

have been put in possession of resources which actually exist—that is all. The right doctor is found, the remedies are found, and the patient recovers, and it has been through prayer. Had we not been put in the right track, we might have blundered and failed; and remember, if there is any power leading *us* to the right people, the same power may act upon *them* to bring them to us. I opine that the discovery of doctors and remedies may be more providential than some of us think.

212. But I will go further; and here those who have followed me with difficulty will probably leave me out in the cold altogether. I will say that I think it not unlikely that in a divinely constituted system of means to ends such as we see around us, there may be some provision for a direct healing agency similar to that of magnetism. Some of you may know how the passes of some one gifted with magnetic power, or in any way found to be in a certain magnetic rapport with another, passes, I say, made with the hand over the affected part, will alleviate pain. Headache can often be taken away, and it is a power very easily verified. There will usually be found in every family one or more who possess it in a limited degree, and you can test it quite sufficiently with headaches. If *one* has no effect, let another try, and so on. So far from this being mere imagination, a relative of my own, who died of a mortal internal complaint, which all day kept him in great agony, used to have a magnetizer every day, and for about two hours, without always sleeping, he enjoyed perfect freedom from pain during his passes; and previous to the introduction of chloroform, a similar practice was commonly adopted as an anæsthetic under which operations were performed without pain. Of course chloroform as an anæsthetic, being much quicker and more certain, has for a time driven animal magnetism out of the field. Still I think that many legends concerning the healing power of saints, as also many cures really wrought by irregular practitioners in our own day—the late Harrup of Brighton, for instance, or the Baron du Potet, still living in Paris [1874], may be attributed to the possession of some real magnetic power of healing.

213. What is that power? It is an imponderable, it is on the border land, which, as we have seen, may fitly form the point of union or

contact between intelligence out of the body and intelligence in the body: and it is at this point that the thought dawns upon us of a direct magnetism, or healing power of some kind, coming to man from a supersensuous sphere. If in prayer he brings himself on to a spiritual plane, it becomes possible, according to the divine order and harmony of satisfied conditions, that he shall be reached by direct curative powers of an occult or hidden nature; yet not of a nature quite outside all our experiences, nay, of a nature with which we are already in part familiar through such magnetic healings as I have referred to.

214. If this be so, we have a presumptive explanation of those sudden recoveries, of those strange turns for health, that constantly baffle our doctors; if there are cases when the doctor says, 'I cannot see why that man should have died,' he may still oftener say, 'I cannot see why that man should have got well.' There was a man in Edinburgh, whom the celebrated Abernethy would never notice or speak to. 'I attended him, I know his case, and he ought to have been dead,' said the doctor. The man got well, but the great physician cut him in disgust.

215. A great deal of (I think) unseemly anger or merriment was caused a short time ago by an eminent surgeon, who suggested that two wards in a hospital should be set aside to test prayer. All the churches and chapels were to pray for one ward and not for the other, and then it was said we should see what effect prayer had upon disease. The religious world was in a great rage, but it is not easy to see why people who doubtless approve of the test put by Elijah—requiring the true God to answer by fire—should be angry at a somewhat similar test being suggested to convince people that prayer is as directly efficacious as ever. Professors Tyndall and Huxley would be quite as fit and proper subjects for conversion as the Baal worshippers on Mount Carmel. But, in truth, the suggestion was probably understood to be a sort of flippant skit upon a question of sacred importance to many, and I do not say that as such it was unfairly treated with a certain measure of contempt.

216. Yet personally I cannot but feel that such a taste would be either unfair or unwise, unless a great deal more than mere praying