

**Hypnotic therapeutics : illustrated by cases : with an appendix on table-moving and spirit-rapping / by James Braid.**

**Contributors**

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# HYPNOTIC THERAPEUTICS,

ILLUSTRATED BY CASES.

WITH

AN APPENDIX

ON

TABLE-MOVING AND SPIRIT-RAPPING.

BY

JAMES BRAID, M.R.C.S., EDIN.,

M.W.S., ETC. ETC.

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## HYPNOTIC THERAPEUTICS.

From a paper published by me in the "Monthly Journal" for June 1851, and various works published at different times, my views of hypnotic and mesmeric phenomena are now pretty generally known, namely, that the influence is subjective or personal, and not objective, or the effect of any mysterious influence, as some communicated from the operator to the patient, during the mesmerising process, as has been alleged by the mesmerists to be the case. In proof of this, it may suffice to state that, at one public lecture, fourteen male adults, who were entire strangers to me, and had never been operated upon before, were seated together in a row, and maintained a steady gaze and fixed act of attention whilst gazing at inanimate objects, and within ten minutes, ten out of the fourteen passed into the hypnotic state in various degrees, whilst I never touched any one of them until after their eyelids closed involuntarily. Three more of the audience likewise sent themselves into the condition at same time, unknown to me, by fixing their gaze and attention upon different points of the room. Again, at a conversation in London, 16 out of 18 (twelve of whom had never been tried before) went into the condition at same time, by gazing fixedly and abstractedly on the foot of a chandelier. At another public lecture, five deaf and dumb patients, and a paralytic patient, all put themselves into the state at same time, by gazing at inanimate objects. I have also endeavoured to prove that all the phenomena, interesting and wonderful as some of them undoubtedly are, so far as I have been able to ascertain, never transcend what is reconcilable with generally admitted physiological and psychological principles.

My researches have led me to conclude that the hypnotic state, which may be induced by various processes described elsewhere, is essentially a state of mental concentration, in which the faculties of the mind of the patient are so engrossed with a single idea or train of thought, as for the nonce, to be dead or indifferent to all other considerations and influences. The consequence of this concentrated

MURRAY AND GIBB, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.



To Professor J H Bennett  
with the author's best compliments & regards

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attention to the subject in hand, therefore, intensifies, in a correspondingly greater degree, whatever influence the mind of the individual can produce upon his physical functions during the waking condition, when his attention is so much more diffused and distracted by other impressions. Moreover, inasmuch as words spoken, or other sensible impressions made on the body of an individual by a second party, act as suggestions of thought and action to the person impressed, so as to draw and fix his attention to one part or function of his body, and withdraw it from others, whatever influence such suggestions and impressions are capable of producing during the ordinary waking condition, should naturally be expected to act with correspondingly greater effect during the *nervous sleep*, when the attention is so much more concentrated, and the imagination and faith, or expectant idea in the mind of the patient, are so much more intense than in the ordinary waking condition.

I am persuaded that this is the most philosophical mode of viewing this subject, and it renders the whole clear, simple, and intelligible to the apprehension of any unprejudiced person.

The real object of the various processes for inducing the state of *hypnotism* or *mesmerism* is obviously to induce a state of abstraction or concentration of attention, whether that may be by requesting the subject to look steadfastly at some unexciting and empty inanimate thing or ideal object, or inducing him to watch the fixed gaze of the operator's eyes, his pointed fingers, or the passes and other manoeuvres of the mesmeriser.

So far as I have seen, the principal difference between the *hypnotic* or *nervous sleep* and common sleep consists in the state or condition of the mind. In passing into common sleep the mind is diffusive or passive, flitting from one idea to another indifferently, thereby rendering the subject unable to fix his attention effectively on any regular train of thought, or to perform any acts requiring much effort of the will. The consequence is this, that a state of passiveness is manifested during the sleep, so that audible suggestions and sensible impressions addressed to the sleeper, if not intense enough to awake him entirely, seldom do more than excite a dream, in which ideas pass through his mind without exciting definite physical acts; but, on the other hand, the active and concentrated state of mind engendered by the processes for inducing the *nervous sleep* are carried *into* the sleep, and, in many instances, excite the sleeper, without awaking, to speak or exhibit physical manifestations of the suggestions received through words audibly uttered in his hearing, or ideas previously existing in his mind, or excited by sensible impressions made by touches or passes of the operator, which direct the attention of the sleeper to different parts, or excite into action certain combinations of muscles, and thereby direct his current of thought.

Nor must I omit to remark that much depends upon the mode of arousing the patient from the sleep as respects the results which



follow. If I wish any predominant idea, or any physical change which has been induced, to be carried strongly into the waking condition, I arouse the patient abruptly, by a clap of my hands near to his ear, when he is in the full height of the desired condition; but if tranquillising is the object in view, then he had better be aroused slowly and softly, such as by gently wafting the face of the patient with the hand, or with a fan, or an open handkerchief; or by placing the balls of the thumbs gently on the eyes of the patient, or on his eyebrows, and then carrying them laterally a few times so as to produce gentle friction, to which may be added gentle fanning when required. If the patient is in the sub or half-waking condition, favourable for manifesting the vigilant phenomena, or "Electro Biological" phenomena, as they have so absurdly been called, a new suggestion, by a word spoken, or a visible movement of any sort being made, calculated to break the previous abstraction, which had been excited temporarily by a former suggestion, will suffice to set the captive free.

It had long been known that keeping the attention of the mind steadily directed to any part of the body was apt to produce various anomalous feelings in the mind of the subject so engaged, especially if such individual was expecting something to happen. Hitherto, however, these phenomena had had reference principally to common sensation, and were considered to be the effects of a vivid imagination, and that the results were of an illusory nature, rather than being accompanied with positive physical changes. True, it had long been known that some remarkable physical changes and cures occurred, occasionally, from causes of great mental excitement; and that some individuals, moreover, through preconcerted plots, had been frightened into serious illness, or even to death, through mental impressions excited by the systematic suggestion of others. It was also known that excessive joy or sorrow had sometimes effected astonishing cures, and in other cases had induced disease or death with the rapidity of the lightning's flash. Other emotional effects, and the power of sympathy and imitation were also pretty well known, and generally acknowledged. Thus far, however, with the exception of Dr Holland's interesting remarks on the influence of attention on the bodily organs, "Medical Notes and Reflections," a work which I had not the benefit of seeing until after completing my experiments "On the Power of the Mind," there seemed to have been no notion entertained that definite and special physical changes could be excited, and regulated, and controlled at will, by the voluntary mental efforts of a healthy individual directed towards *his own body*, or involuntarily, according to the suggestions of another person, by words spoken, or by sensible signs or physical impressions made by him, such as by passes or touches, as is now fully admitted by all physiologists who have carefully and candidly investigated this curious and important branch of inquiry.

In 1844 I performed some experiments to determine the pro-



bable nature and cause of certain effects said to have been realised in America, as *physical* results of medicines manifested on patients *through glass*,—viz., that by touching, smelling at, or tasting the outside of a bottle containing such medicines, would be sufficient to manifest their respective powers on patients, whilst the bottles were securely closed and sealed. I published the results of my experiments at the time, which clearly proved that the effects realised were due entirely to the power of an expectant idea in the mind of the patient over his own physical functions, as I made a little coloured water act on a patient as an emetic, when wide awake, by simply assuring the patient, in a confident manner, that it would produce such an effect; and, by removing from the hand the phial containing the coloured water, and putting another phial in the opposite hand, which I predicted would suspend the sickness, the nausea immediately subsided, notwithstanding the contents of said anti-emetic phial had no *physical* property calculated to have done so, more than the other had to have produced the sickness.

In the year 1845, Baron Von Reichenbach, a great authority in chemistry and on meteoric stones, published his researches on magnetism and the allied sciences, in which he set forth, with laborious minuteness, a series of experiments conducted by him and others on certain nervous and cataleptic patients, whom he denominated *sensitives*; and he adduced what was described as seen and felt, and manifested in various ways by said patients, as satisfactory proof of the existence of "a new imponderable" force, differing from all the other known imponderables, to which new force the Baron applied the term "od," or the "od force." To this Baron Reichenbach attributed a vast variety of the phenomena in nature, and amongst others the phenomena of mesmerism. In the spring of 1846, Professor Gregory published "an abstract" of the Baron's views in an English dress. On perusing this abstract, I at once perceived a grave source of fallacy, as the only proof which they had to adduce of the existence of this new physical force, were the declarations and manifestations of these nervous, cataleptic subjects, of what they alleged they saw and felt under such and such circumstances. Some apparently healthy and vigorous and most intelligent individuals, who profess great power of abstraction, or of fixing their attention, with a vivid imagination, are also susceptible of experiencing the like results from mere fixity of attention on any part, or on any function of their minds or bodies, and are especially prone to be led by suggestions of others into particular trains of thought, as will be explained presently. Whatever credit was justly due to the great zeal and industry and honesty of purpose of the Baron and his patients, and his learned translator, and however high Baron Reichenbach and Professor Gregory were entitled to stand as authorities in chemical and physical science, it appeared to me that they were by no means equally well acquainted with physiology and psychology, otherwise I could not have imagined it possible that



they should so entirely have overlooked or undervalued the important part which the mind and nervous system of the instruments they were operating with were calculated to play in such an inquiry; and I therefore considered that the whole of their inductions must necessarily be unsatisfactory from this circumstance.

In order to correct what appeared to me such a grave and palpable source of error, I undertook a laborious course of experiments on patients in the waking condition, as well as on others when in the hypnotic state, from which I was enabled to demonstrate, not only that an act of fixed attention, on the part of a patient, directed to any organ or part of his body, was adequate to change the normal condition of the organ or part, both as regarded sensation and function, even during the *waking* condition; but I was, moreover, enabled farther to prove that, through audible suggestions, the function of any organ or part might either be excited or depressed in its function with great uniformity, or varied according to the suggestions of a second party, conveyed in an energetic and engrossing manner to the minds of subjects of great fixity of attention, especially if also possessed of a vivid imagination, and lively faith in the fulfilment of the prediction. Mere fixity of attention clearly brought out an exalted manifestation of the *naturally predominant* susceptibility of the organ or function upon which his attention was fixed; but fixity of attention, together with an *expectant idea as to the peculiar result to be anticipated*, was generally followed by a result corresponding *precisely* with the dominant expectant idea in the mind of the patient during his fixed act of attention. All this was clearly proved by examples given in detail in my little brochure on "The Power of the Mind over the Body," which was published in July 1846. I believe this was the first systematic and *extended* course of experiments published, in which satisfactory proof had been adduced that a fixed dominant expectant idea in the mind of the patient might either *excite* or *depress*, or *temporarily suspend* the function of *any* one or of *all* of the special senses, or even the function of any organ or part of the human body; and that an audible suggestion from another person, and the dominant expectant idea excited thereby in the mind of the subject would become so engrossing with some subjects, that they could not avoid realising the *expected* result as regarded *all* the organs of special sense, and some of the mental faculties; and that all the secretions and excretions might be increased or diminished in a remarkable degree, merely as the result of dominant, sustained, expectant ideas in the minds of such subjects. Here, then, was the *rationale* of the phenomena attributed by Baron Reichenbach to his "new imponderable," which proved at least that his alleged "new imponderable," or "od force," was *unnecessary* for their production; and here, likewise, we had not only the *rationale*, but also many examples in point, of phenomena which, four or five years after the publication of my little *brochure*, were alleged to have been a new discovery, and imported into this country from



America, under the designation of "Electro-Biology." The only novelties, therefore, of this alleged importation were the name and theory or explanation; and in respect to the name, it was absurd, and as to the theory, it was obviously erroneous. It is certain that there was no electricity in the matter more than in any other operation in nature, and that the patients were merely *partially hypnotised* by the fixed gaze at the discs.

In patients, again, who passed into what is called the double-conscious state of the nervous sleep, these results of expectant ideas and fixed attention came out still more promptly and pronounced, but, apparently, merely from their attention being still more concentrated, their imaginations and expectant ideas more vigorous, and the counteracting influence of reason being more in abeyance during the complete nervous sleep. Again, when the limbs were extended and rendered cataleptic, and the circulation thereby excited, the influence was still more intense and remarkable in some respects.

With due attention to these facts, there need be no difficulty in comprehending how hypnotism may be rendered available for the relief and cure of various maladies, when skilfully directed and controlled. By our various modes of suggestion, through influencing the mind by audible language, spoken within the hearing of the patient, or by definite physical impressions, we fix certain ideas, strongly and involuntarily on the mind of the patient, which thereby act as stimulants, or as sedatives, according to the purport of the expectant ideas, and the direction of the current of thought in the mind of the patient, either drawing it to, or withdrawing it from, particular organs or functions; which results are effected in ordinary practice, by prescribing such medicines as experience has proved stimulate or irritate these organs, thereby directly increasing their functions, or which produce the reverse effect, either by direct sedative action on the organs, or by diminishing the heart's action, or by stimulating some distant part, and thereby producing revulsion.

The great object of all treatment is, either to excite or to depress function, or to increase or to diminish the existing state of sensibility and circulation, locally or generally, with the necessary attendant changes in the general, and more especially in the capillary, circulation. For this purpose I feel convinced that hypnotism may be applied in the cure of some forms of disease with the same ease and certainty as our most simple and approved methods of treatment; and I therefore wish to direct attention to it as a valuable *adjunct* to other treatment, and as one particularly useful in many nervous affections, which resist all ordinary treatment by the exhibition of medicines. I wish it to be distinctly understood, however, that I by no means desire to hold up hypnotism as a panacea or universal remedy; indeed, I do not believe in the existence of *any* universal remedy. Diseases differ in their nature and causes, and the peculiarities of the constitutions of individuals who may be the subjects of disease; and, consequently, they require treatment to be varied accordingly.



It is indeed well known that I use hypnotism *alone*, only in a certain class of cases, to which I have ascertained, by experience, that it is peculiarly adapted; and, that I use it in other cases *in conjunction with medicines*; whilst, *in the great majority of cases I do not use hypnotism at all*, but depend entirely upon the exhibition of medicines, which I administer in such doses as are calculated to produce obvious and sensible effects.

Again, inasmuch as the only rational mode of treating disease is, first of all, to ascertain the pathological condition, and whether the indication is to stimulate or to depress, and to what extent, in either respect, it is obviously equally necessary that a person shall have such professional knowledge as shall qualify him to do this, in order to prepare him for treating cases with general success by hypnotism, as by the ordinary modes of treatment. In proof of this I may state the following facts:—In cases which had been treated mesmerically by others, with the low circulation, not only without benefit, but with an aggravation of symptoms, so soon as they were subjected by me to the hypnotic process, with the high circulation or stimulating plan, relief and cure were effected immediately. In like manner, at a period when I was much less acquainted with the hypnotic mode of treatment, this same fact was strikingly manifested during my treatment of a severe case of epilepsy. After this case had resisted energetic treatment under medical means, the patient was brought to me to be hypnotised. Being a chronic case, I adopted hypnotism *alone, with the excited circulation, without benefit*, and then I combined this method with the exhibition of medicines, but still without benefit. I then recommended a residence in the country, with fresh air and moderate exercise in the open air, suitable medicines being also used in the meantime, but all to no purpose, as the patient returned as bad as ever. I now hypnotised him daily, *with the low circulation*, and from that day he had but *one fit* subsequently, and has now remained quite well for eight years. I have also had many other examples proving the same doctrine, of how much of our success depends upon proper management *after the hypnotic state is induced*.

During the nervous sleep, by inducing the low circulation and suppressed respiration, as explained elsewhere in my writings, the blood, from being thus insufficiently arterialised, acts as a narcotic, and depresses all the powers of life below that of natural sleep; and if the attention has also been fixed in some particular train of thought, every other function becomes deadened in an extraordinary degree, so that severe inflictions and operations may be borne in that state without the patient evincing any apparent consciousness of pain, nor, if questioned when he awakes, will he remember having felt any pain. The patient seems to have been reduced to a state of temporary nervous coma, during which anæsthesia was complete. In other cases, a patient who is highly sensible to pain when awake, may be rendered quite tolerant of, or indifferent to, an operation, even



when only so partially under the influence as to be quite conscious that the operation is being performed. The following case is a good example in point. I had been attending a lady for affection of the brain, complicated with monomania. At length a tumour formed, burrowing under the upper part of the orbit, which pointed near the inner canthus. From the progress of the case, I suspected that this abscess communicated with the anterior lobe and base of the brain, and I therefore determined to evacuate its contents by a very small puncture, and close the wound, so as to exclude the air from the sac. This I had occasion to do repeatedly, and on every occasion the patient evinced symptoms of intense suffering. I therefore at length proposed to try the effect of hypnotising her, and operating whilst she was in that condition. To this she readily consented, and notwithstanding she was so partially affected as to be quite conscious of what I was doing, she was now enabled to bear the operation without the slightest complaint or apparent suffering. On one occasion I thought it would be interesting, for the sake of contrast, to operate *without* hypnotising the patient, but the consequence was most distressing and alarming. The operation was precisely similar, and not accompanied by a greater discharge than usual, but now she experienced such exquisite pain and suffering, with prolonged fainting and prostration, that immediate death seemed impending, and it was more than two hours before I durst leave her room. I had frequent occasion to repeat the operation subsequently, but I always preceded it by my hypnotising process, and then all went on satisfactorily.

I have myself performed a number of minor surgical operations on patients in the hypnotic condition without pain, and some capital operations have been recorded as having been performed by others entirely without pain, even in this country. Mesmerism seems peculiarly adapted for this purpose amongst the natives of India, as Dr Esdaile's experience proved, seeing he performed 300 important and capital operations, some of them of the most formidable nature, on natives in an hospital in Calcutta, and without pain to the patients, the recoveries, moreover, being far beyond the average success. Still, I suspect, with the European constitution, and in this country in particular, it will be found, that mesmerism or hypnotism are far less available for inducing anæsthesia for surgical and midwifery purposes, than chloroform and æther, as the latter are more certain and speedy in their results, and are perfectly safe when judiciously and skilfully used. However, from a pretty extensive experience of *both* methods, I am warranted in saying, that hypnotism is far more useful for the relief and cure of certain forms of disease, than either æther or chloroform are ever likely to become.

Let the circulation and respiration, however, be both increased, by elevating the limbs and rendering them cataleptic, so that the brain and nervous system are excited by an increased activity of circulation of inordinately stimulating and highly arterialized blood, and we thus induce a condition as remarkable for exaltation of



function and excitement, as the former was remarkable for depression. Moreover, from the habit of abstraction or concentration of attention, superinduced by the original processes, there seems not only to result a general state of quickness of perception, but also a tendency to absolute concentration of attention on whatever idea the mind is directed to. In consequence of this, by directing the attention of the patient to any particular function or action, mental or physical, the whole or the greater part of the force of the *vis nervosa* or powers of life, seems to be concentrated on that function or action, and hence it is manifested with correspondingly exalted energy; or the function may be suspended or temporarily reduced in force, by suggesting audibly to the patient, what will thereby become with him a dominant idea,—for *excitement or depression of function will equally result from a fixed and sustained dominant idea.*

Whilst I do not believe in the reality of any magnetic or occult influence, or nervous or vital fluid or force, passing from the operator to the patient, as has been alleged by the mesmerists to take place during their making movements with their hands, or agitating the air, called passes and touches,—contact or non-contact passes; I readily admit a certain amount of influence to result from them, and with this idea alone I resort to passes, manipulations, and audible suggestions, for their mechanical impression, or that of heat and cold, from the agitation of the air, calling the attention of the subject to certain parts, and withdrawing it from others, and thus modifying physical action, sensation, and circulation, according to the mental direction and dominant ideas in the mind of the patient. Thus, general wafting whilst the muscles are limber will excite the cuticular and muscular systems, the latter slightly, and leave the internal organs in a state of quiescence or of diminished function; or by calling the patient's attention to any particular organ or function, as already stated, we thereby *excite or depress* the function of that organ or part, according to the *expectant idea in the mind of the patient at the time.*

It is highly probable, that additional mental impressions might be made upon some patients, by investing the subject in mystery, and leading the patients to believe that there is some occult or special influence at work, regulated by particular manœuvres; but, as I do not believe in the existence of any such occult influence as the true cause of the phenomena manifested, I could not honestly do so. I therefore content myself by acting according to my own notion of producing curative effects by exciting dominant and persistent ideas in the minds of the patients, with the physical results which flow therefrom, and altering the quality and quantity of the blood circulating through a part in a given time, which can be regulated by certain circumstances and modes of management, as already pointed out. This seems to have been overlooked or under-valued by the mesmerists, but there can be no doubt whatever, that by these means we can produce powerful and positive physical impressions, independently of any occult, magnetic, odyllic, or special, or nervous or vital influ-



ence or force being transmitted from the body of the operator to that of the patient, as has been alleged by the mesmerists as the true cause of the phenomena realised during their processes.

It is quite possible that some influence of an electrical nature may be brought into play during the processes of the mesmeriser, and still farther heighten the effects; for it is a well-established fact, that a change in the electrical polarity necessarily takes place from the simple proximity or contact of all bodies, whether animate or inanimate. However, that this electrical effect is not the chief or important agency is obvious from this fact, that I have found similar results arise from touching a patient with a glass rod  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, or making passes with an artificial hand attached to the end of said rod, as when doing so with my own hand or any conductor of electricity.

Now, inasmuch as the nervous system is the immediate link in the chain between the soul and the body, between sensation and perception; and since it cannot be doubted that the soul and the body can mutually act and react upon each other, it should follow, as a natural consequence, that if we can attain to any mode of intensifying the *mental* power, we should thus realise, in a corresponding degree, greater control over physical action. Now, this is precisely what my processes do—they create no new faculties; but they give us greater control over the natural functions than we possess during the ordinary waking condition, and particularly in intensifying mental influence, or the power of the mind of the patient over his own physical functions; and of a fixed dominant idea and physical state of the organs over the other faculties of the mind during the dominance of such fixed ideas.

In the excited state of the system induced by my processes, therefore, if the object be to stimulate a sluggish function, excite the quickened circulation and respiration, and then, by directing the attention of the patient to the particular organ or function, a greatly excited condition of the function of the respective organ will be the result, more especially if an audible suggestion to that effect has been made within the hearing of the patient, so as to excite in his mind such a dominant idea. On the contrary, if the object be to allay over excitement, we must first produce the general depressing condition, and then also direct the patient's attention to some *other function, or part*, from that which we wish to depress, and moreover, predict, in audible language, uttered within the patient's hearing, the certainty of the expected or wished for result being realised by such processes. For example, if we wish to stimulate the skin *moderately*, simply induce the sleep, and by then gently drawing the tips of the fingers over various parts, or by agitating the air by passing the hands over various parts, with a tremulous motion without actual contact, the attention of the subject being thus called to the surface, it will cause increased activity of the sensation and circulation of the parts thus acted upon. If *intense* cuticular excitement be desired, make the fanning and manipulations over the parts



requiring high excitement, *whilst the limbs are extended and rendered rigid or cataleptic*; and also suggest, in audible language, the wished for result. By this means you may not only increase the action of the skin, and excite increased perspiration, but the quality of the perspiration and of the saliva and urine may be so changed in chemical constitution, in a quarter of an hour, as to be made manifest by the use of test paper, and other chemical agents. This I have proved repeatedly to be the case with highly susceptible subjects, especially when kept for some time in the cataleptic condition. This is a fact too apparent to admit of any possibility of mistake.

In proof that the increased frequency and force of the heart's action during the cataleptic state, is due to internal congestion, from obstruction to free transmission of blood along the extremities, through the *arteries*, from their trunks being compressed between the rigid muscles and the bones, whilst no such obstruction is offered to its free return through the subcutaneous veins, I may state the following facts:—The mere muscular effort required simply to support the extremities for four or five minutes in a given position in the waking condition, would only excite the pulse about *twenty per cent.*, whereas, in *intense* catalepsy, it would cause it to rise *a hundred per cent.*, or to any intermediate degree according to the intensity of the rigidity—the pulse becoming less and less developed at the wrist, and more rapid as the rigidity increases, and the impulse of the heart's action increasing as the volume of the pulse at the wrist diminishes. To prove this still farther, about ten years ago, having occasion to bleed a patient who had large veins, I first hypnotised him and rendered his arm cataleptic, in which state I made a free opening into the vein, when the blood came away only in drops. I then blew upon the arm, and thereby reduced the rigidity, when instantly the blood sprang out in a copious stream, which shortly began to diminish as the cataleptic state returned, until it again flowed only in drops. Blowing on the arm, and thereby reducing the rigidity, caused it again to flow in full stream, and again it diminished as the rigidity returned, and by these means I went on increasing the rate of flow, or diminishing it alternately, until I had taken a pint of blood from my patient during the sleep, which was the quantity required.

If you wish to excite the feeling of nausea or vomiting, give the patient a mouthful of cold water, or draw the band over the stomach, predicting aloud that he must necessarily vomit, as he had taken an emetic, or that the mere touch will be sufficient to produce the like effect; and if the patient is one of those subjects who has passed into the double-conscious state, or who is liable to manifest the power of suggestion during the waking condition, the desired effect is quite certain to follow. With all other patients a similar effect, but in a minor degree, may be realised, provided they can fix their thoughts steadfastly, and for a length of time, on the idea suggested. The same will be the result in respect to the action of



the bowels, the tendency to void urine, exciting the secretion of milk in the nurse by directing the attention of the subject to the mammæ, or talking within her hearing about her child; and the same of other functions, according to the mental direction and ideas suggested to the mind of the patient by words spoken aloud in his hearing, or otherwise. There is evidently an immediate increased determination of blood, and of increased sensibility, to whatever organ or function, or part, the mind of the patient is directed under such circumstances, especially if he is fully persuaded in his own mind, and expects such exciting results. Let any one only reflect for a moment on the physiological phenomena of blushing. In this case the capillary circulation of the cheeks, or of the whole face and neck in some subjects, immediately assumes such a remarkable change as to paint the cheeks, face, and neck of a scarlet hue, even in those who have a pale complexion generally, from red globules crowding through vessels which, in their ordinary condition, admit chiefly the colourless part of the blood, or red globules in single file only. All this remarkable physical change is entirely due to mental emotion, and yet it is effected with a rapidity which could scarcely be equalled by the application to the parts so affected of the most violent mechanical or chemical stimuli. Again, pallor from mental emotion is the reverse of blushing, and is equally prompt in its response. Where, then, is the difficulty in comprehending why a dominant expectant idea in the mind of a patient should be adequate to produce effects equally potent on other parts of the body, and on special organs, when strongly concentrated on such organs or parts?

Upon the same principle, weakened muscles may be permanently energised by being called into strong or cataleptiform action during the general excitement; or they may be improved by being kept limber, and an inordinate quantity of blood forced to circulate through them, whilst the other muscles are kept rigid. To manage this with precision and due advantage, however, professional skill is requisite in the operator, to enable him to determine what the indication of cure is, and to what extent it should be carried in each particular case.<sup>1</sup>

From the impossibility of fixing the mental attention of an idiot for any length of time, I have never been able to *hypnotise* any decidedly idiotic patient,—which I consider to be an important fact, and one which is strongly confirmatory of my theory of the nature and cause of the hypnotic condition.

In ordinary practice we aim, by different means, at attaining the same ends as those pointed out as producible by my hypnotic pro-

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly non-professional persons might be trained to act under the special direction of medical men, as to the mode and extent of management in each particular case. But, from the length of time required for prolonging the processes in some cases, this could not be accorded personally by medical men generally. Until assistants are trained, therefore, for the purpose, hypnotism never can be applied in general practice so much as it otherwise would be.



cesses. Thus, we give digitalis, tartrite of antimony, and aconite, etc., to lower the force of the circulation, and we bleed also for the same purpose, and likewise to render the blood less stimulating, by diminishing the blood globules or carriers of oxygen, and thus we reduce over-excited function. We likewise exhibit stimulants to rouse languid action, general or local, as the case may be. By inducing the *nervous sleep*, however, we can attain the same ends in many cases more pleasantly, speedily, and safely, than can be accomplished by those other means; and, moreover, as already remarked, hypnotism is strikingly successful in a class of painful nervous disorders, in which ordinary treatment is of little or no avail. How *nervous sleep* acts in some such cases it may be difficult or impossible to explain; but it may be reasonably considered to act as an alterative, producing a new action or counter-impression, during which the morbid action is suspended, which affords an opportunity for a natural and healthy action to be resumed when the influence of hypnotism is suspended, and that without any marked physical operation or evacuation. This is all which can be said as to the curative operation of most medicines denominated *alteratives*.

I shall now briefly detail a few of the variety of cases in which I have found hypnotism most successful as a therapeutic agent.

In some affections of the eyes, as loss of nervous power, hypnotism has proved eminently successful, after other means had failed. Also in scrofulous ophthalmia, in which the eyelids are glued together in the morning, hypnotism has produced most satisfactory results. It has also been most successful in some cases of opacity of the cornea of long standing. I have seen it cause an absorption of opacity of the cornea, which had existed for many years, in defiance of all ordinary treatment, and which was a personal disfigurement, as well as an obstruction to vision, and yet this opacity was absorbed in a very short time under the use of hypnotism alone, so as to restore useful vision, as well as to remove the personal blemish. In these chronic cases I had recourse to the quickened circulation, and calling the attention of the patient to the eyes by touches and passes. Acute cases require the low circulation.

In some cases of nervous deafness, in like manner, hypnotism is most successful. It seems speedily to rouse nervous action, and produces an increase in the secretion of wax in the ears, the want of which is so often both a cause and accompaniment of deafness.

I had one case of a girl who had been deaf and dumb from birth. At nine and a-half years of age she came under my care. Up to that period she was never known to have heard sound, even when a person standing close behind her was calling to her at the top of his voice. I hypnotised this girl, directing her attention to her ears during the quickened circulation, and, in a very short time thereafter, her hearing became so acute, that she could readily hear words spoken in a moderate tone of voice, and imitate them after repeated



trials, *without her seeing the motion of the lips of the speaker*. In a short time more her progress was such, that she was sent to school to learn to read and speak in the usual way, in which she made very good progress; and since she left school, she has been many years acting as a domestic servant, receiving her instructions and giving her replies in the usual manner, *by speech only*. Curiously enough there are some sounds, such as the high notes of the pianoforte, which she cannot hear at all, although she hears all within the compass of her voice, so as to be able to imitate them correctly by singing, and the notes at the *extreme* top of the instrument are also heard by her. In like manner she cannot hear the sound of a high-toned bell, but she can hear a low-toned bell, a knock at the door, or a gentle rap on a table.

I had considerable success with some other congenital deaf mutes, but I found them and their friends so unreasonable as to expect that a miracle ought to be wrought for them, by which they should not only be made to hear, and thus be enabled to *learn to pronounce words, and understand the meaning of them*, but they seemed to be disappointed because they required to be taught to speak, and were not instantly invested with the gift of tongues, and the knowledge of the meaning of language, the moment they had acquired the use of hearing, so as to be able to imitate words spoken behind them, when they could not see the motions of the lips of the speaker. This was obviously too much to be expected by reasonable people; but I found that, amongst the poor, they would not take the trouble of teaching their deaf and dumb relatives, after they had been restored to such a degree of hearing as fitted them for profiting by such instructions. Both patients and their friends preferred the old mode of using signs, as being *immediately* more convenient for both, than the toil of teaching and learning ordinary language, the value of which would have been experienced by them only at a future day, and after much labour both to teacher and scholar. I was compelled, therefore, to leave them to their fate, because, without exercise, the faculty of hearing was likely to lose its power, rather than to advance in acuteness.

The following fact regarding a deaf and dumb boy is interesting in several respects:—After I had attained what I considered an important point with him, I exhibited the lad at a public lecture in London. The audience wished to have him tested by a professional gentleman present, who considered himself very competent to do so. He applied his tests, and then pronounced that the boy had *no* hearing whatever. I proved, however, that he possessed hearing in a limited degree, which enabled him to hear me speak to him in a rather loud tone of voice, whilst my lips were six or eight inches from his ears, when he made a good attempt at imitating a number of words, whilst he could not see the motion of my lips. I went on hypnotising this boy daily, and exercising him in imitating words spoken when he could not see the motion of my lips, and the result



was, that on exhibiting the same boy at a public lecture at Liverpool, given a few weeks thereafter, the lad was proved capable of imitating so perfectly words spoken, both by myself and by the head master of the Liverpool Deaf and Dumb School, that many of the audience were inclined to deny the *possibility* that *this boy could ever have been deaf and dumb*. Could any greater proof than this be wanted to convince any one that this lad must have improved greatly in quickness of hearing, from the time when he was tested by a medical man in London a few weeks before, and when he was pronounced by that gentleman to have *no hearing at all*?

The influence of hypnotism, in curing many cases of *tic dolooureux*, nervous headache, paralysis, rheumatism, chronic gout, epilepsy, tonic spasm, St Vitus' dance, hysteria, spinal irritation and distortion, natural somnambulism and catalepsy, etc. etc., is most marked, even in cases which have long resisted every other known method of cure. The reader must not mistake me, however, and suppose that I wish it to be believed that by hypnotism I can cure *every* case of *any one* of these classes of diseases. Some of these cases arise occasionally from organic causes, which necessarily forbid the hope of remedy *from any means whatever*; but, in such cases as *are* curable, in general it can be achieved more speedily, certainly, and pleasantly, by hypnotism, than by any other method of treatment at present known. For example,—I have been enabled, *in a few minutes*, to open the jaws with ease, in cases in which they had been locked for a considerable time, and would not yield to violent mechanical force, nor to ordinary treatment; and, with equal celerity, a patient was enabled to swallow, who, from hysteric spasm of the œsophagus, had been for *thirteen months* unable to swallow any thing but liquids, and these with great difficulty. One patient, whose hand and arm were spasmodically locked, so that no force applied in the ordinary way was able to move them from their fixed position, was equally speedily relieved by hypnotism, and continued well from such affection ever after; and another similar case, which had persisted in the same cataleptic condition for seventeen weeks, in defiance of treatment by eminent medical men, was unlocked in a few days, and speedily cured, by hypnotism alone, and has remained well now for years.

I may also mention a most interesting case of a young lady of sixteen years of age. Her head had been immoveably drawn close to her shoulder for six and twenty weeks, and had resisted most energetic treatment under an experienced physician, viz., bleeding, blistering, purgatives, mercury, opiates, anti-spasmodics, and galvanism, etc.—all of which were pushed to the utmost limits which prudence could sanction. This patient had even been sent to London with a written statement of her case, in order that she might have the benefit of the advice of one of the most eminent practitioners in the metropolis, but all to no purpose—for the spasm had never relaxed either by night or by day, although she was



watched with the view of ascertaining whether it abated during sleep. When I examined the patient at my first visit, I ascertained that the utmost force which I could exert was quite inadequate to separate the head and shoulder of the patient in the slightest degree. However, after being hypnotised for a few minutes, with the quickened circulation, I was enabled, with the greatest ease, to change the position of the head from the left to the right shoulder, by calling the attention of the patient into the antagonist muscles to those which were holding the head fixed cataleptically to the left shoulder, and after allowing her to remain a few minutes in the sleep, with her head inclined towards the right shoulder, I awoke her by a clap of my hands near to the right ear, when she was perfectly straight.

The above case may no doubt seem very marvellous to those unacquainted with the hypnotic mode of treatment, and yet, with my views and mode of explaining the nature, cause, and cure of such affections, nothing could be more simple, or more naturally to be expected. A dominant idea, calling certain muscles into strong action, had become involuntarily fixed in the patient's mind, until cataleptiform rigidity, which is an involuntary power, had locked the muscles in permanent tonic spasm. The patient's own volition was paralysed, or inadequate to overcome this morbid action, and mechanical force only tended to excite these muscles, automatically, into still more vigorous action; but, by stimulating the *antagonist* muscles on the *opposite side of the neck into action*, by slight titillation over them, after I had subjected the brain and the spinal cord to the stimulus of the quickened circulation of a highly arterialised blood,—by extending the extremities, and rendering them rigid during the nervous sleep,—the previous morbid dominant idea was broken, by the attention being withdrawn *from the spasmodic muscles, to their antagonists* on the opposite side, and thus *by art* and NOT BY FORCE, I was enabled to move the head of the patient from the left to the right side, with as much ease as a mother can move the head of her sleeping infant. It was not, therefore, the mere induction of the *nervous sleep* alone which effected the cure, but my knowledge of how to *direct the influence* DURING the sleep, so as to break down the pre-existing, involuntarily fixed, dominant idea in the patient's mind, and its consequences. In proof of this, I may state the following fact:—This patient was enabled to return home quite straight after *two* hypnotic operations, each being only of eight or ten minutes duration. Several years subsequently, the same patient had a similar seizure in one foot, for which she went to consult an eminent London physician, who is a sturdy champion for “the old established modes of mesmerising,” and the magnetic and odylic theories for explaining the nature and cause of the phenomena. Well, this gentleman recommended mesmerism as the remedy, and operated on her daily for about *three months* before she was fit to return home, his operations sometimes being prolonged to *six, eight, or nine hours a day*. Three weeks elapsed of these prolonged operations,—from



depending entirely upon the general mesmerising operations,—before the patient could stir her foot in bed, which shows a striking contrast with my general hypnotising and manipulating processes, by which the spasm of the neck was removed with so much ease in a few minutes. I hesitate not to say that I could have hypnotised this patient, and manipulated so as to have unlocked the foot as speedily as I did the head and neck in the first instance.

In some cases of affection of the larynx, also, with loss of voice, hypnotism has been most rapidly and permanently successful after all other treatment had failed. In nervous palpitation of the heart, hypnotism has also proved of great value, as likewise in dyspepsia and constipation of the bowels, and in some diseases of the skin. Moreover, as might be expected, hypnotism may be rendered most useful for procuring sleep without the use of opiates, which is an invaluable boon to many a sufferer, for it frequently happens that sleep procured by the use of opiates can only be obtained with the certain damage of some of the other most important functions of the human body.

In some cases of insanity, especially monomania and delirium tremens, I have found hypnotism most successful. Thus, in a case in which the patient was haunted with the idea of the personal presence of a departed relative, I hypnotised her, and then excited a different idea in her mind, under the dominance of which idea I awoke her, and the unwelcome apparition never again made its appearance. In like manner, in a case of delirium tremens from excessive drinking, during which the patient imagined that a menagerie had been let loose, and the wild animals had got into his room, so that he could point out the exact place where each animal was standing in his cage, after I had exhausted all my usual resources in vain, and the patient had become so excited as to imagine the house was on fire, and that the animals would be let loose upon him, which induced him to jump from his bed, and run along the streets in his night dress, in order to escape from the assaults of the animals, as I durst not try the effects of opium administered in greater quantity, and which in the doses given had never been adequate to induce sleep, in the presence of my son, Dr Braid, I resolved to try the effect of hypnotism; and, having reduced the patient by this means to sound sleep for twenty minutes, I awoke him, and then again reduced him to the somnolent condition, and left him to remain in that condition until he should awake spontaneously. The result of my operation was this, that on awaking, my patient was quite rational, and convalesced from that hour, and he has remained well from attacks of the sort ever since, which is now many years.

In the case of another patient who, from excessive drinking, had got into a state of maniacal excitement, on two separate attacks of the sort, I got him to lie down on a sofa, and then, in a few minutes I succeeded in reducing him to sleep, in which state he



remained for four hours each time, and then awoke perfectly rational on each occasion.

The most striking cases of all, however, for illustrating the value of the hypnotic mode of treatment, are cases of hysteric paralysis, in which, without organic lesion, the patient may have remained for a considerable length of time perfectly powerless of a part, or of the whole of the body, from a dominant idea which has paralysed or misdirected his volition. In such cases, by altering the circulation, and breaking down the previous idea, and substituting a salutary idea of vigour and self-confidence in their place, (which can be done by audible suggestions addressed to the patient in a confident tone of voice as to what *must* and *shall* be realised by the processes he has been subjected to), on being aroused in a few minutes thereafter with such dominant idea in their minds, to the astonishment of themselves as well as of others, the patients are found to have acquired vigour and voluntary power over their hitherto paralysed limbs, as if by a magical spell or witchcraft. Assuredly, such cures are as important as they are interesting and surprising, because, such cases may resist ordinary modes of treatment for paralysis, for an indefinite length of time; but still, the *rationale* is simple enough when viewed according to the principles which I have already explained, of the influence of an expectant dominant idea, *either exciting or depressing natural function, according to the faith and confidence of the patient.*

The most interesting part of all, however, is this, that in the hands of those who thoroughly understand it, hypnotism may be tried with the utmost confidence; that, even in cases which it cannot cure, the trial may be made without pain, or the slightest danger or inconvenience to the patient. It is therefore useful in many cases in aiding us in forming correct diagnosis in obscure cases.

It is of great importance that it should be clearly understood by patients, that it is by no means generally requisite that they should lapse into the state of unconsciousness in order to ensure the salutary effects of the nervous sleep. Many imagine, that unless they become torpid and insensible, no beneficial effect can ensue. This is a complete misapprehension, for the happy results of innumerable cases treated with the greatest success by hypnotism, clearly prove, that cases which had resisted all ordinary treatment by the exhibition of medicines and external applications, have readily yielded to the impression made on the nervous system by this peculiar influence, even when they were perfectly conscious of all that was done, and could remember, after awaking, every circumstance that had happened during the nervous sleep. This was strikingly verified in my own case, when I cured myself of a violent rheumatic attack by throwing myself into the nervous sleep for eight or nine minutes, from which I was aroused perfectly free from pain, although I had been *perfectly conscious all the while.*

The following is an interesting case of cure of headache of long standing, as also of impaired vision, by the use of hypnotism alone.



In 1849, I was called to attend a severe case of epilepsy of four years standing, in which the parents were anxious to try the influence of hypnotism, as all ordinary treatment of the case had utterly failed in affording relief. During my first visit, the mother of the patient, aged 54 years, told me she had been severely afflicted with headache, to such an extent, that she had not known what it was to have been without headache, when awake, for fourteen years, and that her eyesight had become so impaired, that she could with difficulty manage to read a sign-board when in the street. I offered to try the effect of hypnotism, and on arousing her from the first sleep, which had not been longer than ten minutes, she expressed herself agreeably surprised to find herself free from headache *for the first time for fourteen years*. Next day she had a slight return of headache, which was again removed by another dose of hypnotism. She was less and less afflicted with her headache every day, and by repeating the operations for about ten minutes daily within a week, the headache was gone, and has never recurred since, unless for a short time occasionally, as will occur to any one. Moreover, a most remarkable improvement in the sight also took place from the hypnotising—an improvement which has been permanent to this date.

I could readily adduce many important instances of speedy relief and cure, by hypnotism, of spinal irritation, which had resisted ordinary modes of treatment. I shall allow the following, however, to suffice, which also illustrates the beneficial effect of hypnotism on the action of the skin and bowels:—I was consulted in the case of the late Lady S. G., who was then upwards of 64 years of age. She had suffered much from the state of her spine for 45 years, but for some years previous to consulting me it had become so much worse, that, notwithstanding her carriage had double springs, she dreaded riding in it even for two or three miles, from the intense aggravation of pain in the back caused thereby. The state of her skin was dry and harsh, and unpleasantly hot, the bowels obstinately constipated, requiring tremendous doses of cathartic medicines to procure sufficient alvine evacuations, her sleep was most disturbed and unrefreshing, and the appetite capricious. Having hypnotised her ladyship, notwithstanding she did not become unconscious, it was found, on arousing her, that the skin was moist, and she slept comfortably all night *for the first time for many months*. I went on hypnotising her ladyship night and morning with the happiest results, and soon had the satisfaction of enabling her to keep her bowels sufficiently active, by the assistance of about one-sixth part the doses of aperient medicine required when she came under my care; her headache and feverish state of the skin was gone; her general health and strength became quite renovated, and the spinal irritation so much relieved, that she could bear carriage exercise with comfort, and walk much farther and firmer than for many years.

Some years after I was summoned to attend this patient for an



attack of gout in the foot. Her ladyship's whole family were great martyrs to gout, but she had been much less afflicted with gout than formerly, since she underwent the hypnotic treatment. Now, however, she had got a very smart attack in one foot, and what made her the more anxious about it was her past experience, for she told me that whenever she was attacked in the foot, she had *always* been laid up with it for at least six months, even under the superintendence of the most eminent medical assistance to be procured. Her stocking being removed, I found the great toe and dorsum of the foot very red, and exquisitely tender to the touch, and the whole foot so tender, that the patient durst not place the foot on the floor. I requested her ladyship to recline on the sofa, and submit to be hypnotised, whilst I should make passes over the foot. In the course of twenty minutes I aroused my patient, who had never lost consciousness all the while; when both the patient and her lady's-maid expressed themselves greatly surprised to find the *redness* had entirely disappeared, and that the pain was so much mitigated that she could permit me to touch it freely, and was even able to rest her foot on the floor. As her ladyship lived thirty miles off, I did not wish to trust entirely on the power of hypnotism, when it could be so seldom applied; and I therefore prescribed my usual medicinal remedies for gout, and at my next visit, two days after, I hypnotised her again, and on the third day of the attack I had the agreeable intelligence communicated to me that my patient had been able to walk from one room into another on the same landing; and after another dose of hypnotism, in a day or two more she was able to be down stairs, instead of being confined for six months, as she always had been before when the gout attacked her in the foot. I by no means wish to attribute this cure entirely to hypnotism, but I am satisfied that a large share of the happy result was justly attributable to it.

The following is also one of my latest cases, and is quite in point. A few months ago, I was called to a gentleman who was suffering severely from rheumatism of the lower extremities. He had been confined to the house the previous year, with a similar attack, for fourteen weeks, in defiance of the best attention and care of two most respectable and experienced medical gentlemen. On this occasion he had again been under similar treatment without relief, which induced him to request me to treat him hypnotically. Both his feet were very painful, so that he could not stand on them without great suffering, and he had considerable pain in the knees also. I explained to him that he might not lose consciousness during the process and yet be benefited. I put him through the process, extending the limbs after his eyelids closed. On arousing him in ten minutes, which I did by a clap of my hands near to one of his ears, he protested that no effect whatever had been produced upon him. I told him I perfectly well knew that he had been conscious all the while, but that still I expected that a very decided effect had been pro-



duced upon the sensation and circulation of his lower extremities by my process. He protested that he could not believe this. I then requested him to try how he could stand now, when he candidly admitted that he felt much less pain in the feet and legs, but still he persisted that it was impossible the improvement could have resulted from what I had done. Two days thereafter I called again, and found the feet much relieved, but both knees were extremely painful. I hypnotised him once more, extending his extremities. It was with great difficulty he held them up at first from the acute pain in the knees, but by degrees they got easier, and became slightly cataleptic. On again arousing him, he contended he had not been affected at all, but, to his great astonishment, he found his knees so much better that he could walk across the floor. Next operation, the day after, enabled him before I left the house to walk to the door, and, with all his scepticism, he had the satisfaction of getting quite well by these three simple processes, and he has continued well ever since, and very grateful for what hypnotism achieved for him.

About nine years ago, I was consulted in the case of a young gentleman who had been given up as a hopeless cripple, resulting from an attack of rheumatic fever. He had been attended from the first seizure by an eminent physician, and also by an eminent and experienced surgeon. After exhausting all their resources, he was sent to the sea-side, where he had the benefit of being attended by one of the most respectable and intelligent and experienced surgeons in the kingdom. The whole ordinary resources of medical and surgical science consequently had been brought to bear on this case; and the patient was then abandoned as totally incurable, his legs being fixed nearly at right angles with the thighs, and incapable of extension even when subjected to strong pressure from straps surrounding them when laid upon a board, whilst they were surrounded by warm vapour. He had been for a length of time crawling about the room on his knees and elbows, each of which was provided with a patent leather shield, and such was expected to be his fate for life, when he came under the hypnotic treatment. Notwithstanding the extreme rigidity of the flexors of the legs, during the first hypnotic operation I was enabled to extend them considerably, and still more so at the second, as also to infuse strength into other muscles which seemed to have been almost entirely paralysed previously, so that after the second operation he manifested a degree of power which surprised myself as well as his friends. I went on daily with my hypnotic operations, without any other means being tried, and he gradually gained more and more power. I always made him exert his volition to the utmost when he was asleep, and *every decided advance he made was FIRST manifested during the hypnotic state*, and then in a lesser degree the improvement was manifested after he was aroused from it. Without entering into tedious details, suffice it to say that at length he acquired the power of walking with the



aid of crutches, and then without them, and now he can walk at the rate of three and a-half miles an hour, with only a slight degree of lameness, and without even the aid of a stick. When I saw him a few days ago, he was walking at this rate; and, when I asked him how far he could walk in a day, he said he did not know, but that he occasionally walked *six miles before breakfast*.

Moreover, there are many important cures effected by manipulating patients during the *waking* condition, so as to change physical action, by the *mental* direction of the *mind* of the *patient*; and even without manipulation or any process whatever of a second party, beyond desiring the subjects to sit still and concentrate their minds on the ideas which we wish to be realised; examples of which I have already referred to in reference to my experiments with the coloured water made to act as an emetic, and the anti-emetic phial, when determining the probable nature of the effects of medicines said to produce their effects through glass, and on the alleged "Od" force of Baron Von Reichenbach.

I have frequently produced full vomiting in hypnotised patients, simply by giving them a mouthful of water to drink, and then suggesting to them in audible language that they had taken an emetic; or simply by moving my own lips and jaws, which they heard and imitated; and on my suggesting that they had taken an emetic, the idea alone was quite adequate to produce vomiting. I have never, however, seen hypnotised, mesmerised, or magnetised water produce specific effects, without some mode of suggesting the idea to the mind of the patient, by words spoken or movements made, or by the peculiar manner of the operator or some one present, as has been alleged by the mesmerists to take place with some of their patients.

With many hypnotised patients I have also produced action on the bowels *in a few minutes* by similar suggestions, or by audible suggestions, accompanied by drawing the tips of the fingers gently along the course of the colon, so as to excite its peristaltic motion. The following is a remarkable instance of this, and how an idea suggested during the sleep may manifest its powers for a length of time after the patient awakes. I had hypnotised a gentleman for some time, with considerable benefit, for epilepsy of long standing, and which had resisted all ordinary treatment prescribed by first-rate medical men. On one occasion I moved my lips, and imitated the act of swallowing, which acts he heard and immediately imitated. I then suggested that he had taken some *aloes*, the mere idea of which made him assume all the physical expression of disgust (and also to utter words to that effect) at the well-known bitterness of the drug. I then said it would soon give him still greater cause of uneasiness by its action on his bowels, and very soon he began to writhe his body as if he were labouring under the griping influence of an active cathartic. I said nothing further, but, in four or five minutes he arose from his seat and walked up stairs to the water-closet, and came down again, still asleep, after having left unmistakeable proof



in the pan of the water-closet of the success of my experiment. On being aroused from the sleep, this patient had no idea of what had happened, but he complained of a very bitter taste in his mouth. When this gentleman called upon me next afternoon, he told me that the bitter taste which he complained of when he awoke out of his sleep the previous day, had been so disagreeable, that when he got home he tried to wash it out of his mouth, but could not do so. Every morsel of food or mouthful of drink was disgustingly bitter, both at tea and supper, notwithstanding he had tried to get rid of it by repeatedly washing his mouth. On awaking in the morning the bitter taste remained the same, his breakfast being as bitter and unpalatable as his tea and supper had been. He again tried to wash it away by assiduous gargling, but without effect, and the bitter taste never ceased to haunt him until some time about noon, when his attention had become withdrawn from it through some cause of excitement which he met with in town.

I shall now give a case in which a disgusting odour had made a painful and lasting impression on a person in the waking condition, and which was speedily removed by hypnotism, after all other means resorted to had failed. Mrs —, the mother of a large family, and at the time in question in perfect health, in July 1849 had gone to the house of a deceased friend when the body was in a state of advanced decomposition. She felt distressingly affected by the disgusting odour, and for several days thereafter she never could enjoy a moment's pleasure for this disgusting odour, which haunted her night and day when awake, notwithstanding she had tried all sorts of fragrant scents, salvolatile, snuff, etc., and had even burnt lucifer matches and tobacco under her nostrils, but still the disgusting odour was as potent and persistent as ever. I hypnotised this patient, and, by audible and muscular suggestion, I led her mind to dwell on the idea of inhaling fragrant scents, and in five minutes I aroused her with this impression on her mind, when she expressed her delight with the fragrance with which she was now surrounded and feasted. She had no return of the disgusting odour, not even when on several occasions she tried, by an effort of attention, to recal it. Fourteen months after, however, I hypnotised this patient in the presence of several scientific friends, whom I had previously told that I should endeavour to recal this idea and impression in the sleep, and carry it into the waking condition. The patient had no idea of my intentions, but after she had been in the sleep a short time, by applying one finger to her nose and sniffing; whilst with the other hand I corrugated her brows, drawing them downwards over the root of the nose, the patient began to sniff, and speedily expressed her disgust with the smell of putrid meat—"that old smell come back again." On arousing her with this mental impression, and asking her how she felt, she replied, "that old smell has come back again." Having then had the full manifestation, I wished to exhibit, for she explicitly described the peculiar smell she meant, I immediately hypnotised her again,



and excited the opposite ideas in her mind, and awoke her feasting on more than all the fragrance of Arabia.

Having told a gentleman that the expectant idea in the mind of a patient was quite adequate to produce a corresponding change in the physical function of any organ or part of the body to which it was directed, he expressed his incredulity. I asked him if his wife was not then nursing, to which he replied she was; and I therefore offered to prove my position, if he chose, by causing an increased flow of milk to come into ONE of her breasts, by directing her attention particularly to *that* breast during the sleep. This gentleman's wife had been a patient of mine some eight months previously, and was then cured of violent headaches by hypnotism; and I knew she was one of those subjects who pass into the second-conscious or full state, and upon whom the power of suggestion manifests its greatest influence. The lady was sent for, and asked if she had any objections to be hypnotised, for her husband to have an opportunity of seeing her in that state. She readily gave her assent, and whilst standing on her feet, I held my lancet case over her head, in my usual way, and requested her to gaze upon it, and speedily her eyelids closed, with the twitter peculiar to the hypnotic sleep. After she had remained in this state a little while, I gently drew the tips of my fingers two or three times over the left mamma, when the patient slowly raised her left arm towards her breast. I then inquired What is it? to which she replied "Baby." What about baby? to which she answered, "Oh this is so tight," pointing to her left breast. In this state I allowed her to remain for a few minutes, her mind rivetted to the idea of her baby, and the fulness of her breast. With a clap of my hands I now aroused the patient, who had no recollection whatever of any thing said or done when she was asleep. I asked if any part of her body felt different from its usual condition? To which she replied, pointing to the left breast, this breast feels very tight. I asked her what had made it so? To this she replied, she could not tell, but that it felt so. Her husband now remarked, "That is what Mr Braid said he would do—he said he would bring a rush of milk into it." To this the lady replied, "That will be no easy matter, for my baby is fourteen months old, and I have scarcely any milk." I requested her to bring baby and try, as I felt assured that *now* there would be no lack of milk in that breast. The baby was applied to that breast, and, notwithstanding he was fourteen months old, the flow of milk was so copious that it nearly choked him.

A few days thereafter this lady complained that I had disfigured her, as I had made her over-protuberant on the left side. I said I can soon settle that matter, for, by putting you to sleep again, I can take it down as readily as it was increased in size during former sleep. She most willingly assented to this, but when she was asleep, instead of taking it down (which a suggested idea to that effect would have done), I acted on the other breast in precisely the same manner as on the left breast, and with precisely similar results. The most



important point, however, still remains to be told,—viz., that although her child was fourteen months old, and before being hypnotised she complained of having had very little milk, these hypnotic processes had given such a stimulus to the mammæ, that this lady was enabled to continue to suckle her child from an overflowing breast for *six months longer*.

Another important fact I have to communicate connected with this case. This patient was one of those ladies who menstruate during lactation, and, previous to my hypnotising her the first day, she had gone two weeks beyond the usual period for the appearance of the catamenia. The stimulus to the mammæ, however, through sympathy, had brought on that discharge also within half an hour after she was hypnotised. The consequence of this was, that the lady wished to know whether the like process could be made available in the case of her niece, who was a well-developed young lady, sixteen years of age, but never had had the slightest indication of the catamenia. I told her my opinion and experience were favourable to a trial of hypnotism in such a case. The young lady was hypnotised accordingly, and during the sleep I made non contact passes over the mammæ, and slight contact-passes over the ovaria, with the view of producing excitement of sensation and circulation in these organs. She was not in the condition more than ten minutes, and was standing on her feet all the while. Next day the aunt told me that it had not produced any effect in the way intended, but that another remarkable result had taken place, namely, that her bowels had moved shortly after I hypnotised her, without her having taken medicine for that purpose,—a circumstance which was most extraordinary, as the whole of her family were liable to obstinate constipation of the bowels, always requiring the use of aperient medicine, and that this young lady never had more than *one stool in SIX DAYS, even with the aid of powerful medicines*,—such as six grains of calomel and half a dram of jalap, followed by three or four ounces of black draught. I told the aunt that I had no doubt but I could hypnotise the young lady, and thereby excite her bowels to act again *before I left the house*. With all she had seen and felt, the lady could not imagine this possible, but she had no objections to my trying the experiment. I acted accordingly, drawing the tips of my fingers gently along the course of the colon, from the caput cæcum to the sigmoid flexure, with the view of exciting the peristaltic action of the bowels, at the same time suggesting, in audible language, frequently repeated,—“This will soon make the bowels act.” In the course of six or eight minutes it was obvious, from her manner, that the patient was suffering from all the tormina of a violent cathartic, under which feeling I awoke her; and, at my request, in order to guard against all possibility of mistake as to the result, her aunt caused her to use a close stool, and thus I had ocular demonstration of the efficiency of my process before I left the house: and, moreover, the same afternoon and evening she had two more copious and violently purged stools.



From that period I never saw this young lady for eight months; but I had the gratification to learn that my operation had effected a complete change on her constitution, as far as regarded the state of her bowels, as from that period she had required no more purgative medicines, as her bowels had acted *DAILY of their own accord*, and the young lady had been enjoying excellent health ever since, only she had not yet menstruated.

During this period the patient had left the aunt at whose house I hypnotised her, and the other friends, under whose care she was then placed, were afraid to have any farther trials of what appeared to them so mysterious, both in its nature and effects, as to appear more like magic or witchcraft than legitimate treatment. When this patient again returned to the aunt at whose house she was hypnotised, it was determined on, both by the patient and her aunt, that she should be hypnotised daily, with the object in view of exciting the catamenial flow, and they had no cause to regret their decision, for within eight days after I began to hypnotise her with this view, this important function was established, without the slightest inconvenience to the patient. All went on well with this lady subsequently, and she has now been many years married, and is the mother of several healthy children.

In like manner, by hypnotising patients labouring under violent diarrhoea, and imprinting on their minds by audible suggestions during the sleep the certainty of the process arresting the diarrhoea, in several cases in which I tried it, the success was as complete as immediate, both pain and purging being entirely arrested within a few minutes, and not recurring again after arousing the patients.

I have had many other cases where the catamenia have been excited in a few minutes by the hypnotic processes; but I must make the following case suffice, as it has clearly proved that the expectant dominant idea is adequate to produce such result, not only in the hypnotic state, but even in the waking condition; and not only of exciting it when suspended or deficient, but also of arresting or suppressing it when in excess.

In July 1849, I was called to attend Mrs —, thirty years of age, married, and the mother of three children. She had suffered severely from epilepsy for four years, for which she had been under the care of several medical men. The attacks became a little less frequent for some time, but again increased in frequency and severity, until, at the period when I was consulted, notwithstanding she was under the constant care of a physician, and was taking medicines prescribed by him repeatedly every day, still she was getting worse, so that at this period she had as many as twenty-eight fits daily, besides what occurred during the night, when her attendants were asleep. The day before I first operated on her, she had thirteen violent fits in the space of eight hours; and, when I first saw her, she was jaw-locked, as the sequel to one of her epileptic attacks. Her friends told me, that whenever this state of locked-



jaw occurred, they were never able to open her mouth for many hours, however much force they might apply to effect it. They were, therefore, not a little surprised to observe that, by one of my usual processes for reducing the cataleptic state of muscles during hypnotism or mesmerism, I was enabled, in a few seconds, to open her jaws, and open her mouth, without the slightest difficulty or force. This patient was speedily thrown into the hypnotic condition by my usual method, and the result of my first operation, which was not of more than a quarter of an hour's duration, was this,—that the patient had only *four* fits in eight hours, instead of the thirteen fits which she had during the corresponding period on the day previous.

This patient was operated upon by me twice each day subsequently, and on the fourth day the catamenia, which had been suspended for several months, reappeared, and, in the course of a week, the fits were almost entirely arrested. Indeed, since that period she has only had four or five fits, and these were brought on by causes of great mental excitement. The catamenia recurred regularly for the next six months, and the results realised from the use of hypnotism, when they again became suspended, beautifully and conclusively illustrate the value of this mode of treatment in such affections.

At six successive periods I had occasion to resort to hypnotism for this purpose, and in *every* instance with *entire success*, by a *single operation of from ten to eleven minutes* each. Moreover, I ascertained that this important result could be effected without either touch or pass of a second party, but by mental concentration and direction of the *mind of the patient alone*, and the management of the circulation, without farther mental or physical aid on my part, beyond simply requesting her to put herself to sleep and elevate her limbs, her attention being at same time directed to and concentrated upon the idea of the expected result. On several other occasions when I hypnotised this patient for neuralgic or rheumatic pain in a leg or arm, through the mode of managing and directing the attention and expectant idea, the pains were immediately removed, without exciting any visible manifestation on *any* special organ or function.

Subsequently to this report, which was published in 1850, on six other occasions I resorted to the same process in this case, and with the like success on *every* occasion. It now occurred to me that, inasmuch as it was my opinion that the change in the physical action resulted *entirely* from the fixed mental attention of the patient, with a predominant idea and faith on her part in the power of these processes to produce such results, it would be highly interesting to ascertain whether such results might not be realised by mental concentration of the patient alone, when she remained wide awake. On the 4th of April 1851, I proposed to test this. The requisite means were had recourse to for determining, with the utmost accuracy, the actual physical condition of the patient *before* commenc-



ing the experiment. Four ladies and one gentleman, besides myself, were present. Having requested the gentleman to note the time accurately, the patient being seated in an easy chair, I addressed her in the following words, which were heard by all present :—"Now, keep your mind firmly fixed on what you know ought to happen." All remained silent ; and, in order to withdraw my own mind as much as possible from the patient (and thereby to prevent all idea of my will or other mental powers having any share in effecting the results) I took up an interesting book, and engaged myself in reading it. At the end of eleven minutes, I asked the patient if the desired effect had been produced,—to which she replied she did not know. However, on proper examination being made, I had incontestible proof of the success of my experiment. Next month she did not require a repetition of the process ; but, on the 2d of June, it was again tried, in the presence of two professional gentlemen, and with equal success as on the 4th of April. On the 28th of July, I again had occasion to resort to this process with this patient ; and I was then *particularly* anxious that it should succeed, as a lady was present who required similar aid, and a good example in point was likely to assist me greatly in influencing her the more certainly. My mind, therefore, was unusually intent on the accomplishment of the desired result. At the expiration of eleven minutes, I inquired if it had taken effect, when she replied she could not tell. On examination, however, it was ascertained it had been a failure on this occasion. The patient hereupon remarked that, before sitting down, she thought it would *not* succeed *to-night*. I inquired why ? To which she replied, "because I *could not fix my mind on it to-night*, from having been put out of my way just before I came here." To this I replied, "Well, if you cannot fix your mind on the idea when awake, I know that I can command the requisite attention when you are asleep, and therefore I will hypnotise you." This I then did, at the same time exciting the circulation by elevating the limbs. It very soon became apparent, from the expression of her features and the movements of her body, that the spell was in active operation ; and, on arousing the patient in eleven minutes, there was positive proof adduced that the experiment had not been tried in vain ; and all went on satisfactorily subsequently.

It merits special attention, that, notwithstanding *my mind* was particularly active in *willing* the desired effect when the patient was awake, no success followed, because the requisite *mental* condition of the *subject* was wanting. This failure, therefore, was as positive proof in support of my theory as the successful results. In fact it was even more so ; for, on other occasions my mind had not been so intently desiring the immediate result, and yet the experiment succeeded, but now I was most active in willing success, and even with greater confidence in consequence of former successes ; but now I was doomed to be disappointed, because the requisite *mental condition* of the *PATIENT* was *absent*.



Next month my assistance was not required, but on the 8th of October, in the presence of her mother, the waking experiment was again tried with complete success. On the 8th of November 1851, her mother, and my esteemed friend Dr William Stevens, well known as the author of the saline treatment of cholera and yellow fever, being present, I once more tried the waking experiment, with complete success, in eight minutes. From that period it had never required to be repeated, till July 1852. On the 19th of that month, as the patient had exceeded the proper period by two weeks, I once more requested her to sit down and fix her attention on the certainty of thereby producing the desired result. In the meantime I engaged myself by reading an interesting book, so that the patient was kept at her fixed act of attention, with the expectant idea in her mind, for *thirteen* minutes; at the expiration of which period it was ascertained that the catamenia were flowing copiously. The result of this more prolonged act of fixed attention was an unusually copious flow, which continued for three weeks uninterruptedly, and was exhausting the strength of the patient. To arrest this, I desired the patient to sit down and keep her mind steadily fixed on the confident assurance that the discharge would thereby be arrested. I kept her at this task for ten minutes, and within *one hour* the menstrual discharge had entirely ceased. In a week thereafter, it returned in moderate quantity for three days; and from that period it has recurred monthly, up to the end of March 1853. On the 15th of April 1853, as this patient had exceeded her menstrual period by three weeks, in the presence of my much esteemed friend Dr W. B. Carpenter and another gentleman, I once more tried the waking experiment with entire success in eleven minutes; and the two succeeding months all has gone on satisfactorily.

The following is another highly interesting case of the influence of mental impression changing physical action. The patient was one of those subjects who pass into the second-conscious state of hypnotism, and had been cured by hypnotism of paralysis, both of sense and motion, of one side of the head and face. The following effect of the expectant idea, however, relates to what occurred when she was in the waking condition. This patient, Mrs —, was the mother of three living children, the last of which was a cross birth, delivery being accomplished with great difficulty. The two subsequent births were of largely developed children, both still-born, both having been shoulder presentations, the labour far advanced, and the shoulder and arm advanced within the pelvis before medical assistance arrived. Upon careful examination of the bones of the pelvis of this patient, it was clearly ascertained that there was such advancement forward, and depression of the promontory of the sacrum and lambar vertebræ, as to preclude the hope of her ever giving birth to a full-sized living child; and, therefore, when she again became pregnant, I explained how matters stood to her husband, as well as to the patient, and recommended that premature labour should be induced, as affording



the only chance of her bearing another living child, and as affording the greatest safety, moreover, for the mother. Both parties were perfectly satisfied to abide by my decision on this point, so that I was to consider myself at perfect liberty to act in the matter as I thought best, both as to the method to be adopted for accomplishing such purpose, and also in regard to the time when I was to induce premature labour. About two weeks beyond the seventh month was the period which I had fixed on for inducing labour. I had seen the patient a few days before this period, and found her in excellent health, experiencing no inconvenience of any sort. I told her that in three or four days I intended to do something for her to bring on labour as had previously been agreed upon should be done. She was quite agreeable to this proposal, and seemed to entertain no anxiety whatever on the subject. In two days thereafter, however, I was sent for to the patient, and ascertained that the mere mental impression had been sufficient to bring on labour, for the *os uteri* was not only fully dilated, but, as in the three former labours, the shoulder was presenting. In this case, from the small size of the infant, I was enabled with great ease to turn and deliver the mother of a living child.

The last proof which I shall adduce in support of my position, is the number of *recoveries* which take place *during* (not of *cures* effected *by*) the use of infinitesimally small doses of medicines, as in what is called homœopathic practice. According to the principles which I have demonstrated, there are a number of individuals who may be benefited and cured by whatever means their minds can be confidently and persistently concentrated on and engrossed with, so as to excite a lively expectant idea as regards a particular result. Besides changing the physical action directly, it also does so indirectly, by changing the current of thought, and withdrawing it from the unhappy train in which it was wont to flow. This latter effect alone does much to benefit the patient, by leaving nature, free and unfettered, to carry out the salutary purposes of the "*vis medicatrix naturæ*." This, together with good nursing and suitable regimen, are adequate to effect many recoveries and cures without the aid of a single particle of medicine.

The infinitely small doses of medicine, therefore, may benefit the patient, not by their physical or chemical qualities, but as sensible signs involuntarily to change or fix the current of thought, and thus to modify physical action. But, that the billionth, quintillionth or decillionth of a grain, or drop of any substance in nature, could, on *physical or chemical principles only*, do either good or harm to any human being, is what I do not believe; and I only feel surprised that any rational person can believe what, to me, appears to be such a palpable absurdity. It is just like the Lama amongst the Tartars, who, when short of the required medicine, writes its name on a piece of paper, and rolls it up in small pills, and desires the patients to swallow them, under the conviction that to swallow the *name* has the same efficacy as to swallow the medicine itself. Dr Simpson's calcula-



tions in his late work, clearly prove the exiguity of homœopathic doses, when he demonstrates, that for any person taking billionths of a grain *every second of time*, night and day, would require to go on at this rate, without intermission, for *thirty thousand years*, before he consumed *one* grain of a substance which might be taken by any adult man or woman, at least in a full grain dose, and some of them in fifty grain doses, with perfect impunity. But, if you go to quintillionths, it would require a mass of sugar equal to *sixty-one globes the size of the earth* to compound a single grain of said drugs!

I am aware that some of the practitioners of homœopathy contend that *dose is nothing*, but the proper selection of the medicine *everything*. Now to this dogma I cannot assent for two reasons—first, it is at variance with reason and common sense; second, it is at variance with fact and experience, when I have brought it to the test of experiment and observation. Thus, I have never seen indubitable effects produced from such medicines, when administered by some of its most noted professors, in infinitely small doses; nothing beyond what might be anticipated from the expectant idea, or an accidental coincidence occasionally. Moreover, I have prescribed half-drop doses, every half hour, of the tincture of aconite in delirium with cerebral congestion, with the most marked benefit, but, on diminishing the dose on the subsidence of the symptoms, the delirium returned, and was again relieved, and finally cured, by increasing the dose, and persisting with these *increased doses a little longer*. No sophistry can gainsay such an obvious fact as this displays, that *much* depends on the *amount of dose given*, as well as on the adaptation of the medicine to the case.

Here is another good illustration of the same fact. In the case of a child about two years and a half old, *after other means had failed*, I had *prescribed* arsenic, for a troublesome eruption over most of his body. I gave half a drop of Fowler's solution for a dose twice a-day, and still very little amendment followed. Another member of the family having occasion to take a mixture with the same arsenical preparation, the little fellow got hold of that bottle by accident, and swallowed so much as must have contained at least four or five drops, in one day, not only without inconvenience, but with most decided advantage, for there was an immediate and marked improvement of the eruption on the child from that day forward.

With such evidences as these cases afford of the power of a dominant expectant idea in changing or modifying physical action, either in the second-conscious hypnotic state, or in some subjects in the waking condition, there seems to be no reasonable ground to doubt the fact, and therefore it would only be a work of supererogation to occupy space with the record of additional cases, which I could easily cite from my own experience were it necessary. Nor do I consider it at all proper, considering the great length to which this essay has already extended, to quote cases already recorded by



others, where grave diseases have been suddenly cured by powerful mental impressions, or where grave diseases have been suddenly induced, or even death itself, by sudden and intense mental impressions, either of joy or sorrow. These all can read at their leisure. I must not, however, omit to call attention to the cures effected by spells, charms, and amulets, sacred relics, and by various nostrums, as all these furnish powerful corroboration of the main position I am here contending for. The cures effected at the grave of the Abbe Paris, at St Medard in Paris, in like manner afford clear proof of the influence of mental and moral causes in changing physical action according to the expectant idea in the mind of the patient at the time. Surely few will believe that these cures were effected by the transmission of the "exuberant life of the healthy, to repair and sustain the deficient vitality of the weak" (which would be the notion according to the mesmeric theory of Mr Newnham), for how could exuberant LIFE of the *healthy* have come out of the ashes of the dead saint, so as to have produced these cures? The moral influence of a lively faith, hope, and confidence, however, in the efficacy of a visit to the grave of this notable personage, were quite competent to produce such results, on the principles which I have endeavoured to expound.

Whilst the expectant idea modifying or changing physical action is undoubtedly an important agent in most cases of hypnotic treatment, still it is not the *only* cause by which such cures are effected; as the altered condition of the circulation of the blood, and the quality of that fluid during the cataleptic or reverse condition of the body, as formerly explained, makes a powerful impression on the brain and spinal cord, and ganglionic system of nerves, as also on the heart's action, and must thus produce an alterative effect on the whole system, independently of any fixed idea or special train of thought in the patient's mind.

In proof of the above statement, I could readily adduce cases in which no benefit had accrued to the patients when hypnotised with the *one* state of the circulation, and yet so soon as I threw them into the sleep, and acted on them in all respects as previously, *excepting as regarded the condition of the circulation during the sleep*, they were not only speedily benefited, but entirely cured.

The nervous sleep seems to act powerfully on the nervous and capillary systems, and in an extraordinary degree as regards the function of the skin, perspiration being generally excited, even in a few minutes, in cases which had resisted every other mode of treatment resorted to for that purpose. This was strikingly verified in my own case when, in September 1844, I threw myself into the condition for a severe rheumatic attack, which had resisted other means. I sat down, suffering the utmost anguish, being unable to move my head, to lift my arm, or to draw a full breath, from the stabbing pain accompanying the slightest motion. In *nine minutes*,



I was aroused *quite free from pain*, and *literally bathed in perspiration*. I could then move my head and arm in any direction, and draw a full breath without the slightest pain; I slept comfortably all the following night, and next morning I was a little stiff, but had no pain. A week thereafter I had a slight return, which was removed by another operation, and I have had no return of it since, now upwards of eight years. Three severe cases of scarlet fever treated in this manner also proved the wonderful power of hypnotism in producing perspiration, and diminishing the velocity of the circulation. In ten minutes, all three patients were bathed in perspiration, the frequency of the pulse was much diminished, their headaches were gone, and in fact a crisis had been induced, so as to have converted a violent disease into a mild and moderate affection.

For the mode of producing sleep at will, I must refer to my late work, entitled "*Magic, Witchcraft, Animal Magnetism, Hypnotism, and Electro-Biology*."

The following method of producing and prolonging *sleep at will*—which may be designated hydro-hypnotism—is adopted by the peasantry residing among the Himalaya Mountains. An aged female is generally appointed to watch a number of infants whilst their mothers are engaged out of doors in agricultural labours. The infants are wrapped up like little mummies, laid on their backs arranged in a semicircle, and, from a number of small spouts, a rillet of water is made to fall upon and flow over the head of each infant. The natives believe that this process strengthens the children, and makes them hardy. However this may be, it appears to be a most effectual method of sending them into a state of sleep and quietude, for, at page 272 of Lloyd and Gerard's Travels, they state, as eye-witness of the fact, frequently seen by them, "The most refractory imp, when tied up, let it yell never so loud, will, when the stream has for a few seconds bathed its head, fall into a most noiseless slumber."

The length to which this essay has already extended in developing my views as to *general principles*, precludes the opportunity of giving more cases in detail. Nor is this particularly called for, after the numerous cases already published by me of the success of this mode of treatment of a variety of diseases which resisted ordinary treatment.

It is but proper, however, that I should here explain, that although most of the cases which I have published in this article, and in my other publications, were purposely selected from those which were so *speedily* benefited under the *hypnotic* treatment, as to leave no room to doubt that the treatment and cure stood in the relation to each other of cause and effect, still there have been many other cases which required a *protracted* course of hypnotism, and were at last relieved or cured by it, notwithstanding they had been quite intractable to much longer courses of other and more usual modes of treatment.

In conclusion, I beg leave to remark, that I have advanced nothing as fact which has not been verified in my own practice, by experiments frequently repeated, and with the utmost care, so as to satisfy



myself and many scientific friends of the reality of the effects and phenomena; and I feel assured that the same amount of evidence must carry conviction to the mind of every honest and candid enquirer, as to the reality of the phenomena, whatever mode of explanation he might prefer as to the cause of their production. Of the correctness of the main position of my theory I am satisfied, but I am too well aware of the intricacy of the inquiry, involving as it does the philosophy of *mind as well as of matter*, and their reciprocal action upon each other, to imagine that I have succeeded in disclosing *all* which can be learned of their capabilities and powers in relation to each other. I trust that I may be able to prosecute my own investigations with increasing effect and increasing knowledge; and my ardent desire is that other minds may be brought to co-operate with me in a research which is full, indeed, of novelty in its details, but which deals with principles and powers in themselves long recognised; and which, I trust, I have here shown as acting according to known laws, even in the condition of *nervous sleep*.

I beg farther to remark, if my theory and pretensions, as to the nature, cause, and extent of the phenomena of nervous sleep have none of the fascinations of the transcendental to captivate the lovers of the marvellous, the credulous and enthusiastic, which the pretensions and alleged occult agency of the mesmerists have, still I hope my views will not be the less acceptable to honest and sober-minded men, because they are all level to our comprehension, and reconcilable with well-known physiological and psychological principles.

What I wish is to court enquiry, and to offer every facility in my power to aid candid inquiry into a department of science which is interesting in *many* respects, and which, when properly conducted, I feel convinced may be rendered, in some forms of disease, one of the greatest boons to the cause of suffering humanity.

BURLINGTON HOUSE, OXFORD STREET,  
MANCHESTER, June 1853.



myself and many scientific friends of the reality of the effects and phenomena; and I feel assured that the same amount of evidence must carry conviction to the mind of every honest and candid enquirer, as to the reality of the phenomena, whatever mode of explanation he might prefer as to the cause of their production. Of the correctness of the main position of my theory I am satisfied, but I am too well aware of the intricacy of the inquiry, involving as it does the philosophy of mind, to venture to assert that I have succeeded in disclosing action upon each other, to imagine that I have succeeded in disclosing all which can be learned of their capabilities and powers in relation to each other. I trust that I may be able to prosecute my own investigations with increasing effect and increasing knowledge; and my ardent desire is that other minds may be brought to co-operate.

## APPENDIX.

In the course of last spring I sent, by desire of the members, an elaborate Essay on Hypnotic and Mesmeric Phenomena, to be read and discussed at the Edinburgh Royal Medical Society. In that Essay my views were set forth briefly, on every branch of the subject, including the *modus operandi* of hypnotism in the relief and cure of disease, illustrated by most of the cases published in this article. The Society devoted three nights to the reading and discussion of my Essay, when many of the extraordinary, as well as the ordinary, members attended, and took part in the debate. Immediately after the last night's discussion, Professor Gregory, who had attended and taken part in the debate on the two last evenings, was so kind as to write me a very long letter, from which I make the following extracts:—"Your paper, which is an excellent one, was very well received. My colleagues, Drs Balfour and Bennett, were also present last night. What struck me most in the whole matter was, that these gentlemen, and most of those who spoke, not only admitted all your facts, but adopted your theoretical views; and, what is more, were anxious to show that they must necessarily embrace the whole subject of Mesmerism, which you know is not my opinion. Now, when I remember what was the state of the profession only three years ago, nay, what it still is in the majority, I cannot but perceive a most manifest and remarkable progress. Dr Bennett candidly admitted, that it was the mesmerists (including you of course) who had forced these most important facts on the profession. Of course the facts I mean are, the production of the nervous sleep, or the state of somnambulism, by artificial means, which is still denied by many, and was, very lately, denied by all; and the extraordinary or incredible effects of suggestion on persons in that state, or indeed sometimes on such as are only half in it, and occasionally on persons in the ordinary state; in short, all the phenomena so absurdly called biological, as well as all the suggestive phenomena occurring in the mesmeric or somnambulistic state or sleep.

"Now, I not only admit all the facts recorded in your Essay, but I have always done so." My learned friend then goes into a long disquisition, to convince me that Clairvoyance, and the other higher phenomena of the mesmerists, are equally true as those which I believe in, and assert are producible by my usual hypnotic processes. As I do not claim any such high pretensions as attributes of *hypnotism*, once for all, I beg to state, that I leave the mesmerists in undisputed sovereignty in this higher department of the science. At the conclusion of his very long and interesting letter, Professor Gregory winds up thus:—"Although I cannot adopt all your views, yet I agree with all you have stated, both as to subjective action and suggestion, only bearing in mind that these do not exhaust the subject. I regard your Essay as a very valuable one, more especially in a practical point of view, and my chief objection is to the summary opinions expressed, without proof, on the disputed points."

In the Essay submitted to the Royal Medical Society, I entered very fully into the consideration of the influence of dominant ideas in the minds of parties in exciting or depressing function in accordance with the purport of these ideas,



whether originating spontaneously, or from previous associations, or from the direct suggestions of a second party. This led me to advert to Dr Carpenter's term, *ideo-motor*, used by him to signify unconscious muscular motion from an idea, in contradistinction to voluntary motion. I then said that term was admirably well chosen for characterising the single phenomenon which he was describing, but that, inasmuch as a dominant idea might *arrest* as well as *excite* muscular motion and other functions, it was highly desirable to adopt some terms which might characterise the *whole* range of phenomena which might arise from dominant ideas in the minds of individuals. I have now come to the conclusion that the following would be most appropriate for the purpose:—  
 “1st, To *ideize*, would be to induce the state of abstraction or mental concentration favourable for manifesting the power of suggestion, and of predominant ideas.<sup>1</sup> 2d, *Ideized* would indicate the state or condition of the person when so impressed. 3d, *Ideo-dynamic*, or ideational phenomena, would indicate the character and intensity of the phenomena to be anticipated, according to the all-absorbing idea with which the mind of the subject was occupied, coupled with the known temperament and susceptibility of the subject. It must be obvious that these terms would comprehend every conceivable variety of phenomenon, according to the function of the part on which the dominant idea of the subject was concentrated, and the liveliness of his faith. Thus, let the mind of the person be engrossed with the notion, that he is to be irresistibly drawn, repelled, or paralysed, or catalepted, and the *ideo-dynamic* or ideational condition of the muscles corresponding to this idea will take place, without any conscious volition of the subject to that effect. It is this very ideational or unconscious muscular action which is the cause of “Table-moving,” which has lately so much astonished and excited the public. The experimenters perceive the fact that the table moves; but not being conscious of putting out any voluntary effort, they imagine that the table is drawing them, whilst all the while their own muscles are imparting the requisite impulse to the table, although they are unconscious that they are doing so. This theory of “table-moving” I published anonymously on the 30th of April last, in the “Manchester Examiner and Times,” from which I make the following extract:—“This unconscious muscular influence from dominant ideas in the minds of subjects, Dr Carpenter, Sir Henry Holland, and Mr Braid, all bring to bear upon and explain the phenomena of the gyrations of the *odometer* of Dr Mayo, the *magnetometer* of Mr Rutter, and the *divining rod*; and we know that Mr Braid attributes the supposed levity of a human body, in an experiment described by Sir David Brewster, as well as these furniture movements, to the same cause, viz., the extraordinary influence of dominant ideas in the minds of some individuals, in producing muscular action in accordance with those ideas, without any conscious effort of volition on the part of said subjects. It therefore becomes a complete illusion as regards the parties so experimenting, as is seen in *biologised* subjects; and others witnessing the experiments, become so engrossed by watching and anticipating the movements, as to overlook their real exciting cause.”

In this paragraph, I referred to Dr Carpenter's lectures at the Manchester Royal Institution, so recently reported in the Manchester newspapers, where I said, “The key to the solution of this mystery may be found.” By this mode of expression, I did not mean to intimate that Dr Carpenter had made any special or direct reference to “table-moving,” either in these lectures, or in that at the London Institution, which was reported in the “Athenæum” for the 12th March 1852, for I well knew that his observations in *both* institutions had reference to the ideomotor, or unconscious muscular action as the cause of certain *biological* phenomena, and of the movements of Dr Mayo's *odometer*, of

<sup>1</sup> Causing individuals to look for a considerable length of time, with fixed attention, at any unexciting inanimate object, is generally the most speedy and certain mode of inducing this condition.



Mr Rutter's magnetoscope, of the divining rod, and of rings and other objects suspended from the points of the fingers, which he very graphically designated "the swing-swangs," all of which results he (Dr Carpenter) viewed as coming under the same category. Still, although Dr Carpenter did not refer to "table-moving," that was so much akin to the others, and the Doctor's ideas and my own coincided so entirely on the nature and cause of ideo-motor or unconscious muscular action, and the influence of dominant or expectant ideas in modifying physical action, that I felt assured if ever he brought his acute mind to investigate the phenomena of "table-moving," he would be certain to arrive at the same conclusion as I had done—and I know he has since done so. Indeed, it is now some five or six years since I published a letter in the "Manchester Courier," making a *similar* application of this, to me, familiar physiological principle, to explain the feats of a French peasant girl, who was then astonishing the Parisians by her feats of table and chair moving, and by even moving a heavy trunk with a strong man seated on each side of her. This was alleged to be produced by some extraordinary development of electrical agency in the girl, but, after my unconscious muscular action theory, from some predominant idea or delusion in the girl's mind, was published, the affair was speedily seen in this light, and the girl's marvellous feats were no more heard of. If there is any little merit, therefore, attaching to priority in promulgating this unconscious muscular force theory of furniture moving, by persons in physical contact with such objects, I would have an undoubted right to claim it as due to myself.

Since my paragraph of the 30th April last was published, I expressed the same opinions at a public *conversazione* on table-moving at the Manchester Athenæum, on the 2d of June last, which was extensively reported in the newspapers, and I have also published several letters since supporting the same views, as also cautioning the public against the dangers of trying such experiments too frequently. In one of these letters I said:—"In addition to what I advanced in the Athenæum, I beg to state that, inasmuch as my experience of the influence of dominant ideas being sufficient to produce corresponding muscular action unconsciously, involuntarily, or, in some cases, even in *opposition* to the will of the subject (that is, according to the predominant idea in the patient's mind at the time); *a fortiori*, when the *will and lively faith go along with the dominant idea*, the effect should be still more potent and efficient for accomplishing the expected result. In short, the only difficulty is to believe that, under these circumstances, the motor muscular impulse is *entirely involuntary*, for to *will* the table to move from some impulse of a mysterious nature streaming from our finger-points, held in contact with the body to be moved, and to will the voluntary muscles, at the same time, to be still and inoperative, seems to be a contradiction in terms. I believe the more strictly accurate mode of expressing the matter will be this—and the whole of this paragraph was written ten days ago for a different purpose—that the ideo-motor principle *might* be adequate to effect the result *without* volition, or even in *opposition* to volition, provided the dominant idea was sufficiently vivid; but in these cases of table-moving, when honestly conducted, the ideational motor impulse is supplemented by *volition*, so *slightly exerted as to be unconscious to the persons so exercising it*; their attention and will being, as they suppose, entirely concentrated on the table, instead of on impinging the nervous force into the muscles, the action of which is required for producing the motion. The illusion, therefore, becomes complete, the force being partly ideational and partly voluntary, but partaking so slightly of the latter quality as not to be cognisant to the subjects engaged in the said experiments. I have been led to this conclusion regarding the true cause of these phenomena, from observing that some one of the party always announced, in audible language, the direction in which they were to *will* the table to move, and in every case which I observed closely, the tables took the direction indicated. As to the *tendencies* of such experiments, if frequently repeated, it is quite obvious to me that it is not so harmless an amusement as many may suppose. It has a direct tendency



to destroy the mental power of discriminating between ideo-motor or unconscious movements and voluntary motion, and to weaken the controlling power of the brain and will over the reflex or automatic muscular apparatus, and thus will be engendered a tendency to spasmodic or convulsive diseases, such as St Vitus's dance, hysteria, epilepsy, and catalepsy."

I also directed attention to the mischievous influence of excited imagination, sympathy, and imitation, as manifested during the dancing mania of the middle ages, the *convulsionnaires* in France, and the violent spasmodic disease from religious excitement, which seized 4000 people within a very short time in the south and west of England and Wales, and also in America; and I would also beg to remind my readers, that, in America, nearly two hundred individuals have been sent to lunatic asylums, and a number of suicides have taken place, as the result of this spirit-rapping and table-turning mania.

A valuable report from four most intelligent medical gentlemen, advocating the same views, appeared in "The Medical Times and Gazette" three weeks ago, and a letter from Professor Faraday, on the same side of the question, appeared in last Thursday's London "Times." I consider the report of these gentlemen, and Professor Faraday's experiments in particular, as most satisfactory and conclusive on the point which I have always contended for, namely, that the movements were entirely due to unconscious muscular force; and I doubt not this view of the subject will very soon be the generally accepted mode of accounting for these phenomena—although there may always be some who will cling to the mystical and transcendental view, as it is the natural tendency of a certain class of minds to feast on the marvellous and mysterious, and to reject all common sense views of most subjects.

I observe that the "Zoist" for this month contains three articles on the subject of "table-moving," and "spirit-rappers," one from the pen of the Rev. George Sandby, vicar of Fixton, Suffolk, another from the Rev. C. Hare Townshend, and the third, entitled "The Departed Spirits," by Dr Elliotson—three gentlemen of very great talents and attainments, all thorough going mesmerists, and, as a matter of course, decidedly opposed to my "unconscious muscular action theory." Notwithstanding such a powerful phalanx is opposed to my theory, I will venture to offer a few remarks on their views, in the spirit of candour, and with an honest desire to arrive at truth. As I have the greatest possible dislike to be misrepresented, or to misrepresent any one, by garbled quotations, I shall cite a few passages from these gentlemen so fully as shall fairly exhibit their opinions in their own words. At page 178, Mr Sandby says, "with pure and simple mesmerism in its primary action, there can be no question that this discovery (table-moving) is closely allied, if it be not, as I believe, one and the same thing."

"I have always contended for and believed in that theory which Mesmer originally promulgated, viz., that some external agent, analogous to a fluid, or perhaps to the sparks that proceed from an electrical machine, does proceed in the act of mesmerising from one human being to another. This invisible, imponderable agent, I have seen many reasons to regard as being of a quasi electrical character, if I might not even call it an actual electrical manifestation under the modification of physiological action. Dr Scoresby's scientific investigations on this point have added greatly to our arguments in favour of this view. Richenbach's elaborate researches confirm the notion. \* \* \* We mesmerise water, metals, leather, and paper, as we learn from the effects produced upon our patients; and this action of the tables, induced by continued contact with a chain of human fingers, is nothing but simple mesmerism developing itself in an unexpected phase."—P. 179.

"And the value of this discovery is considerable. We cannot, indeed, say whether it will lead to any ulterior facts, or be useful in promoting more extended information in science; but it adds an important, it might be said, a conclusive amount of evidence, towards the establishment of mesmerism as a physical truth. The theory of imagination will not hold good with wooden matter."—P. 179.



Now, with all due respect for the Rev. Mr Sandby's talents and worth, I am bound to say that all my experience, which has been considerable, and all my convictions, are opposed to what he has here advanced. I beg respectfully to remind the reverend gentleman that whilst *imagination* and other mental faculties could not be supposed to influence the "wooden matter,"—for Mr Sandby has more good sense than to refer the movements to the operation of a *spirit* in the table,—still, imagination and the expectant idea *might* influence, and I maintain that they *do* influence the blood, and nerves, and muscles, which compose the *other* part of the apparatus, for, let it be observed, it is a *compound* apparatus, consisting of *human bodies and "wooden matter" combined*. Until Mr Sandby and other opponents of the "unconscious muscular action theory" of these movements, therefore, shall succeed in producing incontestable evidence that they can effect these movements of inanimate matter by the force of their *will alone*, when all possibility of muscular action, either conscious or unconscious, is entirely excluded, they have no satisfactory proof to adduce in opposition to the evidence which the experiments of myself and others has furnished, that it is quite possible that such movements may be effected through unconscious muscular action, when the hands or fingers of the experimenters are brought into contact with the inanimate matter to be set in motion. The onus of such proof, therefore, necessarily devolves upon these gentlemen.

At page 181, first paragraph, Mr Sandby seems to have overlooked the almost incredible rapidity with which unconscious muscular contraction, and even catalepsy, may take place in some subjects, from very slight exciting causes. Again, in the next paragraph, Mr S. alleges that it is impossible that the grave and scientific narrators of certain experiments could have been mistaken in what occurred when the table was in *rapid motion*; but I am quite of a different opinion, for I believe that this was the very time of all others when they were *most likely to be deceived*, and rendered incompetent to distinguish what amount of momentum had previously been imparted to it *unconsciously*, and which might then be enabling it to move on for some time by its acquired momentum.

Again, at page 183, the reverend gentleman says,—“The efficient cause of these marvellous phenomena is *nothing but electricity*; and the rotatory movements of the tables towards the north, and towards the south, are brought about in accordance with the well known laws which Oerstedt and Faraday have established.” It is certainly most unfortunate for this theory, and most fortunate for mine, that Professor Faraday published a letter in the London “Times” on the very day before the publication of the last number of the “Zoist,” containing these views by Mr Sandby, in which this profound and most acute philosopher (Faraday) repudiates *all* causes of table-moving, *but* the unconscious muscular force one. Indeed Faraday not only repudiates *all other* causes, but he also clearly demonstrates the fact by a number of ingeniously contrived and conclusive experiments. He particularly repudiates the notion of *electricity* or *magnetism* having anything to do in the matter; and we have no higher authority than Faraday to refer to on these matters. Moreover, Faraday invented a simple apparatus, by which he had been enabled so thoroughly to convince the experimenters of the source of fallacy, in supposing it anything else than their own muscular force which moved the tables, that the effects ceased so soon as they steadily directed their vision to his tell-tale index.

The Rev. Mr Townshend does not attribute table-moving to *electricity*, but he attributes it rather to the “mesmeric medium;” and he believes that this can be accumulated in the “wooden matter;” for he says, at page 189, “when *once* the table has been affected, it seems much more easy to do it again;” and once more he says, “I do really infer the action of a fluid from all this, and a certain accumulation of fluid, (or vibratory action of a fluid, or medium).” Again, “We know that the muscles are only moved by the nerves, and by nerve-galvanism. Now this last power may possibly be continued on, out of the mere animal frame, so as to constitute in itself a motive agency.—And this



will not seem wonderful to a mesmerist, who so often projects a force beyond his own body.

"Mind, I only say all this problematically, and as a seeker after truth." Dr. Elliotson sends the rapping-spirits to flight with hearty good will. He admits that many cases of "table-turning" may be the result of "unconscious muscular action;" but he inclines to agree with the two reverend gentlemen, whose papers have been referred to as preceding his, in believing that there are other cases which are independent of muscular action. Thus, at page 193, Dr. Elliotson says, "But may not such movements frequently result from other causes—from an occult agency?" Again, "The table always slid away from their fingers and mine, so slightly did we all touch it. It moved faster than the fingers of any of us, and got in advance of us."

Here, then, we have got all these three distinguished gentlemen agreed that the tables *may* be moved *independently of the muscular force, either conscious or unconscious, of the "table-turners;"* and they are all agreed, moreover, that it is their old friend the *magnetic or mesmeric medium*, which is the efficient agent that sets the inanimate matter in motion, and keeps it in motion, independently of the muscular action of the experimenters. Table-moving is, therefore, deemed a most satisfactory proof of the existence of a mesmeric medium or independent imponderable physical force, which can be directed and controlled by the human *will*, so as to produce various effects, and, amongst others, this movement of inanimate matter, irrespective of the physical agency of the human muscles. According to Mr Sandby, it "adds an important, it might be said a conclusive, amount of evidence towards the establishment of mesmerism as a physical truth."

Moreover, a small book on table-moving was lately published by a London "physician," in which he states that, according to his computation, the average physical force exerted on a table by each "table-mover" is *five ounces*. Well, according to physical laws, this force may be exerted as well and effectively in *lifting perpendicularly*, as in drawing or shoving inanimate matter. We are therefore now in the position to propose the experimentum crucis to these gentlemen. Let five, or ten, or twenty, ascertained efficient table-movers, stand or sit round a table, and exert the force of their *will* to raise a *single ounce* of lead, copper, wood, or marble, from the centre of the table, and hold it suspended in the air for a single minute, say twelve inches above the table, when no human hand is in contact with it, and no trickery or mechanical contrivance has been applied to effect such result, and I will admit that my theory has failed, and that a greater marvel has been presented before me than turning a table on castors weighing a ton, *when a number of human hands are held in contact with said table*. This test I proposed in my first letter, bearing date 15th June last; and I find that Professor Faraday has since proposed the *lifting* experiment, but that he has met with no one who could succeed in doing so. Now, I beg leave to remind the mesmerists that, according to their own belief, they *ought to be able to do so*, for they allege that they can *project* the mesmeric medium from their bodies, and direct its impingement by the force of their *will*, so as to make it act at prodigious distances, producing immediate effects. Thus, Dr Ashburner has stated, in his notes to Reichenbach's translation, that he can do so to the distance of *seventy miles*, producing immediate effects; and that, in this manner, he can telegraph messages to the distance of two miles, without any conducting medium other than his mesmeric or odylic medium, or influence, emanating from his brain, and set in motion by the force of *his will*. At page 32, Dr Ashburner says he has come to the conclusion that "a force which is a material agent, attended by or constituting a coloured light, emanates from the brain of man when he thinks,—that his will can direct its impingement,—and that it is a motive power." Nay, more, this gentleman avers that he can make this force *visible* to the eyesight of some individuals, so that they shall perceive it as a rope passing from his eyes to their heads, and *irresistibly drawing them towards him*, when he is engaged in exerting *his will* to that effect. There ought,



therefore, according to mesmeric notions, to be no insuperable difficulty to parties, standing or sitting round a table, being able to project their mesmeric force to the centre of the table, so as to *lift a single ounce* weight, and suspend it in the air as I have proposed; but, I will dare to predict that, whenever they venture on such an experiment, the full force of the will of a score of the most obstinate and energetic of them will be proved inadequate to lift a *single farthing*. Or they may try to lift a penny or a sovereign at the end of a stick, or of a wheel made of a light hoop, with cross bars, and a central shaft, at right angles, placed upright, the lower end of the shaft resting on the object to be lifted at the lower end of the shaft by the force of their will, exerted to lift it instead of to turn the wheel. Or let two people, instead of turning a hat, lay hold of a wooden pencil or pen-holder, and lift a shilling at the lower end of either of them whilst they are held perpendicularly, which will be equally satisfactory, if they succeed, in supporting their theory of a special or occult influence or force, and opposed to my unconscious muscular force theory. But, if they still wish to cling to the horizontal motion, then they may try the following plan:—Let them sit or stand round a table, but a few inches distant from it, and let them be provided with a number of leathern straps or cords, the one end of which shall extend from the opposite hands of each couple of experimenters, and be allowed to lie loosely on the top of the table. In such case, there would be the same facility of conducting the alleged *mesmeric medium* to the table from the persons operating, as when the hands are in contact with it; but all chance of fallacy, from unconscious muscular action, would be effectually removed, so that, if the table really moves, it cannot be by muscular force, when the bond of communication between the muscles of the experimenter and the table is merely lying loose upon the table. My experiment at the Athenæum Conversazione with the circle of brass wire, held by five ladies at a short distance from the table, with a prolongation of the wire extending from each hand of the ladies to the table, where a coil was made so that it might rest loosely on the table, fulfilled this indication, as well as proved to others what was evident to myself before I proposed it,—the fallacy of supposing the movement dependant on an accumulation of electricity in the table, whilst it was in direct communication with the earth. The ladies continued at their task for half-an-hour without any movement of the table, although I observed the right hand of one of them advanced two or three times to the extent of six inches in the direction the table was willed to move. When the wire was removed, and the hands applied, so that unconscious muscular force could again come into play, the table very soon moved as briskly as at first trials.

These experiments, with a repetition of Faraday's most unexceptionable and conclusive physical tests, ought to be quite adequate to determine such a question as this, and I feel very confident that the result will be in support of my theory of the nature and cause of such phenomena, viz., "the extraordinary influence of dominant expectant ideas in the minds of some individuals, in producing muscular action in accordance with those ideas, without any conscious effort of volition on the part of said subjects." It therefore becomes a complete illusion as regards the parties so experimenting, as is seen in *biologised* subjects; and others witnessing the experiments, become so engrossed by watching and anticipating the movements, as to overlook their real exciting cause." I beg leave, therefore, to remark, that inasmuch as my own experience, as well as that of others, has proved that such movements of inanimate matter may take place from the unconscious muscular action of parties laying their hands in contact with the objects moved, *without* their alleged new force, the onus necessarily lies with our opponents to prove that they can veritably produce such physical movements of inanimate matter by the force of their *will alone*, when all possibility of such unconscious muscular action, as we allege is the cause of the movements, has been entirely excluded. Let these gentlemen, therefore, prove the sincerity of their belief in the principles which they avow, by trying the crucial experiments which I have suggested, and let them publish



the results in an early number of the *Zoist*. There can be no satisfactory mode of determining such a controversy but by such a course as this, viz., by repeating experiments under the guidance of the corrective suggestions, which may be conveyed to us by comparing the different points of view in which phenomena present themselves to different minds.

As to table gesticulations, table-talking, or spirit-rapping, keep all hands off, and all mechanical contrivances for moving the table away from it; and then, when the table replies by lifting one leg and giving the required number of raps on the floor with said leg, the time may have arrived when it may be worth our while to speculate about the cause of such a mysterious phenomenon, but certainly not until then. There can be no reason to doubt that unconscious muscular action, according to dominant ideas in the minds of patients, may be adequate to effect some of these phenomena, as certainly as they produce rotatory movements of such inanimate matter; for, considerable pressure on one side of a table, of suitable construction, would no doubt cause the table to incline in that direction, and thus to do its manners, or to elevate one leg from the floor and bump upon it alternately, according to the ideas in the minds of the experimentalists; but to those who deny this, and will still insist on touching the tables during such experiments, I think we might with some degree of propriety apply the remark, "the pleasure is as great in being cheated as to cheat;" for assuredly I can only consider they are persisting in a course of experiments calculated to deceive themselves, as well as others who are not alive to the source of fallacy which I have pointed out.

The influence of expectant ideas in the mind of persons pointing to the letters of the alphabet, in varying the action when they arrive at the letter which they allege may be the one to be indicated, and the change on the expression of the features of unwary subjects when doing this, and in the tones of their voice when calling letters, may all very readily enable the "medium" to make happy guesses as Mr Lewis has suggested—just as ordinary fortune tellers have long been well aware of, and profited by. Indeed this phenomenon of physical manifestations, in accordance with mental emotions and dominant ideas in the minds of subjects, is so familiar, and is acted on so largely every day, by council, judge, and jury, when sifting evidence in our courts of law, that the great marvel is, that so many respectable and intelligent people in all ordinary matters, should have suffered themselves to be so much duped by such a transparent trick as these spirit-rapping mediums have palmed upon them as supernatural gifts. But let a screen be interposed between the medium and tester, so as effectually to prevent the former from seeing the features of the latter, or his modes of pointing at the card, and let the letters be pointed at irregularly as regards their alphabetical arrangement; and if there is only one medium in the room, I suspect the fallacy of such pretensions will soon become apparent, provided the tester is careful neither to lead nor to mislead the "medium."

But there is still another important consideration and objection to be urged against these spirit-rapping experiments, viz., that they must necessarily have a direct tendency to engender in the minds of the experimenters the grossest superstition. To bring one's self to believe that a table, or any other piece of inanimate matter, is possessed by a spirit of divination, which can reveal secrets to the credulous inquirer or worshipper at said shrine, is quite as bad, in the midst of Christian and civilised society, as the ignorant and benighted idolators of heathen lands, whose folly we deplore in cutting down a tree, one part of which they burn, and another of which they make a graven image, and fall down and worship as a god, possessed of the power not only of revealing all knowledge to them, but also of succouring and supporting them under every trial, difficulty, and danger. Is this what we are to come to in Great Britain, in this year of grace 1853? God forbid! but such, I apprehend, is the obvious tendency of such practices, if they are zealously persisted in.

J. BRAID.

Burlington House, Oxford Street,  
Manchester, 2d July 1853.







