

audacity of your pretension. "*Toujours l'audace*" is the legend of every impostor who wins. It was better than a play to see grave clergymen, lawyers, and other prominent citizens file into the office of a morning to have the solemn old humbug put his magnetic paw upon their heads. Among his patrons were prominent public men, and the Governor of the State himself. The Governor urged me to go to him, because, as he said, the man talked most rationally.

Meeting "Doctor" X. one day in a public library, I sought to hear his theory of healing. He expounded it almost in these words:

"I put my hand upon the patient's head, and bring the sensorium of my brain into contact with the sensorium of the patient's brain. Then I send a subtle current of etherium all over the patient's system, stimulating all his organs into activity. Then I make my examination. I do not want the patient to tell me anything about his symptoms—symptoms are apt to mislead. But I begin with the upper lobe of the brain; if I find that all right, I proceed to the middle lobe; then the lower lobe, or cerebellum; and if I find a coagulation of blood at the top of the spinal cord, I know that the patient has epilepsy, and so on."

A Jew by the name of Quohn was my neighbor. He was a merry-hearted fellow, in spite of the intolerable agony of eighteen years of asthma, which a little later caused his death. He went to see Doctor X., of course, and the exertion of climbing the doctor's steps set him a-wheezing like the steam-engine at a blast-furnace. Placing his hand on Mr. Quohn's head, the wise doctor pronounced the patient to be suffering from asthma. This was a remarkable token of skill, and the patient suffered himself to come under the doctor's hand for five minutes a day during the next five or six weeks, at fifty cents each time. At last, finding his asthma speedily grow-

ing worse, he gave over, laughing merrily at his own stupidity.

"I t'ink," he said to me one day, "t'at Doctor X. has cot a coot teal of magnetic power."

"What makes you think so?" I asked.

"How could he traw eighteen tollars and a half out of my pocket if he hadn't?" he gasped.

Whenever I speak or write of any manifestation of superstition or ignorance in the West, I am sure to meet some eastern man who speaks deprecatingly of western barbarism, as though any one section of the country held a monopoly of ignorance and gullibility. Such a one has only to read the advertisements of clairvoyants in the New York papers to see how many people, in what is called "society," go to see seventh daughters of seventh daughters, or wonderful astrologers.

During the first year that I was in New York, I was talking one day to a prominent journalist. He was speaking highly of a clairvoyant doctor in the West to whom he was about to forward a lock of hair of one of the most celebrated clergymen of the metropolis. It seems that this clairvoyant physician could tell the disease and prescribe medicines by means of a lock of hair. My friend proceeded to mention that the wife of a certain New Englander, of world-wide fame, had been ill a long time, and that at his suggestion a lock of her hair had been mailed to this great clairvoyant, who had complained that the hair was not cut off close enough to the head. A second lock of hair, cut closer, served the purpose, and brought a correct diagnosis and a beneficial prescription.

When this recital was ended, I broke out into some skeptical ravings about the absurdity of all this, finally saying:

"Why, that's as bad as old Doctor X., whom I used to know at ——."

"Doctor X. of ——?" responded my friend; "why, that's the very man!"