M. Jumelin was persuaded that the operation was performing upon him. Upon this he felt an almost universal sensation of heat, and certain emotions in the region of the belly, together with an extreme heaviness; by degrees he grew drowsy and appeared upon the point of falling asleep. This experiment proves what we have already said, that the symptom of drowsiness is the effect of situation and weariness, not of the magnetism.

The same person being afterwards magnetised with his eyes uncovered, and a rod of iron being presented to his forehead, he experienced sensations of pricking: the bandage being then replaced and the circumstance repeated, he was conscious to no sensation. The rod of iron was then removed, and the patient being interrogated if he felt nothing in his forehead, he declared that he felt something move backward and forward from one side of it to the other.

M. B——, a man of learning, and particularly acquainted with the science of medicine, was then blindfolded, and presented us with the same spectacle, feeling certain sensations when he was not acted upon, and often feeling nothing when the operation was performed. These sensations went to such a length, that, previously to the being magnetised in any manner, but believing that the operation had been performing for ten minutes, he felt a heat in his loins which he compared to that of a stove. It is evident that M. B—— had a very strong sensation, since, in order to convey an idea of it, he thought it necessary to have recourse to such a comparison; this sensation however he owed solely to imagination, which was the only agent concerned in the affair.

The commissioners, particularly those of the faculty of medicine, made an infinite number of experiments upon different subjects, whom they either magnetised themselves, or persuaded that they underwent the operation. They performed the operation indifferently, either opposite to, or in the direction of the poles or at right angles with them, and in each case obtained the same effects; experiencing in all these experiments no other difference, than that of an imagination more or less susceptible.* They were therefore

* M. Sigault, doctor of the faculty of Paris, well known for his invention of the operation of the symphysis of the ossa pubis, made a number of experiments, tending to prove that the magnetism is merely an imaginary power. The following is the detail which he made in a letter dated July the 30th, 1784, and addressed to one of the commissioners.

"Having given the persons who inhabited a large house in the Marais, to understand that I was a pupil of M. Mesmer, I produced various effects upon the woman of the house. The magisterial tone and the serious air I affected, together with certain gestures, made a very great impression upon her, which she at first was desirous to conceal from me; but having guided my hand upon the region of the heart, I felt

convinced that the imagination alone is capable of producing various sensations, and causing the patient to experience both pain and heat, and even a very considerable degree of heat, in all parts of the body, and they concluded that it of course entered for a considerable share into the effects attributed to the animal magnetism. It must at the same time be admitted, that the process of the magnetism produces in the animated body changes more distinguished, and derangements more considerable, than those we have just reported. None of those subjects, whom we have hitherto described as the imaginary objects of the magnetical operation, were so far impressed as to produce convulsions; it was therefore a new subject for the experiments of the commissioners, to inquire, whether by the mere energies of the imagination it were possible to produce crises, similar to those which we have stated in the public process.

Many experiments were thought of for the decision of this question. When a tree has been touched according to the principles and method of the magnetism, every person who stops under it, ought to experience in a greater or less degree the effects of this agent; there have even been some in this situation who have swooned, or experienced convulsions. We communicated our

that it palpitated. The state of oppression in which she appeared likewise indicated a contraction of the chest. Other symptoms were connected with these; her face became convulsed, her eyes wandered, she at length fell into a swoon, then threw up her dinner, had several stools, and was reduced to a state of weakness and sinking, perfectly incredible. I repeated the same trick upon several persons, and succeeded more or less, according to their different degrees of sensibility and credulity.

"A celebrated artist, master of design to the children of one of our princes, complained for several days of an extreme head-ach; he acquainted me with it upon the Pont-royal; having persuaded him that I was initiated in the mysteries of M. Mesmer, I expelled his head-ach almost instantaneously by the means of a few gestures, to his great astonishment.

"I produced the same effects upon the apprentice of a hatter in the same distemper. The lad felt nothing in consequence of my first gestures; I then laid my hand upon his false ribs, bidding him at the same time look in my face. He immediately felt a contraction of the chest, palpitations of the heart, yawnings, and an extreme dejection. He doubted no longer of the power I possessed over him. I then guided my finger over the part affected, and asked him what he felt. He replied that his pain dislodged itself, and descended. I assured him that I would guide it towards his arm, and make it come out at his thumb, at the same time squeezing it with considerable force. He took me at my word, and was perfectly well for two hours. At that period he stopped me in the street to tell me that his pain was returned. This effect seems to be the same with that produced by certain dentists upon the mental faculties of those who go to them to have a tooth drawn.

"Further, lastly, being in the parlour of a convent, rue du Colombier, fauxbourg Saint Germains, a young lady said to me: I understand, sir, that you are a pupil of M. Mesmer. I am so, replied I; and I can perform the magnetical operation upon you, notwithstanding the intervention of the grate. At the same time I presented my finger; she was terrified, trembled extremely, and besought me for God's sake to proceed no further. Her emotion was such, that, if I had persevered in my experiment, she would infallibly have fallen into convulsions."

M. Sigault relates that he had himself felt the power of imagination. One day, the operator having undertaken to perform upon him the magnetical operation to convince him of its reality, at the moment he had determined to touch him, he felt a contraction of the chest and a palpitation of the heart. But having immediately composed himself, the gestures and the process of the magnetism were employed in vain, and made no impression upon him.

ideas upon this subject to M. Deslon, who replied, that the experiment ought to succeed, provided the subject were extremely susceptible; and it was agreed that it should be made at Passy in the presence of Dr. Franklin. The necessity that the subject should be susceptible, led the commissioners to conceive, that to render the experiment decisive and unanswerable, it was necessary that it should be made upon a person of M. Deslon's choice, and of whose susceptibility to the operations of the magnetism he was already convinced. M. Deslon therefore brought with him a boy of about twelve years of age; an apricot tree was fixed upon in the orchard of Dr. Franklin's garden, considerably distant from any other tree, and calculated for the preservation of the magnetical power which might be impressed upon it. M. Deslon was led thither alone to perform the operation, the boy in the mean time remaining in the house, and another person along with him. We could have wished that M. Deslon had not been present at the subsequent part of the experiment, but he declared that he could not answer for its success, if he did not direct his cane and his countenance towards the tree, in order to augment the action of the magnetism. It was therefore resolved, that M. Deslon should be placed at the greatest possible distance, and that some of the commissioners should stand between him and the boy, in order to ascertain the impracticability of any signals being made by M. Deslon, or any intelligence being maintained between them. These precautions in an experiment the essence of which must be authenticity, are indispensable, without giving the person with respect to whom they are employed a right to think himself offended.

The boy was then brought into the orchard his eyes covered with the bandage, presented successively to four trees upon which the operation had not been performed, and caused to embrace each of them for the space of two minutes, the mode of communication which had been prescribed by M. Deslon himself.

M. Deslon, present, and at a considerable distance, directed his cane towards the tree which had been the object of his operations.

At the first tree the boy being interrogated at the end of a minute, declared that he perspired in large drops; he coughed, spit, and complained of a slight pain in his head; the distance of the tree which had been magnetised was about twenty-seven feet.

At the second tree he felt the sensations of stupefaction and pain in his head; the distance was thirty-six feet.

At the third tree the stupefaction and head-ach increased considerably; he said that he believed he was approaching to the tree which had been magnetised; the distance was then about thirty-eight feet.

In fine at the fourth tree which had not been rendered the object of the operation, and at the distance of about twenty-four feet from the tree which had, the boy fell into a crisis; he fainted away, his limbs stiffened, and he was carried to a neighbouring grass-plot, where M. Deslon hastened to his assistance and recovered him.

The result of this experiment is entirely contrary to the theory of the animal magnetism. M. Deslon accounted for it by observing, that all the trees by their very nature, participated of the magnetism, and that their magnetism was beside reinforced by his presence. But in that case a person sensible to the power of the magnetism, could not hazard a walk in a garden without the risk of convulsions; an assertion confuted by the experience of every day. The presence of M. Deslon had no greater influence here, than in the coach, in which the boy came along with him, was placed opposite to him, and felt nothing. If he had experienced no sensation even under the tree which was magnetised, it might have been said that at least upon that day he had not been sufficiently susceptible: but the boy fell into a crisis under a tree which was not magnetised; the crisis was therefore the effect of no physical or exterior cause, but is to be ascribed solely to the influence of imagination. The experiment is therefore entirely conclusive: the boy knew that he was about to be led to a tree upon which the magnetical operation had been performed, his imagination was struck, it was exalted by the successive steps of the experiment, and at the fourth tree it was raised to the height necessary to produce the crisis.

Other experiments were made calculated to support this, and the result was the same. One day when the commissioners were all together at Passy at the house of Dr. Franklin, and M. Deslon with them, they previously intreated the latter to bring some of his patients with him, selecting those of the lower class, who were most susceptible to the magnetism. M. Deslon brought two women; and while he was employed in performing the operation upon Dr. Franklin and several persons in another apartment, the two women were separated, and placed in different rooms.

One of them, Dame P——, had films over her eyes; but as she could always see a little, the bandage already described was employed. She was persuaded that M. Deslon had been brought into the room to perform the magnetical operation; silence was recommended; three commissioners were present, one to interrogate, another to make minutes of the transaction, and the third to personate M. Deslon. The conversation was pretended to be addressed to M. Deslon; he was desired to begin the operation; the three commissioners in the mean time remained perfectly quiet and solely occupied in observing her symptoms. At the end of three minutes the patient began to feel a nervous shuddering; she had then successively a pain in the back of her head, in her arms, a creeping in her hands, that was her expression, she grew stiff, struck her hands violently together, rose from her seat, stamped with her feet: the crisis had all the regular symptoms. Two other commissioners, who were in the adjoining room with the door shut, heard the stamping of the feet and the clapping of the hands, and without seeing any thing were witnesses to this noisy experiment.

The two commissioners we have mentioned were with the other

patient, Mademoiselle B——, who was subject to nervous distempers. No bandage was employed upon her, but her eyes were at liberty; she was seated with her face towards a door which was shut, and persuaded that M. Deslon was on the other side, employed in performing upon her the magnetical operation. This had scarcely taken place a minute, before she began to feel the symptom of shuddering; in another minute she had a chattering of the teeth and an universal heat; in fine in the third minute she fell into a regular crisis. Her respiration was quick, she stretched out both her arms behind her back, twisting them extremely, and bending her body forward: her whole body trembled; the chattering of her teeth became so loud that it might be heard in the open air; she bit her hand, and that with so much force, that the marks of the teeth remained perfectly visible.

It is proper to observe that neither of these subjects were touched in any manner; their pulse was not even felt, that it might not be possible to say that the magnetic fluid was communicated; the crises however were complete. The commissioners who had been desirous to know the effect of the influence of the imagination, and to appreciate the share it might have in the magnetical crises, had now obtained all that they desired. It is impossible to see this influence displayed in a clearer or more incontrovertible manner than in these two experiments. If the subjects have declared that their crises were stronger in the public treatment, it must be ascribed to the power of communication possessed by the numerous emotions, and that in general every individual symptom has been increased by the contemplation of similar symptoms.

We had occasion to try a second experiment upon Dame P——, and to experience how much she was under the dominion of her imagination. The experiment of the magnetic basin was proposed: this experiment consists in discovering among a number of basins one that has been magnetised. They are successively presented to a patient susceptible to the magnetism; he ought to fall into a crisis, or at least to experience sensible effects, when the magnetic basin is presented to him, he ought to be perfectly indifferent to all the rest. All that was necessary, according to the recommendation of M. Deslon, was to present them to him in the direction of the poles, in order that he who presents the basin may not himself magnetise the patient, and that there may be no other effect than that of the magnetism of the basin itself.

Dame P—— was sent for to the arsenal, to the house of M. Lavoisier, where M. Deslon was; she began with falling into a crisis in the ante-chamber, before she had seen either the commissioners or M. Deslon, and merely from the knowledge she had that she was about to see him; a distinguished effect of the influence of imagination.

When she had been tolerably recovered, she was led into the room destined for the experiment. Several china basins were presented to her which had not been magnetised; at the second

basin she began to feel the usual symptoms, and at the fourth fell into a complete crisis. It may be objected that her actual state was a state of crisis, that it had begun in the ante-chamber, and was renewed by its own single energy; but a circumstance which is decisive, is that having asked for something to drink, the basin which had been magnetised by M. Deslon himself was presented to her; she drank with perfect calmness and said that she felt herself much better. The basin and the magnetism had therefore failed of their effect, since the crisis was tranquilised in the room of being augmented.

Some time after, while M. Majault examined the films she had over her eyes, the magnetic basin was presented to the back of her head, and continued there for twelve minutes; she was unconscious of the operation and felt no effect from it; she had even at no time been more tranquil, because her imagination was diverted, and fixed upon the examination that was making into the disorder of her eyes.

The commissioners were informed that while this woman had been left alone in the ante-chamber, different persons unacquainted with the animal magnetism had approached her, and the convulsive emotions had recommenced. She was desired to observe that the magnetical operation was not performed upon her; but her imagination was struck to such a degree that she replied: If you did nothing to me, I should not be in the condition in which I am. She knew that she had been sent for in order to be made the subject of the experiments; and the approach of any person towards her, or the slightest noise attracted her attention, excited the idea of the magnetism and renewed her convulsions.

The imagination, in order to its acting with considerable strength, has often need that you should touch several cords at a time. It has a correspondence with each of the senses; and its reaction may be expected to be in proportion, both to the number of senses applied to, and of sensations received: the commissioners were led to this observation by the following experiment. M. Jumelin had spoken to them of a young lady, twenty years of age, whom he had deprived of the faculty of speech by the influence of the magnetism; the commissioners repeated the experiment at his house, the young lady consented to submit to it, and to suffer herself to be blindfolded.

The first object of the experiment was to endeavour to obtain the same effect without performing the operation; but, though in this situation she felt or believed she felt the effects of the magnetism, we were not able to strike her imagination, with the force that was necessary for the success of the experiment. The operation was then really performed, the bandage not being removed; and the success was the same. The bandage was then taken away; her imagination was now attacked at once through the different channels of sight and hearing, and the effects were more considerable; but though she complained of a heaviness in her head, an obstruction in the superior part of the nostrils, and a

number of the symptoms which she had felt under the operation of M. Jumelin, she did not lose the faculty of speech. She observed herself, that the hand by which she was magnetised in the forehead, ought to descend to the level of the nose, recollecting that that was its situation at the time in which she had felt the loss of her voice. What she demanded was accordingly performed, and in three quarters of a minute she was dumb; nothing was now to be heard from her but low and inarticulate sounds, though the exertion of the muscles of the throat for the formation of sound, and that of the tongue and the lips in order to articulation, were visible. This state lasted only a minute: it is obvious to observe that, finding herself precisely in the same circumstances, the seduction of the understanding and the effect of that seduction upon the organs of speech were the same. But it was not enough that she should be expressly informed that she was magnetised, it was also necessary that the sense of seeing should yield her a testimony, stronger, and capable of greater effects; it was necessary that a gesture with which she was already acquainted should re-excite her former ideas. It should seem that this experiment is admirably calculated to display the manner in which the imagination acts, the degrees by which it is exalted, and the different exterior succours it requires in order to its displaying itself in its greatest energy.

The power, which the sense of sight exercises over the imagination, explains the effects attributed by the doctrine of the magnetism to the eyes. The eyes possess in an eminent degree the power of magnetising; signs and gestures, as the commissioners were informed, have commonly no effect, except upon a subject who has been previously mastered by the employment of the eyes. The reason of this is very simple; it is the eyes that convey the most energetic expressions of passion, it is in them that is developed all that the human character has of the commanding or the attractive. It is natural therefore that the eyes should be the source of a very high degree of power; but this power consists merely in the aptitude they possess of moving the imagination, and that in a degree more or less strong in proportion to the activity of the imagination. It is for this reason, that the whole process of the magnetism commences from the eyes of the operator; and their influence is so powerful and leaves traces so strong and lively, that a woman, newly arrived at the house of M. Deslon, having encountered a look of one of his pupils, who had performed the operation upon her, just as she was recovering from a crisis, had her eyes set in her head for three quarters of an hour. For a long time she was haunted with the remembrance of this look; she always saw before her this very eye fixed to regard her; and she bore it uninterruptedly in her imagination, sleeping as well as waking, for three days. We see from this instance what an imagination is capable of doing, that can preserve one impression for so long a time, that is, can renew, of itself, and by its single power, the same sensation regularly and without interruption, for three days.

The experiments, which we have already reported, are uniform in their nature, and contribute alike to the same decision; they authorise us to conclude that the imagination is the true cause of the effects attributed to the magnetism. But the partisans of this new agent will perhaps reply, that the identity of effects does not always prove an identity of causes. They will grant that the imagination is capable of exciting these impressions without the magnetism; but they will maintain that the magnetism is also capable of exciting them without the imagination. The commissioners might easily destroy this assertion by applying the principles of all reasoning, and the laws of natural philosophy: of which the first, is to admit no new causes without an absolute necessity. When the effects observed are capable of having been produced by a known cause, and a cause whose existence other phenomena have already established, sound philosophy teaches that the effects ought to be ascribed to that cause; and when on the other hand we are acquainted with the discovery of a cause hitherto unknown, sound philosophy requires that its existence be made out by effects which do not belong to a known cause, and which cannot be explained but by the new cause. It therefore properly belongs to the partisans of the magnetism, to bring forward other proofs, and to discover effects which shall be entirely stripped of the illusions of the imagination. But as facts are more demonstrative than reasonings, and as their evidence is more universally striking, the commissioners have been desirous of establishing by experiment, what the magnetism could do in cases where the imagination had no concern.

For this experiment they made choice of two rooms, contiguous to each other, and united by a door of communication. The door was taken away, and a frame of wood substituted in its place, with transverse bars, and covered with a double texture of paper. In one of these rooms was a commissioner, who undertook to make minutes of the transaction, and a lady, who was given out to be just arrived from the country, and to have a suit of linen, which she wanted to have made up. Mademoiselle B——, a sempstress by profession, who had been already employed in the experiments at Passy, and whose sensibility to the magnetism was well known, was sent for. Every thing was arranged against her arrival in such a manner, that there was but one seat upon which she could place herself, and that seat stood within the frame of the door of communication.

The commissioners were in the other apartment, and one of them, a physician, who had upon former occasions performed the magnetical operation with success, had undertaken to magnetise Mademoiselle B—— through the paper partition. It is a principle in the theory of the magnetism that this agent passes through doors, walls, &c. A partition of paper could therefore be no obstacle; beside M. Deslon had positively declared that the magnetism passes through paper.

Mademoiselle B—— was accordingly magnetised during half an hour, at the distance of a foot and an half, and in a direction opposite to that of the poles, in conformity to the rules taught by M. Deslon, and which the commissioners had seen practised at his house. During the operation she conversed with much gaiety, and, in answer to an inquiry concerning her health, she readily replied, that she was perfectly well: at Passy she had fallen into a crisis in the course of three minutes; in the present instance she underwent the operation of the magnetism without any effect for thirty minutes. The only reason of this difference must be that here she was ignorant of the operation, and that at Passy she thought it had been performed. The inevitable conclusion is, that the imagination singly produces all the effects attributed to the magnetism, and that, where the imagination ceases to be called forth, it has no longer the smallest efficacy.

Only one objection can be suggested to this experiment; it is that Mademoiselle B—— might not be prepared to receive the magnetic fluid, and might be less susceptible to its operation than usual. The commissioners foresaw this objection, and for that reason made the following experiment. As soon as they had ceased to magnetise the patient through the paper partition, the same commissioner passed into the other apartment; he found no difficulty in engaging Mademoiselle B—— to submit to the magnetical operation. It was accordingly repeated in precisely the same manner as in the former instance, at the distance of a foot and an half, and by the intervention of gestures only, together with the employment of the right finger and the rod of iron. If he had applied the hands, and touched the hypochonders, it might have been objected that any difference of effect was to be ascribed to the application having been more immediate in the latter instance. But the only difference between the two experiments was, that in the former Mademoiselle B—— was magnetised in a direction opposite to that of the poles, and conformable to the rules of the magnetical theory; and in the second she was magnetised in the direction of the poles, or in the transverse line. On this account according to the principles of the magnetism no effect ought to have been produced.

In three minutes however she felt a sensation of dejection and suffocation; to these succeeded an interrupted hiccup, a chattering of the teeth, a contraction of the throat, and an extreme pain in her head; she was restless in her chair; she complained of a pain in the loins; now and then she struck her foot with extreme quickness on the floor; afterwards she stretched her arms behind her, twisting them extremely as at Passy; in a word the convulsive crisis was complete and accompanied with all the regular symptoms. All these accidents appeared in consequence of a process of twelve minutes, though the same process employed for thirty minutes a little before had been ineffectual. The only ground of difference that remains, is the play that was afforded in the latter

instance to the imagination; to this therefore the difference of the effects is to be ascribed.

If the crisis originated in the influence of the imagination, it was the imagination also that put a stop to it. The commissioner who magnetised her, observed that it was time to have done; at the same time presenting to her his two forefingers in the form of a cross; and it is proper to observe that in so doing he magnetised her in the direction of the poles, in the same manner as he had done through the whole experiment; no actual alteration had therefore been made, and the process being continued, the impressions ought also to have continued. But the declared intention of the operator was sufficient to dissipate the crisis; her heat and the pain in her head were immediately alleviated. The disorder of her frame was in this manner followed from place to place, announcing at the same time that it was going to disappear. In this manner in obedience to the voice to which the imagination was subjected, the contraction of the throat ceased, then the accidents of the breast, lastly those of the stomach and the arms. The whole required only three minutes; after which Mademoiselle B—— declared that she no longer felt any sensation, but was perfectly restored to her habitual state.

These last experiments, as well as several of those that were made at the house of M. Jumelin, have the double advantage of demonstrating at once the efficacy of the imagination, and the impotence of the magnetism, in regard of the symptoms which were operated.

If the symptoms are more considerable and the crises more violent at the public process, it is because various causes are combined with the imagination, to operate, to multiply and to enlarge its effects. They begin with subduing the minds of the patients by the employment of the eyes; this is followed by the touch, the application of the hands; it is proper to develop in this place the physical effects of this method of procedure.

The symptoms are more or less considerable: the less are hiccupings, qualms of the stomach, and purgings; the greater are the convulsions to which they have given the denomination of crises. The parts upon which the touch is employed, are the hypochonders, the pit of the stomach, and sometimes the ovaria, when the patient is a woman. The hands and the fingers are pressed with a greater or less stress upon these different regions.

The colon, one of the larger intestines, runs through both the regions of the hypochonders, and the region of the epigastrium which separates them. It is placed immediately under the integuments. It is therefore upon this intestine that the pressure falls, an intestine full of sensibility and irritability. A repeated voluntary effort, without assistance from any other cause, excites the muscular action of this intestine, and sometimes procures evacuations. Nature, as it were by instinct, indicates this manœuvre to persons hypochondriacally affected. The process of the magnetism is

nothing more than this very manœuvre; and the evacuations it is calculated to produce are further facilitated in the magnetical process, by the frequent and almost habitual use of a real laxative, the cream of tartar in their drink.

But while the motion which is produced excites principally the irritability of the colon, this intestine offers other phenomena. It swells in a greater or less degree, and sometimes distends itself to a considerable volume. At such times it communicates to the diaphragm such an irritation, that this organ becomes more or less convulsed. It is this convulsion to which they have given the appellation of crisis in the animal magnetism. One of the commissioners had occasion to see a woman, subject to a kind of spasmodic vomitings, with which she was seized several times in the course of every day. Her efforts produced nothing but a turbid and viscous water, similar to that which is brought up by the patients in the crisis of the magnetical operation. The convulsion had its seat in the diaphragm, and the region of the colon was so sensible, that the slightest touch upon that part, a strong commotion of the air, the surprise caused by a sudden noise, sufficed to excite the convulsion. This woman had therefore regular crises without the assistance of the magnetism, by the single irritability of the colon and diaphragm; and the women who were magnetised obtained their crises from the same cause and through the same irritability.

The application of the hands upon the stomach has physical effects not less remarkable. The application is made directly upon that organ. Sometimes a strong continuous compression is operated, sometimes a number of slight and successive compressions, sometimes a discomposure of the stomach by a rotatory motion of the rod of iron in contact with the part, or by the successive and rapid passage of the thumbs over it one after the other. These methods convey almost immediately to the stomach an irritation, more or less strong and durable, in proportion as the subject is more or less susceptible. The part is also previously disposed for the reception of this irritation by being first compressed. This compression prepares it to act upon the diaphragm and to communicate to it the impressions it receives. It is irritated, the diaphragm is also irritated, and from thence result, in the same manner as by the action of the colon, the nervous accidents which had been already stated. In women who are peculiarly susceptible, the mere compression of the two hypochonders, without their being acted upon in any other manner, occasions a contraction of the stomach and fits of swooning. This happened in the case of the woman magnetised by M. Jumelin, and it often happens from no other cause than an improper degree of tightness in their dress. These cases are not followed by the crisis, because the stomach is compressed without being irritated, and the diaphragm remains in its natural state. The same methods employed upon the ovaria in the female sex, beside their particular effects, produce with

great force the above accidents. The empire and extensive influence of the uterus over the animal economy is well known.

The intimate connection of the colon, the stomach and the uterus with the diaphragm is one of the causes of the effects ascribed to the magnetism. The regions of the lower belly, which are the subject of these operations, answer to the different plexuses which constitute a regular nervous centre in this part, by means of which, leaving every particular system out of the question, there most certainly exists a sympathy, communication or correspondence between all the parts of the body; such an action and reaction, that the sensations excited in this centre affect the other parts of the body, and reciprocally a sensation experienced in any part affects and calls into play the nervous centre, which often transmits the impression back again to all the parts of the body.

The truth thus stated not only explains the effects of the magnetic touch, but also the physical effects of the imagination. It has been constantly remarked, that the affections of the soul make their first corporeal impression upon the nervous centre, which commonly leads their subject to describe himself as having a weight upon his stomach, or a sensation of suffocation. The diaphragm enters into this business, from whence originate the sighs, the tears, and the expressions of mirth. The viscera of the lower belly then experience a reaction; and it is by this automatous process that we are enabled to account for the physical disorders produced by the imagination. Surprise occasions the colic, terror causes a diarrhœa, melancholy is the origin of hysterical distempers. The history of medicine presents to us an infinity of examples of the power of imagination and the mental affections. The terror occasioned by a fire, a violent degree of desire, a strong and undoubting hope, a fit of choler, have restored the use of his limbs to one who has been crippled with the gout or to a paralytic person; a strong and unlooked for degree of joy has dissipated a quartan ague of two months' standing; close attention is a remedy for the hiccup; and persons, who by some accident have been deprived of the faculty of speech, have recovered it in consequence of some of the vehement emotions of the soul. This last assertion is supported by the testimony of history, and the commissioners have themselves witnessed a suspension of this faculty, occasioned singly by the imagination. The action and reaction of the physical upon the moral system, and of the moral upon the physical, have been acknowledged ever since the phenomena of the medical science have been remarked, that is, ever since the origin of the science.

Tears, laughter, coughs, hiccups, and in general all the effects which are observed in what have been styled crises in the animal magnetism, do therefore originate either in the interruption of the functions of the diaphragm by a physical vehicle, such as the touch and the pressure, or from the power with which the imagination is endowed of acting upon this organ and interrupting its functions.

If it be objected that the touch is not always necessary to these effects, it may be replied, that the imagination may be sufficiently fertile in resources to produce them all by its sole instrumentality; especially the imagination exerted in a public process, called into play at once by the methods in which it is itself addressed, and by the effects observed in those who surround it. It has been already seen what were its effects in the experiments made by the commissioners upon isolated subjects; it may easily be conceived in what degree those effects must be multiplied in the case of a number of patients collected together in a public process. These patients are assembled in a narrow space, if the space be compared with the number of patients; the air of the apartment is heated, although care be employed to renew it; and it is always more or less impregnated with mephitic gas, which has the property of acting immediately upon the head and the nervous system. When the introduction of music is added, it affords another means of acting upon and exciting the nerves.

In the public process several women are magnetised at the same time, and they experience at first no effects but such as are similar to those obtained by the commissioners in various experiments. It is even acknowledged that for the most part the crises do not commence in less than the space of two hours. By little and little the impressions are communicated from one to another, and reinforced, in the same manner as the impressions which are made by theatrical representation, where the impressions are greater in proportion to the number of the spectators, and the liberty they enjoy of expressing their sensations. The applause, by which the emotions of individuals are announced, occasions a general emotion, which every one partakes in the degree in which he is susceptible. The same observation has been made in armies upon a day of battle, where the enthusiasm of courage, as well as the impressions of terror, are propagated with such amazing rapidity. The drum, the sound of the military musical instruments, the noise of the cannon, the musquetry, the shouts of the army, and the general disorder, impress the organs, have a uniform effect upon the understanding, and exalt the imagination in the same degree. In this equilibrium of inebriation, the external manifestation of a single sensation immediately becomes universal; it hurries the soldiery to the charge, or it determines them to fly. The same cause is deeply concerned in rebellions; the multitude are governed by the imagination; the individuals in a numerous assembly are more subjected to their senses, and less capable of submitting to the dictates of reason; and where fanaticism is the presiding quality, its fruit is the tremblers of the Cevennes. It has been usual to forbid numerous assemblies in seditious towns, as a means of stopping a contagion so easily communicated. Every where example acts upon the moral part of our frame, mechanical imitation upon the physical part: the minds of individuals are calmed by dispersing them; the same method puts a stop to their spasmodic affections, always contagious in their nature: we have had a

recent example of this in the young ladies of Saint Roch, who were in this manner cured of the convulsions with which they were affected when together.*

The magnetism then, or rather the operations of the imagination, are equally discoverable at the theatre, in the camp, and in all numerous assemblies, as at the bucket, acting indeed by different means, but producing similar effects. The bucket is surrounded with a crowd of patients; the sensations are continually communicated and recommunicated; it ought to be expected that the nerves should be at length worn out with this exercise, they are accordingly irritated, and the woman of most sensibility in the company gives the signal. Immediately the cords, every where stretched to the same degree and in perfect unison, respond to each other; the crises are multiplied; they mutually reinforce each other, and are rendered violent. In the mean time the men, who are witnesses of these emotions, partake of them in proportion to their nervous sensibility; and those with whom this sensibility is greatest and most easily excited become themselves the subjects of a crisis.

This propensity to irritation, partly natural and partly acquired, becomes in each sex habitual. The sensations having been felt once or oftener, nothing is now necessary, but to recall the memory of them, and to exalt the imagination to the same degree, in order to operate the same effects. This will never be difficult when the subject is placed in the same circumstances. The public process is no longer necessary, you have only to touch the hypochonders and to conduct the finger and the rod of iron before the countenance; the signs are well known. Even these are not necessary, it is sufficient that the patients be blindfolded, made to believe that these signs are repeated upon them, and that they are magnetised; the ideas are re-excited, the sensations are reproduced, the imagination, employing its accustomed instruments and resuming its former routes, gives birth to the same phenomena. These cases happen exactly to the patients of M. Deslon, who fall into a crisis without the bucket, and without being excited with the spectacle of the public process.

* On the day of the ceremony of the first communion, celebrated in the parish church of Saint Roch a few years ago (1780), after the evening service they made according to custom the procession tnrough the streets. Scarcely were the children returned to the church, and had resumed their seats, before a young girl fell ill and had convulsions. This affection propagated itself with so much rapidity, that in the space of half an hour fifty or sixty girls from twelve to nineteen years of age were seized with the same convulsions; that is, with a contraction of the throat, an inflation of the stomach, suffocation, hiccups and spasms more or less considerable. These accidents reappeared in some instances in the course of the week; but the following Sunday, being assembled with the dames of Sainte Anne, whose business it is to teach the young ladies, twelve of them were seized with the same convulsions, and more would have followed, if they had not had the precaution to send away each child upon the spot to her relations. The whole were obliged to be divided into several schools. By thus separating the children, and not keeping them together but in small numbers, three weeks sufficed to dissipate entirely this epidemical convulsive affection. See for other instances of the same kind the Natural History of Convulsions by M. Hecquet.

Compression, imagination, imitation, are therefore the true causes of the effects attributed to this new agent, known by the appellation of animal magnetism, this fluid, which is said to circulate through the human body, and to be communicated from individual to individual. Such is the result of the experiments of the commissioners, and the observations they made upon the means employed and the effects produced. This agent, this fluid, has no existence. Chimerical, however, as it is, the idea is by no means novel. Some authors, particularly physicians of the last age, have expressly treated of it in various performances. The curious and interesting inquiries of M. Thouret have convinced the public, that the theory, the operations and the effects of the animal magnetism, proposed in the last age, were nearly the same with those revived in the present. The magnetism then is no more than an old falsehood. The theory indeed is now presented, as was necessary in a more enlightened age, with a greater degree of pomp; but it is not less erroneous. Human nature is formed to seize, to quit and to resume the mistake which is flattering to its wishes. There are errors which will be eternally dear to the sublunary state. How often has the pretended science of astrology vanished and reappeared! The magnetism is calculated to lead us back to it. Its professors have been desirous of connecting it with the celestial influences, that it might have the stronger seduction, and attract mankind by the two hopes that are nearest their heart, that of looking into futurity, and that of prolonging their existence.

There is room to believe that the imagination is the principal of the three causes which we have assigned to the magnetism. It appears, by the experiments we have related, that it suffices alone to produce the crises. The pressure and the touch seem to serve it as preparatives; it is by the touch that the nerves begin to be excited, imitation communicates and extends the impressions. But the imagination is that active and terrible power, by which are operated the astonishing effects that have excited so much attention to the public process. The effects strike all the world, the cause is enveloped in the shades of obscurity. When we consider that these effects seduced, in former ages, men, venerable for their merit, their illumination, and even their genius, Paracelsus, Van Helmont and Kircher, we cease to be astonished, that persons of the present day, learned and well informed, that even a great number of physicians, have been the dupes of this system. Had the commissioners been admitted only to the public process, where there is neither time nor opportunity of making decisive experiments, they might themselves have been led into error. It was necessary to have liberty to insulate the effects, in order to distinguish the causes; it was necessary to see, as they have done, the imagination act, if we may be allowed the expression, partially, and produce its effects, one by one, and in detail, to have an idea to what the accumulation of those effects might amount; to conceive the extent of its power, and to account for all its prodigies.

Such an examination demanded a sacrifice of time, and a number of systematical researches, which we have not always the leisure to undertake for our private instruction or private curiosity, nor even the power properly to pursue without being, like the commissioners, charged with the mandates of the sovereign, and honoured with the confidence of the public.

M. Deslon is not much averse to the admission of these principles. He declared in our session, held at the house of Dr. Franklin, the 19th of June, that he thought he might lay it down as a fact, that the imagination had the greatest share in the effects of the animal magnetism; he said that this new agent might be no other than the imagination itself, whose power is as extensive as it is little known: he affirmed that he always acknowledged the concern of this faculty in the treatment of his patients, and he affirmed with equal confidence, that many persons have been either entirely cured or infinitely amended, in the state of their health, under his direction. He remarked to the commissioners, that the imagination thus directed to the relief of suffering humanity, would be a most valuable means in the hands of the medical profession;* and persuaded of the reality of the power of the imagination, he invited the commissioners to embrace the opportunity which his practice afforded, to study its procedure and its effects. If, therefore, M. Deslon be still attached to his first idea, that these effects are to be ascribed to the agency of a fluid, which is communicated from individual to individual by the touch or under the guidance of a conductor, he cannot, however, avoid conceding to the commissioners, that only one cause is requisite to one effect, and that since the imagination is a sufficient cause, the supposition of the magnetic fluid is useless. It cannot be denied that we are surrounded with a fluid which peculiarly belongs to us; the insensible perspiration forms around us an atmosphere of insensible vapours: but this fluid has no agency but such as is common to other atmospheres; cannot be communicated by the touch but in infinitely small quantities; is not capable of being directed either by conductors, or by the eyes, or by the will; is neither propagated by sound, nor reflected by mirrors; and is in no case susceptible of the effects ascribed to it.

It remains for us to inquire, whether the crisis or convulsions, excited by the methods of the pretended magnetism in the assemblies round the bucket, be capable of any utility, or be calculated to cure or relieve the patients. The imagination of sick persons has unquestionably a very frequent and considerable share in the cure of their diseases. With the effect of it we are unacquainted

* M. Deslon had already said in 1780, "Granting for a moment that M. Mesmer possesses no other secret than that of employing the imagination in the extensive production of the most salutary effects, will it not still be true, that his invention is an extremely valuable one? For in reality, if the physic of the imagination be more salutary than the other kinds of medicine, what good reason can be alleged, why the physic of the imagination should not be brought into general use?"—*Observations on the Animal Magnetism, pp.* 46, 47.

otherwise than by general experience; but, though it has not been traced in positive experiments, it should seem not to admit of a reasonable doubt. It is a known adage, that in physic as well as religion, men are saved by faith; this faith is the produce of the imagination: in these cases the imagination acts by gentle means; it is by diffusing tranquillity over the senses, by restoring the harmony of the functions, by recalling into play every principle of the frame under the genial influence of hope. Hope is an essential constituent of human life; the man that yields us one contributes to restore to us the other. But when the imagination produces convulsions, the means it employs are violent; and such means are almost always destructive. There are indeed a few rare cases in which they may be useful; there are desperate diseases, in which it is necessary to overturn every thing for the introduction of an order totally new. These critical shocks are to be employed in the medical art in the same manner as poisons. It is requisite that necessity should demand, and economy employ them. The need of them is momentary; the shock ought to be single. Very far from repeating it, the intelligent physician exerts himself to invent the means of repairing the indispensable evil which has thus been produced; but in the public process of the magnetism the crises are repeated every day, they are long and violent. Now since the state introduced by these crises is pernicious, the habit cannot be other than fatal. How indeed can it be conceived, that a woman, attacked for instance with a pulmonary distemper, can undergo with impunity a crisis, some of whose symptoms are a convulsive cough and compulsory expectorations; or can safely fatigue, perhaps shatter, the lungs by violent and repeated efforts, when so great pains are necessary to convey to the wounded frame the sanative and the balsamic? How can we imagine that a man, be his disorder what it will, can need in order to his recovery the intervention of crises, in which the sight appears to be lost, the members stiffen, he strikes his breast with precipitate and involuntary motions; crises in a word, that are terminated by an abundant spitting of viscous humours and even blood? The blood thus discharged is neither vitiated nor corrupted, it flows from vessels from which it is torn by the violence of effort and contrary to the intention of nature; these effects are therefore to be regarded as a real not a salutary evil, an evil additional to the distemper be it what it will.

Nor is this the only danger with which they are attended. Man is incessantly enslaved by custom; nature is modified by habit only in a progressive manner, yet she is often so completely modified, as to suffer an entire metamorphosis, and to be scarcely capable of being known for the same. Who will assure us that this state of crises, at first voluntarily induced, shall not become habitual? And should the habit thus contracted frequently reproduce the same symptoms, in spite of the will, and almost without the assistance of the imagination, how dreadful the fate of an individual, subjected to so violent effects, tormented, as well morally as physically, with their unfortunate impression, whose days should be divided

between apprehension and agony, and whose life should be an uninterrupted state of suffering! Nervous distempers of this description, even when natural, are the opprobrium of the medical science; how little ought it to be the object of art to produce them! The art, which thus interferes with all the functions of the animal economy, urges nature out of her proper course, and multiplies the victims of irregularity, is to be regarded as pernicious. Its effects are the more to be apprehended, since it not only aggravates the disorder of the nerves by renewing their symptoms, and causing them to degenerate into habit; but if a distemper of this kind be contagious, as it may be suspected to be, the method of provoking nervous convulsions and of exciting them in public assemblies is a means to diffuse them in great towns, and even to afflict with them generations to come, since the diseases and the habits of parents are transmitted to their posterity.

The commissioners, having convinced themselves that the animal magnetic fluid is capable of being perceived by none of our senses, and had no action either upon themselves or upon the subjects of their several experiments; being assured, that the touches and compressions employed in its application rarely occasioned favourable changes in the animal economy, and that the impressions thus made are always hurtful to the imagination; in fine having demonstrated by decisive experiments, that the imagination without the magnetism produces convulsions, and that the magnetism without the imagination produces nothing; they have concluded with an unanimous voice respecting the existence and the utility of the magnetism, that the existence of the fluid is absolutely destitute of proof, that the fluid having no existence can consequently have no use, that the violent symptoms observed in the public process are to be ascribed to the compression, to the imagination called into action, and to that propensity to mechanical imitation, which leads us in spite of ourselves to the repetition of what strikes our senses. And at the same time they think themselves obliged to add as an important observation, that the compressions and the repeated action of the imagination employed in producing the crises may be hurtful, that the sight of these crises is not less dangerous on account of that imitation which nature seems to have imposed upon us as a law, and that of consequence every public process, in which the means of the animal magnetism shall be employed, cannot fail in the end of producing the most pernicious effects.

If it be objected to the commissioners that this decision concludes respecting the magnetism in general, instead of relating singly to the magnetism practised by M. Deslon, the commissioners reply that the intention of the king was to have their opinion upon the animal magnetism, and that in consequence they have not exceeded the bounds of their commission. Again they reply that M. Deslon has appeared to them acquainted with what are called the principles of the magnetism, and that he certainly possesses the means of producing the effects and exciting the crises which are ascribed to it.

The principles of M. Deslon are the very same with those included in the twenty-seven propositions disseminated from the press by M. Mesmer in 1779. If M. Mesmer now announces a more extensive theory, it was not necessary for the commissioners to be acquainted with the theory to decide upon the existence and utility of the magnetism, it was sufficient to estimate the effects. It is by the effects that the existence of a cause is established, it is by the effects also that its utility must be demonstrated. The phenomena are learned from observation long before we can arrive at the theory which connects and explains them. The theory of the loadstone does not yet exist, and its phenomena are ascertained by the experience of successive ages. The theory of M. Mesmer is in this case indifferent and superfluous; the methods employed, the effects produced, this is what it was necessary to examine. Now it is easy to prove that the essential practice of the magnetism is known to M. Deslon.

M. Deslon was for many years the pupil of M. Mesmer. Constantly during that time he saw the process of the animal magnetism, and the means employed in exciting and directing it. M. Deslon himself administered the magnetism in the presence of M. Mesmer; separated from him he operated the same effects. Being afterwards reconciled they united their patients; the one and the other without distinction undertook the management of them, and of consequence the methods were the same. The method which is followed at this day by M. Deslon can be no other than the method of M. Mesmer.

The effects are not less correspondent. There are crises equally frequent, and accompanied by similar symptoms, at the house of M. Deslon and at the house of M. Mesmer; the effects do not therefore belong to the method of an individual, but to the practice of the magnetism in general. The experiments of the commissioners demonstrate that the effects obtained by M. Deslon are due to compression, to imagination and to imitation. These are therefore the causes of the magnetism in general. The observations of the commissioners have convinced them that these convulsive crises and these violent means cannot be useful in medicine any otherwise than as poisons, and they have judged independent of all theory that wherever it shall be the object to excite convulsions they may become habitual and pernicious, they may be epidemically diffused, and even extend to future generations.

The commissioners were of consequence obliged to conclude that not only the measures in a particular mode of proceeding, but the measures of the magnetism in general, might in the end produce the most pernicious effects.

Paris, the 11th day of August, 1784.

(Signed)	B. Franklin,	Sallin,	De Bory,
	Majault,	Bailly,	Guillotin,
	Le Roy,	D'Arcet,	Lavoisier.

HISTORY AND PROGRESS

OF

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

Vain have been the efforts of science effectually to exorcise the so called "science" of Animal Magnetism; it rises again immediately in a new form. Public credulity is an ample fund for all those who wish to levy contributions upon it. Whoever has contemplated the progress of real knowledge, during a long course of years, will have seen bubble after bubble arise, glitter for a moment, and then disappear, to be succeeded by another as gorgeous and illusory.

Animal magnetism is no new thing; it has had its votaries for more than half a century; its fire has successively gone out and been relighted; but has it yet taken its place as a science? is it tangible? The reader has seen in the foregoing pages that Doctor Franklin and his associates appointed by the King of France, extinguished its influence for a time. Its professors at that period, never dreamed of *clairvoyance* or second sight; this new discovery was necessary to give it currency in a more enlightened age. Let the same degree of care be employed now in detecting the present imposture that was then brought to the subject, and we shall see to what shifts its professors will be brought.

Man is naturally a credulous animal, with an appetite for the marvellous too strongly implanted in his nature to be wholly eradicated. Education, it is true, may weaken this propensity, but can never entirely destroy it. Astrology and witchcraft have been consigned to that oblivion they so richly merited; old women may now keep black cats and ride broomsticks, without appeals being made to the judicial tribunals; but there remains a class who give implicit credence to other absurdities, which do equal violence to the laws of nature; though each of us laughs at his neighbour's credulity, we each still treasure up a pet superstition of our own, if it be no greater than a hesitancy in beginning a journey, or undertaking a new business on a Friday.

Our business is with the *history* of animal magnetism, a topic that has suddenly reached an importance in America, which demands from the press some notice. A belief in its virtues may be

traced back to a very early period. The ancients admitted the existence of a fluid or agent, which pervaded the whole universe and was the cause of life and motion. The soul of man was a portion of this universal spirit, which, on his death, became freed, and entered into other combinations. According to Sir William Jones, the Brahmins believe, that not only the souls of men, but also all that exists in the world, are an immediate emanation from Brahma. The philosophers of the dark ages had a theory somewhat in conformity with this, and, in pursuing their investigations, the wonderful properties of the magnet soon attracted the attention of the learned, and all the characters of the universal fluid were thought to be concentrated in it; it appeared to be a concentration of all the wonders of nature; the principle of its action was unknown, and therefore must have emanated from the stars; and as it always turned to the north, the polar star was the great origin of its powers. Magnetism, and the all-pervading fluid or soul, were now thought to be identical, and every action of nature was supposed to be the immediate result of its influence.

The science remained in a very unsettled state, until the time of the celebrated Mesmer, from whom it received a powerful impulse, and was reduced to some order. Frederick Anthony Mesmer, a native of Switzerland, was born in May, 1734. He studied medicine in Vienna, and settled in that capital as a practising physician, having placed himself in a situation of independence by an advantageous marriage. His mind had a strong bias for the marvellous; the mystical writers, particularly those who treated of astrology, were his delight. He published a Treatise "On the Influence of the Planets upon the Human Body," which drew upon him the universal ridicule of his professional brethren, by whom he was thenceforth regarded as a confirmed visionary. Electricity he thought was the subtle element, or essence, pervading all nature, but after a variety of fruitless efforts, he at length, in 1773, resorted to the magnet, to which his attention had been called by Father Hehl, or Hell, a Jesuit and professor of astronomy at Vienna. He employed in his experiments the magnetic plates invented by Father Hehl with extraordinary success, if we are to credit his account. He communicated the event to Hehl, who not believing in Mesmer's theory, or rather having greater reliance on his own, published the cures as originating in the form of his plates. Hence violent quarrels arose between them, and mutual appeals to the public, which ended in a victory on the part of Hehl.

Mesmer's ideas on animal magnetism, differ in many respects from those now entertained by its supporters, being far less extended and chimerical. He was at first of opinion, that the magnet possessed a specific power in diffusing and communicating the universal fluid; and therefore it was the chief agent in his mode of operating. He insisted that he had the power of transmitting and fixing this principle at will. "I have observed," says he, "that the magne ticmatter is analogous to the electric fluid, and

that it is transmitted in the same manner, by intermediate bodies. Iron is not the only substance containing it. I have rendered paper, bread, wool, silk, leather, stone, glass, water, wood, dogs, and men, all magnetic; in a word, all I touched became endowed with this fluid, and produced the same effects on patients, as the magnet itself."*

Mesmer, soon after, submitted his discoveries to the Royal Academy at Berlin, the only learned society that would receive his paper. But they rejected them as "destitute of foundation, and unworthy the slightest attention." Undiscouraged, he persevered in his experiments, but now declared that the curative agent was different from the mineral magnetism, and bestowed on it the name of animal magnetism. Being still discredited, he was obliged to leave Germany, and repaired to Paris in 1778.

Public attention had been strongly attracted to the subject, and crowds of the sick and the curious flocked to consult him. His success was so great that he was obliged to take pupils to assist him. The most celebrated of these was Deslon, who soon equalled his preceptor, and who was the individual employed by Dr. Franklin to display the miracles they professed to perform.

The blow which was struck by the report of the royal commissioners, seemed likely to be final, and from their convincing arguments it is but now beginning to recover. The report was considered as entirely satisfactory, and a belief in animal magnetism was abandoned by all men of science and observation, though the delusion existed on the minds of the multitude for a long time.

But a new phenomenon presented itself which excited great enthusiasm in its favour, and placed the art on a new basis; this was the discovery that *somnambulism* was capable of being excited by it.

Somnambulism, it is well known, is a kind of morbid sleep, that occurs naturally in some persons, during an attack of which, an individual may walk about, or perform his usual routine of occupations, and even converse with those around him, yet, on being awakened, retains no remembrance of what had passed. This condition is produced by the magnetiser at will, and the patient is wholly under his influence, being obliged to answer questions on almost every topic, although in the natural condition of his faculties, he may be totally unacquainted with the subjects. This discovery was made by the Marquis de Puységur; having accidentally spoken to a person whom he had reduced to a state of somnambulism, to his extreme astonishment he was answered, and informed of the proper mode of treatment to be adopted in the case, and moreover, that all patients should be thus interrogated as to their diseases. This opened a new source of astonishment, and the hospitals were crowded by the curious and credulous to hear the poor patients prescribe for themselves! The details which are given in the French works on the subject are numerous,

* Lettre de Mesmer, à M. Vuzer.

and they form a curious study for the philosopher. The patients subjected to fits, predicted, in their state of somnambulism, the exact day and hour when they should have a return of the paroxysm, and as might very naturally be expected, the fits came on at the time. In this state they also were said to possess the same power of internal inspection with regard to other persons who were placed in magnetic connection (*en rapport*) with them. This condition was called the fifth degree, and all subsequent magnetic states are comprehended under the denomination of *lucidity*, or lucid vision, (Fr. *Clairvoyance;* Germ. *Hellsehen.*)

In the sixth degree, the lucid vision extends to all objects, near and at a distance, in space and time, and is hence called the degree of *universal lucidity.* No patient, it is declared, can reach the higher degrees of magnetism, without, like good masons, having previously passed through the lower. Individuals, it is true, are sometimes placed in the higher degrees at the very first magnetic treatment, but they are supposed to have previously passed through the intermediate stages in so rapid a manner, as rendered it impossible to distinguish the transitions. "In conclusion," says one of the accredited writers on the subject,* "in the higher degrees of animal magnetism, we may find a complete practical refutation of all the material theories of the human mind, an impressive proof of the independence of the soul, and the strongest grounds for presuming its immortality; since it has been demonstrated that in its manifestations, it is not confined to any one particular portion of the corporeal organism, and that it is capable of exercising its functions without the use of any of those material organs, by means of which it usually maintains a correspondence with the external world."

The modes of producing somnambulism, are given at great length in "L'Instruction Pratique sur le Magnétisme Animale, par Deleuze,"† as well as in his "Histoire Pratique." Mr. Colquhoun's mode differs but little from that of M. Deleuze, and as it is of later date, 1833, we offer it for the benefit of those who wish to try the experiment themselves.

"Every individual does not possess the capability of operating magnetically upon others; and even he who does possess the power, in some degree, will not always operate beneficially. Certain properties, partly physical, and partly psychical, are requisite in the practical magnetiser; and the fortunate combination of these properties may, in most cases, be considered as a gift of nature. There is a similar inequality in the susceptibility of patients,—some being not at all, others very slightly, and others, again, very easily and powerfully affected by the magnetic treatment. In general, strong and healthy persons exhibit little susceptibility; while weak and diseased persons are strongly affected in various ways.‡

* J. C. Colquhoun, Esq. † Paris, 1825.

‡ "To these circumstances, perhaps, we may ascribe the confirmed scepticism of certain persons, who have made trivial attempts to bring the magnetic doctrines to

"With regard to physical constitution, experience seems to have demonstrated that the magnetiser ought to possess a preponderance of energy over his patient. A few instances, indeed, have been observed, in which weak persons have magnetised with effect. But such exceptions are said to be extremely rare; and Wienholt attempts to account for them upon the principle, that, in such subjects, the vital energy has a greater tendency to the surface, and, therefore, a more diffusive efficacy.

"The magnetiser ought to possess, not merely a strong constitution, but also a sound state of bodily health. A magnetiser affected with sickness will not only operate imperfectly, but, besides, runs the risk of communicating his diseased feelings to the patient, and of thus increasing those sufferings which it is his purpose to alleviate. The age of the magnetiser, too, is a matter of considerable importance. The proper age is that in which the corporeal and mental constitution have attained their utmost development; and the doctrinal writers have, therefore, fixed it within the period between the twenty-fifth and fiftieth years. To these physical qualifications must be added the psychical, consisting of a sound and energetic mind, a lively faith, and a determined, despotic volition.

"It has been observed, that different persons are variously susceptible of the magnetic influence. This will be best explained when we come to speak of the effects produced by the treatment.

"The magnetic treatment is either simple or compound. In the former case, the magnetiser operates solely by himself; in the latter, he makes use of certain external *media*. The simple magnetic treatment is usually administered with the hand, and is thence called *manipulation*. But the magnetiser can also operate without employing the hand—by breathing, or by fixing the eyes or the thoughts steadily and intensely upon the patient. When the magnetic connection has been previously established, a single fixed look of the magnetiser, accompanied with energetic volition, has frequently been found sufficient to throw the patient into the state of magnetic sleep, or somnambulism.

"The magnetic treatment by manipulation comprehends several modes of touching and stroking with the hand, which could not be described here particularly without leading us into prolixity. The usual method is to stroke repeatedly, with the palms of the hands and the fingers, in one direction downwards, from the head to the feet; and, in returning, to throw the hands round in a semicircle, turning the palms outwards, in order not to disturb the effects of the direct stroke. To magnetise in the contrary direction—that is, from the feet upwards towards the head—not only counteracts the effects of the former method, but frequently ope-

the test of experiment. They do not reflect that the magnetic action depends upon certain conditions, and that, if these conditions are not fulfilled, it is in vain to expect any satisfactory result."

rates of itself, prejudicially, especially in the case of irritable subjects. If we attempt to operate with the back of the hand, no effect whatever will probably be produced upon the patient.

"If, in the course of this process, the hands or fingers of the operator are made actually to touch the body of the patient, it is called manipulation *with contact;* if, on the contrary, the operation is conducted at some distance, it is called manipulation *in distans.* The manipulation with contact is of two kinds: it is accompanied either with considerable pressure, or with light touching—manipulation with *strong* or with *light* contact. The manipulation with strong contact is certainly the most ancient and the most universally prevalent mode of operating; and traces of it are to be found in almost all ages and countries. In manipulating with light contact, the hand, indeed, is conducted very lightly along the body of the patient; but the magnetiser must perform this operation with the utmost energy, and always have the desire of applying strong pressure to the body of the patient.

"The manipulation *in distans* is applied at a distance of generally from two to six inches from the patient's body; in the case of very susceptible persons, it is performed at a still greater distance. The effects of this mode of manipulating are less intense than those produced by actual contact, and, besides, it requires a greater energy of volition on the part of the magnetiser. It is, however, frequently employed in magnetising very irritable patients, who cannot endure any stronger method."

Here we may remark, that all the authors on animal magnetism agree in opinion, that the action of this fluid is better communicated by the thumbs, than in any other manner. Other highly important requisites, according to Deleuze, must not be omitted; they are, "an active feeling of good will, *a firm belief in the power of magnetism;* and entire confidence in its employer." When it is wished to unmagnetise the patient, "you must draw off the fluid by the extremity of the hands and feet, in making the passes beyond these parts, and shaking your fingers after each pass. Afterwards, you are to make some passes across the face and breast, keeping the hands about three or four inches from them; these are made, by presenting the hands joined, and separating them quickly from each other, as if to carry off the superabundant fluid with which the patient may be charged."

Somnambulism has become the great aim of the magnetisers; and it is said to be obtained so frequently, that a fifth part of all those who submit to be magnetised, are thrown into different degrees of it. The production of this state, and the *clairvoyance,* or second sight of individuals, may be considered as the great characteristic distinction, between the magnetism of the present day as it has been practised for fifteen or twenty years, and that of Mesmer.

The theories now professed, may be reduced to three general heads.—That of Mesmer, and his disciples, that of the Spiritualists; and that of Puységur. That of Mesmer we have described.

The Spiritualists believe that all the phenomena are produced by the soul, and that physical action is almost useless; this doctrine, which is by far the most mystical, has many believers in Germany and Prussia. They implore the benediction of God, if the cure of the disease is conformable to the designs of Providence, to aid their exertions. They say "there is some analogy between magnetism and the imposition of hands, which was accorded by the Saviour to the members of his Church." Such are the wild and impious doctrines of this sect of magnetisers.

A similar class took very many minds captive in the United States; the most celebrated case was that of Miss Rachael Baker, at New York, whose visions astounded all conversational circles, soon after Redheffer's perpetual motion was exploded. She not only answered questions whilst in that condition, but also composed prayers and hymns; all of which she was incapable of doing when awake. Dr. Mitchell, one of her disciples, or at least believers, favoured the world with a detailed account of her case, accompanied with some choice specimens of her compositions.

The school of Puységur attribute all the effects produced by magnetism, to a subtle and peculiar vital fluid, which is accumulated in the brain, to which the nerves serve as conductors. This fluid which presides over all actions of the body, is wholly under the power of the will, and can be transfused into any other body. They do not admit the theory of poles, or of planetary influence, but consider the will to be the great source of power, and at the same time this will must be directed by physical means, in order to act on patients. He introduced a great change in the method of operating, refusing the *baquet* and public exhibitions of Mesmer and Deslon, and conducting the treatment in private; this good effect has resulted, that instead of being thrown into convulsions, and other violent symptoms, the patients now are reduced to a state of somnambulism.

Under these new operators, the excitement was renewed in Paris and elsewhere; the subject of animal magnetism was again brought before the Academy of Medicine, in 1827, where an animated discussion took place, whether a committee should be appointed to examine the merits and consequences of the doctrine. This was at first negatived, but on a subsequent trial, a committee of eleven members was appointed, consisting of some of the most celebrated physicians of Paris. Of these, M. M. Double and Magendie refused to act, and were not willing to sign the report, as they had not assisted in making the experiments. The others were Bourdois de la Motte, Fouquier, Gueneau de Mussy, Guersent, Huston, Itard, J. J. Leroux, Marc, and Thillaye. They occupied five years in making up their minds on the subject, and went through a variety of laborious investigations. Of this report it shall now be our duty to present an impartial abstract. It has been referred to by the believers in animal magnetism, as irrefragible testimony of the merits of the practice, and demands therefore the candid attention of the reader.

ABSTRACT OF THE REPORT ON THE MAGNETIC EXPERIMENTS,

Made by a Committee of the Royal Academy of Medicine: read June, 1831.*

This committee was appointed at the solicitation of the magnetic physician, M. Foissac, and they commenced by examining the somnambulist he first brought forward; she failed to exhibit any peculiar phenomena of somnambulism. They soon discovered that a certain combination of conditions is required in order to the production of the effect proposed to be exhibited. The committee sought only to be "inquisitive, mistrustful, and exact observers;" every facility was given them, and the process of magnetising was the same we have already described. The penman of the committee several times submitted to the operation without effect, though the ennui of his position, and the silence observed might have produced sleep at any other time; this was when he was in full health; on another occasion when tormented with very violent and very obstinate pains, he allowed himself to be repeatedly magnetised, and he never obtained by this means the slightest mitigation, although his sufferings were so great as to make him vehemently desire to have them alleviated. M. Bourdois, his colleague, experienced "absolutely no effect." M. Itard on the contrary, thought a slight pain disappeared, though it was very variable; his pulse rose 14 degrees, and he closed his eyes during the operation.

M. Magnien, a physician, had injured his left knee, and had an aneurism of the heart; his pulse decreased at the end of five sittings, and at the sixth the number was the same at the commencement as at the termination. He always experienced a coolness in all those parts of his body to which the fingers of the magnetiser were directed. A colleague, M. Roux, who complained of a chronic affection of the stomach, was magnetised six times; he experienced, at first, a sensible diminution in the number of pulsations, afterwards a slight degree of heat in the stomach, a great degree of coolness in the face; the sensation of a vaporisation of ether, even when no manipulations were practised before him, and finally, a decided disposition to sleep.

Anne Bourdin, aged 23, was magnetised at the Hotel Dieu; she complained of head-ach, and of a nervous pain in the left eye; the inspirations increased from 16 to 39, from 14 to 20, and the

* In making this abstract, the writer has used the very words of the report, only abbreviating it when that was possible without injuring the sense.

pulsations from 69 to 79, &c. The head grew heavy, she fell asleep for some minutes; no change was effected in the nervous pain in the eye, but the head-ach was alleviated. Theresa Tierlin was very similarly affected.

Several individuals were observed to fall asleep who were not subjected to the magnetic influence from the monotony of the gestures employed, the religious silence observed, and the ennui occasioned by remaining long in the same position.

Mademoiselle Lemaitre, aged 25, was afflicted with an affection of the sight (*amaurosis*). She was magnetised, became drowsy at the end of the third sitting, on the fourth she exhibited convulsive motions, and her pulse was accelerated. At each successive sitting she appeared more and more susceptible; at the eleventh, the magnetiser seated himself behind her without making any gesture, and without any intention of magnetising her, and she experienced a more decided tendency to sleep than upon any of the preceding days, accompanied however, with less of agitation and convulsive motions. Her sight did not improve.

Louisa Ganot, a servant, was under treatment for leucorrhœa, and was magnetised; she was subject to nervous attacks, and convulsive motions were exhibited. She experienced the effect of the magnetiser when he was seated behind her and a chair interposed its back between them. On another occasion all the preparations were made for the operation, except that the magnetiser was absent, and she exhibited the same symptoms! An epileptic man experienced the same effects when he was actually magnetised, and when he only believed himself to be so; the imagination was the cause.

A child of 28 months, subject to epilepsy, rubbed its eyes under the influence of the magnetiser, yawned, appeared agitated, scratched its head and its ears, seemed to contend against the approach of sleep, rose and became sprightly; on a second application no symptom of drowsiness appeared. A deaf and dumb epileptic patient exhibited no appreciable phenomena except heavy eyelids, a general numbness, a desire to sleep, and sometimes vertigo. He had no fits afterwards for eight months.

M. Itard again submitted to the operation, and felt a heaviness without sleep, a setting on edge (*agacement*) in the nerves of the face, convulsive motions in the nostrils, face and jaws, &c.

Mademoiselle Louisa Delaplaine, aged 16, had a catamenial suppression; she fell asleep at the first sitting in eight minutes; was spoken to, but made no answer; a white iron screen was thrown down near her; she continued in a state of complete insensibility; a glass bottle was forcibly broken—she awoke with a start. At a second sitting, she answered by affirmative and negative motions of the head; at the third she intimated that in two days she would speak and point out the nature and seat of her complaint; when pinched so as to produce a livid mark, she gave no sign of sensibility. A bottle full of ammoniac opened under

her nose produced only a motion of the hand to her nostril. She never spoke on subsequent trial, nor fulfilled her promised revelations. Baptiste Chamet, a carman, was put to sleep, but failed in his prognostications.

Madame Martineau, aged nineteen, afflicted with chronic inflammation of the bowels, was magnetised fifteen days consecutively, and, in her sleep, said she did not see the persons present, but heard them, when no person was speaking; said she must be purged with manna: they gave her bread, and it purged her. She announced that she would give a detailed account of her complaint on a certain day; when it arrived she told nothing. A Mademoiselle Couturier did even worse than this, failing in every thing; others failed, on repeated trials, in the most blundering manner. One was operated on the right hand, and the convulsions took place on the left, and so on.

The committee next report on a case, *which they did not see*, of a lady having a cancer taken from her while in a state of somnabulism, without knowing it.

Attempts were now made to appreciate the faculty of lucidity, or *clairvoyance*. M. Petit was the first subject; with his eyelids held down, he failed to recognize the date of a coin, saying 1813 for 1812; he was twice mistaken as to the time indicated by the hands of a watch. With a sheet of paper or pasteboard before his eyes, he played picquet well, and recognised the cards with facility. (*Query*, by the touch?)

We next have an experiment which had the appearance of the true lucidity. M. Petit was set asleep in about one minute; his eyes being bandaged, he could not see, and the bandage was removed; the persons present watched his eyes, and thought they were constantly closed; a catalogue was presented to him, and he read, after some efforts which seemed to fatigue him, "Lavater; il est bien difficile de connaitre les hommes." He recognised a passport, &c. He was shown an open letter; he declared he could not read it, as he did not understand English. It was in fact an English letter. He could not read any of the contents of a closed letter, but followed the directions of the lines with his fingers; the address on the outside he read. He won a game at picquet with facility. The ball of the eyes moved under the eyelid. (We here recognise every probability of sight being obtained by natural means.)

Paul Villagrand had suffered a stroke of apoplexy, which was followed by paralysis, and he could not support himself on the left foot; the left arm he could not lift to his head. His right eye saw dimly and he was very hard of hearing. After bleedings, purgings and blisterings, he was magnetised, and fell asleep. From this period his deafness and head-achs disappeared. After a dozen sittings he prescribed certain pills, &c. for his cure; that in three days he would be enabled to walk without crutches, and so he was. He then announced that he should be completely cured by the 1st of January, and in a state of somnambulism he hopped about on

the left foot and exhibited great strength, which was gone when he awoke. He was magnetised on the 25th of December, and kept in that state till January 1, only awakened occasionally and made to believe he had been asleep only a few hours. While asleep he went to the hospital, recognised his old neighbours in the beds, the pupils, &c. and read a very little with his eyes closed. On the first of January he declared he was now perfectly cured, and that he should die of apoplexy. On the 12th of January he recognised cards when his eyes were closed, and read "Histoire de France" on a title page, but could not make out the two intermediate lines, and so on through a variety of experimenting; he attempted in vain to distinguish cards applied to his stomach. (On the whole this was certainly a case with which much pains were taken, but it must be deemed unsatisfactory.)

Pierre Cazot, a hatter, predicted accurately when his epileptic fits would come on, was set asleep by a look from the magnetiser, and could then bear pins to be thrust into him without flinching; he was awakened by the mere influence of volition; he predicted when he should be quite cured, but before the time arrived he was killed in attempting to stop a horse. (The whole of this case admits of the clearest explanation from collusion, and no importance can be attached to it, though in the report it is relied on as clear evidence.)

Mademoiselle Celine described the disease of one of the committee, but it was not right in every particular. To another patient she was introduced unexpectedly; she passed her hand, over the stomach and stated that worms, &c. must be cured by using the milk of a goat which had previously been rubbed with mercurial ointment half an hour before milking; this was the very prescription of her physician! The patient died a year afterwards, the body was not opened to verify the truth of the assertion respecting the disease, worms, &c.

A family in a case of great delicacy, supposed to be a syphilitic taint, wished to have the advice of a somnambulist. Madame Celine placed herself in connection with the patient, and affirmed that the stomach had been attacked by a substance *like poison*, &c. She prescribed a mode of treatment, which was followed for some time, and a perceptible amelioration of the symptoms was the result. But the impatience of the patient at her slow recovery caused the employment of the physicians again, and she died under them; and they pronounced, on opening the body, that there was no indication of a syphilitic taint.

[This is the sum and substance of the report, and any unprejudiced person who will read it with attention must come to the conclusion that the committee were duped; that collusion would account for nearly all that they saw; in many cases which the magnetisers depended on, and promised much from, no effect was produced, or it was ludicrously contrary to what they wished. Notwithstanding this, the committee seem to be *half* convinced, and

we give their "conclusions" without further comment. The examinations as to *clairvoyance* were not conducted with the same caution of covering the eyes, as was practised by the commissioners of the king, and the conclusions on this subject are very unsatisfactory indeed. The same may be said of the examination of 1836.]

CONCLUSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE.

In general, magnetism does not act upon persons in a sound state of health, neither does it act upon all sick persons. Sometimes during the process of magnetising there are manifested insignificant and evanescent effects, which cannot be attributed to magnetism alone, but to hope or fear, prejudice and novelty, ennui, silence, and imagination. A certain number of the effects observed appeared to depend upon magnetism alone, and were never produced without its application. These, they thought, are well established physiological and therapeutic phenomena.

The real effects produced are very various and uncertain. It agitates some, and soothes others; most commonly it occasions a momentary acceleration of the respiration and of the circulation; fugitive, fibrillary, convulsive motions, resembling electric shocks; a numbness, in greater or less degree; heaviness; somnolency; and, *in a small number of cases*, that which the magnetisers call somnambulism. The existence of an uniform character to enable the committee to recognise, in every case, the reality of the state of somnambulism, has not been established. The committee, however, believe they may conclude with certainty that this state exists, when it gives rise to the development of new faculties, which have been designated by the names of *clairvoyance*, intuition, internal prevision; or when it produces great changes in the physical economy—such as insensibility, a sudden and considerable increase of strength; and when these effects cannot be referred to any other cause.

As among the effects attributed to somnambulism there are some which may be feigned, somnambulism itself may be feigned, and furnish to quackery the means of deception. It is only by means of the most attentive scrutiny, *the most rigid precautions*, and numerous and varied experiments, that we can escape illusion. Sleep, produced with more or less promptitude, is a real but not a constant effect of magnetism. They hold it as demonstrated that it has been produced in circumstances, in which the persons magnetised could not see, or were ignorant of the means employed to occasion it.

The look of the magnetiser, his volition alone, possesses the power of magnetising, even with doors intervening. Magnetism is as intense, and as speedily felt, at a distance of six feet, as of six inches, and the phenomena developed are the same, but the action at a distance does not appear capable of being excited with success, excepting upon individuals who have been already magnetised; their memory appeared to be more faithful and more extensive; they re-

membered every thing that passed at the time, and every time they were placed in a state of somnambulism. Upon awaking, they said they had totally forgotten all that took place during the somnambulism.

The muscular powers are sometimes benumbed and paralysed; at other times, their motions are constrained, and they walk or totter about like drunken men, sometimes avoiding, and sometimes not avoiding, obstacles in their way. Some display more agility than when awake. Two distinguished, with their eyes closed, the objects placed before them, mentioned the value of cards without touching them, read words traced with the hand, as also some lines of books opened at random. This phenomenon took place, they think, when the eyelids were kept exactly closed with the fingers. In two, the faculty was found of foreseeing the acts of the organism, more or less remote, more or less complicated; this appeared to apply only to acts or injuries of their organism.

They found only a single somnambulist who pointed out the symptoms of the diseases of three persons; they had made experiments upon a considerable number. They examined too small a number to establish, with any exactness, the connection between magnetism and therapeutics. Some felt no benefit, others a more or less decided relief.

Considered as a cause of certain physiological phenomena, or as a therapeutic remedy, magnetism ought to be allowed a place within the circle of medical sciences, and, consequently, physicians only should practise it!

The committee conclude by stating, that they have not been able to verify other faculties which the magnetisers had announced as existing in somnambulists. But they think they have communicated in their report facts of sufficient importance to encourage the investigations into the subject of animal magnetism, as a very curious branch of psychology and natural history.

Thus ends this report, which has been alternately approved and ridiculed as the reader has or has not a bias in favour of the "science." With it closes our history of animal magnetism, which now pretends to greater and more wonderful revelations than had ever been before attributed to it, or even thought of. That it is destined to a short lived popularity we cannot doubt; an acute examination into its effects is yet to be instituted in this country; the report of the royal commissioners will point out the mode of the enquiry.

Colonel Stone's pamphlet stands alone in this country: much of it is at war with all the known laws of nature; we have yet had no other observer who was willing to report in print all that he witnessed. Other visiters, if we are correctly informed, make statements directly at variance; in more than one instance, when the somnambulist went on an excursion during sleep, she was entirely

at fault as to what she saw in particular houses, while in others, where we are at liberty to suppose there was room for collusion, in the absence of direct proof to the contrary, the revelations have appeared most extraordinary; let us not be carried away till the most minute scrutiny is instituted, and until a uniformity in results is perfectly established.

In conclusion, we warn females from submitting themselves to the action of magnetism; *so gross have been the indecencies committed*, that the arm of the law has more than once interposed to put a stop to its proceedings.

THE END.

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