

A large gathering of patients and assistants to Mesmer's animal magnetism therapy, showing use of the special tub at his clinic. Wood engraving by H. Thiriat.

Contributors

Thiriat, Henri, active 1874-1877.

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MESMER'S TUB ;

Or, a Faithful Representation of the Operations of Animal Magnetism.

The following is a translation of the original description accompanying the above curious old print, which is of especial interest at the present day, when mesmerism has been advanced to the dignity of a science : " Mr. Mesmer, M.D., of the Medical Faculty of Vienna, Austria, is the sole inventor of animal magnetism. This method of curing a number of ailments (such as paralysis, gout, scorbute, and accidental deafness) consists in the application, by Mr. Mesmer, of a fluid or agent, which he administers occasionally through one of his fingers—or else by means of an iron rod—to those who come to seek his aid. He uses also a large tub, to which are fixed pieces of cord which the patients tie round their limbs, or iron hooks which they apply to that part of the body in which they suffer ; the patients, especially women, have fits, which bring about their recovery. The magnetizers (those to whom Mr. Mesmer has confided his secret, and numbering at least one hundred among the gentlemen of the Court) place their hands upon the ailing parts and rub them, thereby aiding the influence of the cords and hooks. There is a tub for the poor twice a week, and music is played in the entrance-hall to cheer the patients. People of all sorts and conditions flock to this celebrated physician, from Field Marshals to artisans. It is a scene to move the coldest heart to see men who have attained the highest honours in society magnetizing aged paupers. As to Mr. Mesmer, he is the picture of benevolence, of a serious disposition, and speaks little, seeming always to be absorbed in profound reflections."