

rigidly adequate to it, and arrests the muscles exactly in the position which one gives to them. Benedikt notes, concerning this point, that according to the researches of Volkmann the contractile capacity of muscle augments or diminishes according as it is shortened or elongated by traction." Evidently, we think, M. Jaccoud has thrown much light on the pathology of the symptoms of catalepsy; but as he says, the causation of the malady is yet obscure;—or, how are produced those opposed states of the cerebral and spinal centres, and why are the symptoms limited to the muscles of animal life?

Referring again to the cataleptic condition associated with the hypnotic state, we ask what changes take place in the system, which by the simple raising of an eyelid effect the change into what M. Jaccoud says is, one of increased spontaneous and reflex tonicity?

First, then, in hypnotism the first of Jaccoud's cataleptic postulates is present, viz., the suspension of cerebral operations and their external manifestations. How has it been possible for light to produce all these changes? We have already noted the hyper-excitability of the muscular nerves present in hypnotism, causing muscular contractions when subject to the slightest irritation. We have further supposed that light has been the excitant or irritant inducing sleep with cerebral force in abeyance. Again we must remember the muscular relaxation taking place when hypnotism is induced. Evidently then our assumed nerve spasm has here passed off. But on opening the eye of the patient the excitant is again present with cerebral operations wholly in abeyance; hence we may suppose that the irritant affecting the optic nerve not only renews the spasm previously present and setting out from the sympathetic nerve cells residing in the medulla oblongata, thereby not only making the cerebro-spinal ataxia more complete, but also as a consequence leaving the spinal cord perfectly separated from cerebral influence; and, moreover, having an irritant in the form of light constantly producing a central influence upon it, we have it held in a state accurately defined by M. Jaccoud as *innervation de stabilité*.

But, gentlemen, our already too long paper must be brought to a close. These hypotheses and suggestions are only made by us as possible explanations of a series of phenomena both strange and unusual. It will indeed afford us a real pleasure when advancing medical science will have rescued many of these questions from the mists still enveloping them, and when the pure light of day will be