

Hints on animal magnetism, addressed to the medical profession in Great Britain / by J.C. Colquhoun.

Contributors

Colquhoun, J. C. 1785-1854.
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

Publication/Creation

Edinburgh : MacLachlan & Stewart, 1838.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/m4ftsn3s>

Provider

Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. The original may be consulted at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. where the originals may be consulted.

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

H I N T S

ON

ANIMAL MAGNETISM,

ADDRESSED TO THE

MEDICAL PROFESSION IN GREAT BRITAIN.

BY J. C. COLQUHOUN, ESQ. ADVOCATE,
AUTHOR OF *ISIS REVELATA*, &c.

*Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere, cadentque,
Quæ nunc sunt in honore.* HORAT.

*Die Medecin ist eine Erfahrungswissenschaft ; die Praxis ein fortdauerendes
Experiment, mit der Menschheit angestellt—und das Experiment ist noch nicht
geschlossen.* C. W. HUFELAND.

Medicine is a science of experience ; practice a continual experiment,
of which man is the object—and the experiment is not yet completed.

EDINBURGH :
MACLACHLAN & STEWART, SOUTH BRIDGE.

MDCCCXXXVIII.

PRINTED BY NEILL AND CO., OLD FISHMARKET, EDINBURGH.

R35580

HINTS, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

A short time ago, upon my return to Edinburgh from the country, where I had been engaged, for a considerable period, in the discharge of important official duties, I found some interesting communications from high quarters awaiting me, upon the subject of Animal Magnetism, especially upon the recent experiments of Baron Dupotet in London; and I have also been informed of the important circumstance, that several respectable physicians of that city had either become convinced of the truth of some of the fundamental facts, or expressed their opinions in favour of a candid investigation. This information could not fail to be highly gratifying to me, who had long and earnestly suggested inquiry, and who felt confident that such an inquiry must ultimately lead to results of vast importance, not to medicine only, but to science and to humanity.

Gentlemen,—You must all recollect the time—it is not yet very remote—when to mention the name of Animal Magnetism in this country, to profess a belief in its asserted agency, or to express the smallest interest in the investigation of the facts it was said to have elicited, was sufficient to excite universal laughter and ridicule, and to draw down upon the unwary individual, who thus exposed himself, a charge of folly, mysticism, or madness. Medical gentlemen, too, were unfortunately among the loudest in this

expression of contempt and mockery. Such was the general feeling upon the subject, among the learned as well as the unlearned amongst us, when I first ventured to present it to the public in a more favourable point of view. Nearly five years have now elapsed since I published a translation of the late Report of the Royal Academy of Medicine at Paris, accompanied with a few historical and other remarks; and, at the same time, took the liberty of calling the special attention of scientific men to that most extraordinary and fully authenticated phenomenon,—the exercise of the sensitive and perceptive faculties in certain pathological states of the system, without the use of their appropriate organs. The subject was thus introduced to public notice by an individual possessed of no philosophical reputation, who disclaimed all pretensions to medical knowledge, and who, consequently, could not be presumed to entertain any sectarian or schismatic views; merely for the purpose of obviating ignorant and irrational prejudices, as well as of pointing out to his countrymen the notoriety which this new method of treatment had already attained amongst our continental neighbours, and the interesting discoveries with which the investigation had at length rewarded the zeal and perseverance of its judicious votaries.

I have had no great reason to flatter myself on the success of my well-meant effort. The subject may, indeed, be said to be *caviare* to the multitude; to the British physician it seemed to be forbidden fruit. The unpretending publication was received by a few with interest and apparent gratitude, by some with unreasonable suspicion and jealousy, and by the many with frigid apathy. So consummate was the ignorance which had previously prevailed upon the subject, that even men who had grown grey in professional study and practice stood gaping at the curious statements then made with foolish wonder, uncertain, it would seem, whether they ought to view them as serious or burlesque.

Their surprise, too, was not unmingled with apprehension. Never, indeed, did the sudden appearance of a ravenous wolf amongst a herd of timid cattle, occasion more anxious alarm. To borrow the language of the poet, they

“ Stood all astonied, like a sort of steers,
 ’Mongst whom some beast of strange and foreign race
 Unwares is chanced, for straying from his peers :
 So did their ghastly gaze betray their hidden fears.”

It might have been reasonably expected that time and inquiry would at length dispel ignorance, subdue wonderment, and allay groundless fears; and that natural occurrences, when once ascertained to be such, would cease to be regarded, by persons of ordinary sense and discernment, as prodigies or impostures. This anticipation, however, has not been entirely realized. Opposition, indeed, and scepticism were not very loudly expressed. There was a manifest diminution of the tones of arrogant censure; but many confused murmurs might still be occasionally heard about nonsense, credulity, danger to science, &c.

“ Then might we see these valiant men of Britain,
 Like boding owls creep into tods of ivy,
 And hoot their fears to one another nightly.”

Even the more recent appearance of *Isis Revelata*,—in which an attempt was made to explain many obscurities upon natural principles,—even the appearance of *Isis Revelata*, like that of the cometary bodies of old, seems to have been hailed at first, in certain influential quarters, with consternation, rather than with complacency. Some doubt, others still wonder, and many who are half convinced, are filled with vague and indistinct notions of imaginary dangers :—

“ They see, indeed,—they hear ; but what avails
 Or sight, or sense of hearing ; all things rolling,
 Like the unreal imagery of dreams,
 In wild confusion mix’d.”

The study of Animal Magnetism, indeed, is not suited to weak minds; such, therefore, had better eschew it. It requires, according to a phrase of Cowley's, "a head that is strong-built and well-ballasted." The subject, it is thought, never can become popular; nor is it, perhaps, desirable that it should. The curious, and apparently anomalous facts it discloses are apt to generate scepticism on the one hand, and a blind credulity and pernicious mysticism on the other. The number of those is probably small, who are capable of regarding them steadily with undazzled eyes, and of investigating them with cool and dispassionate reason, by the aid of a sound and sober philosophy. Moreover, the greater part of mankind, it has been said, carry their brains in their eyes, and some, as Coleridge observes,—"the men of sound common sense,"—"the snails in intellect,"—"wear their eyes at the tips of their feelers, and cannot even see, unless they at the same time touch." Others, again, are in a still more helpless and deplorable state. They seem to be deprived of all faculty of vision, physical as well as mental,—of all external and internal sensibility; and consequently they cannot see at all.

Gentlemen,—It cannot be expected that all men shall become practical magnetizers; many may never have an opportunity of witnessing any of the more extraordinary phenomena of Animal Magnetism. To the greater part of mankind, these must necessarily continue to be a mere matter of testimony, such as the existence, extent, and population of the cities of Grand Cairo, Peking, and Timbuctoo, or the reality of the fall of meteoric stones from the heavens. But, unfortunately for the general diffusion of science, all persons are not equally capable of weighing and deciding upon evidence. Some are naturally incompetent,—many cannot spare the requisite time,—others will not take the necessary trouble to do so. Accordingly, we find that the opinions of the multitude among mankind are frequently

formed, not upon any reasonable judgment of things, but upon certain extraneous or adventitious circumstances,—such as the supposed utility of any newly enunciated fact or doctrine, their conformity to some previously assumed or generally acknowledged principle, the character and situation of the individual who announces them, &c. without any investigation into their actual reality and truth. The learned, too, have their prejudices and prepossessions as well as the vulgar, and those of the former are quite as obstinate and as mischievous, and perhaps, for obvious reasons, still more inimical to the progress of knowledge, than those of the latter. Nay, there is a sort of fashion in belief, as well as in other matters; for many are incapable of forming any independent opinion of their own, and find it most convenient to allow themselves to be carried along with the stream. They may acknowledge with the poet :

“ Quo me cunque rapit tempestas deferor hospes.”

Even the inquiring mind, as a late eminent writer has observed, “seems to be always hovering on the brink of truth; but timidity, or indolence, or prejudice, which is both combined, makes us shrink back, unwilling to trust ourselves to the fathomless abyss.” Moreover, there are some mental optics which are dazzled and confounded by the full splendour of truth, and whose visual perceptions, consequently, are incapable of comprehending any object beyond the half-way house to real science. Finally, the annunciation of new and extraordinary facts and discoveries in science, affords an irresistibly tempting opportunity for all the Merry-Andrews of literature to exercise their favourite vocation. Incapable themselves of appreciating serious and important truths, they take advantage of the popular ignorance, and endeavour to throw discredit upon scientific researches, which they cannot comprehend, by representing them to the public in the ludicrously distorting light of the

Camera Obscura of their own empty minds and fantastic imaginations. They are well aware that it is, at all times, easier to ridicule than to reason,—much less laborious, and probably far more agreeable to the many, to laugh at a bad or impertinent jest, than to follow out a philosophical investigation; for

“Gentle dulness ever loves a joke.”

Gentlemen,—My original resolution to publish any thing upon the subject of Animal Magnetism, was not lightly or hastily formed. I was urged to it, many years ago, by some most learned and respectable members of your own profession, who, aware of the long and deep attention I had bestowed upon it, and, probably, more inquisitive and less prejudiced than most of their fellows, appeared anxious to have the facts and the evidence brought fairly before the British public; and who, at the same time, confessed to me that, as matters were then situated, no professional gentleman *dared* to avow an interest in this interdicted subject, much less to make it an object of scientific investigation. This singular confession was, at first, rather startling to the author, who, in the simplicity of his heart, could not exactly comprehend why any branch of science should be *tabooed*; but he has since been enabled to peep a little farther into the *rationale* of these matters, and without any very extraordinary exertion of his magnetic *clairvoyance*, to see somewhat more distinctly behind the intervening curtain.

It appears that there are some persons, even of note, members of learned incorporations, fellows of Royal and other privileged societies, professors in ancient Universities, &c., to whom, at a certain period of life, the prospect of an accession of real knowledge, instead of being agreeable and satisfactory, is, on the contrary, rather unpleasant, painful, and humiliating. Every man who then ventures to present

them with novel facts or ideas, or in any way attempts to rectify or extend their notions of things, is regarded by them as an invader—a robber—an enemy to what they have been accustomed to conceive to be their vested rights in literature and science. GOETHE, the celebrated German poet, is reported to have said, upon some particular occasion, that when, from time to time, a man arises, who is fortunate enough to discover one of the grand secrets of Nature, ten others immediately start up, who industriously and strenuously endeavour to conceal it again from view. It is so—was—and probably ever shall be. The conflict between light and darkness appears to be interminable. The race of the *obscurantists* in politics, in science, and in literature, promises to survive to the end of time. To use the language of a favourite old author, they are exceedingly “angry with every one that hath out-grown his cherry-stones and rattles, speak evil at a venture of things they know not, and, like mastiffs, are fiercer for being kept dark. These are the great enemies of the useful, experimental methods of philosophy. They take it ill that any thing should be accounted valuable, in which they are uninstructed; being loth to *learn* in an age wherein they expect to *dictate*; and the satirist has told them another reason—

*Turpe putant parere minoribus, et quæ
Imberbes didicere senes perdenda fateri.*”

This author might have added, that the case of these worthies is precisely the reverse of that of the sage of antiquity, who declared that he continued to learn as he grew old (*μανθανων γερασκω*). With regard to the individuals in question, on the contrary, it would appear that age only hardens them in their ignorance, strengthens their prejudices, and confirms them in their folly.

Amidst all the difficulties and discouragements which surrounded me, I continued to persevere in my researches,

in the sanguine hope that, sooner or later, the subject must be found worthy of a serious investigation by more competent individuals. I declined the attempt, sometimes suggested to me, and so frequently resorted to by others in similar circumstances, of forming an exclusive clique, or club, or coterie, for the purpose of disseminating a knowledge of facts, to which so little attention had hitherto been paid in this country; I declined this attempt, because, confident as I was of the reality of these facts, I preferred allowing them to work their way gradually into inquiring minds, as in my own case, and because I acknowledged the correctness of the general observation of the great Roman historian,—*Veritas, visu et mora; falsa, festinatione et incertis, valescunt*. I had no doubt of the result, as soon as a fair and patient hearing could be obtained. I will confess, however, that, notwithstanding the encouragement afforded me by a very few intelligent and discerning individuals, the almost general silence of the learned had nearly brought me to despair, when recent circumstances fortunately presented a more favourable omen, and induced me to hope that this most interesting subject might still receive a satisfactory investigation from our countrymen. These circumstances have also led me to obtrude myself once more upon the notice of the public, upon the present occasion.

Gentlemen:—It might well appear presumptuous in me to remind you of the present defective state of medical science, or to venture to suggest any means for its improvement. Having during many years, however, bestowed no little attention upon a subject which is closely connected with medicine, on the one hand, and with general philosophy, on the other, and which I humbly conceive to be of vast importance to both; I trust I may be permitted, with great deference, to bring under your notice some views, which, I should think, cannot be regarded with indifference by any enlightened and liberal physician.

In a recent work, I quoted a high authority, that of the celebrated Dr Abercrombie of Edinburgh, upon the subject of the uncertainty of medicine; and, with regard to Physiology, we have only to glance over the crude speculations of our most admired British physiologists, from Lawrence to Elliotson, in order to be satisfied of the glaring errors of its professors—errors which are scarcely compensated by the more sober, the more cautious and accurate researches and expositions of a Barclay, a Bell, a Prichard, and an Alison. But, instead of delivering any worthless opinion of my own, I may here observe, that Professor Grant of London asserts, and in this view he is corroborated by the late lamented Dr Fletcher of Edinburgh, that we are, at this moment, “a century behind our continental neighbours in this department of science.”

Now, if these opinions be correct, surely every philosophical physician will be disposed to take a lesson from those so far a-head of us, and to embrace every opportunity that may present itself of increasing his therapeutic powers, and of enlarging and rectifying his knowledge of the sympathies and susceptibilities of the human constitution. Towards the close of the last century, the discovery of Animal Magnetism opened up a new, a wide, and a most interesting field of investigation to the continental physiologists. Indeed, the curious facts which that peculiar mode of treatment gradually disclosed, were of the very highest importance, and could not fail to reflect much new light, both upon the medical and the philosophical sciences. They might be not inaptly compared with the brilliant physical discoveries which have been recently made in Electricity, Galvanism, Magnetism, and Electro-magnetism, to which they are probably akin. While the latter have tended to elucidate the action of certain intangible and imponderable forces upon inorganic nature, the former have brought to light some of those still more mysterious influences, whose

activity is occasionally exerted in modifying the state of the organism of animated beings. For a considerable period, it is true, the reality of this last class of facts was disputed and ridiculed by the ignorant and the supercilious—by the physiological materialist and the philosophical sceptic; but time is a powerful auxiliary to the advancement of scientific investigation—

Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed sæpe cadendo—

the materialists and sceptics gradually became convinced by the overwhelming evidence afforded by ample experiment and repeated observation; and truth, at length, obtained a signal triumph over ignorance, incredulity, and prejudice. There is not now, probably, a single intelligent and inquiring physician upon the Continent who denies the influence of the magnetic action upon the living body, or the reality of the phenomena produced by its means. It is different, no doubt, in this country, where the investigation can scarcely be said to have yet commenced, and, consequently, the reign of incredulity and prejudice is still far from being at an end; where the phenomena in question continue to be viewed with extreme scepticism by a number of otherwise learned and enlightened individuals, to whom the subject is new, who have not yet condescended to investigate the facts, and whose judgment, therefore, seems to be suspended between the very extraordinary nature of the truths elicited, and the strength of the evidence which has been adduced in support of their reality. This is natural enough: for it requires much time and study—a great deal of careful experiment, observation, and reflection—to enable us ultimately to arrive at just and satisfactory conclusions upon matters so obscure and intricate—so obnoxious to prejudice, and, at the same time, so remote from the fashionable pursuits and prevalent notions of the age.

Gentlemen:—The two principal points which appear to

have been established, in the most satisfactory manner, by the labours of the animal magnetists, are :

1st, The cure of various diseases, or, at least, of various diseased persons, by means of certain natural and apparently insignificant processes, either in combination with ordinary medicines, or without their use—that is, in other words, the existence of the *sanative magnetic action* ; and,

2dly, The reality of that peculiar constitutional affection, as a distinct pathological state of the organism, which has been denominated *somnambulism*, *somno-vigilia*, or the *ecstatic crisis*, with all its extraordinary phenomena ; and also, the possibility of producing this affection artificially, by means of the processes alluded to.

I. On the first of these points—the sanative efficacy of the magnetic processes—the evidence is so ample and so unambiguous, as, when well considered, must place the matter far beyond the reach of contradiction or controversy. To produce that evidence, or any considerable part of it, here, were impossible: it would fill many volumes. I shall, therefore, merely refer you to the various works mentioned in *Isis Revelata*. But you, Gentlemen, must have abundant opportunities of putting this matter to the most proper and most conclusive test, in the course of your medical practice. The treatment is obviously founded upon natural instinct; and it appears to have prevailed almost universally, in one form or another, from the most remote times. It has been shewn elsewhere, that the practice probably obtained in the Egyptian and Greek Temples of Health; and that, after the decline and fall of Paganism, it was, in all likelihood, transmitted down to the Christian monasteries, and may still be traced in certain superstitious practices which have survived to the present day. It has been more or less directly alluded to by many ancient and modern authors; and, in addition to the information for-

merly given upon this subject, I may embrace the present opportunity of directing your attention to the following quotation from the treatise of an old English medical writer, near the time of Greatrakes, which was recently pointed out to me by a learned and intelligent physician of this city.

“There are some,” says Dr GEORGE THOMSON (in his *Direct method of curing Chymically*, London, 1675), “who have such an idiosyncrasie, or peculiar constitution of body, that, upon contact, palpation, or stroking another living body, they change the texture of the same, alter a valetudinary, melancholy stamp, to a wholesome, cheerful image,” &c. A great deal more curious information upon this subject will be found in the works of the magnetic authors.

But, Gentlemen, I must here take the liberty of making one or two observations upon this branch of the subject, in order, if possible, to prevent nugatory cavilling. The physician either admits or rejects the zoo-magnetic agency. In the latter case, as all argument with him would be useless, we must just send him to study the evidence. If he admits the agency, and is only sceptical with regard to the sanative efficacy of the processes, he may naturally be expected to be much more accessible to reasoning, and open to conviction. Let him, then, but reflect upon the means which have led to the discovery of all the most important and most efficacious remedies. Setting aside the results of accident and instinct—of which last I shall have occasion to say something presently—Is it not clear that, as soon as it is admitted that, by means of the agency in question, remarkable changes can be produced upon the human organism—a fact acknowledged even by some of the sceptics in regard to many of the zoo-magnetic phenomena—all reasonable analogy directly leads to the presumption, *a priori*, that the same influence might be beneficially employed in modifying many of the morbid affections of the system?

Our celebrated countryman, the late Professor Dugald Stewart, when treating of this very subject, has justly remarked, that this is precisely the reasoning upon which medical inquirers are accustomed to proceed, when they discover any new substance possessed of *poisonous* qualities. "Is not this," he asks, "considered as a strong presumption, at least, that it is capable of being converted into a vigorous remedy, if its appropriate and specific disorder could only be traced; and has it not often happened, that the prosecution of this idea has multiplied the resources of the healing art?" Now, in order to make this presumption pass into certainty, it is, of course, necessary that we should institute experiments; and in following out the experimental method in this case, the decided efficacy of the magnetic treatment has been abundantly demonstrated by eminent medical practitioners, as well as by unprofessional persons, in thousands of instances. It has been proved that Animal Magnetism has a powerful influence on the nervous, muscular, and vascular systems—upon the organs of sensation, nutrition, circulation, and secretion; and Dr Rostan, the celebrated pathologist, seems disposed to think that it may also, perhaps, promote the interstitial absorption. By these means, it may be made to produce the most decidedly salutary effects upon the entire vital organism.

But when any remarkable cure is alleged to have been performed by means of Animal Magnetism, I am aware that the medical sceptic may immediately object, that this cure may have been the independent result of the conservative power of nature. This objection, founded, as it is, upon a mere possibility, does not perhaps admit of a positive and satisfactory answer. The same thing, however, may be said, and with equal reason, of all cures alleged to have been performed by means of ordinary medicines. And here we are reminded of the principle of the *vis conservatrix et medicatrix naturæ*, assumed, upon probable grounds, by

many eminent physicians; the *Enormon* of Hippocrates, the *Archæus* of Paracelsus and Van Helmont, the *Pneuma* of Stahl, the *Vis vite* of Hoffmann, &c. According to some medical authorities, indeed, it may be said, that, in one particular view, medicine cures nobody; the science and skill of the physician being principally directed towards the removal of those impediments which obstruct the free action of the conservative principle, when Nature herself is enabled to perform the cure. Animal Magnetism, therefore, stands in precisely the same situation with all other medicines; and, like that of every other remedy, its efficacy must be determined by experience and careful observation. The connection between cause and effect can be as easily and as distinctly recognised in the one case as in the other. In the case of the magnetic treatment, indeed, the *experimentum crucis* has been repeatedly made in the most decisive manner. When the treatment has been suspended, the patient relapsed; when recommenced, the morbid symptoms again disappeared. No intelligent person, therefore, who has attentively examined the evidence, can entertain any rational doubt of the sanative efficacy of Animal Magnetism, any more than he can seriously deny the therapeutic properties of the quinquina, of rhubarb, opium, digitalis, or of any other medicinal drug. Indeed, in consequence of its peculiar modes of affecting the system, the former will probably be found to be of far more general utility than any other medicine whatever. Moreover, it possesses this positive advantage over all other remedial means, that, when judiciously and skilfully administered, it has never, I believe, been found to prove injurious. It is quite a mistake, however, to suppose that this method is intended to supersede all other means of cure; a notion which appears to have excited no small degree of prejudice, apprehension, and alarm, in the minds of certain medical men, as if the whole of their science were in danger of being

overthrown. On the contrary, upon studying the works of the best practical magnetisers, it will be seen that the two methods are very frequently, if not always, combined. Animal Magnetism, indeed, if not always a principal remedy, will, in most cases, be found to be a powerful auxiliary.

“Magnetism,” says M. Foissac, “sometimes cures a patient without producing any other perceptible effect. In such cases, it is pretty common to ascribe the amendment solely to the force of nature. But if we give up magnetism, we soon find reason to repent it; and the return of the morbid symptoms compels us to acknowledge its real, although latent action, and to recommence the treatment. D’Eslon gives several examples of this in his *Observations sur le Magnetisme*, and in the *Supplement aux Rapports*.”

For the farther illustration of the principle in question, I presume it is unnecessary for me to make any apology for quoting the following case, reported by a competent and most respectable authority, Dr J. G. Passavant of Frankfort, on pages 42 and 43 of the second edition of his interesting work, *Untersuchungen über den Lebens magnetismus*, &c., published last year. I quote this case, not as being the most apposite, but because the volume happens to be now lying beside me.

A girl of thirteen years of age, the daughter of a mechanic, had been subject to convulsions from her sixth year, produced, as her father believed, by a violent fright. These convulsions gradually became converted into a perfect St Vitus’s dance, all the muscles moving irregularly, being withdrawn from the control of the will. Many different medicines had been administered by the physicians without effect, when the father applied to Dr Passavant, with the view of trying Animal Magnetism. The Doctor being too much occupied at the time to admit of his undertaking the magnetic cure in person, devolved the task upon the father,

under his own superintendence and direction. The girl was magnetised twice every day for half an hour, took no medicine, but drank some bottles of magnetised water, and had every second day a magnetised bath. At first the fits became milder, and they afterwards ceased altogether during the treatment. The intervals between the fits, after each sitting, subsequently became longer; and at length, after a three months' treatment, the patient was completely cured, without having exhibited any other symptom of the effects of magnetism; nor was there any remarkable change in her organic development, to which the cure could be ascribed.

After relating the foregoing case, Dr Passavant refers, in a note, to forty-four cases of magnetic cures reported by Dr LICHTENSTADT, partly effected without sleep, and all without somnambulism. Cases of the same description will be found in the works of Dr WIENHOLT, and other magnetic physicians. It is worthy of observation, too, that a great proportion of the magnetic cases reported by medical men, consist of such as had previously refused to yield to any of the ordinary methods of cure.

Gentlemen,—It has been sometimes objected to Animal Magnetism, that the doctrine is wild and visionary, because, in the present state of our knowledge, we are incapable of assigning any special principle to which the phenomena might be legitimately referred. But even if this were really the case, it is a defect which it shares in common with almost every other department of science. Newton, for example, is said to have demonstrated the principle of gravitation. But what do we know of the cause of gravitation? Is it not merely a word employed to express a general law of nature, under which are comprehended a certain class of particular facts? And is not the term Animal Magnetism used in the same sense, and for the same purpose, to denote a particular class of facts comprehended un-

der a general law—in short, a generalized fact? Probably all that can be said in most cases of the kind is this: *Latet causa, vis est notissima*. The doctrine, as it is sometimes not very accurately denominated, can only be invalidated by disproving the reality of the phenomena, or the existence of the principle of generalization. The name is but a name.

Gentlemen,—Our knowledge of nature, and of the powers and processes of nature, is generally acquired by slowly progressive steps. *Est quodam prodire tenus*—we advance a certain length, and are then perhaps arrested by to us apparently insuperable difficulties, which afterwards vanish before the more successful inquiries of some more acute or more fortunate genius, in a subsequent age. The experimental researches of our own times, however, seem destined to elucidate the nature, properties, and action, of many of those invisible, intangible, and imponderable agents, which, irreducible to the laws of any merely mechanical principle, evidently exert such a mighty dynamic influence over organic, no less than over inorganic nature. In the study of these influences, as already observed, so far as they concern the animal organism, we are still far behind our neighbours on the continent of Europe. The researches of the continental physiologists have already thrown much light on the nature and action of the vital forces, and the sympathies and susceptibilities of the organism; and a similar path has been recently pursued, with distinguished success certainly, *sed longo intervallo*, by some of our own countrymen, among whom Dr W. Philip deserves especial notice. The day perhaps is not now far distant, when the principles of Animal Magnetism will be at least as clearly ascertained, as those of the chemical, electric, and magnetic agents, and may, moreover, be referred to a similar source. We are not yet, probably, prepared to adopt, as a philosophical truth, the bold assumption of the poet, that

“ there is a magnet-like attraction,
Which links the viewless with the visible,
And pictures things unseen.”

Dare we entertain the hope that we shall ever be enabled to discover the grand *vinculum naturæ*, the delicate link, imperceptible by our grosser senses, to which Providence has assigned the important task of holding in connection the various and apparently heterogeneous phenomena of the universe—the material and the spiritual? He who should be bold enough to make such an attempt, might fail indeed of success; yet to him, perhaps, might be appropriately applied that which was poetically said of the adventurous charioteer of the solar steeds in fabulous times :

Magnis tamen excidit ausis.

II. After the ample evidence adduced in *Isis Revelata*, I should conceive it impossible for any sane person to doubt the reality of that peculiar constitutional affection, which has been called *somnambulism*, *somno-vigilia*, or *ecstasis*, with all its extraordinary phenomena; or the possibility of producing that affection and these phenomena artificially, by means of the magnetic processes. Of the natural crisis, examples may be discovered at almost all times, and amongst all nations: of the artificial, the works of the magnetic physicians afford numerous instances. It will not be denied, I should think, that the facts thus disclosed are of great importance to physiological science; nor can the physician hesitate to investigate the very remarkable and most interesting phenomena of the pathological state in question, without abandoning a most important and most useful department of professional study, for the prosecution of which the discoveries of Animal Magnetism present him with many facilities. Pathology has been said to be the crucible of physiology; and no examination of morbid structure, in the dead body, can supersede the necessity of investigating

the phenomena of life and action in animated beings. Indeed, a well-informed recent medical writer observes, that, “notwithstanding the many important additions to our knowledge of structural change, little, it may be safely asserted, has been done to advance our real knowledge of disease; it would appear indeed,” he adds, “that hitherto, in pathological researches, too much importance has been attached to the detection of sensible material changes, whilst the finer modifications of the vital processes, as manifested by altered sensation and action, and molecular constitution of the body, have been little attended to.” To this may be added, that it is not the mere mechanism of our frame that determines its operations, and its healthy or morbid action; these may also be affected by the energies depending upon sensibility, irritability, and the mental emotions.

Gentlemen,—Among the phenomena occasionally developed in somnambulism, whether natural or artificial, there is one which ought to be considered peculiarly valuable by physicians—I allude to the *instinct of Remedies*. There is probably no professional gentleman of extensive practice who has not, more or less frequently, observed this instinct, as manifested by some of his patients; although it does not appear to have attracted the attention it deserves, until after the discovery and investigation of the magnetic somnambulism. Several curious instances of the development of this faculty will be found in *Isis Revelata*; and many more might have been adduced, had not the author conceived that the thing must have been quite familiar to most physicians. The celebrated Dr Georget appears to have been deeply impressed with the great value of this discovery, in the case of the magnetic somnambulism, which he had himself verified in many instances. “I believe,” said that eminent physiologist, “that no perfect medicine can exist but that of the somnambulists, in all that relates to their own complaints, and that we may advantageously

avail ourselves of their admirable *instinct* in the case of other patients." In the works of the magnetic physicians, numerous instances will be found of the development of this singular instinct, as witnessed by practitioners of eminence, and successfully applied to the practical purposes of their profession.

But it is not the magnetic physicians alone who have observed and attested the occasional occurrence of this remarkable phenomenon. I confess that I cannot pretend to any very extensive medical reading; indeed, I have often of late had occasion to regret my deficiency in this respect; but the following gleanings may, perhaps, prove not altogether unacceptable to the profession.

Sick persons have a natural feeling of their diseased condition, but wanting a clear knowledge of the internal structure of their bodies, they are often incapable of giving a distinct and intelligible account of the cause of their morbid sensations. When their imaginations become excited, they sometimes express their painful feelings in such a figurative manner as may be mistaken for actual delirium. A certain Viscount Alexander, every night previous to an attack of pain in the kidneys, is said to have dreamt that he was eating something or other; and the more indigestible the imaginary food, the more violent was the pain. One night he dreamt that he had eaten some metallic substance, and his sufferings became almost intolerable. JUNKER had a patient, who, when any question was asked him, always answered by making some allusion to a certain night-utensil. He was afflicted with an affection of the kidneys, which occasioned a suppression of urine. MARCELLI DONATI relates that a man believed his body to be an extended drum-skin, and, as often as he touched it, he asked the persons around him whether they did not hear the sound. Some sort of tympany may have given rise to this fancy. The same author mentions, on the authority of VEGA, that a

certain patient was seized with a vehement inclination to swim, and conceived that his apartment was a lake. Having obtained permission to swim, he stretched himself upon the floor, and set to work; and after making great exertions, he stood upright, and said that he was now quite well, which was found to be the case. This man, probably, had an obscure feeling that he required some violent bodily exercise, and his fancy pointed out to him the above-mentioned means of cure. All this shews how important a matter it is for the physician to watch and study the indications of nature in disease, and to pay attention to even the most whimsical, and apparently most fanciful and frivolous notions of his patients. Most of the violent appetites of the sick are founded upon some such obscure feelings, mixed up with imagination, from which the attentive and skilful physician may frequently derive excellent remedial maxims. These fancies of the sick must not be regarded as mere follies. THOMAS BARTHOLINUS speaks of a patient who maintained that he had swallowed a nail, and he was cured by taking an emetic—a nail having been thrown into the basin in order to deceive him. This man must not be considered as an arrant fool. He felt an oppression in the stomach; his imagination suggested to him that he had swallowed a nail, and the physician could have devised no better means of relieving him than an emetic.

Nature sometimes points out to the sick the remedies best adapted to their particular disorders. Persons who have acidity in the stomach long for earthy and alkaline substances; others, in a fever, feel a strong desire to eat a salt herring, which they indulge, and are relieved. Plethoric persons dream of bleeding, &c. The same instinctive feeling is found, even more generally, in some of the lower animals. It may be considered as the utterance of that conservative principle which nature has implanted in all living beings, independently of reason; and it is frequently

manifested, in the most lively manner, in the ecstatic affections, in delirium, and in insanity. There are many instances of insane persons having given excellent hints to the doctor.

CICERO, in his treatise *De Divinatione* (lib. ii. sect. 66), relates of Alexander the Great, that when his friend Ptolemy lay in a dying state, in consequence of a wound he received in battle from a poisoned arrow, Alexander, who was sitting beside him, fell into a profound sleep, and dreamt that the serpent kept by his mother Olympias appeared to him, carrying a root in its mouth, and told where it grew, at no great distance, and that its efficacy was such that it would cure Ptolemy. The root was sought for, found, and administered; and it is said to have cured not only Ptolemy, but many other soldiers who had been wounded by similar arrows. Could we give full credit to this anecdote, it would present a curious instance of the magnetic *rapport*, combined with the remedial instinct.

An analogous and notable instance of the development of this instinct occurs in the case of the celebrated Melancthon, who relates of himself, that he was afflicted with a dangerous complaint in one of his eyes, and made use of many medicines without success. He dreamt one night, however, that he consulted a certain physician, who recommended the use of *Euphrasia*; and having followed this advice, he was cured in two days. See I. MANLIJ, *Loc. commun. collect. ex lectione Melancth.* Basil, 1563.

It frequently happens that patients take a longing for some particular species of food, which apparently could only have a hurtful effect, and which the physician, therefore, has strictly forbidden; yet the indulgence of this longing is almost always beneficial. The following curious observations, it is presumed, may be considered as authentic. They occur in a recent publication,—*Reminiscences*, by the Rev. R. POLWHELE.

“ In three memorable instances, Wolcot (whilst Warwick, an apothecary, stood astonished) allowed Dickenson, in a high fever, to take cold water—whence a profuse perspiration: and indulged me, in fever likewise, with a piece of roasted pig, for which I had expressed a strong desire (and it brought me to myself again); and made no objection to the gratifying of Miss Daniell (Mrs Napleton), who, her fever coming I suppose to a crisis, said ‘ nothing could do her good but lobster.’ A lobster was not to be had; but the remnant of a lobster, which had been thrown out on a dunghill, was brought to her by Wolcot’s own order, in almost a putrid state. Its very smell revived her,—its flavour more; and from that moment she fast recovered.”

In a well known work, even the cautious and sceptical CABANIS bears witness, from his own experience, to the fact of the occasional development of the instinct in question. His testimony is direct, unsuspecting, valuable, and, moreover, exceedingly curious and apposite. “ We sometimes see,” says he, “ in certain ecstatic and convulsive diseases, the sensitive organs become sensible to impressions which they did not perceive in their ordinary state, or even receive impressions foreign to the nature of man,”—in the normal state of the organism, it is presumed. “ I have repeatedly observed in women the most singular effects of the changes of which I speak. There are some of these patients who easily distinguish with the naked eye microscopic objects; others see quite clearly in the most profound obscurity, so as to guide themselves safely. There are some who follow the trace of persons like a dog, and recognise, by the smell, objects which have been used by these persons, or which they have merely touched.” Are not these just instances of what has been called the *magnetic rapport*. “ *I have seen,*” continues CABANIS, “ *some whose taste had acquired a peculiar delicacy, and who desired or knew how to select the aliments, and even the remedies, which appeared to be really useful to them, with a sagacity which, in general, we only ob-*

serve in the inferior animals. We see some who, during their paroxysms, are enabled to perceive in themselves certain crises which are preparing, and of which the speedy advent proves the accuracy of their sensation, or other organic modifications, attested by that of the pulse, and by signs still more certain."

—RAPPORTS DU PHYSIQUE ET DU MORAL DE L'HOMME, t. i. pp. 457-459.

Now, these facts, as already stated, are unquestionably of great physiological value, and deserve to be very seriously investigated, not as matters of mere curiosity, but with a view to their being made, as much as possible, available for professional purposes, and subservient to the improvement of medical science. It will be observed, that the phenomena in question occur most frequently in the ecstatic affections,—in the natural and in the magnetic somnambulism; and this circumstance renders the study of Animal Magnetism so important to the physician.

There is another curious and valuable fact, previously known, indeed, to a certain degree, but which has only lately been brought prominently forward, experimentally investigated, and put to medical uses, in consequence of the discoveries of Animal Magnetism. The fact here alluded to, is that partial or total organic insensibility, or impassibility, which occasionally takes place in somnambulism, and especially in the ecstatic crisis. While in these states, individuals have been severely pinched and pricked with pins; their eye-lashes have been burnt with candles; the loudest noises have been made close beside them, such as firing pistols, ringing bells, &c. Spanish snuff and volatile aromatics have been thrust up their nostrils; their bodies have been subjected to the burning of *moxa*,—nay, the most painful surgical operations have been performed upon them, without exciting the slightest apparent sensation. All these things have been witnessed and recorded by eminent physicians, and by other individuals of the most respectable character, whose veracity is unquestionable. Nay, pheno-

mena even more astonishing than any of these have been seriously related by grave and trust-worthy historians,—phenomena which, I am aware, would be at once scouted and ridiculed, as impossible and absurd, by all those who are ignorant of the curious facts disclosed by Animal Magnetism.

Gentlemen,—You will no doubt recollect the celebrated case of Madame Plantin, originally communicated by M. Cloquet to the Royal Academy of Medicine at Paris, and recorded by a committee of that learned body, in their late report on Animal Magnetism. You may also be aware of an analogous case reported by the Doctors Hamard and Oudet, and noticed, about twelve months ago, in the *Journal de Medecine et de Chirurgie*. Let me remind you, too, of what has been stated by Dr Georget, with regard to his own magnetic patients. “My somnambulists,” says he, “are so totally deprived of the sense of hearing, that the loudest noise, most unexpectedly produced, does not cause in them the slightest alarm. Thus a pistol-shot, a noisy bell, do not produce the smallest motion, or prevent them from continuing, without interruption, a conversation already commenced.” You will observe likewise, that Dr Rostan, and many other distinguished physicians, bear witness to the occurrence of the same phenomena. All this tends to prove that Animal Magnetism, so far from being a matter merely capable of gratifying an idle curiosity, and independently of its efficacy as a directly sanative process, may be otherwise employed with manifest advantage in medical practice.

CABANIS, in his work already referred to, has some pertinent observations upon this subject. “Let us here remark,” says he, “that the sensibility acts in the manner of a fluid, of which the total quantity is determined, and which, whenever it is thrown in greater abundance into one of its canals, diminishes proportionally in the others. This be-

comes very perceptible in all the violent affections, but especially in ecstasies, when the brain and some other sympathetic organs enjoy the greatest degree of energy and activity; while the faculties of sensation and motion, while life, in a word, appears to have abandoned all the rest of the system. In this violent state, fanatics have sometimes received with impunity grievous wounds, which, in their natural state, would have been mortal, or very dangerous; for the seriousness of those accidents which ensue from the action of bodies upon our organs, depends principally upon the sensibility of these last; and we see every day that what would be a violent poison for a healthy man, has scarcely any effect upon a sick person.—T. i. pp. 121, 122.

Upon this branch of the subject, I shall only add one other remark. It is well known to all practical physicians how exceedingly desirable a thing it is, in many cases of disease, to procure for the exhausted patient even a short period of repose,—a temporary respite from suffering. According to the method at present in use, this object, when deemed necessary, is attempted to be accomplished by means of narcotic drugs of one kind or another, which sometimes fail to produce the desired effects, and in many cases, may otherwise prove positively injurious. Now, there is this eminent advantage attending the magnetic sleep, or even the magnetic treatment without actual sleep, that, besides accomplishing, with almost equal certainty and with far greater effect, the object immediately in view, they are also in themselves restorative and highly salutary.

“ Non est melior Medicina homini, quam homo.”

PETRUS BLESENSIS.

Gentlemen,—I am aware that the present state of the medical profession in this country, is not very favourable to the cultivation of such studies as those I have been for some time endeavouring to urge upon its members. Besides the prevailing scepticism, and the general prejudice

that exists against the admission of any novel and uncommon facts, and the indisposition manifested towards the study of new systems of doctrine; most of our eminent physicians are probably too deeply engaged in professional practice, to be able to spare the requisite time for scientific investigation. I know not whether my own brethren, the lawyers, or my worthy friends, the doctors, considered as public bodies, be the most infected with bigotry, and the most averse from any, even the most useful innovation. Systems of law, and methods of practice, are hereditary amongst incorporations, as certain diseases are said to be in particular families; and wo betide the luckless wight who ventures to suggest the propriety or the necessity of a reform!

*Sey im Besitze—und du wohn'st im Recht,
Und heilig wird's die Menge dir bewahren.*

Be in possession—thou hast rightful holding,
And sacred will the many guard it for thee.

In science, as in other matters, the multitude are generally content blindly to follow their leaders,—*sequentes antecedentium gregem—pergentes, non qua eundum est, sed qua itur.*

But the general recognition, in this country, of the facts of Animal Magnetism, and of their scientific importance, may be considered as merely an affair of time. It required half a century upon the Continent; but if the subject were once seriously taken up by competent inquirers amongst ourselves, a much shorter period ought to suffice; because we have it in our power to avail ourselves of all the previous researches of the continental physiologists. In France and Germany, where the investigation hitherto has been principally carried on, the facts in question, I believe, are now generally recognised by philosophers, and reasoned upon, as authentic elements, in almost all physiological and psychological works. What is true, in this respect, upon the Continent, cannot be false in Great Britain. Science is

of no particular country, and acknowledges no geographical boundaries.

I must confess, however, that I am not very sanguine in my expectation of the speedy advancement of magnetic science in this country. There are too many old and inveterate prejudices to be eradicated—too much of the *vis inertiae* to be overcome—too many heavy bodies to be set in motion. But the force of truth is irresistible in the end; and when once fully discovered, it only requires to be clearly enunciated and vigorously pressed home. It is to you, Gentlemen, that this important subject must be committed. You cannot get rid of it:

Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.

The question is, Will you take it up yourselves, or allow it to fall into the hands of ignorant and improper persons? I am satisfied that, were two or three eminent individuals among your number to announce their conviction after adequate inquiry, their example would soon be followed by many respectable members of your profession. I must warn you, however, that for some time the avowal of a belief in Animal Magnetism may probably expose you to obloquy, misrepresentation, and even ridicule, in consequence of any patronage which, in your liberality, you may choose to bestow upon this interesting, although long proscribed subject of investigation. But I doubt not that you possess a sufficient portion of moral courage to enable you to look down upon all such dishonest dealings with pity, with contempt, or, which is best, with philosophical indifference; so that—

“Neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men
Shall e'er prevail against you,”

or discourage you from pursuing the path of honest, and honourable, and useful research. In times of ignorance, even the dullest jackass may safely take his clumsy fling at

Animal Magnetism, and the gaping bye-standers may indulge in a horse-laugh at his awkward drollery. But as soon as the light of knowledge becomes generally diffused, such unseemly performances will be no longer tolerated, and the names of the wretched performers, if any names they have, will be consigned to oblivion, unless they should happen to be wafted down to posterity in the sportive pages of some future philosophical *Dunciad*. Let us continue, then, undauntedly to prosecute our investigations, and to bring forward our ascertained facts; these may be ridiculed, indeed, for a time, but cannot be refuted, just because they are facts; and ridicule, in such circumstances, is a feeble and short-lived opponent.

With regard to my own labours, I stated at the outset that I considered myself merely as a pioneer; and as soon as I shall find a few respectable physicians seriously occupied with a candid examination of this subject, I shall conceive my mission to be at an end, and thereafter leave the task of expounding Animal Magnetism to individuals more competent, and in every way better qualified. In the meantime, I would repeat—INVESTIGATE—INVESTIGATE—INVESTIGATE! Devote the whole of your attention, in the first instance, to the facts alone, and avoid all hasty speculation. Premature theory,—the great besetting sin of Animal Magnetists,—has unquestionably retarded the general recognition of the phenomena. Permit me respectfully to remind you that, however new in this country, the subject in question has been cultivated upon the Continent during more than half a century, and that many valuable works have been written upon it, which are well deserving of your attention. Some preparatory study, indeed, I should consider absolutely necessary, before entering upon the practice of the art. Animal Magnetism has recently attracted considerable attention in London; but I regret to observe that some respectable individuals, after witnessing one or two

phenomena, immediately set about forming a theory to account for them. More harm than good must result from such a mode of proceeding; and of this, I am satisfied, all will be convinced the farther they pursue the investigation. Let us first endeavour to obtain possession of all the facts and analogies, and then generalise them. This I have attempted, although imperfectly, no doubt, in *Isis Revelata*; and it is probably all that can be done in the present state of our knowledge.

Gentlemen,—In a late No. of the *London Medical Gazette* (16th September 1837), I find an article entitled, *Fallacy of Animal Magnetism*, written with some talent certainly, but with more asperity. Prefixed is a motto from Cicero, intimating that it is allowable for the writer, as for all, to defend the dignity of the medical art, and that he will not eschew the task, provided he have an opportunity of being heard. A strange motto, indeed, in the circumstances of the case! Does this writer seriously believe that the medical art runs any risk of being degraded by attempting to enlarge its boundaries, and to multiply the resources of its professors? And does he really think that there is more difficulty and danger in opposing, than in supporting Animal Magnetism? I had supposed,—nay, I have experienced,—that the difficulties and the dangers lie quite upon the other side. The article itself, characterized as it is by ignorant hostility, merits little remark. The author seems disposed to get rid of all the facts, and to cut short all argument, by intimating his very courteous opinion that “the problem is a lie;” and in support of this opinion, he afterwards propounds sundry truisms about “the laws by which the propagation and modification of light and sound are governed,” such as, “that light cannot be transmitted through a brick wall,” &c. This writer evidently mistakes altogether the true nature of the problem in question, which does not relate to the ordinary laws of light and sound, but to the ex-

traordinary modifications of the sensibility, in certain pathological states of the organism, which have been observed to occur in hundreds of instances. It is somewhat strange that a medical man should have fallen into such a mistake. Moreover, this anonymous writer is evidently disposed to deny the benefit of a fair hearing to a subject, which, although he appears to be entirely ignorant of this, as of many other facts, has engaged the attention of many of the most eminent physicians and philosophers of Europe, during the last half century. His irrational hostility, therefore, can be of little moment.

Following the article in question, there is something purporting to be a Report on Animal Magnetism, made to the Royal Academy of Medicine in Paris, in the month of August last. When and by whom the commission was appointed is not mentioned ; but I do not hesitate to characterize the report itself, as given in the *Medical Gazette*, as one of the most monstrous pieces of glaring absurdity ever perpetrated under the abused name of science. The operator is said to have been a M. Berna, whose name I never before heard, but who is previously described in the *Medical Gazette*, as “an impudent charlatan,”—a very fit person truly to officiate upon such an occasion. Yet, for aught I know, M. Berna may be a very honest man. The whole *soi-disant* report, which does not appear to have been sanctioned by the operator, is infinitely disgusting, and utterly unworthy of notice, unless it were to expose the disgraceful ignorance and folly of the opponents of Animal Magnetism. And such is the trash which is now impudently brought forward, with a view to invalidate the testimony of such men as Wienholt, Gmelin, Reil, Treviranus, Sprengel, Autenrieth, Hufeland, Humboldt, Cloquet, Cuvier, Georget, Rostan,—whose scientific character the *Medical Gazette* vainly attempts to depreciate,—and hundreds of other competent and credible witnesses in all parts of Europe.

Alas for the dignity of the medical art, if it is to be defended by such discreditable means as these! Either the facts of Animal Magnetism have been already sufficiently substantiated, or medical men, however otherwise learned and respectable in point of character, are the most foolish and the most mendacious of living beings. I at least will not become a party to the gross libel upon the profession implied in the latter alternative, looking either at home or abroad.

But, gentlemen, I must solemnly protest against all such unseemly exhibitions as are got up for the purpose of displaying the phenomena of Animal Magnetism to the rude gaze of the multitude. They are calculated to do no good, and may be productive of much mischief.

Non tali auxilio—tempus eget.

It is needless to attempt to convince persons who are pre-determined not to be convinced. I should be sorry to be understood as applying these observations, in their full force, to the interesting experiments of Baron Dupotet, of whose talents, good sense, and integrity, as a practical magnetiser, I have long been aware. But the more strictly these experiments are confined to the profession, and the sooner all such public exhibitions are discontinued, the better. Let it never be forgotten, that Animal Magnetism, like all other remedial processes, ought to be practised only by the skilful, and for the benefit of the sick; and that it is sinful, and may be exceedingly dangerous, to prostitute the treatment for the gratification of a mere idle curiosity. Instead of continually running after the more extraordinary effects of these processes, with the view of dazzling the eyes of the uninitiated, we should be satisfied with carefully observing, and accurately reporting them, in those cases where they occasionally occur. An opposite conduct is at once childish and presumptuous; and by pursuing such a

course, that which might be rendered a mighty blessing to mankind may be perverted into a withering curse. The many hundred volumes already written on the subject upon the Continent, will afford ample information with regard to the principles and details of this method; while in the public hospitals, and in private practice, intelligent physicians may find abundant opportunities of testing the efficacy of the magnetic treatment, of witnessing all the most interesting phenomena, and of applying the knowledge they may acquire in subservience to the interests of science and of humanity.

I am, GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. C. COLQUHOUN.

POSTSCRIPT.

I find that, in a recent work on Physiology, Dr Elliotson of London has thought proper to make some pretty copious strictures upon *Isis Revelata*, after the mature deliberation of one year and a half. The natural serenity of his temper, indeed, appears to have been wonderfully discomposed by that publication; and he has mustered all the scanty resources of his science, sophistry, and powers of vituperation, in order to invalidate, or, at least, to discredit its most important statements, as well as to depreciate the researches of its author. Now, I really have not the smallest desire to quarrel with Dr Elliotson, the more especially as he has announced his general belief in the principles of Animal Magnetism, or, as he calls it, Mesmerism; although some reasons lead me to doubt whether the accession of this gentleman will prove of much value to the cause. There are some points, however, upon which, so long as he retains his present opinions—and he seems to congratulate himself upon his own obstinacy—he and I are not very likely to agree; and although his observations upon my book are not always expressed in the most polite terms imaginable, and he appears to have been labouring under considerable excitement,

it may, perhaps, be expected that I should embrace the first opportunity of taking some notice of his animadversions.

There seems to be a good deal of confusion in the Doctor's thoughts, and his style of writing, throughout, is exceedingly rambling ; but the principal charges he brings against me may be reduced to these three, *nonsense, credulity, and coarseness.*

1. *Nonsense.*—I am not a professional physician, and *Isis Revelata* was not addressed exclusively to medical men ; indeed, at the period it was written, I had almost abandoned all hope of producing any general impression upon the stubborn minds of the Doctors. What Dr Elliotson, therefore, is pleased to denominate *nonsense*, probably consists of those statements which were addressed, not to the profession in particular, but to the general reader ; and the public may happen to be of a different opinion from the critic. Dr Elliotson, no doubt, would have preferred a strictly medical work ; but, in that case—even had I felt myself competent to the task—my readers would probably have been few, and I wished, if possible, to interest the many. I may here observe, that some eminent professional gentlemen have considered the greatest merit of *Isis Revelata* to consist in what has most excited the spleen of Dr Elliotson, in its tendency to counteract that materialism, which, at present, constitutes the great *opprobrium* of English physiology. The Doctor must not be so vain as to imagine that every statement must necessarily be nonsense which he has not the capacity to comprehend, or that every fact must be false which he either cannot or will not see. He should really endeavour to get rid of some small portion, at least, of his superabundant self-esteem, and to acquire a little more respect for individuals who, it is just possible, with less pretension, may be quite as wise, or, perhaps—which would be no great miracle—even wiser than himself. Dr Elliotson, indeed, considers every thing nonsense which relates to the doctrine of a soul or spirit ; but in this respect, I trust, he is in a very small minority. I, on the contrary, humbly presume to hold that the doctrine in question is consonant to nature, to reason, and to revelation ; and, moreover, that the thesis, “ *Nullus in microcosmo spiritus, nullus in macrocosmo Deus,*” is capable of a strict demonstration. If Dr Elliotson means to apply the term *nonsense* to any of the philosophical speculations contained in *Isis Revelata*, I utterly deny his competency as a judge in such matters, and throw back the charge whence it came. I could very easily point out abundance of nonsense in his book on physiology but *cui bono* ? No intelligent person can be misled by it. I may add, on this head, that the Doctor, not very ingenuously, sometimes attri-

butes to me the opinions of others, which I never acknowledged as my own.

2. *Credulity*.—This from a phrenologist! *Risum tenetis!* For myself, I may say, that the principal facts I have advanced in my work were brought forward upon perfectly competent and credible authority, chiefly that of respectable medical men; and not only this, but I omitted no opportunity of making every possible inquiry into the character and credibility of the reporters, as well as into the circumstances in which the particular observations were made. If credulity, then, consists in giving credence to the testimony of competent and trustworthy witnesses—men of unimpeached and unimpeachable character, who had no conceivable motive to falsehood or misrepresentation; in that case, I confess myself credulous; but it is a credulity of which I am not at all ashamed. Indeed, I consider such a credulity as far more amiable, as well as philosophical, than the vulgar incredulity of an ignorant and obstinate scepticism. I do not hold, however, that medical men are alone capable of observing facts. A distinguished friend of mine, indeed, holds medical facts in great contempt, and with some reason; for it is too probable that they are often unwarrantably assumed to serve the temporary purposes of some particular hypothesis, and then carelessly copied from one author by others. But is Dr Elliotson of opinion that all the statements of his professional brethren are utterly worthless, when inconsistent with his own views—that his judgment is the only criterion of truth—and that he is the sole depository of all knowledge? Then might we justly exclaim, *Quantum est quod nescimus!*

3. *Coarseness*.—Where is it? From certain expressions which Dr Elliotson has thought proper to use in regard to myself and others, I assure him that I am far from considering his style of writing as a perfect pattern of delicacy and politeness. Like myself, it is true, he seems fond of story-telling; but some of his stories, besides being rather stale, are, assuredly, not of the most savoury description; and if brought forward as specimens of his wit, are certainly not very creditable to the taste of the author. But *de gustibus non disputandum*.—By the bye, the Doctor evidently does not know (as how should he?), that the tale he tells with so much apparent glee, respecting a certain imprudent or unfortunate Professor at Montpellier, involves a church-heresy upwards of a thousand years old (the imputing of miracles to magic), which, many centuries ago, St Austin, and other ecclesiastical writers, thought it worth their while to refute.

I must not omit to notice what Dr Elliotson is pleased to denomi-

nate a specimen of my "knowledge and mind." In a note to a passage in *Isis Revelata*, I had observed—following the opinion of many other philosophers and physiologists—that, "although we have good reason to believe that the brain is the seat or centre of the operations of the intellect, we have equally good reason to hold that the ganglionic system—the nerves and plexus of the chest and abdomen—is the primary seat of the passions and affections of the mind," &c., and that "any effect produced by these passions and emotions upon the brain, appears to be merely secondary or sympathetic." As instances, I referred to the emotions of love, hate, jealousy, joy, sorrow, anger, surprise, terror, &c. Now, hear the learned Doctor, "Shame makes the cheek blush; shame therefore has its primary seat in the cheeks!" Admirable reasoning! I must thank him, however, for an additional, and, indeed, one of the best possible illustrations of the proposition he attempts to controvert. Does this physiologist really hold that the brain is the elaboratory of the *blood*, as well as of the *mind*, and that the former is thence propelled into the cheeks in the emotion alluded to? I had, hitherto, been taught to believe that the *heart* was the centre of the sanguineous system, and that the heart was situated in the chest, or rather under the ribs; but, as it would appear, *nous avons changé tout cela*; and a phrenological professor of physiology is probably about to announce the important and heretofore undreamt of discovery, that the business of the circulation of the blood is actually carried on by the brain. Can Dr Elliotson really be so profoundly ignorant as not to be aware, that the opinion he presents as a specimen of my "knowledge and mind," has been held by many individuals far more distinguished in the world than either he or I are ever likely to be? Passing over others, has he never yet heard of a certain ancient philosopher called PLATO, or of a modern physiologist of the name of BICHAT? Is it necessary for me to refer to the opinion of an eminent countryman of our own? The learned and intelligent Dr Crichton, in his work on *Mental Derangement*, observes, that "the pleasurable and painful feelings which arise from mental causes are not felt in the mind, but in the body; they undulate about the heart and breast, producing great and remarkable changes there, the influence of which is often extended throughout the vascular and nervous parts of our whole frame." Has Dr Elliotson perused the physiological lectures of his ingenious professional brother, Dr M. Hall, lately published in the *Lancet*? The instance adduced by Dr Elliotson himself gives additional probability to the opinion he endeavours to ridicule; and the casual observation so ostentatiously referred to, as affording a specimen of my "knowledge and mind," has exposed a

beautiful sample of the blessed ignorance of certain very ambitious and self-conceited authors of ponderous volumes upon Physiology.

Tecum habita, et noris quam sit tibi curta supellex.

Dr Elliotson seems vastly annoyed because I reject Phrenology, and have expressed determined hostility to Materialism. To the former hallucination I was once a little disposed ; but time and research ultimately dispelled the illusion :

“Blest be the day I ’scaped the wrangling crew.”

I oppose the doctrine of Materialism, because I believe it to be false in itself, and, moreover, positively mischievous—inasmuch as it can be proved to demonstration that, when consistently pursued into its legitimate consequences, it must inevitably tear up all morality and all religion by the roots. I do not go so far as to say that *all* materialists are practical atheists, but only that they are wretchedly bad reasoners: indeed, they are only rescued from the greatest of follies by the grossest incapacity. Dr Elliotson speaks of my enthusiasm, which he, of course, ridicules. It appears to me that he is himself in the situation of a man who is destitute of a particular sense, and of its corresponding feelings. He may remind us of the fox in the fable, who had unfortunately lost his own tail, and advised all his friends to get rid of theirs, as an unnecessary and unseemly appendage. Madame de Stael observes, that *l’enthousiasme en tout genre est ridicule pour ceux qui ne l’éprouvent pas. La poésie, le devouement, l’amour, la religion, ont le meme origine ; et il y a des hommes, aux yeux des quels ces sentimens sont de la folie.* It were more than useless to attempt to lecture a man born blind upon the beauty of colours.

Dr Elliotson, indeed, appears desirous of throwing his sceptical ridicule upon all attempts to multiply the natural proofs of the immateriality and independence of the human soul. This is an obvious consequence of his stubborn and irrational materialism. I have no hope that any evidence, even the most irrefragable, will make the slightest impression upon his obstinate and prejudiced mind. There are others, however, whose candour may induce them to attach some considerable weight to the opinion of an author, whose philosophical talents and accuracy of research have procured for him a distinguished reputation upon the Continent.

Dr Passavant, in the preface to the second edition of his *Untersuchungen über den Lebens magnetismus und das Hellsehen*, observes, that “he who has had an opportunity of frequently and carefully examin-

ing the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, must have had the conviction forced upon him, that they stand in the most intimate connection with the highest powers of the human soul ; and that an individual, in a state of pure ecstasy, is enabled to foresee future events with precision, and distinctly to recognise distant objects, manifestly affords decisive evidence of the immaterial nature of the soul, which, even in this life, is sometimes emancipated from the fetters of the material organization."

Dr Passavant farther mentions, that the absurd and unphilosophical manner in which the phenomena of Zoo-magnetism were frequently treated and abused, would have completely disgusted him with the subject, had he not repeatedly witnessed the appearance of *clairvoyance* in its purest forms.

In proceeding with his strictures upon *Isis Revelata* and its author, the Doctor gradually loses all control over his passions and emotions, and his excitement at length becomes exalted into absolute phrenzy. Here he calls forth our commiseration. He assumes the most grotesque airs, and throws himself into the most ludicrously contorted attitudes. There are many natural and magnetic somnambulists, it is said, who, in their crises, appear greatly more placid and composed than in their ordinary state. Their intellectual and moral faculties seem to acquire additional energy and acuteness, while their discourse manifests unusual clearness and elevation of thought and purity of language. The Doctor's paroxysm is evidently altogether of a different character or type, and rather presents to our view the hideous features and frightful convulsions of the Pythoness of old, as described by the poet:—

*At Phoebi nondum patiens, immanis in antro
Bacchatur rates, magnum si pectore possit
Excusisse deum : tanto magis ille fatigat
Os rabidum, fera corda domans, fingitque premedo.*

He actually slavers, and foams, and frothes at the mouth, talks quite incoherently, in language which one might conceive to have been culled out of the *Siang Dictionary* ;

Magna vocis boat—celeri cursu verba fatigat ;

his meaningless jargon flows from him incessantly in one continuous turbid torrent ; his harsh and unintelligible vocables—probably belonging to the unknown tongues—dance about, hither and thither, in all the mazes—not, indeed, of metaphorical, but of mad confusion.

“ Oh, that a man should put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains !” His whole faculties—at no time of the most brilliant order—become totally eclipsed during the paroxysm ; and he presents a most melancholy and truly deplorable spectacle of entire moral destitution and intellectual annihilation,—*a body without a soul.*

In some of his more tranquil moods, which, however, are of very rare occurrence, he raves about old divines, old wives, and young nursery-maids, towards all of whom he seems to entertain a most inveterate magnetic antipathy ; he appears desirous of laying claim to the invention of Phrenology, and expresses some hopes of becoming the discoverer of Animal Magnetism. And he, too, it would appear, has also his peculiar *beatific visions*, outseeing, indeed, even the far-famed *Seherin von Prevorst*. He is elevated and transported to the third heaven—sees himself there *bodily*—the angels there *bodily*—Jesus Christ there *bodily*,—nay, even God the Father there *bodily*,—all solid and material flesh, blood, and bones. *Horresco referens !* But

“ Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

The *Diagnosis* of the Doctor's disorder is attended with little difficulty. It seems to be just a very violent access of that disease, which will be found designated in the Nosologies by the name of *Pneumatophobia*, of which an old psychological writer has left us the following admirable and very accurate description :

After remarking that “ physicians speak of a certain disease or madness called *hydrophobia*, the symptoms of those that have been bitten by a mad dog, which makes them have a monstrous antipathy to water ;” so, he continues, there are others who “ are possessed with a certain kind of madness, that may be called *Pneumatophobia*, that makes them have an irrational but desperate abhorrence from all spirits or incorporeal substances ; they being acted, at the same time, with an *Hylomania*, whereby they madly dote upon matter, and devoutly worship it as the only *numen*.”—CUDWORTH.

There can be no doubt, then, that the Doctor's disease is *pneumatophobia*, combined with *hylomania*.

On the best medical treatment for such a complicated complaint it is not quite so easy to decide. The *verba et voces*, which, according to the Roman physician, sometimes prove so efficacious in the mitigation of pain and the cure of disease, would hardly avail in the present instance ; nor should I be disposed to place much reliance even on the *certa piacula*, which the same writer describes as so recreative, af-

ter perusing a little book—my own, for example—three times over, with pure magnetic intention :

Sunt verba et voces quibus hunc lenire dolorem

Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem.

Sunt certa piacula, quae te

Ter pure lecto poterint recreare libello.

Such lenitives could scarcely be expected to succeed in a case of such desperate violence and obstinacy. Perhaps a course of hellebore might prove more effectual, especially if accompanied with copious phlebotomy, and emollient cataplasms applied to certain prodigiously overgrown bumps towards the posterior summit of the cranium. Above all things, *Isis Revelata* must be carefully avoided, as being much too powerful in its operation upon the *nervous system* of the patient—a single pill having already proved to be an over dose. Indeed, it seems to have produced a somewhat similar, but infinitely more violent effect upon Dr Elliotson than the aconite did upon Van Helmont. His attendants too, must be aware of *touching the raw*. The patient was heard to mutter something about this in one of his paroxysms ; and, so far as could be gathered from his incoherent expressions, he seemed to feel it intolerably painful. *Haeret lateri lethalis arundo*. But—best of all—perhaps our excellent friend Baron Dupotet might be induced to undertake the cure. The Doctor has evidently been heretofore too much conversant with the *phrenological manipulations* ; let him now try the *magnetic*. Never could the Baron have a better opportunity for displaying the resources and the efficacy of his art. Besides, let him think of the *eclat* of restoring to perfect health and tranquillity of mind one of the most profound, and most modest, and *sweetest tempered* of our modern professors of physiology.

I shall conclude these observations with another “ old wives’ story.” It must not, however, be told to Dr Elliotson, not even in a lucid interval, lest it might peradventure occasion a relapse, and aggravate the symptoms of his malady. Dr GEORGET was an eminent physiologist of Paris, and throughout the greater part of his career, a determined and obstinate materialist. GEORGET died too early perhaps for the interests of science, but he lived long enough to emancipate himself from the sophistry of his former opinions ; and in his last will and testament, he paid a striking and valuable homage to the truth. His expressions are very remarkable. “ I cannot,” says the dying man, “ I cannot terminate this document, without adding an important declaration. In 1821, in my work on the *Physiology of the Nervous Sys-*

tem, I boldly professed materialism," &c. "Scarcely had I given that work to the world, when new meditations on a very extraordinary phenomenon—SOMNAMBULISM—no longer permitted me to doubt the existence, within and without us, of an intelligent principle, altogether different from material existences. Let it be, if you please, the SOUL and God; I have, in regard to this, a profound conviction, based upon facts which I believe to be incontestable. This declaration will not see the light, until there can be no longer any doubt of its sincerity, or any suspicion of my intentions. Should I not publish it myself, I earnestly entreat those persons who may take notice of it, at the opening of this testament, to give it all possible publicity."

I now turn, with pleasure, from Dr Elliotson to a gentleman of a very different calibre of mind,—to Dr Prichard of Bristol, a gentleman of unquestionable talent, learning, and research, whose able and interesting treatise on *Insanity* has only recently come under my attention. Even Dr Prichard, however, with all his candour and liberality, must be allowed to be a little hasty, at least, in some of his conclusions relative to Animal Magnetism; and I know that he will excuse the liberty I take—upon almost any other subject I might call it presumption—in offering a few observations upon his strictures. Nobody can know better than he, that it is at all times much easier to condemn a system at once, upon an insufficient acquaintance with its facts and principles, than to appreciate it justly, after full and adequate inquiry. The author, therefore, would humbly recommend to that very eminent physician a more profound investigation of these facts and principles, before he again pronounces Animal Magnetism to be "a very wild speculation." LAPLACE did not think so; CUVIER did not so appreciate it; GEORGET, "a man of most acute penetration," was not of that opinion; WIENHOLT, GMELIN, REIL, TREVIRANUS, HUFELAND, HUMBOLDT, SPRENGEL, BRANDIS, KIESER, ESCHENMEYER, NASSE, AUTENRIETH, CLOQUET, ROSTAN, "the celebrated pathologist," HUSSON, ANDRAL, FOISSAC, FILASSIER, and hundreds of the most eminent and intelligent physicians and philosophers upon the Continent, have publicly avowed a totally opposite conviction; and assuredly these distinguished individuals,—distinguished, too, in a remarkable degree, for their diligent, ingenious, and successful experimental researches, and having a competent practical knowledge of the subject in question,—were not very likely to give their countenance to wild and visionary doctrines. Moreover, the Royal Academy of Sciences at Berlin, and the Royal Academy of Medicine at Paris, have recognised the reality of many of the pheno-

mena of Animal Magnetism ; a magnetic clinic has long been established in the former of these cities ; nay, a committee of the last-mentioned learned body has even gone so far as to recommend that this "very wild" doctrine should actually "be allowed a place within the circle of the medical sciences." Is Dr Prichard prepared to maintain that all these eminent individuals, as well as all, or at least a majority of the members of these learned bodies, are wild visionaries ? Truly may it be said, that the wildness of scepticism equals, if it does not surpass, the wildness of belief. Oliver Cromwell's porter is said to have expressed an opinion that either he himself was mad, or that all the rest of the world were mad. Now, as he was perfectly satisfied that he himself was not mad, it necessarily followed, according to him, that all the rest of the world were mad,—a most logical and legitimate conclusion ! Is Dr Prichard aware that, at present upon the Continent, the sceptics in regard to Animal Magnetism, among the learned, are in a very small minority ; and that the scepticism of that minority is now very feebly expressed ?

Dr Prichard is disposed to ascribe the phenomena of Animal Magnetism to the influence of the imagination, laying considerable stress upon the opinion of Dr Bertrand, in preference to that of Cuvier, Georget, Hufeland, Humboldt, Rostan, and almost all the most eminent of the continental physiologists. As this is a mere matter of theory, the author might allow it to pass unnoticed : it can in no degree affect the reality of the facts. But it is rather amusing to observe how prejudice and prepossession frequently lead otherwise intelligent persons to catch at a straw for support, when attempting to bolster up an untenable hypothesis. Of all the individuals practically acquainted with Animal Magnetism, the late Dr Bertrand, in his day, stood almost if not entirely alone in ascribing the effects in question to the imagination. But although, in his published works, Dr Bertrand certainly expressed such an opinion, it is believed that, shortly before his death, he became nearly, if not wholly, convinced of his error, in consequence of witnessing the numerous and decisive experiments which were made by Dr Georget and others in the Parisian hospitals. With regard to the performances of the Abbé Faria, to which Dr Prichard alludes, they may be much more satisfactorily explained upon the principles of Animal Magnetism, than upon the imagination theory ; and there are many magnetic cases which cannot by any means be tortured into such a shape as to fit the Procrustean bed of the latter hypothesis. Count Segur and others have well observed, that the advocates of this theory have never yet given such a definition of this extraordinary

power of the imagination, as would comprehend the peculiar phenomena. Has Dr Prichard ever discovered that the most effectual method of setting his patients asleep is to excite their imagination? Or, will it be said that the magnetic patients only imagine that they are asleep? for sleep, real or apparent, is one of the most ordinary effects of the processes. Moreover, the Abbé Faria did not *confessedly* operate through the imagination of his patients. This is just begging the question. Will any person maintain that Greatrakes, Gassner, Mesmer, Wienholt, Puysegur, Georget, Deleuze, Rostan, Ferrus, Filassier, &c. operated through the imagination of their patients? Does Dr Prichard attach no weight to the decided opinion of Cuvier?

In dealing with somnambulism, I regret to be obliged to observe that Dr Prichard does not appear to have proceeded altogether fairly. He seems disposed to throw entirely out of view all those cases "that have been brought forward by professed supporters of Animal Magnetism," or that "occurred in places where that practice was an object of interest." Now, it is well known that somnambulism never was an object of much general attention, until after the discoveries of Animal Magnetism, when the subject naturally became of more interest, and, consequently, the phenomena were more carefully observed, and more scientifically investigated. Previously to that period, only such phenomena were attended to as might happen to be accidentally manifested in a few occasional instances of the natural or spontaneous crisis, and scarcely any attempts were made to classify and generalize the facts. Dr Prichard, therefore, proposes to throw aside the very best and most authentic portion of the evidence, and to admit only that which had been fortuitously obtained by merely groping in the dark. Such a mode of proceeding, in the case of scientific inquiries, appears to the author at least to be quite unprecedented in the history of philosophy. If engaged in illustrating the principles of chemistry or electricity, would the learned Doctor, in the same manner, go back fifty or an hundred years, and throw out of view all that had been done for these sciences in more recent times, because they had become objects of greater interest, and consequently been more fully investigated? It is quite impossible to conceive, that such a man as Dr Prichard should be so illiberal, as to wish to insinuate that all those intelligent, upright, and honourable individuals, who have devoted themselves to the experimental study of Animal Magnetism and Somnambulism—several of whom had been eulogised by himself—had, in this particular instance, condescended to become knaves and impostors, and thereby rendered themselves utterly unworthy of credit. And in investi-

gating the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, if the testimony be otherwise unsuspecting, why should a different method be adopted from that which is pursued in the other departments of science?

The author may here observe, by-the-by, that he has generally perceived amongst our medical writers, even the most able of them, a very considerable deficiency in the talent of collecting, weighing, and appreciating evidence. Their materials are often abundant, but they seem for the most part incapable of making a proper use of them; and they are frequently carried off the straight-forward path, unconsciously no doubt, in consequence of some lurking prejudice, or of some preconceived opinion. Upon the subject of Somnambulism—natural and artificial—the author must take the liberty of referring to *Isis Revelata*. Many more instances than are there given might have been adduced; but he conceived that he had done enough to satisfy every reasonable mind, and he was unwilling to overload the case.

Dr Prichard is pleased to observe, that the *doctrine* of Animal Magnetism “soars so far above the region of observation and experiment, that it cannot be subjected to proof.” Now, the author does not very well understand what is meant by the *doctrine* of Animal Magnetism; but if this term is intended to apply to the conclusions deducible from the facts, he regrets to find this very learned physician betraying so much ignorance of the subject he has undertaken to examine; for it may be affirmed, without hesitation, that the very reverse of his proposition is the truth. The doctrine in question, when considered apart from those theoretical views in which some of its followers have occasionally indulged, is entirely founded upon observation and experiment, and without these it has not a leg to stand upon. Accordingly, it is to observation and experiment that its supporters constantly appeal, and to which they are continually inviting their opponents. Let any one attentively peruse the writings of Mesmer, D’Eslon, Tardy de Montravel, Puysegur, Wienholt, Gmelin, Heinecken, Hufeland, Kluge, Deleuze, Dupotet, Foissac, &c. Every one of the most eminent advocates of Animal Magnetism, it is believed, without a single exception, was originally a determined sceptic, until conviction was ultimately forced upon him by observation and experiment. Has Dr Prichard carefully considered the best scientific treatises upon this subject, in connection with the physiology of the nervous system, and the pathology of the human organism? Has he made or witnessed any experiments? If he has done so—and until he has he ought to be more reserved in his opinions—he cannot fail to have perceived that the magnetists have implicitly followed the philosophical counsel

of Lord Bacon. They have carefully interrogated Nature, and faithfully recorded her answers. The proofs have rapidly accumulated during the last fifty years, and they have already satisfied every intelligent, competent, and candid inquirer.

In concluding these observations, the author must be permitted to express his high and unfeigned respect for the distinguished talents of Dr Prichard—a gentleman whose opinions in general are understood to carry great weight with the profession, a weight to which, no doubt, they are well entitled. His sentiments upon the present occasion, indeed, have been rather too hastily pronounced; but he possesses great candour of mind, combined with a felicitous ardour in the investigation of truth; and when he shall have divested himself of every particle of prejudice, and pushed his impartial researches a little farther in the right way, it is hoped that, ere long, he will be found enrolled—along with his eminent professional brethren, Cuvier, Hufeland, Humboldt, Georget, Cloquet, Rostan, Husson, &c.—among the ranks of the intelligent and rational converts to Animal Magnetism.—*Quod sit faustum, felixque!*

I regret to find that the *Edinburgh Review* still persists in its ignorant and irrational hostility to Animal Magnetism. It never, indeed, attempts to grapple manfully and honestly with the subject, but seizes every opportunity of aiming an impotent bye-blow at truths with which it is just about as well acquainted as with the geography of the moon.

In the 132d Number of that Journal, (page 90), the writer of a paper on Lord Bacon makes the following observations:—

“ Though every body is constantly performing the process described in the second book of the *Novum Organum*, some men perform it well, and some perform it ill. Some are led by it to truth, and some to error. It led Franklin to discover the nature of lightning. It led thousands, who had less brains than Franklin, to believe in Animal Magnetism. But this was not because Franklin went through the process described by Bacon, and the *dupes* of Mesmer through a different process,” &c. What follows appears to me to be pure nonsense.

Now, the author has no opportunity of weighing or measuring the brains of this writer; but he apprehends that some strange hallucination must occupy the head of that man, who can look upon CUVIER, GEORGET, CLOQUET, and the many other eminent individuals who, during the last fifty or sixty years, have become experimentally con-

vinced of the reality of the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, as the *dupes* of Mesmer; and who, moreover, leaves it to be inferred that he considers the philosophy of Bacon to be hostile to the observation, classification, and generalization, of such facts as obtrude themselves upon our senses. For my own part, I readily subscribe to the *dictum* of Bonnet, which Bacon himself could not have disapproved: *Shew me the facts; shew me the obvious conclusion deducible from these facts; —AND THERE IS MY PHILOSOPHY.*

J. C. C.

Lately published by the Author,

ISIS REVELATA; *An Inquiry into the Origin, Progress, and Present State of Animal Magnetism.* Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart. London: Simpkin & Marshall.

This work contains the most ample details hitherto published on the history and phenomena of Animal Magnetism; as also the largest collection of cases of the natural and the magnetic Somnambulism.

PRINTED BY NEILL & CO. OLD FISHMARKET, EDINBURGH.