

# STAR,

AND

## CONCEPTION BAY JOURNAL.

VOL. 1. NEW SERIES.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1884.

NO. 1.

Conception Bay, Newfoundland.--Printed and Published by D. E. GILMOUR, at his Office, Carbonear.

### Science.

#### ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

The following cases of *Animal Magnetism* are copied from a review, which appeared in the *Lancet*, of a translation, by J. C. Colquhoun, Esq., of a Report of Experiments made by a Medical Committee of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Paris; and read at the Meetings of June 21st and 28th, 1831.

The astonishing powers of animal magnetism, exemplified in the experiments here reported, are certainly almost beyond the belief of the most credulous; but, appearing, as they do, under the sanction of men of the greatest talent and respectability in the capital of France, who were present during the whole of the operations, it cannot be withheld. Some years ago, much noise was made concerning this same animal magnetism, but it was treated as empirical and visionary, and even ridiculed on the stage; the professor of the science was before his age, and the powers he professed to possess were too wonderful to be credited; the science consequently fell into disuetude until very recently when it became to be so much spoken of, that the above-named commission, composed of scientific men, all disbelievers in the science they were about to investigate, was appointed to inquire into the truth of the reports of the power of animal magnetism upon the human mind and body.

After a statement of the power of the operators to produce somnolency, in which state the powers of the human mind are developed in a most miraculous manner, the Report goes on to state:

"The questions relating to somnambulism, exhibit, it is true, some interesting phenomena, but in point of real interest, and in the hope of benefiting the science of medicine, are infinitely beneath those with which your committee are now about to make you acquainted."

*Paralysis of the Left Side—Failure of Cure in the Hospitals.—Trial of Animal Magnetism.—Relief from Deafness and Head-ache.—Repetition of Magnetism, and production of Somnambulism.—Prescriptions during Sleep for his Disease by the Patient himself.—Prediction*

*of his Cure.—Treatment followed.—Partial Cure.—Repetition of Somnambulism.—Final Recovery.—Subsequent Somnambulism, and Vision with the Eyes closed.*

"Paul Villagrard, student of law, born at Magnac Laval, (Upper Vienne,) on the 18th of May, 1803, suffered a stroke of apoplexy on the 25th of December, 1825, which was followed by paralysis of the whole left side of the body. After seventeen months of different modes of treatment, by acupuncture, a seton in the nape of the neck, twelve applications of moxa along the vertebral column—modes of treatment which he followed at home, at the Maison de Sauté, and at the Hospice de Perfectionnement, and in the course of which he had two fresh attacks,—he was admitted into the Hôpital de la Charité on the 8th of April, 1827. Although he had experienced perceptible relief from the means employed before he entered this hospital, he still walked with crutches, being unable to support himself upon the left foot. The arm of the same side, indeed, could perform several motions; but Paul could not lift it to his head. He scarcely saw with his right eye, and was very hard of hearing with both ears. In this state he was intrusted to the care of our colleague, M. Fouquier, who besides the very evident paralysis, discovered in him the symptoms of hypertrophy of the heart.

"During five months, he administered to him the alcoholic extract of *nux vomica*, bled him from time to time, purged him, and applied blisters. The left arm recovered a little strength; the head-aches, to which he was subject, disappeared; and his health continued stationary until the 29th August, 1827, when he was magnetized for the first time by M. Foissac, by order and under the direction of M. Fouquier. At this first sitting, he experienced a sensation of general heat, then twitchings (*soubresauts*) of the tendons. He was astonished to find himself overcome by the desire of sleeping; he rubbed his eyes in order to get rid of it, made visible and ineffectual efforts to keep his eyelids open, and, at length, his head fell down on his breast, and he fell asleep.—From this period, his deafness and head-aches disappeared. It was not until the ninth sitting that his sleep became profound; and at the tenth he answered, by articulate sounds, the questions which were addressed to him. At a later period he announced that he could not be cured but by means of magnetism, and he prescribed for

himself a continuation of the pills composed of the extract of *nux vomica*, sinapisms, and baths of Bareges. Upon the 25th September, your committee repaired to the Hôpital de la Charité made the patient be undressed, and ascertained that the inferior left limb was manifestly thinner than the right,—that the right hand closed much more strongly than the left,—that the tongue, when drawn out of the mouth, was carried towards the right commissure,—and that the right cheek was more convex than the left.

"Paul was then magnetized, and soon placed in a state of somnambulism. He recapitulated what related to his treatment, and prescribed that, on that same day, a sinapism should be applied to each of his legs for an hour and a-half, that next day he should take a bath of Bareges; and that, upon coming out of the bath, sinapisms should be again applied during twelve hours without interruption, sometimes to one place, and sometimes to another; that, upon the following day, after taking a second bath of Bareges, blood should be drawn from his right arm to the extent of a *palette* and a-half. Finally, he added, that by following this treatment, he would be enabled, upon the 25th, i. e. three days afterwards, to walk without crutches on leaving the sitting, at which, he said, it would still be necessary to magnetize him. The treatment which he had prescribed was followed; and upon the day named, the 28th September, the committee repaired to the Hôpital de la Charité. Paul came, supported on his crutches, into the consulting-room, where he was magnetized as usual, and placed in a state of somnambulism. In this state, he assured us, that he should return to his bed without the use of his crutches, without support. Upon awakening, he asked for his crutches,—we told him that he had no longer any need of them. In fact, he rose, supported himself on the paralyzed leg, passed through the crowd who followed him, descended the step of the *chambre d'expériences*, crossed the second court de la Charité, ascended two steps; and when he arrived at the bottom of the stair, he sat down. After resting two minutes, he ascended, with the assistance of an arm and the balustrade, the twenty-four steps of stairs which led to the room where he slept, went to bed without support, sat down again for a moment, and then took another walk in the room, to the great astonishment of all the other patients, who, until then, had seen him constantly confined to bed.