

justice in order to deserve her name must begin to make some provision for this novel factor in criminal jurisprudence. Any person who has seen the most ordinary experiments in mesmerism, and observed the total subjection of the person operated upon to the operator, cannot fail to have been struck with the dreadful consequences that might ensue should such a power belong to an unscrupulous person. I said before that Mesmer was rather the promulgator than the discoverer of mesmerism. There can be no doubt that it was early known and practised in the east by the magi and priests of the ancient faiths, at the same time as many other branches of natural magic, the knowledge of which has now passed away, except from a few isolated individuals. It is remarkable to note how the more our knowledge of those strange Eastern lands, whose civilization is lost in the mist of ages increases, we are forced to own more and more that the existence of mysterious natural agencies, an idea up till now scoffed at, is the only way of accounting for strange exhibitions of power which have been well authenticated. I was much struck with a remark I met with in reading, "Europe is the understanding of the world. The Orientals have more spiritual power, and are further removed from the material," and again with reference to the modern cast of thought, "We are too wise now. We trust what we call our judgment, and reject our instincts, we never accept our impressions, but begin to reason upon them, and so mar and obliterate them. But the intellect is less wise than the spirit, and vastly slower. The soul is as sensitive as the eye—it sees at once. As well say we don't see physically at once, as spiritually. Spiritual perceptions are as instantaneous as sight. Instincts are superior to reason." If these two remarks are taken together, we shall see I think the reason of the incredulity with which all things out of the common are received in the most civilized nations, and shall perhaps by pondering over the second quotation I have made, begin to see that it does not always follow that everything which is not at once explicable by our reason is imposture.

Mesmerism fortunately is removed from the suspicious surroundings which will always militate against the reception of spiritualism, whether it be true or not. It requires no darkened room, or any other paraphernalia, and its results are too patent to be disregarded. I, myself have the pleasure of knowing two individuals possessed of this remarkable gift; though they were aware of its existence, they could give no account of how it was exercised. One of the gentlemen I refer to, told me that when he mesmerized he felt the power going from him, and the exhaustion after manifesting the power seemed to show that the force is intimately connected with the vital principle. It seems to be of the same mysterious nature as that which a serpent exercises over a bird, with the additional peculiarity that in some subjects who have been once brought under the influence, there remains a subjection to the wish of the mesmerist which

is independent of contact or space. This feature of which there is ample evidence, does away with the commonly received interpretation, that the subject is governed by his own ideas and not by the will of the mesmerist. In Chambers's Encyclopædia under the heading, "Animal Magnetism" there is this statement: "No wish of the mesmerist, or of any other person was ever known to affect the subject, until it was conveyed to him by voice or otherwise." This statement may be true with regard to the large percentage of persons who can mesmerize themselves by steady gazing at a fixed object, and the production of sleep in this manner known as hypnotism is a well-known medical phenomenon, but it is not universally true. There are persons who are capable of mesmerizing independent of any action on the part of the subject calculated to bring him into subjection, and they have no need of expressing their wishes to that class of subjects I have spoken of before, who once mesmerized remain under the power of the operator. The mere forming of an idea with reference to such subjects seems to be sufficient to affect them powerfully. I, myself, know a case of two brothers who are in this peculiar relation to each other, one of them being a mesmerist of remarkable power.

There is a kindred subject connected with mesmerism clairvoyance, upon which much doubt has been cast. It has however, been proven in many instances that in subjects of a peculiar temperament, the clairvoyant power exhibits itself when under the mesmeric influence. Neither does this latter condition seem always necessary. An instance occurred last summer, for the truth of which I can vouch. A young lady was staying with some people with whom I was well acquainted, who was able under test to read writing placed at the back of her head. She could not explain the phenomenon. She said that the words mirrored themselves one by one on her brain. This exhibition of power was followed by the same lassitude as I have mentioned was apparent in the case of a mesmerist.

Space will not allow me to enter more fully into the examination of this interesting subject. My object has been to awaken intelligent enquiry, and to shew as far as lay in my power that mesmerism is something more than the mere juggling it has generally been considered, and with this view I have cited no instances except those which have come within my own personal experience. It is nearly time that some searching and scientific investigation should be made, whereby we might be enabled to discover the laws operating to produce these strange phenomena. It is not a question of imposture; it is one of the highest importance, and which I trust will in the march of intellect and science not be overlooked.

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