

the physical. The vital (pranic) forces of that plane are readily governed and regulated by physical or pranic means. But just as soon as the forces of the next succeeding planes, or when still higher mental complications are introduced, complex reactions are set up which are always attended with evil consequences. When the selfish element of collecting fees for such treatment is added a further evil arises. This question of money and reward, recognised in the church as simony, is the reason of the still partially surviving custom among physicians in Europe, where medical etiquette prevented a doctor from rendering an account. The true mesmerist, one who is skillful in the control and regulation of the vital forces, will never charge for his services. The ignorance of the hypnotists and mental healers, the Christian Scientists and faith curers, who in addition to exercising astral and psychic forces on the vital or pranic plane, accept large fees for their "operations" and "demonstrations," will not justify them before that Law of Retribution whose impersonality ensures the exact and just equivalent for its violation.

The ordinary citizen finds it difficult to understand a jargon of occultism which requires terms like astral, pranic, psychic, and so on to make itself intelligible. Madame Blavatsky compared the lower planes of existence to the four elements, carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen, and by associating these with the physical, astral or form, pranic or vital, and psychic planes, even the wayfaring man should have little difficulty. The physical or carbon plane is simply the vehicle of all the others. Nitrogen, the astral, is like a sponge which supplies form to the physical, and is soaked with oxygen, as a sponge absorbs water. Hydrogen, the psychic principle, or that of the animal soul, is the fire-element which burns in the presence of oxygen, the pranic or vital principle.

The new sorcerer understands little or nothing of these distinctions, and still less of the higher division of mind, soul and spirit. Whatever power he

obtains control over he usually attributes to God, while those who see the operation, and do not understand it, declare it be of the devil; the intelligent man on the street meanwhile declaring all he hears about it to be rank humbug.

Hypnotism, or Satanism, as it has been aptly described, involves the suspension of the functions of the form-body, corresponding to the nitrogen element. As it serves to dilute the force of the oxygenic energy, its paralysis is evidently highly injurious, while the interference with its functions as a vehicle of sensation between the outer world and the inner perceptions, disarranges the whole system.

Mesmerism is merely the regulation and distribution of this oxygen principle in the body by the exercise of powers peculiar to its own plane. No mental action of any kind is involved, and the conception of animal magnetism under which it is frequently presented is fairly explanatory of its effects and action.

Christian Science, which its adherents believe to be the result of mind power, has nothing to do with mind, but is psychic, and depends upon the direction of forces of the psychic or hydrogen plane, upon the lower principles. Sometimes the vitality is stimulated, when a cure is effected; sometimes the astral or nitrogen principle is interfered with when death may occur; sometimes no effect whatever is produced, and the victim of this "science" survives or expires as the strength of his constitution may decide.

Occasionally all of the forces mentioned may be found at the disposal of one of these irresponsible practitioners, and the most varied results are the consequence. But none of them have any philosophical understanding of their processes. They are aware that the adoption of a certain mental attitude, the exercise of a little elementary occultism, which is thought to be a power from the highest heaven, will produce certain results in the majority of cases. But there is no absolute certainty of a definite result in any case, as indeed they are honest enough to admit.